



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST HOUSE COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

January 13, 2020

The Honorable RD James
Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Mr. RD James:

We write regarding priorities for the Great Lakes region as the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) develops its fiscal year (FY) 2020 work plan. The FY 2020 Energy and Water Appropriations bill provides robust funding for your agency, including additional funding of \$2,690,000,000 above the budget request. The Corps is responsible for building and maintaining much of the water transportation and infrastructure across our nation. The expertise and tireless efforts of the Corps' dedicated workforce is essential to keeping our regional economy competitive in the 21st century.

Asian Carp

In May 2019, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent Congress the Chief's Report for the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, a critical chokepoint for keeping Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes. It is imperative that there be no further delays to moving this critical project forward.

To ensure the Brandon Road project proceeds, we ask that \$3,800,000 be included in the FY 2020 work plan, which is necessary to begin Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED). As you know, additional funding was included in the FY 2020 appropriations bill within the Investigations account for ecosystem restoration projects, for which the Brandon Road project can compete.

Preventing Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes is critically important, and requires additional funding for project management activities and structural measures, including the following for FY 2020:

- o \$19,300,000 for construction of the second-high field array of the electric dispersal barriers, of which \$5,000,000 is for high priority testing and \$14,300,000 is for construction; and
- o \$315,000 for Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study program management.

Soo Locks

The importance of the Soo Locks to our national defense and economy cannot be overstated. To ensure continued, efficient progress in building the new lock, we ask that the work plan fully fund the FY 2020 capability, which is currently estimated to be \$42,400,000 above the budget request. This will help to ensure this critical project stays on time and on budget. As you know, \$50,000,000 of additional funding was included in the FY 2020 appropriations bill within the Construction account to continue to construct new navigation infrastructure for locks and Corps-owned bridges not on the inland waterways system, for which the Soo Locks can compete.

In addition, in order to ensure the safety of ships passing through the existing Soo Locks, and the ability to ensure that the existing locks remain open for the movement of critical commerce, we ask that the work plan fund the current capability of \$8,000,000 for Poe Lock Ship Arrestors and \$3,500,000 for MacArthur Lock Tainter Valve Machinery. These projects are navigation infrastructure and should be eligible for the additional \$50,000,000 in funding referenced above.

Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study

The Great Lakes coastline faces numerous threats, such as lake level fluctuations, erosion, flooding, nutrient runoff, and aging infrastructure. This year, record water levels as high as three feet above the long-term average have battered shores, spurred flooding, and damaged infrastructure. Notably, these highs come only six years after the Great Lakes experienced record-low water levels. Such rapid and unpredictable swings in water levels place enormous stress on coastal communities and regional economies.

This study proposed in consultation with Great Lakes states would be a first-of-its kind effort to develop a coordinated strategy to manage and protect the Great Lakes and its 5,200-mile coastline. The study has garnered robust and diverse support from a diverse group of Great Lakes states, which have agreed to serve as non-federal sponsor.

The America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 authorized the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study and we ask that you include not less than \$1,200,000 in the FY 2020 work plan as a new start to meet the requirement in the FY 2020 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act for a multi-purpose watershed study to address coastal resiliency.

Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration (GLFER)

The FY 2020 appropriations bill provides additional funds for multistate ecosystem restoration programs for which GLFER can compete. The GLFER program restores fish and wildlife habitat, removes dams and other barriers to fish migration, prevent and control non-native species, and contribute to the removal of beneficial use impairments in Areas of Concern. The program is implementing a number of projects across the Great Lakes Basin that have been developed in collaboration with a variety of federal, state and local partners. All proposed GLFER projects are reviewed by an expert committee to ensure feasibility, effectiveness, and consistency with state, tribal, local, and federal resource management objectives. We understand the Corps has a capability of \$10,000,000 for FY 2020, and we ask that funding is included in the work plan for this important program.

