

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 20, 2019

The Honorable Jane Corwin, Chair
The Honorable Robert Sisson, Commissioner
The Honorable Lance Yohe, Commissioner
International Joint Commission, U.S. Section
1717 H Street, NW S. 835
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Commissioners Corwin, Sisson and Yohe:

As members of Congress from the Great Lakes region, we are writing to share our interest in management of St. Lawrence River flows from Lake Ontario. The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 gives the International Joint Commission (IJC) authority to manage the river through the Moses-Saunders dam in Massena, New York.

The Great Lakes, including communities in our districts are facing high-water levels. We understand that this problem is real. However, we urge the commission to reject a short-term solution for Lake Ontario that risks commerce in the region by causing the Saint Lawrence Seaway to close during the navigation season. Any closure of the Seaway during the navigation season will impede maritime commerce and negatively impact international trade to and from our states.

Since construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in the 1950s, the St. Lawrence River has linked the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean, opening up our ports to world markets. The reliability of this waterway is critical to businesses and labor in both the farm and manufacturing sectors. In 2018 more than 3000 vessel transits moved 31 million tons of commodities through the St. Lawrence River. This included more than 11 million tons of farm exports. Commerce through the Seaway supports more than 32,000 jobs in our states.

Before any action is taken that causes the Seaway to close during the navigation season, it is incumbent on the IJC to notify the Congressional representatives signed below to explain the economic impacts of such a decision on Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Wisconsin. As the IJC considers management options, we oppose measures that will close the river to navigation, disrupt the supply chain and result in the loss of jobs in our states. Going forward, we ask that the decision-making process be public, and science based.

Sincerely,



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



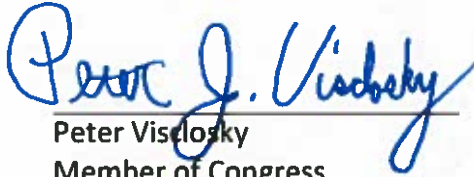
John Moolenaar
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



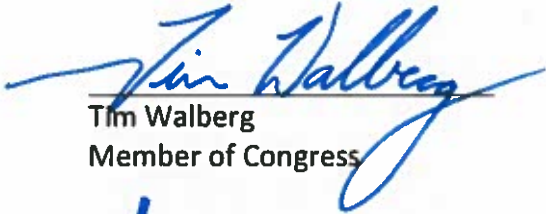
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Peter Vislosky
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



Brenda Lawrence
Member of Congress



Mike Gallagher
Member of Congress



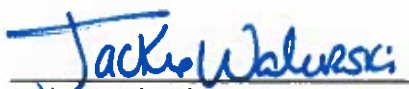
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



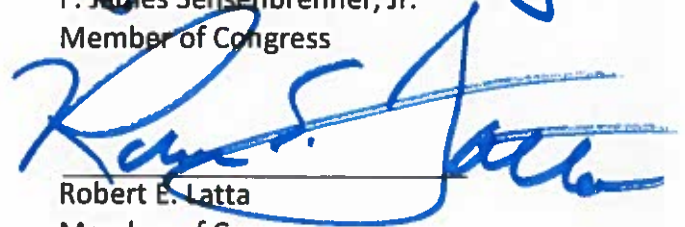
Jack Bergman
Member of Congress



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

cc: Secretary of Transportation, Secretary of State