



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Applauds Government of Canada's Historic Investment in Freshwater Protection**

*Months of advocacy for fresh water protection by regional Mayors pays off*

**Chicago, IL – March 24, 2023** – The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (Cities Initiative) welcomes the Government of Canada's significant new investment in the protection of the Great Lakes announced today by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during President Biden's visit to Canada. This announcement comes after months of advocacy led by the Cities Initiative and its members to bring public attention to this issue, including the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Summit on Fresh Water held on February 14 in Ottawa which included participation from U.S. Congressional officials. As the largest freshwater system in the world, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin is an invaluable resource for the people, economy and environment of our region.

The federal government's commitment to invest \$420 million over 10 years to protect and restore the Great Lakes will support critical programs and initiatives that are essential for preserving the health of freshwater resources that provide drinking water for more than 40 million Canadians and Americans. With climate change and population growth putting additional pressure on Canada's waters, funding for Great Lakes protection will help ensure that the sustainability of the basin and tackle some of its most pressing challenges, including biodiversity loss and contamination.

"As a shared resource between our two countries, it is key for both our national governments to invest in protecting the Great Lakes and ensure that everyone in the basin has access to clean safe drinking water," said Billy McKinney, Mayor of Zion, IL and Chair of the Cities Initiative. "Today's announcement will build on the significant investments made by the Biden administration in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and ensure that both our countries are doing their part to restore our waters for the benefit of our communities and future generations."

"Representing an international border community on the shoreline of the Great Lakes, I am thrilled to see this kind of cooperation and coordination between the U.S. and Canadian governments to enhance the health of the Great Lakes," said Mike Duggan, Mayor of Detroit. "The substantial investment announced today by the Canadian government, coupled with U.S. investments in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, shows our collective commitment to protecting our freshwater resources is as strong as ever."

"This investment is a significant step towards ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of our freshwater resources," said Gino Moretti, Mayor of Saint-Anicet and Vice-Chair of the Cities Initiative. "We are happy to see the results of our members' efforts on both sides of the border to push our governments to increase funding for freshwater protection and restoration. Investing in cleaning the Great Lakes will also have direct benefits for downstream communities in Quebec, like ours."

“Today’s announcement on the heels of our motion adopted on World Water Day is tremendous news for waterfront communities like ours,” added Bonnie Crombie, Mayor of Mississauga. “What makes our city and region so attractive is our access to our beautiful Great Lakes and we all need to work together to ensure that they remain resilient to climate change.”

**About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative**

*The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational organization led by a coalition of mayors working collaboratively to promote the environmental and socioeconomic health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin for the benefit of current and future generations. With more than 230-member municipalities, the Cities Initiative is the largest municipally-driven organization in the basin.*

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