



## **MAYOR BECKER CALLS FOR MORE ACTION ON THE GREAT LAKES**

Gary Becker, Mayor of Racine, Wisconsin, testified today in Congress calling for more action under the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Becker said, “We have a resource of tremendous value in the Great Lakes, and we have made a major investment in developing the Collaboration Strategy. Now all parties must step up and deliver on the actions that are needed.”

The Collaboration Strategy, developed by over 1500 people in the Great Lakes community between December 2004 and December 2005, was an unprecedented effort that sets out the major challenges faced and the actions needed to protect the resource. The Strategy arose out of a Presidential executive order issued in May of 2004 calling for action on the Great Lakes.

Great Lakes mayors continue to spend millions of dollars on wastewater treatment, sewer systems, stormwater management, parks, beaches, water quality, water conservation and many other initiatives, and many mayors have accelerated their efforts since the Regional Collaboration was launched. Likewise, many of the Great Lakes states have stepped forward with major programs.

The Collaboration Strategy called for up to \$20 billion to restore the Great Lakes, which would be spread out over many years. Mayor Daley of Chicago, Governor Taft of Ohio, and Governor Doyle of Wisconsin set out a plan for proceeding with \$300 million in high priority programs to begin the work. This plan also calls for comprehensive legislation on keeping invasive species out of the Great Lakes, and streamlining the over 140 federal programs on the Great Lakes, especially those dealing with wetlands.

Mayor Becker is the Vice Chair of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, an organization of over 80 United States and Canadian Mayors working together to protect and restore the resource. His testimony today was before the U.S. House of Representatives, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee.

Press Release

Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

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