We greatly appreciate your attention to these priorities of the Great Lakes region as you work to complete the FY 2020 work plan.

Sincerely,



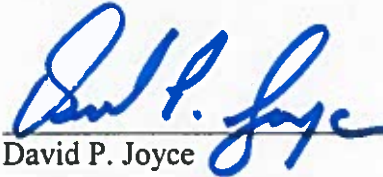
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Democratic Co-Chair



Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress
Great Lakes Task Force
Republican Co-Chair



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress
Great Lakes Task Force
Democratic Co-Chair



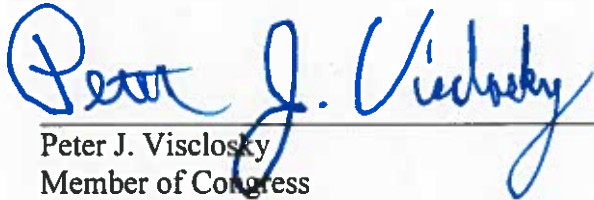
David P. Joyce
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Bill Foster
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Joseph D. Morelle
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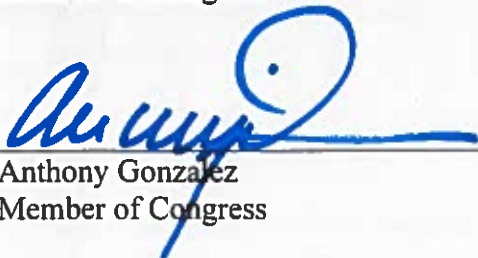
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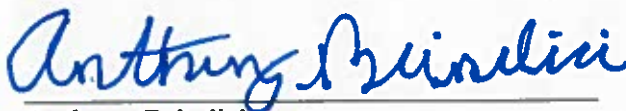
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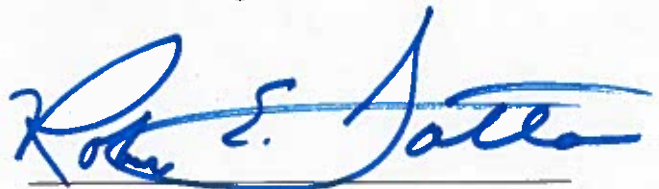
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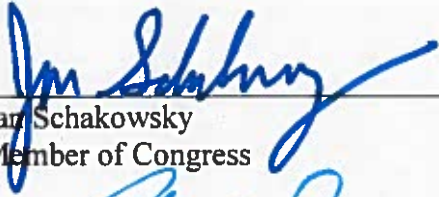
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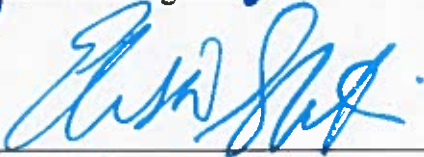
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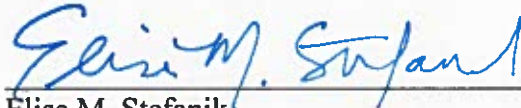
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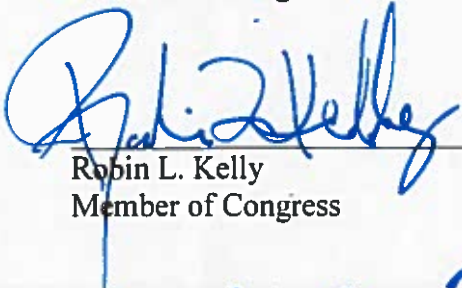
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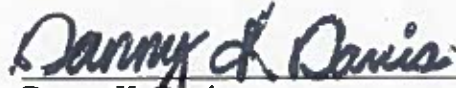
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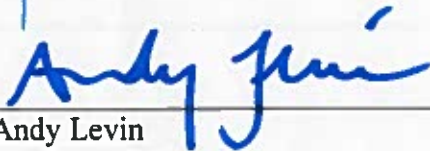
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