November 1st, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger,

On behalf of the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition, we write to thank you for your efforts in advancing the fiscal year 2020 appropriations process. We are grateful for you and your colleagues hard work in reaching a budget agreement and increasing the caps for nondefense discretionary spending. We particularly appreciate your significant 302(b) allocation for the Interior and Environment appropriations bill. The House allocation enabled the passage of H.R. 3052, the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Act, 2020, that strengthened the federal commitment to Great Lakes restoration.

The Great Lakes define our region’s way of life, provide drinking water for over 30 million Americans, and is at the heart of a binational economy that is the third largest in the world. Protecting these waters and continuing our investment in the region today is essential. As you gather with your Senate colleagues to allocate funding levels and conference the bills, we urge you to continue your support for Great Lakes priorities by ensuring the highest possible allocation for the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. Furthermore, we encourage you to support:

- The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, by adopting the House passed allocation of $320 million
- Asian Carp mitigation and eradication efforts, by adopting the Senate approved report language apportioning $25 million and $9.6 million to the USFWS and USGS respectively.
- The Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act, by adopting the Senate approved report language apportioning the program $1.68 million.
- Water infrastructure investment through the:
  - Clean Water State Revolving Fund, by adopting the House approved allocation of $1.78 billion
  - Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, by adopting the House approved allocation of $1.3 billion
- Sec. 106 Clean Water State Grants, by adopting the House approved allocation of $240.8 million
- Sec. 221 Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse Municipal Grants, by adopting the House approved allocation of $90 million
- Sec. 319 Nonpoint Pollution Grants, by adopting the House approved allocation of $175.9 million

We are grateful for the much needed support the region has received and understand the difficult decisions the Conferees face in allocating funding from the budget agreement. But we urge you to keep the highest possible funding allocation for the Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. We are seeing on-the-ground results because of the investments in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. However, the Great Lakes still face many urgent problems. The problems we face will only get worse and the price we pay will only be higher if the federal partnership with the region is scaled back.

We thank you for your leadership and support. Please do not hesitate to contact Chad Lord, our coalition’s policy director, if you have any questions. He can be reached at (202) 454-3385 or clord@npca.org.

Sincerely,

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President
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