

A Resolution Submitted by the City of Sheboygan, WI



**PROTECTING U.S. FEDERAL FUNDING TO COMBAT EROSION AND FLOODING ACROSS THE
GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BASIN**

May 2025

WHEREAS communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin continue to suffer the environmental and economic impacts of coastal hazards, with historic high lake levels in 2017 and 2019 causing millions of dollars in damage to coastal properties and communities.

AND WHEREAS targeted coastal resilience projects can significantly reduce the risk associated with severe storms, erosion and fluctuating lake levels, with some studies estimating that every dollar invested in flood hazard mitigation returns up to \$8 in economic benefits.

AND WHEREAS Executive Order 14239 was signed on March 18, 2025, calling on states and local governments to “play a more active and significant role in national resilience and preparedness,” directing federal agencies to review existing policies and transition pre- and post-hazard mitigation efforts to the subnational level.

AND WHEREAS all eight Great Lakes states lead coastal resilience efforts through their respective State Coastal Management Programs but heavily rely on federal funding and staff support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

AND WHEREAS NOAA’s budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 may seek to reduce the agency’s budget by 25 percent or more as compared to current funding levels, including proposals to fully defund the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program, the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) and the National Sea Grant network according to credible media reports.

AND WHEREAS on April 4, 2025, FEMA announced it had unilaterally eliminated the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, the agency's largest funding program to preemptively reduce risk of natural disasters.

AND WHEREAS FEMA subsequently indicated that all BRIC projects from FY20-23 that have yet to begin construction will not receive obligated funding regardless of existing contracts, terminating nearly a billion dollars in federal funding for community resilience projects.

AND WHEREAS hundreds of NOAA and FEMA staff members have been terminated or furloughed, severely impacting the agencies' ability to implement remaining resilience programs and provide technical assistance to state, municipal and Tribal governments.

AND WHEREAS Cities Initiative members from throughout the basin rely on federal support to protect the health and safety of their communities but now face funding delays and uncertainty that prevent the implementation of crucial coastal resilience projects.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- NOAA should request full funding for CZM, NCRF and Sea Grant in its FY26 budget request, consistent with current funding levels.
- NOAA should complete its review of all pending contracts and grants as expeditiously as possible.
- FEMA should honor all existing contracts with state, municipal and Tribal governments, including obligated funding under the BRIC program.
- The U.S. Congress should reject NOAA's proposed cuts to CZM, NCRF and Sea Grant and continue to fully fund these vital programs.
- The U.S. Congress should demand that FEMA fully restore the BRIC program and comply with congressional authorizations and appropriations going forward.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT copies of this resolution will be distributed to: U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem and the Great Lakes Task Force in the U.S. Congress.