

SCR11, As Adopted by Senate, September 24, 2015

Senators Warren, Hopgood, Ananich, Kowall and Bieda offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 11.

A concurrent resolution to urge the Congress of the United States to restore Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to \$300 million for fiscal year 2016.

Whereas, The Great Lakes are a critical resource for our nation, supporting the economy and a way of life in Michigan and the other seven states within the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes hold 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater and 95 percent of the United States' surface freshwater. This globally significant freshwater resource provides drinking water for more than 30 million people and is an economic driver that supports jobs, commerce, agriculture, transportation, and tourism throughout the region; and

Whereas, The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) provides essential funding to restore and protect the Great Lakes. This funding has supported long overdue efforts to clean up toxic pollution, reduce runoff from cities and farms, combat invasive species like the Asian carp, and restore fish and wildlife habitat. Since 2010, the federal government has invested nearly \$2 billion in more than 2,000 projects through the GLRI. Over its first five years, the GLRI has provided more than \$280 million for 580 projects in Michigan alone; and

Whereas, GLRI projects are making a significant difference. They have restored more than 115,000 acres of fish and wildlife habitat; opened up fish access to more than 3,400 miles of rivers; helped implement conservation programs on more than 1 million acres of farmland; and accelerated the cleanup of toxic hotspots. In Michigan, GLRI funding has been instrumental in removing contaminated sediments from Muskegon Lake, the River Raisin, and the St. Mary's River; restoring habitat along the St. Clair River, Cass River, Boardman River, and the Keweenaw Peninsula; and developing improved methods for sea lamprey control; and

Whereas, While this is a significant investment, there is still more work to be done with numerous ready-to-go projects that need funding. Toxic algal blooms, beach closings, fish consumption advisories, and the presence of contaminated sediments continue to limit the recreational and commercial use of the Great Lakes. The 2014 shutdown of the city of Toledo's drinking water system due to a toxic algal bloom, forcing more than a half million people to find another source of drinking water, is just one example of how much still needs to be done; and

Whereas, Proposed cuts to GLRI funding would jeopardize the momentum from a decade of unprecedented regional and bipartisan cooperation. The FY 2016 executive budget recommends a \$50 million cut in federal funding to \$250 million. This cut would be a shortsighted, cost-saving measure with long-term implications. Restoration efforts will only become more expensive and more difficult if they are not addressed in the coming years; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the Congress of the United States to restore Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding to \$300 million for fiscal year 2016; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.