



Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition

April 6, 2015

The Honorable Candace Miller
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Rep. Miller and Sen. Stabenow:

Thank you for introducing S. 589 and H.R. 1135, the Defending our Great Lakes Act of 2015. I am pleased to offer our Coalition's full support for this important legislation.

Non-native Asian carp pose a serious threat to the Great Lakes, and preventing them from taking hold in Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes demands a focused, timely response. Foot-dragging is not acceptable and only further jeopardizes our environment and economy. The January 2014 U.S. Army Corps Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) laid out steps that can be taken to prevent Asian carp and other aquatic invasive species (AIS) from invading the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. While the Army Corps concluded that separating the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River basins with a physical barrier is the most effective way to stop AIS transfers, it did not select a preferred alternative among the many options it presented. Our Coalition supports building a physical barrier to provide the best protection for the Great Lakes. We also understand that interim steps can be helpful in reducing the risk of new invasions as the region moves toward a more permanent, long-term solution. A new law directing the Army Corps to construct the next set of projects can help ensure that the region's short-term and long-term prevention efforts stay on track.

Your bills provide that direction. The *Defending Our Great Lakes Act* gives the Army Corps authority to take near-term action to prevent the spread of invasive species at a critical control point near the western end of the Chicago Area Waterway System—the Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The GLMRIS report called for the construction of an engineered channel to put control technologies in place like additional electric barriers, carbon dioxide bubble screens, underwater sound canons, and pheromones at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The Army Corps announced in December that they are evaluating which technologies will be most effective at keeping invasive species out of the Great Lakes basin. This bill gives the Army Corps the flexibility to choose from all of their available options prior to making a decision.

Equally important is the bill's attention to make sure that the region continues to advance critical components of any long-term solution to prevent the spread of invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. Your legislation rightly stresses the need for continued

improvements in flood mitigation and protection of water quality throughout the Chicago Area Waterway System, both of which will be critical to any long-term plan. The legislation will help shore up defenses against Asian carp as the region develops consensus around a long-term approach. To that end, our Coalition continues to support the most effective solution: the full, hydrologic separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins.

Thank you again for introducing the Defending Our Great Lakes Act. I am proud to lend you our Coalition's support. If you have any questions regarding this endorsement, please do not hesitate to contact Chad Lord, our Coalition's policy director, at 202-454-3385 or clord@npca.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd E. Ambs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd Ambs
Campaign Director