



**AMERICAN
GREAT LAKES PORTS
ASSOCIATION**

July 18, 2016

The Honorable John McCain, Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed:

As directors of the major commercial ports on the Great Lakes, we urge you to accept language in the House-passed version of the National Defense Authorization Act which would simplify chaotic ballast water discharge regulations that plague commercial shipping. Specifically, we urge Senate conferees to accept Title XXXVI of H.R. 4909.

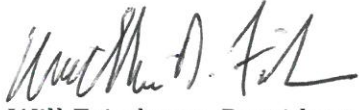
This provision is similar to the Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (S. 373), which was approved by Senate Commerce Committee on July 29, 2015. The need for reform of ballast water discharge regulations is acute. By their very nature, commercial vessels are mobile, operating in multiple jurisdictions. State-by-state rules simply do not make sense. Currently, two federal agencies, and more than two dozen states regulate vessel discharges under two federal statutes and multiple state laws. There is no requirement that state and federal regulators harmonize their rules, and in many instances they have not. This chaotic system threatens to impede both shipping and environmental protection.

To invest millions in environmentally protective ballast water treatment systems, vessel operators require certainty. Today's patchwork of vessel discharge rules discourage such investment. The longer federal and state agencies debate water quality standards and regulatory oversight, the longer we delay environmental protection. It is time for Congress to clarify and simplify the path forward.

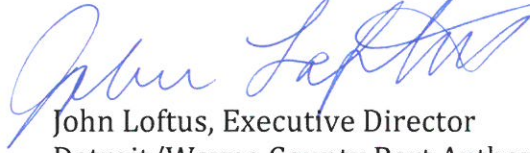
For the health of the Great Lakes environment and for the benefit of commerce we urge adoption of uniform ballast water discharge regulations contained in Title XXXVI of H.R. 4909.

Thank you for considering our views.

The Honorable John McCain, Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member
July 18, 2016
Page 2



Will Friedman, President
Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority



John Loftus, Executive Director
Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority



Rich Cooper, Executive Director
Ports of Indiana



Clayton Harris III, Executive Director
Illinois International Port District



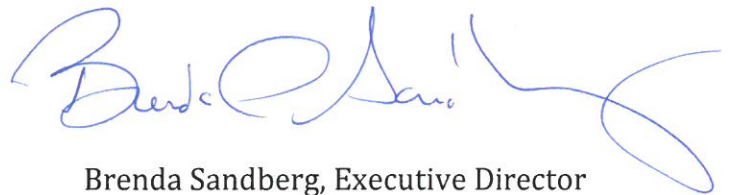
Vanta Coda, Executive Director
Duluth Seaway Port Authority



Paul Vornholt, Director
Port of Milwaukee



Dean Haen, Director
Port of Green Bay



Brenda Sandberg, Executive Director
Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority




Paul LaMarre, Director
Port of Monroe



Zelko Kirincich, Executive Director
Port of Oswego Authority

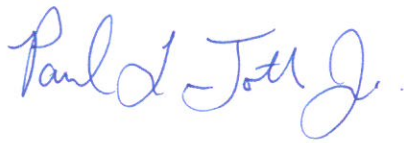
The Honorable John McCain, Chairman
The Honorable Jack Reed, Ranking Member
July 18, 2016
Page 3



Wade Davis, Executive Director
Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority



Ben Cross, Chairman
Muskegon Port Advisory Committee



Paul Toth, Executive Director
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority



Jason Serck, Port Manager
City of Superior

cc: Great Lakes Congressional delegation