

For Immediate Release

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**DePaul University Study Underscores Uncertainty of GLMRIS Report Options
Coalition Urges Continued Stakeholder Dialogue, Realistic Solutions**

CHICAGO – Last week, DePaul University’s Professor Joseph P. Schwieterman, Director of the Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, released a report offering perspective on the costs and benefits associated with the structural alternatives explored in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) Report released on January 4.

The report concluded that the total cost of GLMRIS Report’s structural alternatives ranges from \$13 - \$32 billion over 50 years, more than twice the construction costs estimated in the GLMRIS Report. According to Professor Schwieterman, “When all relevant factors are taken into account...the necessary expected benefits for [the physical separation] alternatives must be approximately \$2 billion per year to justify the costs.”

Professor Schwieterman’s report also raised significant questions about proposed implementation timeframes, some spanning 25 or more years, which create “significant uncertainty about project benefits.” “The lengthy period of expenditures, with many costs being incurred several decades before benefits are realized, greatly hampers the economic viability of the alternatives,” Professor Schwieterman wrote.

Mark Biel, Chairman of UnLock Our Jobs and Executive Director of the Chemical Industry Council of Illinois, reacted by stating that “Professor Schwieterman’s findings about the separation alternatives indicate tremendous uncertainty and significant cost, with no guarantee of the desired result of stopping the spread of Asian carp and other invasive species.”

Tom Allegretti, President & CEO of the American Waterways Operators, added, “Waterborne commerce is critical to the regional and national economy and is forecasted to grow. Severing the vital connection between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River would have profound effects on the safety and efficiency of commodity movements. Professor Schwieterman found that there are tremendous costs associated with shifting waterborne commerce to other modes of freight transportation – \$228 million per year in added wear and tear on highways, increased pollution, and added traffic safety costs.”

Benjamin Brockschmidt, Executive Director of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce’s Infrastructure Council, stated that “Professor Schwieterman’s study reinforces concerns that the Illinois Chamber and its allies have with alternatives that include physical separation, costs and the length of time required.”

“UnLock Our Jobs maintains its opposition to physical separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins and urges stakeholders to reach agreement on sound, science-based solutions that balance the need to stop the spread of invasive species with the necessity of preserving waterborne commerce and ensuring adequate flood control and water quality protections,” Mr. Biel concluded.

UnLock Our Jobs is a coalition dedicated to protecting the essential waterway connection between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River corridor. A project of the Chemical Industry Council of Illinois, coalition members represent agriculture, business, labor, river communities, and concerned citizens working towards a comprehensive solution to stop the spread of Asian Carp, while leaving the Chicago locks open to commerce. For additional information and resources, please visit our website at www.unlockourjobs.com.