



March 20, 2017

The Honorable Rick Nolan
Member of Congress
2366 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Nolan:

The American Great Lakes Ports Association is an organization representing the major commercial ports on the United States side of the Great Lakes. Our members include public port agencies, and port-related businesses that rely on an efficient maritime transportation system. We are writing to share our support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and urge Congress to fully fund the program at its authorized level of \$300 million in Fiscal Year 2018.

Launched in 2010, GLRI was created to accelerate efforts to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. Past practices have left our inland seas with a legacy of contamination, habitat loss and a compromised ecosystem. Although launched by President Obama in 2009, GLRI is a bi-partisan initiative built on a foundation of earlier work. A 2004 executive order by President Bush established a Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to coordinate federal agency actions related to Great Lakes restoration. In 2005, Great Lakes stakeholders (including AGLPA) worked to develop the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy, which outlines eight priority areas for restoration action. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) leads and administers the restoration initiative and partners with multiple federal agencies to carry out restoration projects.

Since GLRI was launched, more than 2000 individual projects have been implemented across the Great Lakes region. Projects are carried out by federal agencies in partnership with states, counties, municipalities, universities and other stakeholders. These projects include several of particular interest to the maritime industry. For example, GLRI funding

700 12th Street NW Suite 700 Washington, DC 20005 Tel: 202-625-2102 Fax: 202-625-2104

WWW.GREATLAKESPORTS.ORG

The Honorable Rick Nolan

March 20, 2017

Page 2

supports ongoing work at the Great Ships Initiative (GSI), the region's only ballast treatment technology test center. GSI scientists and engineers are working to help accelerate the deployment of ballast water treatment technology for commercial vessels. GLRI funds are also being used to implement beneficial reuse projects for dredge material disposal, such as the Cat Island Restoration Project in Green Bay.

As stakeholders in a healthy, productive ecosystem, Great Lakes ports support the GLRI program and urge Congress to include \$300 million in the EPA's FY2018 budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. A. Fisher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Steven A. Fisher
Executive Director