



Representative Michael Sheehy
46th Ohio House District

Representative John M. Rogers
60th Ohio House District

Chairman Green, Vice-Chair McClain and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 14 today. This resolution will designate September 7th as Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Appreciation Day and Representative Sheehy and I would very much appreciate your support on this matter.

The two of us, in addition to several other members in the House and Senate, are members of the Council of State Government's Great Lakes Legislative Caucus. This caucus is a binational, nonpartisan organization with the sole purpose of engaging legislators from the Midwest and Canada on policy issues affecting our Great Lakes. In September of this year, Representative's Sheehy and I along with other members of the Ohio General Assembly, attended the organization's annual meeting, where legislators from the Great Lakes region were asked to share this resolution with their home state legislatures.

The purpose of this resolution is to draw attention to the immeasurable value of the Great Lakes, and that of our own Lake Erie. The date of September 7th is of particular significance because it marks the date in 2012 when the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the United States and Canada was signed. On that day, our Nation together with our Canadian friends from up north, affirmed this binational agreement to enhance both the water quality and the ecological health of the Great Lakes basin.

The Resolution draws attention to important facts about the value of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River. We know for instance, that 48 million Americans and

Canadians together receive their fresh water supply from these bodies of water. Those of us familiar with the algal blooms in the western Lake Erie basin know that having access to fresh drinking water is not something that should be taken for granted. Water quality in our state is, and should continue to be, a priority for us here at the Statehouse.

Here in Ohio, we are blessed with 312 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie. Our lake is truly one of our state's greatest natural resources which is also a driving force of economic prowess. Lake Erie facilitates some 100,000 tourism related jobs, generates over \$750 million in state and local tax revenue, while also attracting 1.5 million hunters and anglers to the region. Indeed, billions of dollars are spent here in Ohio each year by visitors to the region.

This Concurrent Resolution honors the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River as invaluable natural resources and as vital engines to the region's economic prosperity and vitality.

Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, we thank you for allowing us the opportunity to speak about this resolution. We respectfully ask each of you for your support and would be glad to respond to any questions that you might have on this important Resolution.