

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Requests full FY2021 funding for great lakes restoration initiative

Posted on Thursday, Mar 26, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the bipartisan Senate Great Lakes Task Force, this week joined her colleagues in sending a letter to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Ranking Member Tom Udall (D-NM) to request at least \$320 million in funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) in Fiscal Year 2021.

GLRI is a successful, results-driven program that is designed to address the most serious issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of the Great Lakes basin, including invasive species, pollution, and toxic contamination.

*“As the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies considers FY 2021 appropriations requests, we are requesting no less than \$320 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI),” **wrote the senators.** “We are pleased that the Administration agreed to bipartisan requests from Congress to include at least \$320 million in its FY 2021 budget request for this important program, which supplies drinking water to millions of people and contributes billions of dollars to the economy each year... We appreciate your past support of the GLRI and look forward to working with you to ensure that the program remains fully funded.”*

Full text of the letter is available [here](#) and below. An online version of this release is available [here](#).

Dear Chairman Murkowski and Ranking Member Udall:

As the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies considers FY2021 appropriations requests, we are requesting no less than \$320 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). We are pleased that the Administration agreed to bipartisan requests from Congress to include at least \$320 million in its FY2021 budget request for this important program, which supplies drinking water to millions of people and contributes billions of dollars to the economy each year.

In December 2016, Congress reauthorized GLRI as part of the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (P.L. 114-322) for five years through FY2021 at \$300 million. With your help, Congress has consistently fully funded GLRI since its inception in 2010. Most recently, Congress provided \$320 million for GLRI in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-94).

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is the largest investment in the Great Lakes' health, ecosystem, and water quality. Since its inception in 2010, \$2.7 billion has been used to fund over 5,300 projects to combat the greatest threats to the Great Lakes, including invasive species, harmful algal blooms and loss of fish and wildlife habitats. The program has leveraged up to 35% of federal funding with nonfederal dollars from a wide range of partners, including nonprofit organizations, states, communities, educational institutions, and private companies. In targeting Areas of Concern, the program has successfully addressed problems that directly impact public health and safety including beach closings, restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption, dredging restrictions, and problems with drinking water taste, odor and consumption. The Great Lakes provide drinking water for 40 million people, contributes billions in tourism each year, and support hundreds of thousands of jobs across the region.

We appreciate your past support of the GLRI and look forward to working with you to ensure that the program remains fully funded. Thank you for your consideration of our request.