



## **Mayors Call for Better Protection from Oil Transportation Spills** ***Recent accidents in and around Great Lakes and St. Lawrence raise concerns***

Thunder Bay, ON June 18, 2014 – Today, at the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative annual meeting, mayors from the United States and Canada issued a call to their respective federal governments and the responsible companies to significantly improve the safety of oil transportation across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin, in order to protect the largest source of fresh water on Earth.

“In our opinion, the reaction on the part of federal governments and energy and transportation companies to devastating accidents like those that have occurred in Lac-Mégantic and in the Kalamazoo River has been slow and insufficient,” said incoming Cities Initiative chair John Dickert, mayor of Racine, Wisconsin.

Mayors of the Cities Initiative voiced their concern with the recent exponential increase in rail transportation of oil, and the string of accidents, including the devastating derailment and explosion in Lac-Mégantic last year that resulted in 47 deaths and the destruction of half the downtown area. Conveyance of oil by pipeline across the basin is also on the rise, with several expansions or new lines planned or recently activated in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin. The 2010 Enbridge pipeline rupture in Michigan that resulted in a spill in the Kalamazoo River, costing almost \$1 billion to clean up, illustrated the dangers of poor emergency response to spills into water ways. Finally, large-scale maritime transport of oil on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River may be expanded if the Superior, Wisconsin, Calumet oil dock project is finalized.

“The increase in oil transportation across the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence basin cannot be at the expense of communities and water resources,” said Keith Hobbs, outgoing chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and mayor of Thunder Bay, “All modes of oil transportation must be held to the highest safety standards.”



At its annual members meeting, the Cities Initiative passed a resolution that calls on:

1. the Canadian and American Governments to establish stronger regulations, conduct more thorough and frequent inspections, and bring enforcement actions before spills and other incidents occur;
2. require that energy companies pay a fee on oil being transported to establish a compensation fund to help cover emergency response and cleanup, property damage and restoration costs, as is done in the maritime sector;
3. the oil producers, transporters, and refiners, as well as the federal governments, to consult on a regular basis and more transparently with potentially affected communities.

“By ensuring that communities are prepared and informed, energy companies are fully liable, and governments are fulfilling their oversight responsibilities, we can make oil transportation safe in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region,” said Mitch Twolan, incoming vice-chair of the Cities Initiative and mayor of Huron-Kinloss, ON.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a coalition of more than 110 Canadian and US mayors who work together to promote, protect and restore the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence.

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### **Media Contacts**

David Ullrich  
Executive Director  
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities  
Initiative  
Cell: (312) 480-6501  
Email: david.ullrich@glslcities.org

Nicola Crawhall  
Deputy Director  
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities  
Initiative  
Cell: (416) 407-5880  
Email: Nicola.crawhall@rogers.com