



Lake Carriers' Association

The Greatest Ships on the Great Lakes

JAMES H. I. WEAKLEY, PRESIDENT

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April 27, 2009

Via E-Mail: Gmcdowell@house.mi.gov

The Honorable Gary McDowell
Michigan House of Representatives
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Representative McDowell:

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RESOLUTION NO. 80, A RESOLUTION TO MEMORIALIZE THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO ALLOCATE FEDERAL STIMULUS PACKAGE FUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SOO LOCK AT SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

Lake Carriers' Association represents 18 American corporations that operate 65 U.S.-Flag vessels on the Great Lakes. These vessels carry the raw materials that drive our country's economy: iron ore for the steel industry, limestone and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation and steel production.... These vessels can transport more than 115 million tons of cargo a year when high water levels offset the lack of dredging at ports and waterways.

We thank you for introducing the referenced Resolution and urge your fellow members of the Michigan House of Representatives to enthusiastically support it. Construction of a second Poe-sized lock at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, is precisely the kind of project Congress envisioned when it passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The project will immediately create jobs for American workers — an estimated 1.5 million man hours over the life of the project — and use American goods and products, many of which (limestone and cement in particular) which will be made in Michigan. One economist has likened the project to operating an auto manufacturing plant for a decade.

Once the lock is complete, the Soo Locks will no longer be the single point of failure that would cripple Great Lakes shipping. A second Poe-sized lock will ensure the continued free flow of iron ore (again mined in Michigan) to steelmakers in not only your state, but also Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Twinning the Poe Lock will ensure that power plants in St. Clair, Muskegon, Essexville, Monroe and other Great Lakes cities will be able to receive clean-burning low sulfur coal from Montana, Wyoming and Colorado.

As you may know, groundbreaking for the lock is scheduled for June 19. The \$17 million appropriated so far for this year will allow construction of the coffer dams. Allocation of an additional \$100 million will secure funding for Phase I and allow more job-creating contracts to be signed within months.

Again, thank you for your commitment to a strong and secure America. We urge your fellow legislators to support House Resolution 80.

Sincerely,

James H. I. Weakley
President

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The Association Representing Operators of U.S.-Flag Vessels on the Great Lakes

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CENTRAL MARINE LOGISTICS, INC. GRAND RIVER NAVIGATION COMPANY, INC. GREAT LAKES FLEET/KEY LAKES, INC. INLAND LAKES MANAGEMENT, INC.
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SOO MARINE SUPPLY, INC. UPPER LAKES TOWING COMPANY, INC. VANDERHOF TUG & BARGE IN C.