



August 28, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chairwoman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Chairwoman Murkowski, Chairman Rogers,
Senator Mikulski, Senator Udall, and Congresswoman Lowey:

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) is a coalition of over 110 U.S. and Canadian cities representing over 17 million people, and is committed to the protection, restoration, and long term sustainability of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence. As part of that commitment, its member cities have a strong record over many years of dramatically reducing combined sewer overflows (CSO) and releases of untreated wastewater to the Great Lakes, and will continue those reductions into the future. The ratepayers in our cities are investing billions of dollars in these efforts and in most instances are working under the Congressionally approved CSO Control Policy.

Section 428 of Senate Appropriations Bill 1645 to require elimination of CSO's is counter-productive and would lead cities and their ratepayers to expend billions of dollars to reach an unrealistic level of zero discharge of this type of pollution. It is well recognized that the cost effectiveness of these expenditures to reach zero discharge and the resulting water quality benefits are very limited. Reaching such a level is even more difficult because of climate change, with more intense rainfall events stressing already aged infrastructure more than ever before and at a time when funding for these investments is exceedingly scarce.

20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2700, Chicago, Illinois 60606 ~ (312) 201-4516 phone ~ (312) 407-0038 fax

www.glslcities.org / @GLSLCities

Mitch Twolan, Mayor of Huron-Kinloss, Chair

Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montréal, Vice-Chair

Paul Dyster, Mayor of Niagara Falls, New York, Secretary-Treasurer



We urge you not to pass Section 428 of SB 1645. Cities are moving forward aggressively to reduce CSOs to the lowest possible level, and to implement many other programs to enhance one of the world's greatest freshwater treasurers, the Great Lakes.

Thank you for considering our comments on this very important matter and please contact me at david.ullrich@glslcities.org or 312-201-4516 with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

David A. Ullrich, Executive Director
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

cc. Great Lakes Congressional Delegation