



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST HOUSE COALITION

## GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

April 22, 2013

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on the State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Agencies  
HT-2 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the State, Foreign  
Operations, and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

As co-chairs serving on the Great Lakes Task Force, we are writing to inform the Subcommittee that we are united in carefully monitoring programs that are integral to the Great Lakes environment and waterborne commerce. As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 appropriations bill, we write to share our commitment to programs within the U.S. State Department that protect our economic and environmental health, including fish and wildlife resources in the Great Lakes. In particular, we will carefully monitor the following programs:

- **The Great Lakes Fishery Commission** as authorized by the *Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries of 1954*; and
- **The International Joint Commission** as authorized by the *Boundary Treaty of 1909*.



These Commissions were established by treaties and agreements to protect access to shared international fisheries resources and support vital economic and environmental interests, and the commercial and recreational fisheries managed by these organizations generate income estimated from \$12 to \$15 billion annually for the United States.

The work carried out by the International Commissions of the Department of State is of critical importance to the sustainability of the Great Lakes' natural resources. The Great Lakes are a unique natural system of global economic and environmental significance. It provides the world's largest system of surface freshwater, supplying drinking water for more than 30 million Americans; supports over 1.5 million jobs, generating \$62 billion in wages each year; and is home to over 3,500 species of plants and animals. At the same time, the Lakes have struggled with invasive species, toxic chemical contamination, habitat loss, and beach closures. The missions of the Great Lakes programs are closely and integrally linked such that one agency's programmatic activities and funding will have ramifications for other agencies' programs success.

We urge the Subcommittee to carefully review these programs and thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have questions, please contact Kate Ostrander, Legislative Director of the

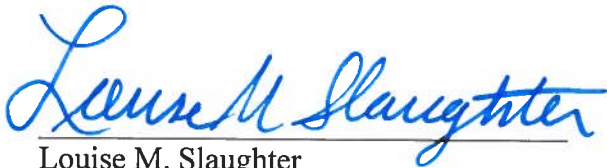
Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition, at 226-6106 or [kate.ostrander@mail.house.gov](mailto:kate.ostrander@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



John D. Dingell  
Member of Congress  
Great Lakes Task Force,  
Democratic Co-Chair

Sean P. Duffy  
Member of Congress  
Great Lakes Task Force,  
Republican Co-Chair



Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress  
Great Lakes Task Force,  
Democratic Co-Chair