

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairman  
State, Foreign Operations, and  
Related Programs Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
State, Foreign Operations, and  
Related Programs Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey,

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2016 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations bill, I respectfully request that you include language that would prevent the International Joint Commission (IJC) from using any funding to implement their Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Plan (Plan 2014).

In June of last year, the IJC introduced another proposal for the management of water levels in Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. The third iteration, called Plan 2014, increases the frequency of raising and lowering the water levels in Lake Ontario. This fluctuation in water levels will result in increased erosion damage to the Lake's south shoreline, including the lakeshore properties of businesses and homeowners. It would also raise the current water maximum by 2.4 inches and will increase the annual cost of shoreline maintenance and protections by 13 percent. Communities, residents, and businesses including the recreational harbors along this shoreline that provide millions of dollars in economic activity are at risk under Plan 2014.

Despite receiving over 5,000 letters from organizations and constituents opposing the plan, the IJC has done nothing to address the negative impacts that increasing frequency of water level fluctuation will have on these communities. This plan spans six counties in upstate New York and would cause damage to land assessed at nearly four billion dollars. These six counties are already among the top 20 counties nationwide that pay the most in property taxes – adding Plan 2014 will only increase costs on homeowners.

The U.S. Department of State is currently conducting an inter-agency review of Plan 2014 – seeking information specifically from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Transportation (DOT). This plan is not only bad for homeowners and businesses, but also for trade and transportation along the U.S.-Canadian border. In an August 2013 letter to the IJC from DOT Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, Susan Kurland, she wrote that the Department cannot support the proposed plan and questioned “the IJC’s authority to change the current plan without reference or communications from the U.S. and Canadian governments.”

This plan is a bad deal for the United States. This is why we would like to ensure this plan cannot move forward by inserting the following language into the FY16 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations bill:

*Sec. \_\_\_\_, None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to implement the International Joint Commission's Plan 2014.*

Eliminating the IJC's ability to implement Plan 2014 provides certainty to the communities who have seen repeated efforts by the IJC to disrupt the current shoreline protections. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



CHRIS COLLINS  
Member of Congress



JOHN KATKO  
Member of Congress