

Senators Stamas, Garcia, Birkholz, Johnson, Sikkema, Goschka, Van Woerkom, Sanborn, Gilbert, Toy, George, Cassis, Hammerstrom, Cropsey, Bishop, Kuipers, Jelinek, McManus, Allen, Patterson, Brown, Hardiman, Barcia and Olshove offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 8.

A concurrent resolution to urge the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Great Lakes Dredging Team to examine the dredging permit review process to develop an expedited system.

Whereas, While dredging in the Great Lakes and the connecting waterways has long been an important tool in managing these resources for commercial and recreational uses, this process has become significantly more important in recent years because of low lake levels. Both recreational and commercial access to the Great Lakes depends on dredging in many areas, especially in harbors and near marinas. Dredging is essential to maintaining the safety of navigation and to the construction and repair of infrastructure components like bridges and water supply intakes; and

Whereas, Because dredging can have a significant impact on several aspects of the environment, the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Quality have developed a joint permit process. This procedure ensures that both federal and state regulations are followed to protect the affected areas; and

Whereas, In the past few years, low water levels have greatly increased the number of dredging projects being pursued. The notable increase in permit applications, especially over the past four years, has resulted in longer delays before actual dredging can take place. The lag time is proving very costly. Even the loan program initiated to help marina owners cope with the costs of slow permit processing is proving insufficient in providing ample relief. Clearly, some means of an expedited dredging permit process needs to be developed as soon as possible; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we urge the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Great Lakes Dredging Team to examine the dredging permit review process to develop an expedited system; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Environmental Quality, and the Great Lakes Dredging Team.