



## **RESOLUTION TO ENSURE THE HARBOR MAINTENANCE TRUST FUND IS USED FOR ITS INTENDED PURPOSES**

**WHEREAS**, Great Lakes commercial and recreational harbors are essential to the economy of the Great Lakes region and coastal communities generating annually \$33.5 billion from commercial activity and nearly \$16 billion in recreational boating activity while collectively employing more than 450,000 people;

**WHEREAS**, Several years of inadequate funding from the Corps of engineers operation and maintenance budget for the Great Lakes have created an 18 million cubic yard, \$200 million backlog for dredging of channels and commercial and recreational harbors;

**WHEREAS**, Recent unprecedented low Great Lakes water levels have further impacted the usability of many shallow draft harbors endangering the safety of more than 4 million recreational boaters registered in the eight Great lakes states;

**WHEREAS**, Congressional policy prohibiting earmarks has precluded an often utilized source of funds for dredging recreational harbors through appropriations bills;

**WHEREAS**, \$1.6 billion per year is generated nationally for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund enacted in 1986 for the sole purpose of funding U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operation and maintenance of all federally authorized harbors and channels through a tax levied on the value of waterborne imported and domestic cargo arriving in U.S ports; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Harbor Maintenance Trust fund is not being fully utilized with only \$800 million annually allocated for harbor maintenance and operation purposes resulting in a cumulative fund surplus of nearly \$7 billion.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, Reform of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund is now urgently needed in order to ensure that funds generated are used for the purpose for which they were originally intended.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, Congress resist proposals to narrowly define availability of Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund resources to those ports with tonnages over 1 million tons effectively precluding any fund availability for the Great Lakes smaller ports and recreational harbors.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, Congress recognize the critical need for funds to dredge and maintain Great Lakes harbors and ports and request that the Administration make available the full use the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to enhance the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes Navigation, Operations and Maintenance budget to dredge Great Lakes commercial and recreational harbors.

Passed May 29, 2013

*The United States Committee of Advisors represents commercial, recreational, agency, and public fishery interests in the Great Lakes Basin. United States advisors provide advice to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; they are nominated by the State Governors and appointed by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.*  
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