

Resolution Supporting

Dredging Small Harbors

Whereas, there are 87 federally authorized small harbors in the Great Lakes basin; and

Whereas, the federal government is responsible for maintaining boater access to these harbors through adequate dredging and maintenance of navigation infrastructure (hereinafter referred to as maintenance); and

Whereas, small harbors perform other valuable functions such as ports of refuge during inclement weather, ports for U.S. Coast Guard rescue stations, ports for law enforcement, ports for commercial fleets, ports for Great Lakes research vessels, and ferry terminals; and

Whereas, many of the small harbors require regular maintenance because of natural sedimentation, low water levels, storm events, and littoral drift, among other factors; and

Whereas, longstanding federal policy prevents the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from allocating funds for the maintenance of small harbors in its operation and maintenance budget for the Great Lakes, thus forcing these harbors to seek Congressional assistance or “earmarks” to secure funds for maintenance; and

Whereas, this inefficient, inequitable system has resulted in maintenance backlogs that have hindered, or in some cases totally blocked, access to small harbors, causing significant economic loss and increased risk to human health and safety; and

Be it further resolved that the US Advisors to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission urge the Michigan Small Harbors Coalition, the Great Lakes and Saint Lawrence Cities Initiative, and other organizations in Great Lakes states to advocate for a more equitable, sustainable, needs-based system to allocate funds for adequate maintenance of small Great Lakes harbors and support similar efforts in other Great Lakes states.

Submitted by Chuck Pistis, U.S. Advisor, Lake Michigan

Passed unanimously, June 4, 2008

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