



December 10, 2021

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The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate
Committee on Environment and
Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Chair, U.S. House Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee
on Transportation and Infrastructure
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Carper, Ranking Member Capito, Chair DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

We together call on the U.S. Congress to provide full federal funding in the 2022 Water Resources Reform and Development Act for the remaining design, construction, operation, and maintenance costs of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam project. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam is a key piece of infrastructure with profound regional and national significance. This project is intended to prevent invasive carp from migrating up the Mississippi River and entering and colonizing in the Great Lakes, which could devastate the ecosystem that supports fisheries for tribal, commercial, and recreational interests and prove detrimental to local and regional economies that rely on recreational tourism as well as reducing property values. The completion of this project is therefore a national priority.

Nonnative species of carp, such as bighead, silver, and black carp, collectively known as invasive carp, pose an imminent threat to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River ecosystem and economy because of their ability to reproduce rapidly and consume large quantities of food. Once established, invasive carp would be difficult to eradicate or control, thereby joining sea lamprey, zebra mussels, and other aquatic invasive species (AIS) that federal, state, and local governments as well as businesses in the region spend many millions of dollars each year to mitigate and control.

As you know, the Great Lakes are the engine of a \$6 trillion regional economy. The region's \$7 billion commercial and sport fishing industry and \$15 billion recreational boating industry would be devastated if invasive carp were to become established in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. Establishment of invasive carp would also prove detrimental to local and regional economies that rely on recreational tourism and cause reductions to property values. Overall, the introduction and rapid spread of invasive carp to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin will result in environmental and economic impacts that compromise the benefit of native biota, water quality, fisheries, commercial navigation, and recreational boating.

Invasive carp are not currently present in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin but are established in the Illinois River and Mississippi River and are increasing their distribution across the United States. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam on the Des Plaines River in Illinois provides a strategic focal point that can provide enhanced controls as part of any comprehensive suite of measures to prevent invasive carp from moving closer to the Great Lakes.

The federal government through prior legislative and agency actions has already recognized the importance of stopping the introduction and spread of invasive carp. As you know, the U.S. Congress authorized the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Brandon Road Project in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020 which was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and is authorized at \$858,047,000. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has completed a Chief's Report to the U.S. Congress with a plan of action at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam to prevent invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin at this focal point.

The Great Lakes Governors have already demonstrated our shared commitment to preventing the introduction of invasive carp into the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin. The Great Lakes Governors are further committed to ensuring the final design will be fiscally responsible and avoid unnecessary costs for construction and maintenance of the project. As an example of the cooperation among the states, the USACE and the State of Illinois signed a design agreement on December 29, 2020, to complete pre-construction engineering and design (PED), sponsored by the State of Illinois. The PED is estimated to cost \$29 million and take 3-4 years for completion, and the States of Illinois and Michigan have committed to provide the 35% non-federal cost share for this phase (>\$10 million).

However, the balance of project cost for design, construction, operation and maintenance is beyond the capacity of the Great Lakes States to match. Therefore, we request that United States federal government address this project consistent with how other large-scale projects have been funded that similarly have a strong bearing on the regional and national economy. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to support the inclusion of full federal funding for the remaining design, construction, operation and maintenance of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam Project via the 2022 Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our shared efforts to protect the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Basin, thereby creating jobs, expanding economic opportunity, and ensuring a healthier environment for all the people of our nation.

Sincerely,



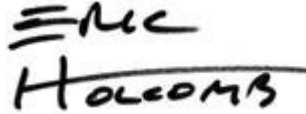
Tony Evers
Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
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Mike DeWine
Vice Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors
Governor of Ohio



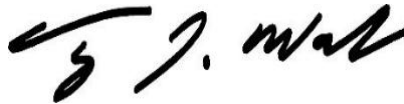
Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York



Eric Holcomb
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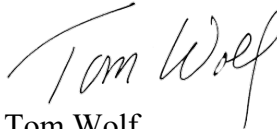
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