



RESOLUTION

Adopted October 13, 2022

Improving Capacity for Great Lakes Icebreaking

Whereas, the Great Lakes Navigation System is a critical driver of economic activity and jobs throughout North America; and

Whereas, the region's \$6 trillion economy depends on the safe and efficient movement of raw materials throughout the year, including winter months when ice cover on the Great Lakes complicates navigation; and

Whereas, economic analysis done by the economists at Martin and Associates on behalf of the Lake Carriers' Association determined that inadequate icebreaking during the winters of 2014, 2015 and 2019 combined to cost the region \$2 billion in economic activity and 11,000 jobs; and

Whereas, during even mild winters Great Lakes connecting waterways and tributaries experience severe flooding because of ice dams; and

Whereas, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is responsible for icebreaking on the Great Lakes, based on a 1936 Executive Order, to move maritime commerce, and provide flood relief when ice jams rivers and impacts coastal communities; and

Whereas, the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) is also responsible for icebreaking on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, USCG and CCG icebreakers are needed in winter months for law enforcement, pollution response, flood control and search and rescue missions; and

Whereas, the USCG maintained 14 icebreakers in 1979, including two heavy icebreakers which today has dwindled to nine with only one heavy icebreaker while the CCG maintained six icebreakers in 1979 which today has dwindled to two; and

Whereas, the USCG does not account for the Great Lakes as a system when measuring their icebreaking mission, only providing Congress with impacts in four connecting waterways and no open lake, harbor, or bay impacts where vessels must transit, load and unload; and

Whereas, the USCG maintains eleven 65-foot harbor tugs on the East Coast between New Jersey and Maine to break ice along docks and in harbors in contrast to the Great Lakes ports where carriers hire commercial tugs to provide that service; and

Whereas, the USCG 140-foot icebreaker tugs in the Great Lakes are in need of recapitalization and present an opportunity for redesign.

Therefore, be it Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages Congress to appropriate full funding for a new heavy Great Lakes USCG icebreaker that is at least as capable as the USCG Cutter MACKINAW; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages Congress to appropriate funding to replace USCG 140-foot icebreaking tugs in the Great Lakes that include research capabilities, such as winter ecology and freshwater oil spill response and research; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission encourages the Canadian Government to allocate additional CCG icebreakers on a permanent basis to the Great Lakes; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that Congress pass statutory language directing the USCG to provide reasonable icebreaking services on the Great Lakes and accurate icebreaking performance metrics that illustrate the impacts to our citizens from ice-dam flooding and winter supply chain disruptions.

Adopted at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, October 11-13, 2022, held in Erie, Pennsylvania. The resolution was passed unanimously.