

Testimony of  
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur  
Chairwoman, Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development,  
and Related Agencies  
Before the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
United States House of Representatives  
Hearing entitled “WRDA Members’ Day Hearing”  
March 16, 2022

Thank you Chairwoman Napolitano, Ranking Member Rouzer, and your staffs for the hard work you have put in to developing the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 (WRDA). On a bipartisan basis, your Committee has now completed work on four consecutive WRDAs since 2014 – advancing significant progress to meet our nation’s needs.

The Committee’s authorization of new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects, studies, and policies supports local, regional, and national priorities that have a lasting impact. As Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees the Corps’ budget, it is an honor to partner with you in this mission.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you here today the important issues facing the Great Lakes communities that I represent. The bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* that Congress passed last year contains funding for an array of projects that we have worked on together for many years.

Within this legislation was \$17.1 billion for Corps initiatives – including \$516.2 million for the Soo Locks project and \$225.8 million for the Brandon Road Lock and Dam project.

The critical role that Great Lakes waterways play in sustaining and advancing America’s economic vitality cannot be overstated. As Chair of the Energy and Water Subcommittee, it has been my top priority to secure the federal resources that ensure the navigability and preservation of the Great Lakes for generations to come. The Soo Locks, located on the St. Marys River in Sault Ste. Marie,

Michigan, are a vital system of water locks that facilitate maritime shipping between Lake Superior and the four other Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway. Approximately 80 million tons of cargo – valued at nearly \$6 billion – pass through the Soo Locks each year.

The Brandon Road Lock and Dam, located on the Des Plaines River near Joliet, Illinois, is a central connection point through which invasive Carp species frequently move between the Illinois Waterway system into Lake Michigan and the four other Great Lakes, severely harming native fish species. The \$225.8 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will fund the construction and deployment of state-of-the-art technologies and innovative programs that interrupt the movement – protecting the Great Lakes’ \$7 billion fishing and \$16 billion recreational boating industries.

I would also like to thank the Committee for its continued focus on another ecological problem that we face in the Great Lakes region: harmful algal blooms (HABs). The expertise of Corps scientists and engineers is invaluable in the fight against the devastation wrought by HABs. The Corps provides resource management, water flow design, and engineering solutions for HAB prevention, mitigation, and control. I urge the Committee to continue supporting the ongoing work of the Corps for testing HAB controls and encouraging continued interagency cooperation.

Finally, I ask that the Committee consider my request – which I submitted along with my friend and colleague whose district also stretches along Lake Erie, Congressman David Joyce – to allow for increases to the Corps’ Continuing Authorities Program federal expenditure limits to keep up with inflation. It is important that the Corps has the funds and flexibility to implement these necessary programs.

Thank you again for your dedication to pursuing another WRDA on a bipartisan basis.