The Honorable Jane Corwin, Chair  
The Honorable Robert Sisson, Commissioner  
The Honorable Lance Yohe, Commissioner  
International Joint Commission, U.S. Section  
1717 H Street, NW S. 835  
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Commissioners Corwin, Sisson and Yohe:

As members of Congress from the Great Lakes region, we are writing to share our interest in management of St. Lawrence River flows from Lake Ontario. The Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 gives the International Joint Commission (IJC) authority to manage the river through the Moses-Saunders dam in Massena, New York.

The Great Lakes, including communities in our districts are facing high-water levels. We understand that this problem is real. However, we urge the commission to reject a short-term solution for Lake Ontario that risks commerce in the region by causing the Saint Lawrence Seaway to close during the navigation season. Any closure of the Seaway during the navigation season will impede maritime commerce and negatively impact international trade to and from our states.

Since construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in the 1950s, the St. Lawrence River has linked the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean, opening up our ports to world markets. The reliability of this waterway is critical to businesses and labor in both the farm and manufacturing sectors. In 2018 more than 3000 vessel transits moved 31 million tons of commodities through the St. Lawrence River. This included more than 11 million tons of farm exports. Commerce through the Seaway supports more than 32,000 jobs in our states.

Before any action is taken that causes the Seaway to close during the navigation season, it is incumbent on the IJC to notify the Congressional representatives signed below to explain the economic impacts of such a decision on Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Wisconsin. As the IJC considers management options, we oppose measures that will close the river to navigation, disrupt the supply chain and result in the loss of jobs in our states. Going forward, we ask that the decision-making process be public, and science based.

Sincerely,

Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress

John Moolenaar  
Member of Congress
Mike Kelly  
Member of Congress

Peter Visclosky  
Member of Congress

Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress

Mike Gallagher  
Member of Congress

Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress

Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress

Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress

Brenda Lawrence  
Member of Congress

Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress

David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress

Marcia L. Fudge  
Member of Congress

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress
cc: Secretary of Transportation, Secretary of State