



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST SENATE COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

March 27, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Dirksen Building, Room 140
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy & Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Dirksen Building, Room 188
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander, and Ranking Member Feinstein:

As Senators of the Great Lakes delegation, we write to request your continued support for the Army Corps of Engineers to implement emergency measures to stop the spread of invasive species in the Great Lakes in the Energy and Water Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2016 (FY2016). The spread of invasive species poses a serious threat to the wellbeing of the Great Lakes, which provide drinking water for over 30 million Americans, hundreds of thousands of jobs, and immeasurable educational and recreational opportunities for our nation. We thank you for past support and hope we can continue to work together to provide this assistance in FY2016.

- **We urge the Committee to provide continued support to the Corps of Engineers that is necessary to implement the Agency's emergency authority to prevent the dispersion of aquatic invasive species into the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River Basin through FY2016. We also ask the Committee to clarify as was done in past appropriations bills and in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014, (H Rept. 113-449 at 47 (2014), reprinted in 2014 U.S.C.C.A.N. 4077), that the emergency authority for the Corps is not limited to the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, but by way of any hydrologic connection between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River Basin.**

In addition to the numerous environmental benefits, the Great Lakes also support a \$7 billion fishing industry, which sustains thousands of jobs throughout the region. To protect the regional economy and the environment, we must do all that we can to keep invasive species, including the destructive Asian Carp, out of the Great Lakes. The Water Resources and Development Act of 2014 provided authority to the Corps of Engineers to implement certain emergency measures to prevent Asian carp and other aquatic nuisance species from entering the Great Lakes. We urge you to support sufficient funding to enable the Corps of Engineers to be successful in this important mission and urge you to include the attached proposed bill language. It is critical that the Corps has the ability to address emergency situations at the hydrologic connections between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact Jon VanderPlas with Sen. Kirk's office (202-224-0350) or Aaron Suntag with Senator Stabenow (202-224-0839).

Sincerely,

Proposed Language for Protection of the Great Lakes from Invasive Species

During the fiscal year period covered by this Act, the Secretary of the Army is authorized to implement measures recommended in the efficacy study authorized under section 3061 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (121 Stat. 1121) or in interim reports, with such modifications or emergency measures as the Secretary of the Army determines to be appropriate without regard to geographic limitations, to prevent aquatic nuisance species from dispersing into the Great Lakes by way of any hydrologic connection between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River Basin.