THE NORTHEAST-MIDWEST COALITION

GREAT LAKES TASK FORCE

November 4, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to follow-up on the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force's *Report to the President on the Implementation of the Great Lakes Executive Order*. After reading the report, we are disappointed by the limitations placed on Regional Collaboration through this report.

When Regional Collaboration was initiated last year, nothing indicated that the Regional Collaboration Strategy needed to stay within current budget projections, and we were led to believe that the Administration would consider some new budget initiatives. A serious consideration of the challenges faced in the Great Lakes region requires a commitment of federal resources.

As you stated in the Executive Order, "the Great Lakes are a national treasure," and we were encouraged by the Administration's commitment to address the environmental and natural resource challenges of the Lakes through a "regional collaboration of national significance." The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration has brought together roughly 1,500 people who are dedicated to protecting and restoring the Great Lakes. All of these individuals contributed time and resources in order to develop a strategic, comprehensive strategy for the Great Lakes.

Meaningful Great Lakes restoration cannot happen without support from all levels of government, including the federal government. The states, municipalities, and tribal officials, as well as the individual participants, have provided tremendous support for Regional Collaboration. However, these efforts alone will not restore the Lakes. Each party must be willing to provide additional short and long-term commitments in the near future. The problems impacting the Great Lakes will only get worse over time, and the implementation of the solutions will only become more expensive.

We cannot wait to start restoring the Great Lakes to a healthy condition for future generations. The Great Lakes are vital to our cities', states' and nation's environment, economy and way of life. We appreciate your past support for improving the Great

Lakes and strongly urge that you maintain your commitment to the Great Lakes by not limiting restoration recommendations to the current budget projections.

Sincerely,

Mike DeWine, Co-Chair
United States Senator

Carl Levin, Co-Chair
United States Senator

John Dingell, Co-Chair
Member of Congress

Vernon J. Ehlers, Co-Chair
Member of Congress

Mark Kirk, Co-Chair
Member of Congress

Louise Slaughter, Co-Chair
Member of Congress

Russell D. Feingold
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

George V. Voinovich
United States Senator

Richard Durbin
United States Senator

Barack Obama
United States Senator

Evan Bayh
United States Senator

Herb Kohl
United States Senator

Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senator

Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress

Candice Miller
Member of Congress

Fred Upton
Member of Congress

Luis Guiterrez
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Sander M. Levin
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Mark Green
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Dave Camp
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Tim Ryan
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Steven LaTourette
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Sherrod Brown
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Bart Stupak
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Dale Kildee
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Peter Visclosky
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Mike Rogers MI-08
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Janice Schakowsky
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James T. Walsh
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Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Melissa Bean
Member of Congress

Joe Schwarz
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Mark Dayton
United States Senator