



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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Committee(s) Assignment:

Burke (14) Maldonado (26) Sawyer (6) Resolution

Call for opposition to reduction in federal funding to Environmental Protection Agency and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Committee on Health and Environmental Protection

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March 29, 2017

RESOLUTION - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes are the second largest body of freshwater in the world, containing 95% of fresh surface water in the U.S. and roughly 22% of the Earth's freshwater; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes provide roughly 40 million people with drinking water; and

WHEREAS, Lake Michigan is the third largest of the Great Lakes, spanning sixty-three miles of coast in Illinois and providing public drinking water to more than 10 million people; and

WHEREAS, the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) was launched in 2010, for the purpose of improving water quality, ensuring pollution control and remediation, oversight of waterfront development, combating invasive species and restoring healthy native habitats; and

WHEREAS, since its inception in 2010, the GLRI has provided \$2.2 billion dollars in funding to eight states; and

WHEREAS, GLRI provides funds for numerous projects with goals including habitat restoration, environmental remediation and clean-up, removal of invasive species and treatment of toxic water pollution; and

WHEREAS, to date GLRI provided funding for 10 initiatives in the state of Illinois, with three located in Chicago proper; and

WHEREAS, GLRI funding was essential to the Burnham Wildlife Corridor along Lake Shore Drive, which removed invasive species from the area to create safe habitat for migratory birds and butterflies to stop-over during seasonal migration; and

WHEREAS, GLRI funding was essential to the 63rd Street Dune and Beach Restoration, which restored 21 acres of dunes and aquatic habitat, successfully returning native plants and birds to the area, including endangered birds; and

WHEREAS, GLRI funding was essential to the restoration of Northerly Island, an \$8.4 million-dollar project, that provided 115 jobs, to restore natural prairie and marsh ecosystems so that habitat could be provided to native species and expanding recreation space in nature to the people of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, the health and prosperity of the Great Lakes is also essential to municipal economic success; as of 2011, more than 1.5 million people depended on the Great Lakes for their livelihoods, generating about \$62 billion in annual wages; and

WHEREAS, the commercial and sport fishing industries of the Great Lakes produce approximately \$7 billion per year for local economies; and

WHEREAS, President Trump's proposed budget includes a 31 percent reduction to the EPA, which includes cutting \$300 million in annual funding for the GLRI.

WHEREAS, any cut to GLRI's budget would inhibit the efforts to ongoing environmental remediation including preventing toxic pollution of the lake, curbing invasive and destructive species, cleaning beaches with E. coli contamination, and ensuring drinking water is safe and free of harmful contaminants; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and the members of City Council stand in opposition to a federal budget that would strip any funding from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and expressed its continued support;