



August 21, 2018

Dear Great Lakes Senator:

On behalf of the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition and our over 150-member organizations, we write in support of the many Great Lakes provisions in the current substitute amendment to S. 2800, the bi-partisan America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018. We are thankful to see so many parts of this bill that will help the region preserve, protect, and restore the drinking water for 30 million Americans.

The Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition represents more than 150 non-governmental organizations in all eight Great Lakes states. We consist of environmental, conservation, outdoor recreation organizations, community groups, zoos, aquariums and museums. Our groups represent millions of people whose common goal is to restore and protect the Great Lakes.

The substitute amendment to S. 2800 includes provisions that will benefit the restoration and protection of the Great Lakes—and the communities that rely on the lakes for their drinking water, health, jobs, and quality of life. Sec. 3604 increases the resources available to the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act, which helps protect and restore the region's wildlife habitat. Sec. 3605 increases funding for the effective Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Our region is making great progress under the GLRI; however, the lakes still face serious threats. The increased support allows Great Lakes communities to continue cleaning up toxic hot spots, restoring wetlands and other habitat, stopping farm runoff, and controlling invasive species for the benefit of the environment and economy. Sec. 3606 authorizes the important Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency study to coordinate and recommend actions to manage and protect the Great Lakes coastline from changes in lake levels, erosion, flooding, agricultural and urban runoff, and aging infrastructure. Lastly, Sec. 2306 keeps much-needed pressure on the Army Corps to complete their Brandon Road study so the region can move towards constructing new, structural measures that keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes. Equally important, it also modifies the federal share of the operations and maintenance of the project once it is completed.

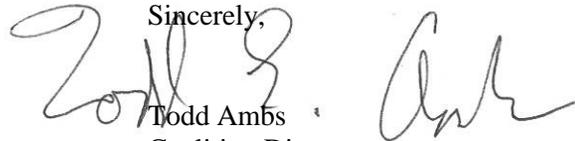
The bill also focuses much-needed attention on the enormous backlog of work fixing our region's old, outdated wastewater, drinking water, and stormwater infrastructure. The Great Lakes provide drinking water for more than 30 million people in the United States. They are the foundation of our economy and our way of life. Repairing old infrastructure is a large undertaking — and expensive. A recent survey of needed infrastructure investments across the nation shows that the Great Lakes region alone requires \$179 billion over the next 20 years to repair and replace our wastewater and drinking water infrastructure. Paying for these projects often falls on communities that cannot afford it, underscoring the importance of financial support from the federal government.

S. 2800 includes provisions that address many of the drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater problems facing Great Lakes communities. For example, Sec. 5004 provides important technical assistance to small, medium-sized, and rural communities helping them get ready for system improvements. Sec. 5005 sets aside funds to implement source water protection plans and authorizes

grants for sewer overflow control, including stormwater management activities. Sec. 5006 applies integrated management principles for wastewater and stormwater. It also encourages nature-based infrastructure and requires new affordability criteria for determining the ability of households to pay their utility bills. Sec. 5010 focuses needed attention on investing in local workers and local small businesses to strengthen communities and build strong career pipelines for skilled and diverse workers. Sec. 5011 states clearly that the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds should receive robust funding. Secs. 5017 and 5020 increase resources to create resilient water systems that can adapt to forecasted changes to regional hydrologic changes and accelerate the integration of innovative water technology that addresses the region's pressing drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater challenges.

We support the Great Lakes provisions in the substitute amendment to S. 2800 that will help the region to stay on track in solving our most pressing problems. We hope you will support these provisions as the Senate considers this bill. For more information or if you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact Chad Lord, our coalition's policy director. He can be reached at (202) 454-3385 or [clord@npca.org](mailto:clord@npca.org).

Sincerely,



Todd Ambs  
Coalition Director