

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515–2207

July 21, 2022

Chairman Jared Huffman
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans and Wildlife
House Committee on Natural Resources
1527 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Cliff Bentz
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife
House Committee on Natural Resources
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Bentz, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for allowing me to address the Subcommittee on my bill, H.R. 7975, the Great Lakes Restoration Semipostal Stamp Act.

As many of you know, the Great Lakes are an indispensable resource for my home state of Michigan, the Great Lakes region, and our nation at large. As the largest system of fresh surface water in the world, the Great Lakes represent over 20% of the world's supply of fresh water and provide safe drinking water to more than 40 million people. The Great Lakes also act as a vital economic and environmental asset for Michigan and the entire country, boosting tourism, supporting recreation, and providing for the transportation of goods.

Currently, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, also known as the GLRI, protects the health of the waterways and the communities of the region by ensuring safe drinking water, engaging in cleanup and restoration efforts in areas of concern, and protecting against a variety of threats – from algal blooms to invasive species such as Asian carp. Since its inception in 2010, the initiative has restored over 460,000 acres of habitat through its on-the-ground and in-the-water projects that have targeted some of the most significant environmental problems plaguing the Great Lakes.

I have seen firsthand the benefits that investments from the GLRI can have on the ecology and water quality of the Great Lakes. In my district, GLRI efforts have helped to restore the natural habitat of the Pointe Mouillee wetlands in Monroe County that had been negatively affected by invasive species. The GLRI provided the resources necessary to return the wetlands to its natural state so that it could be enjoyed again as a great site for wildlife, hunting, and fishing.

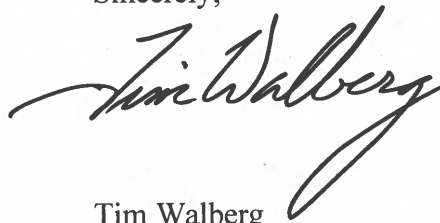
The many success stories of the GLRI are why I have introduced H.R. 7975, the Great Lakes Restoration Semipostal Stamp Act. My bill would create a special postage stamp designed to raise money to support the GLRI and strengthen preservation efforts. Citizens would be able to voluntarily purchase stamps featuring artwork of the Great Lakes at a price slightly above that of first-class postage, with the difference being transferred to support the GLRI.

The work that the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative supports is making a positive impact on the health and well-being of the Great Lakes and its surrounding communities. My bill would further strengthen this critical clean-up work.

I would like to thank Congresswoman Dingell for joining me on this bipartisan effort that is vital to the long-term preservation of the Great Lakes.

I also thank the Subcommittee for considering this bipartisan piece of legislation that would support the efforts of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and ensure that the Great Lakes can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Walberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Tim Walberg
Member of Congress