WHEREAS, the freshwaters of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River are the primary source of drinking water, as well as water-based recreational activities, for the more than 40 million people that live predominantly in urban areas within the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River basin; and

WHEREAS, protecting and improving the quality of shoreline infrastructure, notably those used for water treatment and disposal as well as for recreational, maritime and other economic uses, is vital to sustaining high quality of life in shoreline communities across the basin; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River are already feeling the effects of climate change, with severe storms, abnormally high tides and great variability of water levels cause uncommon erosion; and

WHEREAS, such changes have a significant impact on the state of the shores, affecting shoreline citizens’ safety, shoreline access and economic development of shoreline municipalities; and

WHEREAS, shoreline conditions are protected and improved through the completion of municipal infrastructure retrofits and projects; and

WHEREAS, municipal governments are willing to do the necessary work, but lack sufficient funds required to not only improve shoreline infrastructure required to meet new challenges, but even to maintain its current state; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian government is commended for approving a 10 year, $53.5 billion investment in municipal and provincial infrastructure, which will help municipalities address water and wastewater infrastructure needs, among other things.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative calls on Federal, Provincial and State governments to improve their support to shoreline municipalities for all measures related to restoration, protection and enhancement of the shores; and
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative calls for increased flexibility in the application of environmental and infrastructure-related regulations, in order to meet the diverse needs and objectives of shoreline communities.

Signed this 19th day of June, 2013

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Tom Barrett, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of Milwaukee