

**Before the House Government Oversight Committee House Concurrent Resolution 14 –
Urges Enactment of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2024
Testimony by Alliance for the Great Lakes
Don Jodrey, Director of Federal Relations
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Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey and Members of the House Government Oversight Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 14.

This bipartisan resolution urges Congress to support the reauthorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. On February 6, 2024, Ohio Representative David Joyce and Michigan Representative Debbie Dingell, along with Ohio Senator J.D. Vance and Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow, introduced the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Act of 2024 to reauthorize the GLRI program for another five years at \$500 million per year. Currently the GLRI is set to expire in 2026, but this bi-legislation would extend the program through 2031. It is important to note that this bi-partisan legislation is supported by the House and Senate Great Lakes Task Forces and is supported by a wide variety of nongovernmental organizations Ohio and the great Great Lakes region.

Congress established and funded the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in 2010 to allow the U.S. EPA, working in collaboration with other federal agencies, states, and tribes, to provide grant funds to restore and protect the Great Lakes. The funding addresses on-the-ground restoration projects, including habitat restoration, projects to reduce non-point source pollution, clean up legacy pollution and toxic sediments, and actions to prevent the establishment or spread of invasive species.

To date, the GLRI has funded more than 7,563 individual projects totaling \$3.7 billion and greatly improving the quality of life in the region. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 recognized the importance of this program and provided \$1 billion to accelerate the clean-up of toxic legacy pollution at “areas of concern” throughout the region.

The GLRI program provides major economic benefits, as it is estimated that for every dollar spent, an additional three dollars of value is added to the regional economy.

The Great Lakes are extremely important to our economy and the GLRI supports the Great Lakes. According to the Great Lakes Commission, the lakes generate more than 1.5 million jobs and \$60 billion in wages annually and are a source of drinking water for 40 million people. Lake Erie is an invaluable resource for Ohio, supporting millions of dollars of economic activity in numerous sectors.

Reauthorizing GLRI is in the interest of Ohio residents and we would encourage the Ohio House to pass this important resolution. Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey and Members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for your consideration of H.C.R. 14.