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November 4, 2002

**STATEMENT of CONGRESSMAN BART STUPAK**

**1<sup>st</sup> District of Michigan**

**for the**

**U.S. COMMISSION on OCEAN POLICY**

**Introduction** I appreciate the opportunity to submit a statement for the record of the public meeting on the Great Lakes held in Chicago. The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy has an important role in identifying and highlighting critical policy issues, and its success will hinge upon a careful reading of the variety of expert opinion. The Commission's "Mid-Term Observations" have already identified many key issues, and the array of speakers in your Chicago public meeting have added new and critical dimensions that need to be incorporated in its final report. I hope that concern for our unique regional differences will have an important place.

**Discussion** As the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District of Michigan includes over 2400 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, citizens are particularly sensitive to the many challenges already highlighted at the public meeting. In Congress, however, a practical view of policy comes out of every day's work here. And, our priorities are shaped by what our districts need, in concert with the overall national interest. As an example, here are some of the authorization and appropriations actions that have had high priority in my office in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress:

**Aquatic Invasive Species**--supported numerous FY 2003 appropriations for research and action: Great Lakes Fishery Commission, US Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Sea Grant Program, US Fish and Wildlife Service

--an original cosponsor of the House of the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act of 2002, and the Aquatic Invasive Species Research Act

--these acts establish national ship ballast water exchange standards, strengthen enforcement, limit introduction of new alien species, authorize extensive new research, development and demonstration programs--including substantial focus on the Great Lakes

**Water Diversion and Export**--long term concerns with protecting Great Lakes water for future generations

--opposition to the principles motivating the State of Michigan's permitting of the Nestle/Perrier groundwater mining and out-of-basin export operation in Mecosta County

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–strong advocacy of better water resources management, planning and strengthening of weak legislation—both at the state and federal level

–introduced in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress much-needed amendments to the federal Water Resources Development Act that strengthen the ability of state governments, native tribes and citizens to make water diversion and export decisions based on public trust principles, covering groundwater and tributaries in the Great Lakes Basin

–advocated stronger concern by the International Joint Commission on the potential water export threats of the North American Free Trade Agreement and other international trade mechanisms

–backed more funding for fundamental data and analysis on Great Lakes water uses and conservation programs

**Drilling for Oil and Gas**—introduced legislation prohibiting drilling for oil and gas in Great Lakes bottomlands leading to the present Federal ban

–risk to other, more valuable natural resources too great

–strongly and successfully encouraged the Great Lakes States to permanently ban drilling

**Navigation and Transportation**—enhancements and maintenance to waterways, airports and highways

**Restoration and Clean Water**—over the years, strongly supported a wide range of efforts in the Congress to restore beneficial uses of the Great Lakes

–every year, supported larger appropriations for the Federal Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds than requested in the president’s budget

–increased appropriations for combined sewage overflow control, non-point source pollution, and state wetlands grants, research and action on ecosystems protections and restoration

–backed enhanced funding for cleaning up toxic Areas of Concern, the EPA and HUD brownfields programs

**National Parks, Lakeshores, Forests and Wildlife Refuges**—consistently championed enhancements, land acquisitions and improved management of numerous Federal assets that make the 1<sup>st</sup> District unique.

The entire list is much longer. These are my “expert” issues. Just for the 1<sup>st</sup> District, they define a stream of unending efforts to shape a future by catching up with complex changes and remedying the ravages of the past. Our stewardship of the enormous human and natural

resources assets of the Great Lakes Region depends upon blending the views of our industries, natural resources managers, public interest groups, Native American tribes and all citizens. In my 10 years in the Congress, many of these issues have expanded and persisted. Some issues are decades old, and new challenges will become more complex and pervasive.

### *Key Factors*

Our institutional models for researching, managing and legislating are often even older than the issues. We stumble over the rich political and organizational culture that surrounds ever more complex problems. Sometimes we worsen them by ignoring wider and wider system impacts.

Budget is chronically scarce. We have already identified over \$ 50 billion in maintenance and restoration needs in the Great Lakes. Both State and Federal governments will struggle with the effects of a shrinking economy for many years. Much attention must be paid to how our resource managers perform, their motivation and the strategies that guide them. Research needs to translate into action. Congress and legislatures, with their its authorizing and appropriating powers, can have an enormous affect upon the priorities and progress of protection, restoration and enhancement. Alert, well-informed citizens are a key resource.

### *Recommendations*

Given its broad mandate, the Commission could help identify and highlight a family of action imperatives for managers, citizens and legislators. In the face of enduring budget scarcity, we need to become more inventive at restructuring traditional institutional arrangements—not by just reorganizing and renaming, but by fundamentally improving their effectiveness. Look for opportunities where we can merge deployment goals for public and private capital—both human and economic. More varied working relationships must be explored. Search for a more productive interface between public and private action, and encourage a broad vision that is not bound up in traditional roles.

We look forward to the Commission making great gains in redefining national stewardship of the coasts and oceans, and how that should reshape the legislative agenda of the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. I appreciate the opportunity to submit remarks for the record.

Sincerely,



BART STUPAK  
Member of Congress

BTS/fjh