



July 29, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House

The Honorable Eric Cantor
Majority Leader

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader

Dear Speaker Boehner, Representative Cantor and Representative Pelosi:

Funding for Great Lakes restoration and water infrastructure is critical to the livelihood of the millions of people that live in the Great Lakes region. Mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative urge Congress to restore funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and Clean Water State Revolving Funds (CWSRF) to fiscal year 2010 levels to ensure continued progress on Great Lakes protection and restoration.

The Great Lakes provide drinking water to approximately 40 million people, support a \$7 billion fishing industry, and are the foundation upon which the regional economy has been built. Despite their importance, they continue to face significant threats, including aquatic invasive species, pollution from stormwater runoff, and aging water and wastewater infrastructure. The GLRI and CWSRF have been critical to ensuring these threats are addressed and the region's plan for Great Lakes restoration is implemented. With this funding, important restoration and infrastructure work is getting done in cities throughout the region to make certain the water is safe to drink, the fish are safe to eat, and the resource is sustained long into the future. It would be a shame to see this progress slowed or stopped by reducing funding to GLRI and the CWSRF for FY 2012.

In addition to restoring critical protection and restoration funding, mayors of the Cities Initiative encourage Congress to continue to advance sound environmental policy with respect to the Great Lakes. The federal government and its partners in the region are making progress on protecting the Lakes, their streams and tributaries, addressing polluted stormwater runoff from industry, urban, suburban and agricultural sources, and shutting the door on the invasion of aquatic invasive species. The government must continue to implement and uphold such policies in order to protect the largest supply of surface freshwater on earth.

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Brian McMullan, Mayor of St. Catharines, Chair

Tom Barrett, Mayor of Milwaukee, Vice-Chair

Régis Labeaume, President of Québec Metropolitan Community, Secretary/Treasurer



Mayors around the Great Lakes recognize the difficult financial situation facing our nation and our communities. We strongly believe however, that continuing to invest in and protect the Great Lakes makes good economic and environmental sense, not just for us today, but for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Mayor Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee
Vice Chair, Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

Cc: Leah Konrady, Northeast Midwest Institute
Mike McCabe, Great Lakes Legislative Caucus

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