

Adopted Sept. 11, 2012

Resolution: Open and Reciprocal Trade Between Canada and the United States

Whereas, the United States and Canada have the largest trading relationship in the world; and

Whereas, the member states and provinces of the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) strongly believe that free, open and reciprocal trade between our two countries constitutes an engine of strong economic growth and job creation for both countries; and

Whereas, trade between the United States and Canada supports millions of American and Canadian jobs, including nearly 1.5 million in the Midwest, and Canada remains the leading export market for 35 American states, including all member states of the GLC; and

Whereas, our economies are highly integrated, with nearly one-third of all bilateral trade between companies that make products together, and that integration is especially strong between the Midwest, Ontario and Québec; and,

Whereas, member states and provinces of the GLC understand that issues concerning the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence are best addressed through the binational, collaborative approach of organizations like the GLC; and

Whereas, that this understanding between the member states and provinces embraces notably the sustainable management of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence water system, but also matters concerning the regional economy, as evidenced by the creation of an Economic Committee within the framework of the GLC; and

Whereas, regional bodies such as the Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC) have passed resolutions in 2009 and 2012 encouraging both countries to “keep their restrictive markets open and accessible to Canadian and American goods and services, which advances the goal of North American competitiveness and helps strengthen the economies of both countries”; and,

Whereas, the U.S. Congress has regularly attached language to legislation that restricts bidding on federal projects to companies using American content; and,

Whereas, previous attempts at “Buy American” policies, such as those attached to the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), actually hurt some U.S. companies when they could not sell to Canadian customers barred from bidding on ARRA-supported projects.

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the GLC encourages Congress and the Administration to look at joint content rules and other options for future federally supported projects that recognize the integrated nature of the Canada-U.S. business economy; and

Be It further Resolved that the GLC will work with other regional bodies to encourage local, state and provincial governments to adopt regulations aiming toward open procurement policies within our region and, ultimately, between our two countries, with the understanding that these initiatives would both enhance the competitiveness of our regional economy and reflect the spirit of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement; and

Be It Finally Resolved, that this resolution be submitted to appropriate federal, state and provincial officials.

Adopted at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, Cleveland, Ohio, September 10-11, 2012.