



**72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting  
of the Midwestern Legislative Conference  
of  
The Council of State Governments**

July 9 – 12, 2017

**Resolution in Support of Modernization of the  
Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan**

- WHEREAS,** the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, play a critical role in the economy and security of the Midwest and the nation. Each year, approximately 10,000 Great Lakes vessels, carrying 80 million tons of iron ore, coal, grain and other cargo, safely and efficiently traverse the locks. Nearly 80 percent of domestic iron ore, the primary material used to manufacture steel, travels from mines in Minnesota and Michigan's Upper Peninsula through the Soo Locks; and
- WHEREAS,** only one of the four Soo Locks is large enough to accommodate the modern vessels that commonly traverse the Great Lakes. Seventy percent of cargo is carried on these large ships that can only pass through the Poe Lock. The remainder of cargo goes through the smaller MacArthur Lock, with the smallest 100-year-old Davis and Sabin locks rarely used; and
- WHEREAS,** the reliance on one lock poses a serious risk to national security and the economies of the state of Michigan, the Midwest and the United States. A long-term outage of the Poe Lock due to lock failure or terrorist attack could cripple the economy and disrupt steel production in the United States. It is estimated that a 30-day outage would result in economic losses of \$160 million; and
- WHEREAS,** upgrades to the Soo Locks are needed to ensure national security and unfettered commerce through the Great Lakes. To this end, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has requested funding to conduct a study crucial to moving forward with the construction of a second large lock. The Economic Reevaluation Report would examine the economic benefits and costs of replacing the Davis and Sabin locks with a lock similar in size to the current Poe Lock; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Midwestern Legislative Conference encourages the federal government to support plans to upgrade the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and approve the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' reprogramming request to fund an Economic Reevaluation Report for replacing the Davis and Sabin locks; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that this resolution be submitted to appropriate state, federal and provincial officials.

*Adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017 at the 72<sup>nd</sup> MLC Annual Meeting in Des Moines, Iowa*