

Reps. Mayes, Kahn, Farrah, Polidori, Brown, Adamini, McDowell, Espinoza, Williams, Moolenaar, Moore, Gillard, Proos, Hansen, Sheltroun, Accavitti, Acciavatti, Ball, Brandenburg, Byrnes, Byrum, Clack, Condino, Cushingberry, Farhat, Garfield, Gonzales, Green, Hopgood, Kolb, David Law, Kathleen Law, Lemmons, Jr., Lipsey, Meyer, Miller, Murphy, Nitz, Nofs, Plakas, Sak, Alma Smith, Spade, Vagnozzi, Waters, Zelenko and Gleason offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 288.

A resolution to memorialize Congress to increase funding to dredge Michigan's deep-draft Great Lakes ports and waterways.

Whereas, Michigan is home to 40 deep-draft commercial ports on the Great Lakes, more than the other seven Great Lakes states combined; and

Whereas, In a typical year, these ports will handle in excess of 90 million tons of cargo, representing more than 50 percent of all the cargo moving on the Lakes, and the equivalent of 10 tons for each Michigan resident. The ports of Calcite, Cedarville, Drummond Island, Port Inland, and Presque Isle typically ship nearly 70 percent of the limestone moving on the Great Lakes. The ports of Marquette and Escanaba account for more than 20 percent of the Lakes' iron ore trade. The ports of Alpena and Charlevoix are the primary source of cement carried on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, This waterborne commerce generates tens of thousands of family-sustaining jobs in Michigan and supports the state economy. For example, Michigan's steel and construction industries depend on Great Lakes shipping to deliver efficiently millions of tons of raw materials they need each year; and

Whereas, The U.S. Department of Transportation is promoting Short Sea Shipping--commercial waterborne transportation along the inland and coastal waterways--as a means of easing congestion on the nation's crowded highways and railbeds; and

Whereas, Waterborne commerce is the most environmentally friendly mode of transportation, using less fuel and producing fewer emissions than trucks or trains. In addition, the efficiencies of waterborne commerce enable Michigan utilities to use clean-burning low-sulfur coal loaded in Wisconsin and shipped on the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, Michigan's deep-draft Great Lakes ports and waterways are long overdue for needed dredging to deepen them. For example, while currently under way, it had been 23 years since the Saginaw River turning basin was last dredged; and

Whereas, Michigan's economy is not reaping the full benefits of Great Lakes shipping due to the lack of necessary dredging. Ships cannot carry full loads and offer customers the best freight rates. The largest vessels delivering low-sulfur coal to Michigan are leaving behind as much as 4,500 tons each trip. Shortfalls in deliveries of iron ore, limestone, cement, and other cargos hamper Michigan employers' ability to compete; and

Whereas, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' budget for dredging Great Lakes ports and waterways has been inadequate for decades. This is true even though cargo is assessed a federal tax to fund dredging and the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund has a surplus of nearly \$2 billion; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize Congress to increase federal funding for dredging Michigan's Great Lakes deep-draft ports and waterways, using surplus monies from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge Congress to direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to clear the backlog of dredging projects at Michigan's ports and waterways and to then maintain those harbors and channels to project depth in the future; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.