

Senator Matt Dolan
24th District



Senator Frank LaRose
27th District

Senate Resolution 59 Sponsor Testimony
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Wednesday, March 29, 2017

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chair Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien, and distinguished members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Resolution 59. This resolution calls for the President and the Congress of the United States and the United States Office of Management and Budget to support plans to upgrade the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and encourage the United States Army Corps of Engineers to take expeditious action in preparing an Economic Reevaluation Report.

The Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, play a critical role in the economy of the Great Lakes region and the United States. As the world's 4th largest economy, the Great Lakes transport an estimated 5 trillion dollars over their majestic water ways every year. Products like iron ore, steel and grains are transported all around the Great Lakes region using the four Soo Locks. Unfortunately, there is only one operational lock, the Poe Lock, that is large enough to accommodate the vessels that are used to carry these products. Seventy percent of all vessels traveling across the Great Lakes use this lock, leaving the region vulnerable if it were to become damaged.

We encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to recognize the great risk to our country's national security and our nation's economic stability if the Poe Lock were to become unusable. We ask the United States President, Congress and the United States Office of Management and Budget to follow through with their plans for creating a second Poe-sized Lock in the Great Lakes. Additionally, SR 59 calls on the Army Corps of Engineers to carefully consider the accuracy of reports regarding the economic implications associated with the closing of Poe Lock.

Thank you, Chairman Balderson and members of the committee, for allowing us to speak to this legislation. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.