



## GREAT LAKES LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

June 23, 2010

Ms. Ellen Alberding  
President  
The Joyce Foundation  
70 West Madison Street  
Suite 2750  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear Ms. Alberding:

As members of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus -- a nonpartisan group of state and provincial lawmakers committed to helping restore and protect our region's greatest natural resource -- we are greatly concerned about the threat of a sustainable Asian carp population reaching the Great Lakes. But with this threat, we also believe this region has an opportunity to find a way of permanently shutting down one of the main pathways used by invasive species (including Asian Carp) to enter the Great Lakes. That pathway is the artificial connection between the Mississippi River and Great Lakes watersheds. One possible solution is to build a physical barrier that ecologically separates the two systems, which are connected now in the Chicago area by a series of rivers and manmade canals.

With that in mind, we are writing to express our support for a proposal by the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) to study options for ecological separation. To make the right decisions about ecological separation, the Great Lakes cities, states and the federal government need a reliable, fact-based evaluation of various options and the economic, technical and ecological feasibility of them. The Army Corps of Engineers is conducting an inter-basin study, but a project overseen by the GLC and the Cities Initiative will be more attentive to the needs of state and local governments. Further, it will help focus the Corps' attention on structural measures that result in the physical separation of the two watersheds.

In December, the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus passed a resolution urging federal and state authorities to take immediate, aggressive action to keep Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes and their tributaries. We must now complement the various short-term strategies that have been employed with a longer-term outlook: How can we ensure that Asian carp and other potentially destructive species from the Mississippi

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River System do not reach the lakes via the Chicago Area Water System? Ecological separation is a long-term, permanent fix that we believe the entire region can get behind, provided that we can find a solution that addresses concerns about the impact of ecological separation on flooding, wastewater management, and barge and recreational traffic. The GLC/Cities Initiative study is a step toward finding the right solution for this region.

We are grateful for the Joyce Foundation's ongoing support of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus, and we appreciate your consideration of this letter endorsing the GLC/Cities Initiative proposal.

Sincerely,



Illinois Representative Karen May



Michigan Senator Patricia Birkholz  
Great Lakes Legislative Caucus Chair



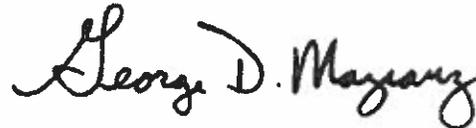
Indiana Senator Karen Tallian



Minnesota Senator Ann Rest



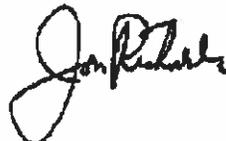
Michigan Representative Rebekah Warren



New York Senator George Maziarz



Michigan Representative Arlan Meekhof



Wisconsin Representative Jon Richards