

February X, 2017

Dear Mr. President,

We write to express our strong support for efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Specifically, we respectfully request that you include \$300 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request.

The Great Lakes are truly a national treasure. The Great Lakes are the largest freshwater system in the world, holding roughly 18 percent of the world's fresh water supply and 90 percent of the United States' fresh water supply. The Lakes are also an economic driver that supports jobs, commerce, agriculture, transportation, and tourism for millions of people across the country. More than a century of environmental damage has taken a significant toll on the Great Lakes, which the GLRI is helping to correct. Since the initiative was launched in 2010, GLRI funds have been used to support over 3,000 restoration projects to improve water quality, protect and restore native habitat, clean up environmentally-impaired Areas of Concern, fight invasive species, and prevent beach closings.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is showing real and measurable results, but there is still a great deal of work to do. The Great Lakes Basin is vulnerable to various pollutants and invasive species, which threaten the health of the Great Lakes. For example, in 2014 a toxic algal bloom in Lake Erie forced 400,000 residents in the Toledo area to go without home water service for three days. While the GLRI has prioritized monitoring efforts, which help drinking water treatment plant operators and beach managers minimize health impacts associated with these toxic algal blooms, more must be done to better understand and prevent these algal blooms in the future.

The federal government commits significant resources each year to address the challenges the Great Lakes face. In particular, GLRI resources have supplemented agency budgets to fund coordinated efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes ecosystem, and we must ensure that this important work continues. To that end, we urge you to include \$300 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you and your Administration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress

David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress

Louise Slaughter  
Member of Congress