

SCR-17, As Adopted by Senate, May 3, 2005

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 17.

A concurrent resolution to urge the United States Coast Guard to immediately eliminate the "No Ballast on Board" (NOBOB) exemption from regulations on ballast water management and require all ships with ballast tanks that enter the Great Lakes to conform to all regulations for ballast water management in federal law.

Whereas, Great Lakes waters are among the most valuable natural resources in the world, vital to the economy and environment of the state; and

Whereas, More than 160 species of aquatic invasive plants and animals have been introduced into the Great Lakes. Several species, including the sea lamprey, zebra mussel, round goby, and purple loosestrife, have impaired Michigan's environment, affecting recreational and commercial fishing, beaches, municipal and industrial water supplies, coastal habitat, and fundamental ecosystems in the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, Many of these species have been accidentally introduced from foreign ports by discharge from ships' ballast tanks. There are many more species from all over the world that may still be introduced and pose a threat to the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, Most ships enter the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence Seaway fully loaded, carrying no ballast, and are designated no ballast on board (NOBOB); and

Whereas, NOBOB ships are exempted by rule of the United States Coast Guard from meeting regulations under the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, as amended by the National Invasive Species Act of 1996. These regulations require ships with ballast to meet certain requirements for best management practices regarding ballast water, including exchange of ballast water on the open ocean; and

Whereas, NOBOB ships are still carrying unpumpable water and sediments in ballast tanks that will be mixed with Great Lakes water and pumped out while the vessels are transiting the lakes; and

Whereas, This mixture may contain aquatic invasive species from foreign ports that could be discharged into the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality petitioned the United States Coast Guard on July 14, 2004, seeking to end the exemption from federal ballast water regulations for NOBOB ships; and

Whereas, The United States Coast Guard has published in the *Federal Register*, pages 1448-1449 of Volume 70:5, a notice for consultation with all interested parties in identifying ballast water management strategies for NOBOB vessels entering the Great Lakes; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the United States Coast Guard to immediately eliminate the "No Ballast on Board" (NOBOB) exemption from regulations on ballast water management and require all ships with ballast tanks that enter the Great Lakes to conform to all regulations for ballast water management in federal law; and be it further

Resolved, A copy of this resolution be transmitted to the United States Coast Guard and the United States Department of Transportation.