



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The City of Buffalo, New York Joins the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and the Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership

CHICAGO, IL — March 17, 2026 — Today, the **Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative** announced that **Buffalo Mayor Sean Ryan** has formally joined the organization, a coalition of more than **425 mayors and local elected leaders** working together to protect and restore our freshwater resources and promote the economic health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region. Mayor Ryan has also joined the **Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership**, a collaborative, mayor-led effort focused on accelerating lead service line replacement in major Great Lakes cities.

“The City of Buffalo is proud to join the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and stand alongside more than 425 mayors committed to protecting our shared waters,” said **Mayor Sean Ryan**. “Lake Erie has always been at the heart of our community — driving our economy, sustaining our residents, and providing opportunities for recreation and natural beauty. Today, however, our communities face growing challenges from environmental pressures and aging infrastructure — and meeting these challenges will require purposeful collaboration with cities across our region.”

“One of Buffalo’s most pressing challenges is the removal of approximately **40,000 lead service lines** across the city,” Mayor Ryan continued. “By working together with the Cities Initiative and the Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership, we look forward to confronting these challenges head-on and improving public health and quality of life for our residents.”

“We are pleased to welcome Mayor Ryan and the City of Buffalo to our coalition,” said **Mayor Cavalier Johnson of Milwaukee**, Co-Chair of the Cities Initiative’s **Mayors Commission on Water Access** and a member of the Great Lakes Lead Pipes Partnership along with **Chicago, Detroit, Rochester, and now Buffalo**.

“Across the Great Lakes region, many municipalities face significant obstacles to removing lead service lines,” Mayor Johnson stated. “The EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule Improvements require most cities to replace these lines within the next decade, and nearly **20 percent of the nation’s remaining lead service lines are concentrated in major Great Lakes cities**. Through regional collaboration, we can accelerate lead service line replacement through shared best practices, coordinated advocacy, and regional collaboration — reducing the risk of lead exposure via drinking water for millions of Great Lakes residents.”

About the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a multinational coalition of municipal and Indigenous government executives representing communities in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Region who are working to promote economic prosperity in our communities and protect our fresh water for the benefit of current and future generations. With more than 425 communities represented, the Cities Initiative is leading the way in advancing the environmental, economic, and social health of the region by addressing issues impacting its residents.

For more information, please contact:

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