



October 20, 2006

Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Honourable Peter Gordon MacKay, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

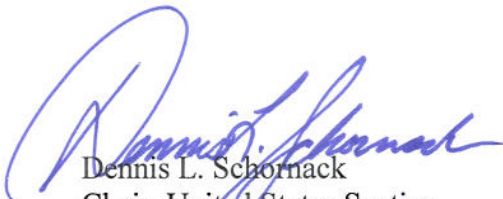
Dear Secretary Rice and Minister MacKay:

We have the honour to transmit the International Joint Commission's *Advice to Governments on their Review of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement: A Special Report to the Governments of Canada and the United States*. A pre-publication version was provided to the governments on August 30, 2006. We intend to release the Special Report on October 24, 2006.


The Commission believes that the time is right for change to reinvigorate binational cooperation and accelerate national efforts to restore the Great Lakes. Indeed, the Agreement has not been revised since 1987 despite the emergence of new challenges, advances in science and other changes. We trust your governments will find our advice useful and hope that our work might be a catalyst to speed the review process to a successful conclusion.

In the Commission's opinion, a completely new accord is needed rather than amendments to the current Agreement. Outdated provisions need to be replaced by contemporary ones. Better account has to be taken of new conditions in the basin with more flexibility to adapt to ongoing change. Clear action plans have to be developed and mechanisms put in place to ensure accountability for their implementation as well as more effective, direct consultation and coordination between the Parties. Plans should be designed to reach out to residents around the basin so that the public becomes more engaged in the process. The Commission also believes this review provides an opportunity to clarify and strengthen its own role assessing progress under the Agreement and assisting with its implementation.

Yours sincerely,



Dennis L. Schornack  
Chair, United States Section



The Rt. Herb Gray, P.C., C.C., Q.C.  
Chair, Canadian Section

CC: Mr. Alex Lee, Director, Office of Canadian Affairs, Department of State  
Mr. Tobias Nussbaum, Director of U.S. Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs  
and International Trade

Encl.