

Reps. Palsrok, Brandenburg, Vander Veen, LaJoy, Amos, Acciavatti, Robertson, Milosch, Sheen, Farhat, Casperson, Nofs, Shackleton, Accavitti, Adamini, Brown, Byrum, Caul, Condino, Dennis, DeRossett, Ehardt, Elkins, Garfield, Gillard, Gleason, Howell, Huizenga, Jamnick, Kolb, Kooiman, Lipsey, Meyer, Middaugh, Minore, Murphy, Paletko, Pappageorge, Pastor, Phillips, Richardville, Sak, Sheltroun, Stahl, Stakoe, Tabor, Taub, Tobocman and Voorhees offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 158.

A resolution to urge the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada to present a formal request to the International Joint Commission to examine the matter of invasive species within the Great Lakes basin.

Whereas, The protection, conservation, and use of the aquatic ecosystem formed by the Great Lakes basin are responsibilities shared by the United States and Canada, the eight Great Lakes states, two Canadian provinces, and the many cities that dot the shoreline. As the only state or province located entirely within the basin, Michigan has unsurpassed interest in protecting the Great Lakes from the onslaught of invasive species; and

Whereas, The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 established the six-member International Joint Commission (IJC) and gave it numerous powers. Among these powers is the authority to engage in joint fact finding on matters concerning boundary waters, especially within the Great Lakes basin, the largest boundary water system shared by our two countries. The United States and Canada have taken further joint actions to restore and maintain the waters of the Great Lakes through the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1972 and its subsequent protocols and annexes. The agreement requires the IJC to provide assistance in this work; and

Whereas, The IJC is a science-based organization that works to address key problems facing the Great Lakes ecosystem. The IJC was specifically established to address such problems as the threat posed by invasive species; and

Whereas, Invasive species are a form of biological pollution that clearly threatens the integrity of the Great Lakes basin ecosystem. Non-native species constitute the number one threat to aquatic biodiversity. Well over 150 exotic species are now established in the Great Lakes, and new invaders are being discovered at a rate of one every eight months. The damage done to the region of the Great Lakes is staggering and includes serious harm done to both to the economy and the ecology; and

Whereas, Ballast water discharges are the primary source of invasive species introduced into the Great Lakes. The regulation of navigation and international commerce are the exclusive jurisdictions of the federal governments of the United States and Canada; and

Whereas, Many people and organizations in the Great Lakes basin have urged the governments of the United States and Canada to refer the matter of invasive species to the International Joint Commission for investigation and to recommend actions and coordinate policies to prevent further introductions of invasive species; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada to present a formal request to the International Joint Commission to examine the matter of invasive species within the Great Lakes basin. We urge that the request ask that the commission's study be comprehensive and include a reference to coordinate and harmonize binational efforts for action to stop this ongoing threat to the economy and the biological integrity of the Great Lakes regarding ballast water issues. We also call on the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada to work to provide appropriate financial support for the International Joint Commission's efforts to deal with invasive species within the Great Lakes; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Canada, the United States Secretary of State, the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the International Joint Commission.