

## **Supporting Tourism to Promote Economic Growth and Environmental Sustainability Throughout the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River System**

### *A Resolution Submitted by the City of Niagara Falls, ON*

December 2020

Whereas, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Region is a global tourism market before COVID 19. The region accounted for 15% of tourism-related revenues and 19% of tourism-related GDP in North America; and

Whereas, before COVID 19 a significant amount of all North American tourism jobs are in the Great Lakes and St Lawrence region supporting a great portion of tourists visiting North America; and

Whereas, before COVID-19 over 120 million international tourists arrived in North America spending \$275 billion a year. That revenue is at risk until tourists feel safe travelling long distances by plane; and

Whereas, Governments are exploring support mechanisms for sectors most affected by COVID 19, such as tourism, and are developing programs for 2021 to encourage driving in their area; and

Whereas, waterfront and shoreline communities offer opportunities for outdoor, social distancing tourism that supporting thousands of Great Lakes and St Lawrence river-based businesses such as fishing lodges, marina, restaurants and food trucks, sporting equipment rental and sales, and local attractions; and

Whereas, Federal, State, and Provincial Governments are developing tourism programs to promote economic growth post-COVID 19 throughout the Great Lakes and St Lawrence region in 2021-22; and

Whereas, climate change is affecting the precipitation patterns in the Great Lakes and St Lawrence region causing unpredictable water levels and current municipal and shoreline infrastructure designed in the 1950s during the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway were not built to withstand current water levels; and

Whereas, the current Canadian and previous U.S. Administration prioritized the security of our borders and the important environmental issues facing our country and our region; and

Whereas, municipalities, business owners, and the marine industry located within the eight states and two provinces have billions of dollars in maintenance and re-design projects ready to start in 2021 and 2022 due to years of changing water levels and climate adaptations; and

Whereas the region struggles to recover from the COVID 19 one time “stimulus” shoreline tourism infrastructure funding investments will create jobs in every shoreline community and protect our tourism sector and the freshwater environment needed to attract visitors from around the region and the world as we return to normal;

Whereas, the fledgling new Great Lakes and St. Lawrence cruise industry has suffered tremendously from their inability to operate;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Federal, Provincial/State Governments work with stakeholders to develop COVID appropriate tourism financial package for the tourism sector.