**Senator Stabenow, Congresswoman Miller Introduce Bipartisan Bills to Stop Asian Carp**

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Congresswoman Candice Miller (R-MI) today introduced bipartisan legislation to stop Asian carp and other invasive species from entering the Great Lakes, which put hundreds of thousands of jobs at risk. Invasive species pose a grave threat to the Great Lakes ecosystem and the region's $7 billion recreational fishing and $16 billion recreational boating industries. The Defending Our Great Lakes Act will give federal agencies broad authority to take immediate actions to stop the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species. This legislation will also require key agencies to work with regional stakeholders to institute long-term measures to stop the spread of invasive species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins.

Sen. Stabenow is Co-Chair of the bipartisan Senate Great Lakes Task Force. In 2012, her Stop Invasive Species Act was signed into law. This expedited the completion of the Army Corps of Engineers' report, known as the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS). The report outlined strategies to permanently prevent Asian carp and other invasive species from entering the Great Lakes. The legislation introduced today directs the Army Corp and federal agencies to implement some of the specific strategies outlined in this report and to coordinate with regional stakeholders on other long-term solutions.

"Finding a solution to the threat from Asian carp and other invasive species is not easy," said Senator Stabenow. "Working alongside members of the Michigan delegation and a wide range of stakeholders, including other Great Lakes lawmakers, our bill is our best chance of halting these fish as they come through the Chicago waterway."

Rep. Miller, a life-long advocate of the Great Lakes, authored House legislation in 2014 to stop Asian carp. She also serves as the only member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure from Michigan and plays an integral role in ensuring legislative initiatives, like the recently-enacted Water Resources Reform and Development Act, include provisions that protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp.

"We cannot afford to take a cavalier approach when it comes to protecting our Great Lakes from Asian carp," Miller noted. "This destructive species is quickly migrating north, destroying nearly every ecosystem along the way. In fact, just this week, we learned that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has identified nearly 30 of these aggressive fish just south of the Brandon Road Lock and Dam, which is why this bipartisan, bicameral legislation I am working with Senator Stabenow to advance is so important."

"Most stakeholders agree that an invasive species inhibiting structure at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam can and should be achieved as soon as possible," said Michigan State University professor William Taylor, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's U.S. Section Chair. "This legislation seeks the art of the possible by addressing the most immediate opportunities first while not easing up on the pursuit of innovative, permanent, long-term solutions. I commend Senator Stabenow and Congresswoman Miller for their unrelenting work to stanch the tide of invasive species that cost billions of dollars in damage to the US and Canada each year."

The Defending Our Great Lakes Act gives the Army Corps of Engineers authority to take near-term and long-term actions to prevent the spread of invasive species at a critical control point near the western end of the Chicago Area Waterway System-the Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The GLMRIS report called for the construction of an engineered channel to put control technologies in place like additional electric barriers, carbon dioxide bubble screens, underwater sound canons and pheromones at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam. The Army Corps of Engineers announced in December that they are evaluating which technologies will be most effective at keeping invasive species out of the Great Lakes Basin. This bill gives the Corps the flexibility to choose from all of their available options prior to making a decision.

Under the Defending Our Great Lakes Act, the Army Corps of Engineers will be required to lead federal efforts to prevent the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species in coordination with local, state, and regional officials in consultation with the business and environmental communities. The Army Corps of Engineers will be required to report to Congress within 18 months and each year thereafter.

There are 12 additional members of the Michigan delegation who are original cosponsors of the bill, including Senator Gary Peters (D-MI) and Representatives Dan Benishek (R-MI), Mike Bishop (R-MI), John Conyers (D-MI), Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Bill Huizenga (R-MI), Dan Kildee (D-MI), Sandy Levin (D-MI), John Moolenaar (R-MI), Dave Trott (R-MI), Fred Upton (R-MI) and Tim Walberg (R-MI).

Other original cosponsors include Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Al Franken (D-MN), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Rob Portman (R-OH), Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Representatives Sean Duffy (R-WI), David Joyce (R-OH), Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Mike Kelly (R-PA), Robert E. Latta (R-OH), Rick Nolan (D-MN), and Louise Slaughter (D-NY).

This legislation is supported by the Great Lakes Commission, Great Lakes Fishery Commission, National Wildlife Federation, Great Lakes Metro Chamber of Commerce, Healing our Waters Coalition, Alliance for the Great Lakes, Michigan Trout Unlimited, Michigan Conservation Clubs.