



September 22, 2008

The Honourable Jack Layton
Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
300 - 279 Laurier West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5J9

Dear Mr. Layton,

We are writing you in our roles as Canadian executive members of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative (GLSLCI). The GLSLCI is a bi-national coalition of 60 mayors representing 12 million people living in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region. Seven million of these people are Canadian residents.

We are now at a very important time in the history of North America when our political leaders can make a decisive difference in how we address the environmental and economic challenges we face. With federal election campaigns underway in both Canada and the US, we are issuing letters to the national party leaders in both countries to better understand their policies regarding the protection of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are the foundation for the quality of life and economic well being for more than forty million Canadians and Americans. Protection of the most significant source of fresh water on our continent is central to the future success of the region. It is important to remember that, when considered together, the provinces of Ontario and Quebec and the eight Great Lakes States represent the second largest economy in the world.

With this in mind, we would like details concerning the policies you would bring forward to restore and protect this vital natural resource should your party form the next government of Canada. You can provide us with this information by answering the following questions:

1. Will your government call on the U.S. to renegotiate with Canada a new Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement by 2010 to effectively address such key issues as climate change, invasive species, toxic chemicals, habitat protection, and others necessary to improve the health of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River?
2. How much new federal funding will your government allocate each year to support Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River protection programs and essential wastewater infrastructure?
3. What support will your government offer municipalities to address climate change mitigation and adaptation for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River region?
4. Is your government willing to work with the municipal governments in Ontario and Quebec to develop and implement Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River agreements, programs and to set infrastructure funding priorities?



Kindly address each one of these issues individually so that we can better understand your position as the federal election campaign moves forward. Please send your responses to GLSLCI Executive Director, David Ullrich, at david.ullrich@glslcities.org by October 3, 2008. Your responses will be made public on our website at www.glslcities.org and in a news release to be issued before the election.

Thank you for your consideration of these important matters. We look forward to your responses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lynn Peterson
Mayor of Thunder Bay
Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denis Lapointe". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Denis Lapointe
Mayor of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield
Secretary-Treasurer
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Miller". The signature is cursive and clearly legible.

David Miller
Mayor of Toronto
Founding Canadian Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative