



**For Immediate Release**  
August 17, 2007

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## **GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH SIGNS HISTORIC GREAT LAKES PROTECTIONS**

Chicago, Illinois– Governor Rod Blagojevich on Friday signed legislation ratifying an interstate compact that will create unprecedented protections for the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin.

“Today, we have taken an important step to protect Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes,” Governor Blagojevich said. “I commend members of the General Assembly, in particular, Representative Harry Osterman and Senator John Cullerton for their leadership on this issue of regional, national and global importance. I would also like to thank Mayor Richard M. Daley for the City of Chicago’s support throughout the compact development and approval process.”

“I applaud Governor Blagojevich and the State of Illinois for this action. Now that our neighboring States of Illinois and Minnesota have adopted the Compact, it is time for Wisconsin to take the necessary steps to protect our precious resource – the Great Lakes.” said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, Council of Great Lakes Governors Chair.

In December 2005 the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin endorsed the interstate compact. At the same time, the Governors and the Premiers of Ontario and Québec signed a companion good-faith agreement to provide protections throughout the region. The agreement details how each of the States, Ontario and Québec will manage and protect the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Basin and provides a framework for each State and Province to enact protective laws.

To become law in the States, the interstate compact must be approved by each of the State legislatures and Congress must give its consent. Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty signed the compact into law earlier this year and bills are pending in Indiana, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania. Action is anticipated in coming months in the other States.

Ontario and Québec have separate processes to implement the agreement into Provincial law. No federal legislation is required in Canada. On June 4, Ontario, led by Premier Dalton McGuinty, adopted legislation implementing the agreement. The Québec National Assembly approved the agreement last year and, under the leadership of Premier Jean Charest, is taking further steps to fully implement its terms.

The interstate compact legislation signed Friday by Governor Blagojevich includes the following points:

- Economic development will be fostered through the sustainable use and responsible management of Basin waters.
- The States will ensure that authority over Great Lakes water uses is retained in the region.
- Regional goals and objectives for water conservation and efficiency will be developed, and they will be reviewed every five years. Each State will develop and implement a consistent water conservation and efficiency program. For Lake Michigan water use, conservation has been a component of Illinois' water management program for thirty years.
- The collection of technical data will be strengthened, and the States will share comparable information, which will improve decision-making by the governments.
- There is a strong commitment to continued public involvement in the implementation of the compact.

The complete text of the agreements and additional information is available at [www.cglg.org](http://www.cglg.org).

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