A Resolution Submitted by the City of St. Catharines, ON and the City of Portage, IN

ADVANCING A GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE STRONG RESPONSE TO
THE U.S.-CANADA TRADE WAR

May 2025

WHEREAS the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative values the strong economic and trade relationship between the United States and Canada, including the mutual benefits derived from a fair and open exchange of goods and services.

AND WHEREAS the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region benefits in particular from a strong trade relationship between the United States and Canada, representing 50 percent of our countries' bilateral trade.

AND WHEREAS our communities contribute to a $6 trillion USD / $8 trillion CAD regional economy, which is equivalent to the third-largest economy in the world.

AND WHEREAS blanket U.S. tariffs on all Canadian goods will, if implemented, disproportionately harm American and Canadian businesses in our region, leading to increased costs, reduced competitiveness and potential job losses.

AND WHEREAS across-the-board U.S. tariffs on Canadian imports will undermine the principles of free and fair trade and create uncertainty for local businesses that rely on cross-border trade.

AND WHEREAS Canadian countermeasures will exacerbate American and Canadian job losses and reduce the economic competitiveness of our region.

AND WHEREAS blanket U.S. tariffs and Canadian countermeasures are likely to cause challenges to the integrated North American supply chain, leading to higher prices and less choice for American and Canadian consumers while resulting in a 1.6 percent decrease in U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) and a 2.6 decrease in Canadian GDP, according to one reputable analysis.

AND WHEREAS collaboration and advocacy at all levels of government are essential to protecting our regional economy and supporting our businesses and residents amid current tensions in the bilateral trade relationship.

AND WHEREAS U.S. President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney met in Washington, DC, on May 6, 2025, on several issues, including U.S. tariffs and Canadian retaliatory measures, with the two leaders appearing poised to continue bilateral discussions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- The Cities Initiative affirms its strong opposition to the proposed blanket U.S. tariffs on all Canadian goods.

- The Cities Initiative expresses its solidarity with municipalities and First Nations and Tribes across our region that would be adversely impacted by these tariffs and their economic repercussions.

- The Cities Initiative further expresses its solidarity with businesses across our region that would be adversely impacted by these tariffs.

- The Cities Initiative calls for a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Strong response to the U.S.-Canada trade war. Specifically, the Cities Initiative urges:

  o States and provinces in our region, in collaboration with municipalities and First Nations and Tribes, to take immediate and decisive action to oppose these tariffs, protect American and Canadian businesses and jobs and strengthen regional economic cooperation.

  o Federal governments in the United States and Canada to consider relief measures for municipalities and First Nations and Tribes, as they develop assistance measures to protect workers, businesses and local economies from the impacts of the trade war.

  o Members to collaborate on strategies to mitigate economic damage from the trade war, protect against harmful federal actions and endorse this resolution.

- o Regional stakeholders to explore the possibility of a Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Unity Summit to chart a path forward for securing our shared interest in maintaining a strong and prosperous regional economy.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT copies of this resolution will be distributed to: the Great Lakes Task Force in the U.S. Congress; the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Group of the Canada–United States Inter-Parliamentary Group; the governors of the eight Great Lakes states and the premiers of the Province of Ontario and the Government of Québec.