

Detroit, Michigan and Windsor, Ontario  
October 20, 2017

## RESOLUTION

### MANAGEMENT OF THE GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER MARITIME SYSTEM

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River maritime system is designed as a continuous waterway extending more than 2,400 miles from Duluth, Minnesota to the Gulf of St. Lawrence on the Atlantic Ocean; and,

**WHEREAS**, this single, integrated system includes the Lakes, River, and connecting channels, as well as built infrastructure including locks, navigational structures, recreational harbors and commercial ports; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence maritime system is a major component of the regional economy and generates over 227,000 U.S. and Canadian jobs related to the shipping industry, and U.S.\$34.6 billion in business revenue by firms; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime portfolio includes more than 100 commercial ports, 25 of the United States' top 100 ports by tonnage, in Ontario 12 of Canada's top 50 ports by tonnage, and in Québec 7 of Canada's top 30 ports by tonnage related to total trade; and,

**WHEREAS**, more than 40 provincial and interstate highways and nearly 30 rail lines link the 15 major ports of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin maritime system and 50 regional ports with consumers, products and industries all over North America, and the system serves as a critical connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Ohio, Illinois and Mississippi River transportation systems; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers in 2013 launched a Maritime Initiative and have been working aggressively to improve State-Provincial coordination and enhance the use of the Great Lakes-St Lawrence system; and,

**WHEREAS**, despite the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence being one system, and the efforts of the Governors' and Premiers' Maritime Initiative to improve coordination, management of critical system components such as dredging, icebreaking, lock maintenance, customs, and pilotage is spread across multiple federal agencies and departments in the U.S. and Canada that coordinate with one another in an informal or ad hoc fashion; and,

**WHEREAS**, fragmented system management creates complexity, a lack of transparency and accountability, and increases costs which deter potential users and complicate coordination with other governments; and,

**WHEREAS**, modern supply chains require predictable, transparent and efficient delivery systems with minimal transaction costs from transportation service providers; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system is a significantly underused asset wherein many ports and the St. Lawrence Seaway are used at less than 50% of their capacity, driven in part by this inefficient management structure; and,

**WHEREAS**, the federal governments could more efficiently and effectively eliminate obstacles to achieving a seamless transportation system that fully integrates maritime with other transportation modes; and,

**WHEREAS**, in a global economy the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region must compete with other parts of the world; and,

**WHEREAS**, other regions around the world have put in place more effective management mechanisms that promote transparency, efficiency, accountability and, as a result, benefit from a competitive advantage compared to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River system is one of our region's competitive advantages and improved federal management would significantly improve its utility and value, and help facilitate the growth of new markets such as cruising and container shipping.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Governors and Premiers call on the U.S. and Canadian Federal Governments to collaboratively manage, within their areas of competency, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River maritime system as a harmonized transportation system for the benefit of the entire region and the national economies of both countries; and,

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Governors and Premiers call on the Federal Governments, within their areas of competency, to develop a binational treaty that will help improve transparency, efficiency, accountability and regulatory harmony.

*Adopted by the Governors of the Great Lakes States and the Premiers of Ontario and Québec on this 20th day of October 2017.*