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## **GOVERNORS RENEW CALL TO ENACT GREAT LAKES PROTECTIONS**

*Governors reject notion that the Great Lakes Compact needs to be re-opened  
and call on states to protect the largest source of surface freshwater in the world*

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – The eight Great Lakes Governors today renewed their call to state legislators to take the steps needed to protect the region’s most valuable asset, the Great Lakes. Specifically, the Governors adopted a resolution again urging swift enactment of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact (compact) and rejected calls for renegotiations that will only serve to weaken the protections they endorsed more than two years ago. The Governors issued a clear statement decrying recent proposals to upset the delicate compromise among diverse and varied interests in support of protecting the Great Lakes through the compact.

“The Great Lakes are not only our greatest natural resource, but they are also a true national treasure,” said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, Chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors. “As Great Lakes Governors, we have been fighting to make sure we have a compact that preserves and protects the waters of the Great Lakes. We cannot allow misguided efforts to derail this important compact at this critical time.”

“This compact will improve and protect the health of the Great Lakes and our region’s economy,” Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty said. “It was designed to enhance the protections many of our states already have in place and will protect us from new diversions of water from the Basin. We are hopeful that every Great Lakes state will ratify the compact soon.”

In December 2005, following a nearly five-year negotiation, the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin endorsed the compact. To become law, the compact must be approved by each of the state Legislatures and Congress must give its consent.

The compact will create unprecedented protections for the Great Lakes and ensure their continued availability for regional economic growth. Once enacted, it will ban long-distance diversions and provide a framework for ensuring sustainable water use in the Great Lakes Basin.

The compact was developed by the Governors during an open and transparent process in order to ensure that everyone’s interests were represented and protected. As a result, there is an overwhelming consensus in favor of enacting the compact’s protections.

Recent proposals by individual state legislators to change the compact threaten to destroy its protections and jeopardize regional management of the Great Lakes. Due to the legal vulnerability of current federal law, failure to enact the compact endorsed by the Governors will likely result in litigation through the courts or Congress interceding to exercise control over the Great Lakes.

Over 900 state legislators have already voted to ratify the compact – about 95% of all legislators who have cast a vote on its protections. Legislative approval has already been completed in four states: Minnesota, Illinois, New York and Indiana. Compact legislation has been approved by the Pennsylvania House and the Ohio House; bills are pending in Michigan; and, a bill is expected to be introduced soon in Wisconsin. Additionally, over 100 diverse groups of stakeholders who depend on the Great Lakes have endorsed the compact approved by the Governors.

The five Great Lakes comprise the world's largest surface freshwater system and a world-class environmental and economic asset. They are relied upon by 35 million Americans for agriculture, industry and as a source of drinking water and recreation. The partners to the compact have developed its protections to ensure the vitality of the Great Lakes for this and future generations. The complete text of the Governors' resolution, the compact and additional information is available at [www.cglg.org](http://www.cglg.org).

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