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RICK SNYDER GOVERNOR BRIAN CALLEY

May 17, 2017

The Honorable Gary Peters US Senator 724 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510

**Dear Senator Peters:** 

I am writing to express my concerns regarding potentially significant impacts to Michigan's authority over vessel discharges, including ballast water, as a result of legislation being considered by Congress. Specifically, the Commercial Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (CVIDA), as currently written, would jeopardize the health and vitality of the Great Lakes by weakening protections against the introduction of aquatic invasive species. As you consider the adoption of CVIDA in the Coast Guard Authorization Act, I urge you to continue to advocate for improvements that would ensure protection of the Great Lakes.

The State of Michigan exercises regulatory authority over vessel discharges for the protection of unique state waters from ship mediated pollution, the prevention of aquatic invasive species, and the sustainability of natural resource-based economies. If adopted as currently written, CVIDA would erode the long-standing ability of states to protect their waters, and would limit the ability of the US Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that water quality standards are based on the best available science and enforced in accordance with the Clean Water Act.

Aquatic invasive species are among the most serious threats to the environmental and economic health of the Great Lakes. More than 185 non-native species are already established in the Great Lakes, with costs to the region estimated to be \$200 million annually. Michigan is taking action to address all potential pathways through which aquatic invasive species can enter our waters and currently has significant state resources dedicated annually to invasive species prevention, detection, and management.

The State of Michigan remains committed to working together with all stakeholders to harmonize ballast water regulations and establish regulatory consistency within our region. I am encouraged by the ongoing dialogue between various states, industry, and Congress to address issues of regulatory certainty while also providing necessary protections for water quality, especially in the Great Lakes. I look forward to continuing to engage in the process to meet those goals. However, CVIDA, as currently written, falls short.

Thank you for your steadfast support of the Great Lakes. I urge you to continue to work to ensure the complementary benefits of regulatory certainty and environmental protection are met.

Sincerely,

Rick Snyder Governor

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