

(July 5, 2007) Lipinski Announces Introduction of Bill to Clean Up Great Lakes

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Great Lakes Water Protection Act Imposes Higher Dumping Fines, Invests in New Infrastructure

CHICAGO - With another summer of beach closings looming, U.S. Reps. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and Mark Kirk (R-IL) unveiled the bipartisan Great Lakes Water Protection Act establishing a federal deadline to end sewage dumping in the Great Lakes. The legislation imposes fines on municipalities who violate the Act to be paid into each state's Clean Water Revolving Fund. The fund promotes the construction of sewer infrastructure to prevent future dumping.

"We must end the dumping of raw sewage into our Great Lakes," Lipinski said. "It is disgusting, harmful, and just plain wrong. Those who are dumping must stop doing it or be held accountable. And only the federal government can do this."

Chicago dramatically improved its sewer infrastructure to prevent the dumping of partially-treated raw sewage into Lake Michigan by building the Deep Tunnel. However, other cities along Lake Michigan have been slow to upgrade their sewer infrastructure and continue to pollute the lake. Over 24 billion gallons of untreated sewage are discharged into the Great Lakes annually, the equivalent of 100 Olympic swimming pools of raw waste per day.

Lipinski and Kirk's legislation raises the civil penalties for violations of sewage dumping into the Great Lakes. Those who violate Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations after 2027 will be fined \$100,000 for every day they are in violation. Both Lipinski and Kirk believe it is time to hold polluters accountable for the health of the lake system.

"Pollution is not partisan and it knows no geographic boundaries between countries, states, cities, or congressional districts," said Lipinski. "That is why we must all work together to counter this great threat, and our legislation today represents a strong, bipartisan step forward to continue the progress we have made in cleaning up the Great Lakes."

The legislation was introduced on June 28 and has the support of numerous organizations, including the Alliance for the Great Lakes, Audubon Society, Brookfield Zoo, National Wildlife Federation, Shedd Aquarium, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, and many others.

[Click here to view Congressman Dan Lipinski's statement.](#)

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