



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST HOUSE COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

March 25, 2015

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

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

Dear Chairman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

As members of the Great Lakes delegation, 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) 2016 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. 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 fresh surface water, 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.


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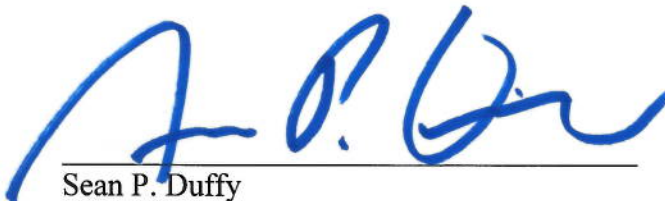
We urge the Subcommittee to carefully review these programs and thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have questions, please contact Samuel Breene, Legislative Director of the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition, at 226-6106 or samuel.breene@mail.house.gov

Sincerely,

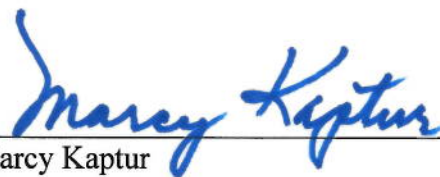

Candice S. Miller

Candice S. Miller
Member of Congress
Great Lakes Task Force
Republican Co-Chair


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



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



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress
Great Lakes Task Force
Democratic Co-Chair



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Dan Benishek
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Sander Levin
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress