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MEMBER OF CONGRESS
14TH DISTRICT OF OHIO

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.
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COMMITTEE ON
APPROPRIATIONS

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman,

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit the following statement in support of the DEFEND the Great Lakes Act, H.R. 4768, for the record.

The U.S. side of the Great Lakes has over 4,500 miles of coastline. This is greater than the entire length of coast from Maine to Texas. Tourism, commercial shipping, and the larger economy in the region are closely tied to the health of the Great Lakes. Roughly 25 million Americans live in the Great Lakes Basin and each year millions more enjoy recreation, fishing, and the natural beauty the area and its ecosystems have to offer. Yet, these ecosystems are fragile and require significant maintenance. The Great Lakes Basin is prone to significant changes in temperature and water levels. Flooding and waves constantly erode the Great Lakes shoreline, and some hard-hit parts of the shoreline can retract by as much as a foot each year. This loss and degradation threaten the shoreline and the surrounding ecosystem, as well as human structures nearby.

Section 206 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (33 U.S.C. 2330) authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct cost-effective restoration and protection projects to improve the environmental quality of aquatic ecosystems. Initially, this Act authorized \$25 million per year for such projects. This was re-authorized every two years, and, in the intervening quarter century, this amount has risen to \$62.5 million per year. Of this amount, no more than \$10 million may be used on any one project.

The Great Lakes face an acute need for federal support. The projects the Army Corps of Engineers can conduct would have a great impact on maintaining and improving the Great Lakes shorelines. The DEFEND the Great Lakes Act would guarantee that in the next two years, the Army Corps of Engineers would commence at least five projects under Section 206 to combat erosion in the Great Lakes.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony on H.R. 4768 and I urge support for the bill.

Sincerely,

David P. Joyce
Member of Congress