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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2210

December 9, 2013

COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
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HOMELAND SECURITY
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COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

RAILROADS, PIPELINES,
AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

WATER RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Director
Executive Office of the President
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Burwell:

We write today to express our strong support for commerce on the Great Lakes. As you finalize the President's budget for Fiscal Year 2015, we respectfully request that you include adequate funding for the Great Lakes Navigation System (GLNS), in particular the Soo Locks Asset Renewal Program.

As you are aware, the GLNS connects all five Great Lakes from Duluth, MN to Ogdensburg, NY. This system is highly dependent on a system of locks, ports, and navigation channels that, all told, contain, nearly 25 percent of the nation's harbors. According to a recent estimate by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the GLNS moves 145 million tons of commodities annually, supports over 128,000 jobs in the United States, and provides an economic impact of \$18.1 billion.

The Soo Locks represent one of the most critical components of the GLNS. In 2007, the USACE determined that over 80 million tons of commodities pass through the Soo Locks each year. Although there are currently two operating locks at the Soo, only the Poe Lock (completed in 1968) is wide enough for modern commercial vessels. Unscheduled outages and closures are estimated to have an economic impact of \$160 million per day to the Great Lakes region.

Over the last several years, investments from USACE's Operation and Maintenance account have been made to minimize the number of unscheduled outages at the Soo Locks through the Soo Asset Renewal Program. Until such time as additional redundancies can be completed through the construction of a replacement lock, we respectfully request that you adequately fund this account to ensure the Soo Locks remain fully operational. This issue is critical to improving our nation's infrastructure and strengthening American competitiveness and the economy.

Sincerely,

Rep. Candice S. Miller

Rep. Dan Benishek

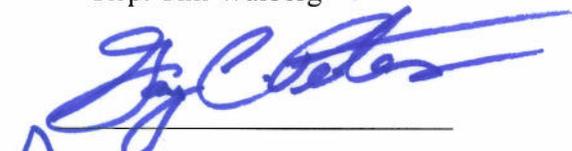
Ms. Sylvia Mathews Burwell

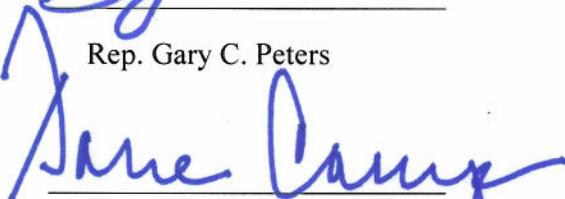
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Rep. Bill Huizenga


Rep. Tim Walberg


Rep. Gary C. Peters

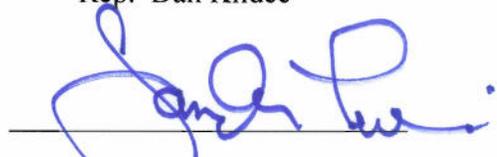

Rep. Dave Camp

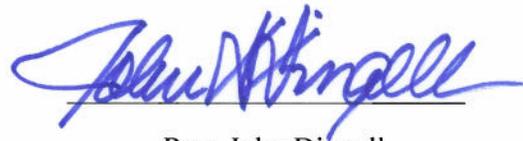

Rep. Fred Upton


Rep. Kerry Bentivolio


Rep. Mike J. Rogers


Rep. Dan Kildee


Rep. Sander Levin


Rep. John Dingell