

April 4, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environmental, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environmental, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environmental, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environmental, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Re: FY 2018 Funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Dear Chairs Murkowski and Calvert and Ranking Members McCollum and Udall:

The Council of Great Lakes Industries (CGLI) and the Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition (GLMCC) urge you to support continued funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), which was authorized in 2016 at \$300 million per year for five years but would be allocated no funding for FY2018 under the budget proposal that the President released on March 16, 2017.

A key reason that industry and the business community support continued funding for the GLRI is that annual funding for the Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) comes directly out of GLRI. GLLA was enacted in 2002 to stimulate the remediation of legacy contamination in the Great Lakes region. Industry strongly supported the GLLA when it was enacted and continues to see the Act as a critical catalyst in addressing difficult-to-address sites that otherwise would be subject to costly and inefficient remediation through traditional federal and state cleanup programs. Because the GLLA requires a non-federal contribution (typically 35-50%), the federal investment of \$360 million or so over the past ten years has leveraged an additional \$240 million in non-federal match from industry and state partners. Industry has reacted so positively to the

GLLA that the Sediment Management Work Group, an industry group that promotes scientifically-sound, risk-based, and cost-effective sediment management decisions, supports the creation of a similar program nationwide.

Another significant reason that industry and the business community support continued funding of the GLRI is that the GLRI has provided support to thousands of projects and programs in the Great Lakes region that address urban runoff and other types of non-point source pollution, reduce the risk of invasive species, and restore wetlands and coastal habitats. These projects have paved the way for economic improvement and job creation by providing a foundation for additional investment that spurs economic revitalization and growth.

Investing in the Great Lakes region will support economic growth across the country. The BMO Financial Group estimates that the eight states and two Canadian provinces that make up the region generate nearly one-third of combined US and Canadian economic activity. The region accounts for more than half of all cross-border trade between the US and Canada and 51 million jobs (31% of the workforce of the US and Canada). Industrial activity in the Great Lakes region supports vibrant cities and dynamic metropolitan areas. World Business Chicago estimates that, if the region were a country, its GDP would be the third largest in the world (behind the US and China).

The five Great Lakes themselves are a vital component of the engine that drives the economy. The lakes provide resources needed not only for drinking water but also for energy generation, transportation, agricultural production, and robust recreation and tourism. The lakes contain 20% of the world's supply of fresh surface water, which creates a unique competitive advantage for the region and the country. To suggest that the Great Lakes are simply a local resource ignores their critical significance. Put simply, the Great Lakes are a valuable national asset.

Our organizations and our members have long supported GLRI as a mechanism for advancing restoration of the Great Lakes ecosystem. Representatives of the business community participated in the multi-stakeholder Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy that was completed in 2005 and articulated a restoration agenda for the Great Lakes. We supported and spearheaded the economic analysis that led to the Brookings Institution's estimate in 2006 that every dollar invested in restoring the Great Lakes would return a minimum of two dollars in regional economic gains. As a member of the Great Lakes Advisory Board, CGLI continues to work with other stakeholders on behalf of industry to ensure that restoration projects incorporate elements consistent with the Strategy and provide positive economic impact.

Federal GLRI investments in Great Lakes protection and restoration help to retain and attract industrial activity and jobs by contributing to a competitive business climate characterized by value-added environmental practices. The GLRI also has contributed to a healthy and attractive ecosystem that helps to attract talented people to live and work in the region. We urge you to reject the President's budget proposal and restore funding for the GLRI in FY2018.

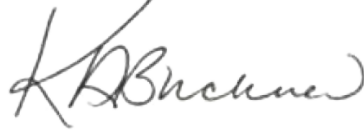
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CGLI is a binational non-profit organization representing the common policy interests of Canadian and US companies from the manufacturing, utilities, natural resources, and trade sectors that have investments in the Great Lakes region. CGLI works to ensure that industry is a substantive partner in the development of public policy in the Great Lakes region. The mission of CGLI is to promote the growth and vitality of the region in harmony with its human and natural resources (sustainable development).

GLMCC is a coalition of nearly 40 chambers of commerce in the Great Lakes states. GLMCC supports economic development in the Great Lakes region and promotes significant short- and long term investment and new policy initiatives in federal transportation infrastructure funding and policy, the US-Canada border, energy development, immigration of high-skilled talent, and water quality in the Great Lakes.

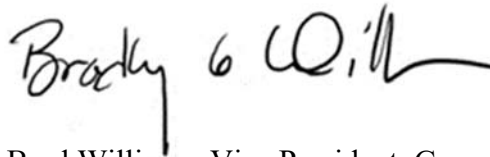
Very truly yours,

COUNCIL OF GREAT LAKES INDUSTRIES



Kathryn A. Buckner, President

GREAT LAKES METRO CHAMBERS COALITION



Brad Williams, Vice President, Government Relations

Cc: The Honorable Rob Portman, Co-chair, Senate Great Lakes Task Force
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, Co-chair, Senate Great Lakes Task Force
The Honorable Sean Duffy, Co-chair, House Great Lakes Task Force
The Honorable Bill Huizenga, Co-chair, House Great Lakes Task Force
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur, Co-chair, House Great Lakes Task Force
The Honorable Louise Slaughter, Co-chair, House Great Lakes Task Force
George H. Kuper, CGLI Chair