

Cities Initiative Delegation Makes an Impact at Great Lakes Day 2023

A delegation of Cities Initiative members gathered in Washington, DC, last month for a jam-packed day of advocacy as part of Great Lakes Day 2023. This annual advocacy event brought the Cities Initiative, the Great Lakes Commission and other partners together to promote joint federal priorities for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The delegation also shared the Cities Initiative's 2023 U.S. Federal Priorities.

The Cities Initiative delegation communicated a resounding message: local leaders are united in championing the environmental and socioeconomic health of the basin. In over a dozen meetings on Capitol Hill, they advocated for continued federal funding for the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study, the Brandon Road Lock and Dam and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. They also urged Members of the U.S. Congress to supplement the $15 billion for lead service line replacement in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act with direct funding for municipal water projects and continued funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. The Cities Initiative delegation also met with U.S. federal agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes and Ohio River Division.

The delegation featured mayors and municipal staff from both the United States and Canada, including: Cities Initiative Chair Mayor Billy McKinney of Zion, Illinois; Cities Initiative Vice Chair Mayor Gino Moretti of Saint-Anicet, Quebec; Mayor Leon Rockingham, Jr. of North Chicago, Illinois; Mayor Bill Bazzi of Dearborn Heights, Michigan; Mayor Scott Denison of Gibraltar, Michigan; Mayor Maja Vodanovic of Lachine, Quebec; and Brenda Scott-Henry, Director of Sustainability and Environmental Affairs of Gary, Indiana.

Thank you to these delegates for representing residents from across the basin and for showcasing why local leadership is crucial in protecting our shared waterways and the communities that depend on them. We hope many members will consider joining us in Washington for Great Lakes Day next year. To learn more, read the press release about Great Lakes Day 2023 here.



The Cities Initiative delegation and Brigadier General Kimberly Peeples, Commander, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



The Cities Initiative delegation outside the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency after meeting with Wendi Wilkes, Senior Advisor, and Bruno Pigott, Deputy Pigott, Deputy Assistant Administrator, in the Office of Water.