



December 7, 2016

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker
House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leaders Pelosi, McConnell, and Reid:

On behalf of the Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition (GLMCC), a coalition of nearly forty chambers of commerce in the Great Lakes region that share a federal policy agenda, I am writing to express our support for the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA 2016), which is included in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act amendment to S.612. Specifically, we are encouraged by the following provisions that were included in the final WRDA 2016:

- Sections 1107 of WRDA 2016 would make permanent the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) annual allocation to the Great Lakes Navigation System (GLNS) established in WRRDA 2014.
- Section 1133 of WRDA 2016 would require the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) to publish within 90 days of WRDA 2016's enactment the guidance on managing the GLNS as a system that was required by WRRDA 2014.
- Section 1108 of WRDA 2016 would ensure that HMTF funding does not decline during the build-up to full use of annual revenue authorized by WRRDA 2014, even if revenue projections for a fiscal year are less than previously projected.
- Section 1401 of WRDA 2016 would authorize the Upper Ohio River navigation project.
- Section 5005 of WRDA 2016 would reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

The Great Lakes region includes 50% of all U.S. steelmaking capacity, 70% of U.S. automobile manufacturing, and 42% of all U.S. manufacturing employment. The region's maritime shipping is integral to all that and to the economies of the United States and Canada. According to a recent study, shipping on the Great Lakes alone creates 227,000 jobs, \$33.5 billion in business revenue, \$14.1 billion in annual personal income, \$6.4 billion in local purchases, and \$4.6 billion in tax revenue. Each year, Great Lakes maritime transportation provides shippers a remarkable \$3.6 billion in transportation rate savings over surface transportation modes, according to the Corps.

These provisions and this bill will increase the Great Lakes region's competitiveness and enhance business investment into our region. On behalf of the GLMCC, I urge you to pass this critical legislation during this session of Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Williams", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brad Williams
Executive Director, Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition

CC: The Honorable James Inhofe, Chairman, Environment and Public Works Committee
The Honorable Barbara Boxer, Ranking Member, Env and Public Works Committee
The Honorable Bill Shuster, Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member, Committee on Trans and Infrastructure