



October 13, 2023

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

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 Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member, U.S. House  
Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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CHAIR  
*Governor of Wisconsin*

MIKE DEWINE  
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TIM WALZ  
*Governor of Minnesota*

GRETCHEN WHITMER  
*Governor of Michigan*

DAVID NAFTZGER  
*Executive Director*

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

The Governors of the Great Lakes States call on the U.S. Congress to provide full federal funding by increasing the federal cost share to 100% in the 2024 Water Resources Reform and Development Act for the costs of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam project. This project is intended to prevent invasive carp from invading the Great Lakes, which could devastate its ecosystem and severely impact our economy. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam is a critically important piece of regional and national infrastructure.

Invasive carp, which include bighead, silver and black carp, pose a major threat to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River ecosystem and economy. Invasive carp can decimate ecosystems by reproducing rapidly and outcompeting native species for food. If established in the Great Lakes, invasive carp would be extremely difficult and costly, if not impossible, to eradicate or control. Zebra mussels, sea lamprey, and other aquatic invasive species already established in the Great Lakes cost the governments and industries in the region millions of dollars each year to mitigate. All waters would be vulnerable to these fish including rivers and inland lakes.

The Great Lakes St. Lawrence region is home to more than 100 million people and 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater. It is a major economic region with a \$6 trillion economy. Invasive carp would devastate the region's commercial and sport fishing industry and recreational boating industry. Overall, the introduction and rapid spread of invasive carp to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin would result in major environmental and economic impacts that harm native species, water quality, fisheries, recreational boating, and property values.

Invasive carp are established in the Illinois River and portions of the Mississippi Rivers and pose a clear threat to the Great Lakes. The Brandon Road Lock and Dam site in Illinois is a strategic pinch point that can provide important new protections against invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes. Action is urgently needed. However, significant and burdensome non-federal obligations threaten to delay project implementation.

The federal government has previously recognized the importance of stopping invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes. As you know, the U.S. Congress authorized the project in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020 and increased the federal cost share to 90 percent for all project costs in WRDA 2022.

While the increased federal cost share was greatly appreciated, even with the currently authorized 90:10 federal/non-federal cost-share, remaining costs are well beyond the typical non-federal sponsor obligations and stretch the capacity of the State of Illinois and the remaining Great Lakes States. The current certified cost estimate would require \$114 M from the State of Illinois as the non-federal sponsor for construction costs alone. Illinois and Michigan, recognizing the importance of this project, prioritized funding and have appropriated \$50 million and \$64 million to address the nonfederal portion of the cost share for construction.

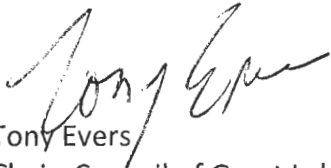
However, beyond the cost share requirement for construction, the additional non-federal obligations for land acquisition including remediation of hazardous and toxic waste, cultural resources preservation, and operation, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and replacement (OMRR&R) in perpetuity will create additional up-front costs and a perpetual obligation that an individual state should not be expected to assume. This is particularly true for a project that benefits not just one state but rather eight states, two provinces, the United States, Canada, and many tribal nations.

The Great Lakes Governors, led by the State of Illinois, have demonstrated a strong commitment to stopping the introduction and establishment of invasive carp in the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin. The State of Illinois and the US Army Corps of Engineers signed an agreement to complete the pre-construction engineering and design (PED) phase in 2020. The States of Illinois and Michigan provided the 35% non-federal cost-share (\$10.1 M) for this phase, which has resulted in Project Increment 1A to approach 95% design completion. Preliminary design work on project channel improvements (Increment I-B) has also started with innovative construction ideas in mind.

Despite this progress, future non-federal sponsor cost share responsibilities will dwarf the PED costs and are beyond the capacity of Illinois and the other Great Lakes States. Therefore, this project, as a true national interest, requires full federal funding as for other major infrastructure projects that similarly safeguard the regional and national economies. We strongly support the inclusion of full federal funding for the remaining costs of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam Project in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2024.

Thank you for your continued partnership in our shared efforts to protect the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Basin. We look forward to our continued partnership to create jobs, protect the environment and expand economic opportunity in the region and the nation.

Sincerely,



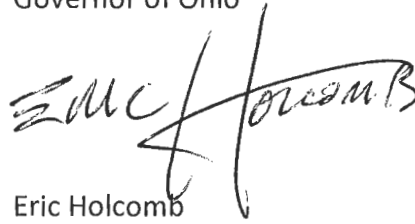
Tony Evers  
Chair, Council of Great Lakes Governors  
Governor of Wisconsin



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



Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York



Eric Holcomb  
Governor of Indiana



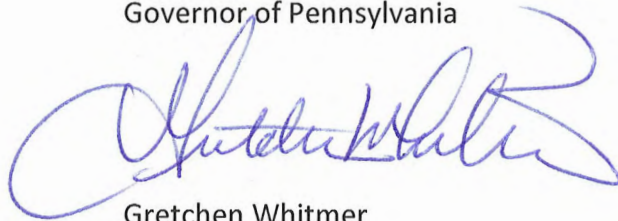
JB Pritzker  
Governor of Illinois



Josh Shapiro  
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Tim Walz  
Governor of Minnesota



Gretchen Whitmer  
Governor of Michigan