



## Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition

September 7, 2016

Dear Great Lakes Representative and Senator:

As Congress reconvenes this fall we ask you to take the following actions before the end of the year to help protect and restore the Great Lakes:

**Pass legislation authorizing Great Lakes programs.** Authorizing the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative helps federal, state, and local partners strategically target funds at the highest priority projects. It also assists congressional oversight and ensures public involvement. The House unanimously passed H.R. 223 (Rep. Joyce), the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2015, in April. The Senate's Committee on the Environment and Public Works passed S. 1024 (Sen. Kirk) in January and included it in its WRDA bill. The two bills are different and need to be reconciled. We urge the Senate to pass H.R. 223 or amend the version in its WRDA legislation to reflect the changes made in the House bill.

Additionally, both the House and Senate should pass H.R. 4595/S. 2569 (Rep. Quigley/Sen. Peters), the Great Lakes Fishery Research Authorization Act of 2016, and H.R. 5765/S. 2949 (Rep. Dingell/Sen. Klobuchar), the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 2016, either on their own or as part of other legislation like WRDA.

**Pass appropriations bills for fiscal year 2017.** While a continuing resolution is necessary to keep Great Lakes programs funded at the start of the new fiscal year, Congress must not adjourn without enacting final appropriations bills. These bills must include the following funding for Great Lakes programs:

- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (EPA): \$300 million; House and Senate recommendation
- Clean Water State Revolving Fund (EPA): \$1.350 billion; Senate recommendation
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (EPA): \$1.070; House recommendation
- Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (Army Corps): \$2.6 million; House and Senate, President's budget recommendation
- Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Dispersal Barrier (Army Corps): \$12 million; House and Senate, President's budget recommendation
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission (State Department): \$24.22 million; House recommendation for the Great Lakes

**Include Great Lakes priorities in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).** The House and Senate WRDA bills (H.R. 5303/S. 2848) include provisions that support our region's Great Lakes agenda. We urge the following be included in any final bill:

- Extend the authorization of the Army Corps' Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration program, which helps restore the Great Lakes (House bill; §117).
- Amend the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2016 (See above) (Senate bill; §7611).
- Add the Waterfront Community Revitalization and Resiliency Act of 2016 (Senate substitute, §4018).
- Include provisions from the Senate bill that address critical water infrastructure needs in communities across the Great Lakes basin, such as by authorizing states to use drinking water funds to implement source water protection programs (§7104), authorizing a grant program to

- assist small and disadvantaged communities (§7106), reauthorizing grants addressing combined and sanitary sewer overflows (§7201) and requiring EPA to promote green infrastructure (§7204).
- Include provisions from the Senate bill to assist Flint, Mich., and other communities in dealing with lead in their drinking water, such as making emergency funds available through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (§7401), providing additional resources for lead line replacement (§7107), requiring better compliance reporting and public notification (§§7109 & 7110) and establishing a lead testing program for schools and childcare facilities (§7111).

Over thirty million people rely on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, recreation and livelihood. Passing these provisions before the end of the year assists the Great Lakes region in our ongoing work to protect and restore the Great Lakes.

Thank you for considering our request. Please contact Chad Lord, our coalition's policy director, at (202) 454-3385 or [clord@npca.org](mailto:clord@npca.org) with questions.

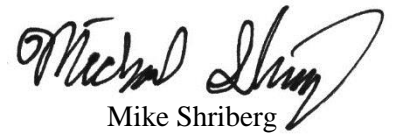


Mike Carlson  
Co-chair

Sincerely,



Joy Mulinex  
Co-chair



Mike Shriberg  
Co-chair