

**Substitute for House Resolution No. 135.**

A resolution to urge the other Great Lakes states and Canada to adopt ballast water standards equivalent to the 2013 federal Vessel General Permit requirements.

Whereas, Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are one of the most serious threats to the health of the Great Lakes and the people and businesses that depend on them. Once introduced and established, these harmful species are nearly impossible to eradicate and naturally spread across political boundaries with potentially major environmental and economic impacts. Past invasions have been estimated to cost the Great Lakes region more than \$100 million annually; and

Whereas, Ballast water carried in ships participating in overseas trade is the primary pathway for bringing AIS into the Great Lakes. To protect the Great Lakes, the introduction of AIS through ballast water discharges from these oceangoing ships must be controlled; and

Whereas, Preventing AIS must not be at the cost of crippling vital maritime commerce. Great Lakes shipping is an integral economic link among the Great Lakes states and provinces and the rest of the world. Oceangoing ships operating on the Great Lakes and the cargo they carry account alone for nearly 18,000 jobs and more than \$2.3 billion in annual business revenue in the United States and Canada; and

Whereas, The U.S. federal government has finally established strong and reasonable ballast water standards to prevent the introduction of AIS. The U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have adopted an internationally-accepted standard and a compliance timeline that will lead to the installation of technology on oceangoing ships to treat ballast water and kill AIS; and

Whereas, It is in the best interest of the Great Lakes states and Canada to align with U.S. federal requirements and create a consistent and seamless standard for the Great Lakes region. Adopting similar standards will ensure the shipping industry will not have to operate in a quagmire of different regulations. At the same time, the Great Lakes states and Canada will achieve a new milestone in its efforts to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species and protect the natural treasure in our shared trust; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge the other Great Lakes states and Canada to adopt ballast water standards equivalent to the 2013 federal Vessel General Permit requirements; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the governors of Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, the premiers of Ontario and Quebec, the Canadian Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, and the members of the Great Lakes Legislative Caucus.