



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE
CITIES INITIATIVE
L'ALLIANCE DES VILLES
DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative applauds passage of the Infrastructure bill -- now urges Congress to pass the Build Back Better bill immediately

CHICAGO, November 11, 2021 – With the successful passage of the Infrastructure bill, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is now urging Congress to take immediate action on the Build Back Better reconciliation package.

“While the infrastructure bill will greatly help with lead line replacements for our most vulnerable citizens and provide billions of dollars for coastal resilience and water infrastructure projects that are desperately needed, there is more that can be achieved through the Build Back Better package,” said Mayor Billy McKinney of Zion, Illinois, who chairs the Cities Initiative’s Mayors Commission on Water Equity.

The Build Back Better legislation currently provides funding for key priorities for Great Lakes cities, including:

- \$225 million to reduce rates for low-income water customers;
- \$6 billion for coastal communities and climate resilience;
- \$600 million to support flood mapping;
- \$30 million for technical assistance for climate change planning, mitigation, adaptation and resilience;
- \$9 billion for lead line remediation projects;
- \$1.85 billion for sewer overflow and stormwater reuse grants;
- \$350 million to acquire a new Great Lakes icebreaker; and
- \$600 million for port infrastructure and supply chain resilience.

“While the passage of the infrastructure deal is a once-in-a-generation investment that will create millions of jobs modernizing our infrastructure, turn the climate crisis into an opportunity, and put us on a path to win the economic competition for the 21st century, our work isn’t done,” said Mayor Tom Barrett of Milwaukee. “We must pass the President’s Build Back Better framework.”

“We need this bill to fight climate change and prepare our cities for continued shoreline erosion and coastal flooding,” said Mayor Ryan Sorenson of Sheboygan, Wisconsin. “The bill will also help us advance water equity for all of our citizens by addressing the cost of water, removing lead water lines and rebuilding aging water infrastructure.”

About The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition of 135 U.S. and Canadian mayors and local officials working to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The Cities Initiative and local officials integrate environmental, economic and social agendas and sustain a resource that represents approximately 80 percent of North America’s surface freshwater supply, provides drinking water for 40 million people and is the foundation upon which a strong regional economy is based.

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