



THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST HOUSE COALITION
GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

As the co-chairs of the Congressional Great Lakes Task Force in the U.S. House of Representatives, we write to extend our sincere congratulations to you on becoming the 46th President of the United States. In the years ahead, we look forward to working with you and your Administration together—Republicans and Democrats alike—to address our shared mutual interests and tackling all the challenges facing the Great Lakes and surrounding communities, both here at home and with our international partners.

The Great Lakes are an unparalleled natural resource we are entrusted to protect for the health of our people, our environment, and our economy. These waters bind our region across eight states, two provinces, and two countries, and they provide drinking water for nearly 50 million people.

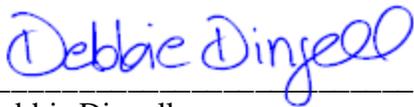
The Congressional Great Lakes Task Force is a bipartisan, Congressional Member Organization with the mission of collectively advocating for the strongest policies and programs that enhance the Great Lakes region. In this capacity, task force members have advanced and secured a number of victories at the federal level including reauthorizing and increasing funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). Studies show, GLRI projects have resulted in a 3-to-1 economic return on investment in the region and directly result in creating jobs, increasing tourism, boosting home values, and attracting and retaining a younger workforce. Additionally, over the years, the task force has worked to ban the use of microbeads in cosmetic products that threaten to pollute, increase conservation funding, harden defenses and increase federal support against invasive species, and increase resources to improve drinking water, waste water, and navigational infrastructure.

Even after these successes, we still face challenges that will endure and require our collective collaboration to address long-term problems faced by the Great Lakes. Lake levels, harmful algal blooms, invasive species, emerging contaminants, aging infrastructure, and climate change will continue to threaten our region—we have to step up to the plate and work together to tackle each head on.

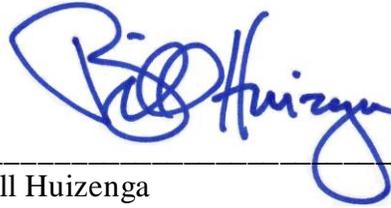
Like cities and communities all over the world, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has hit our local Great Lakes' economy hard. It is critical that we also make every effort to accelerate the pace of economic recovery, and we stand ready to work with your administration to defeat this virus. With nearly one-third of U.S. economic activity centered around the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, our region's recovery has the power to fuel the larger, national economic recovery.

The Congressional Great Lakes Task Force, in both chambers, has demonstrated a long history of bipartisan collaboration that we look forward to continuing, as well as engaging your administration, to address our most pressing issues facing these treasured natural resources and the communities they support. Under your leadership, including your nationwide call for unity at this difficult time in our nation's history, we stand ready to work with you on the many challenges and opportunities ahead to ensure the Great Lakes ecosystem is restored and preserved for future generations, and that the region's economy remains strong.

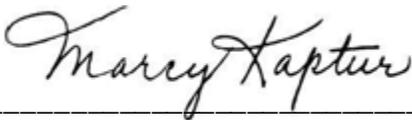
Sincerely,



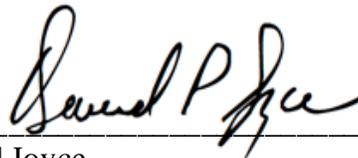
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress
Great Lakes Task Force
Democratic Co-Chair



Bill Huizenga
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Marcy Kaptur
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