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1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Use of the most efficient and environmentally  
3 friendly means of transportation lends to economic growth and  
4 positions the State of Illinois to successfully compete in a  
5 global marketplace; and

6 WHEREAS, Practical, science-based solutions that preserve  
7 waterborne commerce between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi  
8 River system is critical to our State; and

9 WHEREAS, The United States saves an estimated \$200 million  
10 in air pollution abatements by moving bulk commodities by barge  
11 on the Upper Mississippi River System; and

12 WHEREAS, Commodity transportation diversions away from  
13 these river systems can increase delays at railroad crossings,  
14 amplify congestion on highways, and deteriorate State  
15 roadways; and

16 WHEREAS, Opening the expanded locks in the Panama Canal by  
17 2016 will dramatically affect the United States and global  
18 trade patterns; and

19 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois is one of our nation's key  
20 agricultural states; one acre of corn can produce enough

1 kilocalories to feed 10 people for an entire year and our Upper  
2 Mississippi and Illinois River levees protect over 750,000  
3 acres of prime farm land; and

4 WHEREAS, Sixty percent of the grain exported from the  
5 United States travels part of its journey by barge on inland  
6 waterways; trade growth on the Mississippi River is projected  
7 to increase by 40% over the next 20 years; and

8 WHEREAS, One 15-barge tow can move 787,500 bushels of  
9 grain, equal to 870 semi-trailer loads or two 100-unit trains,  
10 barges can also accommodate product that is too heavy or too  
11 large to be handled by other modes of transport; and

12 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois encompasses more miles of  
13 rivers and levee systems than any other state; in its  
14 Comprehensive Plan, the Illinois Department of Transportation  
15 has recognized the importance of barge transportation on inland  
16 waterways as a critical part of the Illinois freight  
17 transportation system; and

18 WHEREAS, The Governor has recognized the importance of  
19 Illinois' waterways as a critical part of the freight  
20 transportation system by the formation of a multi-department  
21 Illinois Interagency Port Working Group; and

1           WHEREAS, The majority of levees along the Upper Mississippi  
2 and Illinois River are classified as federal levees with  
3 operation and maintenance provided by the local drainage and  
4 levee district sponsors as political subdivisions of the State;  
5 these levees provide the sideboard for our navigation channel  
6 that helps create our waterway system; and

7           WHEREAS, The federal levees in this State are seeing  
8 changes to both safety and performance standards under the  
9 discretion of the United States Army Corps of Engineers' new  
10 Levee Safety Classification, which is causing increased costs  
11 to the local sponsors; and

12           WHEREAS, Illinois levees along the Upper Mississippi and  
13 Illinois River protect many acres of prime farmland, 13  
14 Illinois river ports, 18 Mississippi river ports, 139 miles of  
15 United States Highways and Interstates, 770 miles of railroads,  
16 7,300 acres of State Conservation Areas, 4,100 acres of State  
17 Parks, and 4,000 acres of State Fish and Wildlife areas; and

18           WHEREAS, According to the Upper Mississippi River  
19 Comprehensive Plan, the United States Army Corps of Engineers,  
20 and a Tennessee Valley Authority study, improving our flood  
21 control system in Illinois can return 5 dollars for every one  
22 dollar invested in Regional Economic Development; and

1           WHEREAS, Effective flood control infrastructure and  
2 management are critical to commercial navigation on these  
3 inland waterways; therefore, be it

4           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL  
5 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
6 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we support the United States Department  
7 of Transportation's designation of the M-35 from St. Louis,  
8 Missouri to St. Paul, Minnesota and the M-55 from Chicago via  
9 St. Louis, Missouri to New Orleans, Louisiana as Marine Highway  
10 Corridors; and be it further

11           RESOLVED, That we encourage support for the local drainage  
12 sponsors and the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Upper  
13 Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan, as approved by the  
14 Mississippi River Commission, for systemic flood control  
15 planning and implementation; and be it further

16           RESOLVED, That we support the streamlining of the State  
17 Levee Permitting process to encourage and facilitate both flood  
18 control and navigation improvements to Illinois levee systems.