



*THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST HOUSE COALITION*

## **GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE**

March 25, 2009

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.  
Chairman  
Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Ranking Member  
Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member:

As you work to draft the House Budget Resolution, we are writing to urge you to include language that states that within funds provided for natural resources and the environment, there will be \$475 million in funding for the Great Lakes as indicated in President Obama's proposed Fiscal Year 2010 budget.

The Great Lakes are an important national treasure. Almost all of the Great Lakes' waters are a legacy of the glacier age with less than one percent renewed annually by precipitation and run off. They hold 90 percent of the U.S. surface fresh water and are the largest system of fresh surface water on earth. Over 40 million people currently rely on the Great Lakes for drinking water, and the global water demand is expected to double every 21 years.

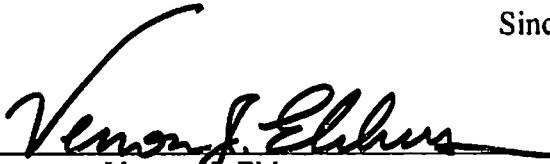
Unfortunately, the health of the Great Lakes is threatened by aquatic invasive species, contaminated sediment, nonpoint source pollution, and habitat loss. According to some scientific views, the Great Lakes are at a tipping point. Failure to protect and restore the lakes now will result in more serious consequences.

Knowing the importance of the Great Lakes, over 1,500 federal, state, local, tribal and other stakeholders from the region spent over a year drafting the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy Report in 2005. The Strategy Report is the blueprint for how additional federal resources may be spent to address the many threats facing the Great Lakes.

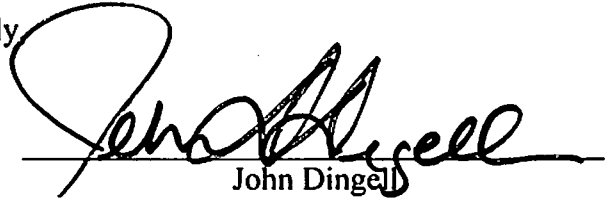
Last summer, President Obama made a promise to restore the Great Lakes, and including \$475 million in new funding for the EPA is a way to start following up on that commitment. We have long supported Great Lakes restoration, and we urge you to include language in the Budget Resolution that assumes that within funds provided for natural resources and the environment,

there will be \$475 million in funding for the Great Lakes.

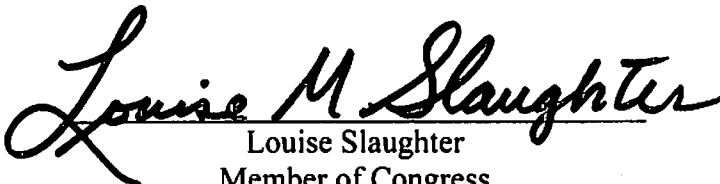
Sincerely



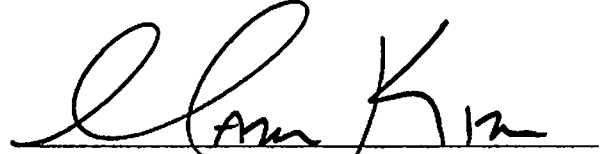
Vernon J. Ehlers  
Member of Congress



John Dingell  
Member of Congress



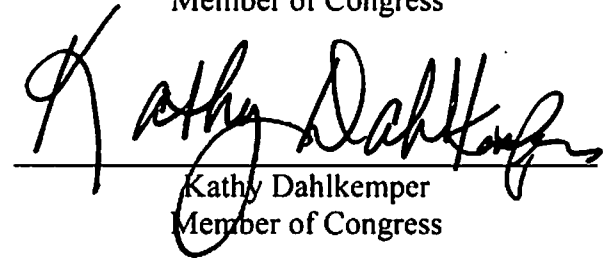
Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress



Mark Kirk  
Member of Congress



Sander Levin  
Member of Congress



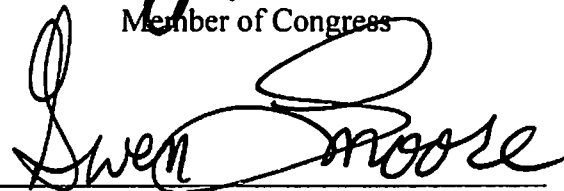
Kathy Dahlkemper  
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton  
Member of Congress



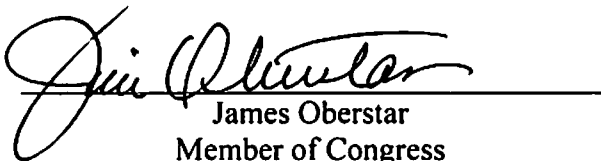
Steven LaTourette  
Member of Congress



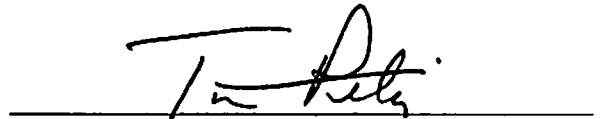
Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



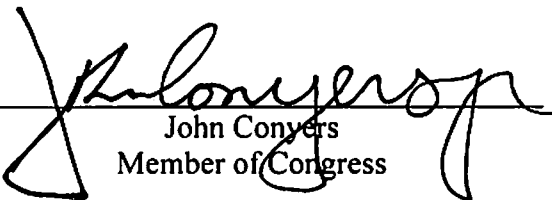
Carolyn Kilpatrick  
Member of Congress



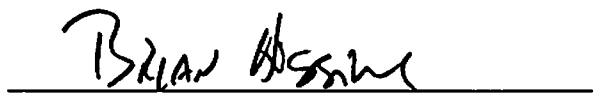
James Oberstar  
Member of Congress



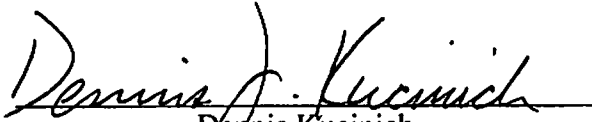
Thomas Petri  
Member of Congress




John Conyers  
Member of Congress





Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

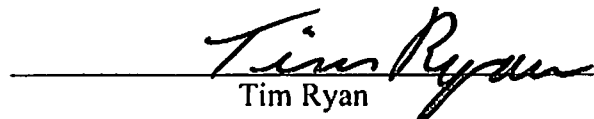
  
Dennis Kucinich  
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Keith Ellison  
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Tammy Baldwin  
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