



December 17, 2025

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Senators representing Great Lakes states, we write regarding your Executive Order, “Restoring America’s Maritime Dominance,” signed on April 9, 2025. We share your goal of a revitalized shipbuilding and maritime manufacturing industry and believe that the hardworking people and dynamic economies of the Great Lakes region will be essential to achieving it. While Congress works to pass the Ships for America Act (S. 1541), which we believe will provide additional resources and tools that your Administration can use to turbocharge American shipbuilding, we would like to offer recommendations for complementary executive action that can be implemented in the near-term.

Section 11 of the Executive Order calls for a plan to establish Maritime Prosperity Zones in regions outside of traditional coastal shipbuilding centers, including the Great Lakes. We agree that the Great Lakes can play a vital role in reclaiming our nation’s position as a global leader in shipbuilding. The Great Lakes are already home to shipbuilders, manufacturers, steel producers, casting and forging, and maritime industry suppliers. Additionally, efforts are underway to connect industry leaders in the Great Lakes and develop a shipbuilding consortium for organized and strategic collaboration. In many ways, the Great Lakes states are well positioned for sustained national investment that would build on the current shipbuilding and manufacturing capacity in the region.

A critical component of your plan to establish Maritime Prosperity Zones is identifying opportunities to incentivize and facilitate domestic investment in maritime industries. We would like to share recommendations for your consideration that we believe will best suit Great Lakes Prosperity Zones, leverage Midwest manufacturing strengths, create jobs, fund infrastructure investment, and upgrade the nation’s military preparedness.

1. *Define Great Lakes Prosperity Zones by Activity*

By using an industry reference rather than geography, shipyards, their suppliers, and customers engaged in the maritime industry, as well as their educational and training partners, will benefit from Great Lakes Prosperity Zones. By doing so, the focus of Great Lakes Prosperity Zones is on the shipyard and related port, manufacturing and educational industries, not specific neighborhoods that happen to overlap with shipyards. This approach assures a common application of prosperity zones across the Great Lakes without winners and losers based on geographic location and encourages emerging or resurgent shipyards and related activities currently not operational.

2. *Support the Creation of a Great Lakes Shipbuilding Consortium*

Shipyards, steel producers, and manufacturing suppliers in Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Indiana have the capacity and workforce to build Navy and Coast Guard vessels, icebreakers, commercial ferries, and maritime security craft. Groups of shipyards and their Great Lakes-based supply chain partners are forming a Great Lakes Shipbuilding Consortium to collaborate on modular construction of U.S. government vessels. We recommend commissioning and funding a study led by the Consortium to facilitate investments in infrastructure, workforce, and technology.

3. *Support Public and Private Investment into Shipyards, Ports, Supply Chain Modernization and Industrial Technology*

The maritime industry, including many of the suppliers that serve U.S. shipyards—like metal fabricators, casting and forging, and engine component manufacturers—operate with aging equipment and limited capital. While the U.S. capital markets and general economy are the best source for funding the maritime sector, the White House should continue federal investments, like MARAD's Small Shipyard Grant Program and the Port Development Infrastructure Program. It should also explore additional mechanisms to support the industry, especially small and mid-sized manufacturers. Strengthening our supplier base is key to scaling up ship production and maintaining a resilient and surge-capable industrial ecosystem.

4. *Create the Conditions for Sustained Success*

To effectively establish Great Lakes Prosperity Zones, your Administration should streamline and increase competition in military new construction and repair contracting procedures. We recommend creating a Great Lakes Home Port designation to explore the feasibility of conducting military maritime repair work on the Great Lakes.

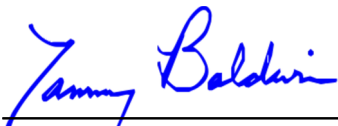
It is also critical that your Administration consistently enforce any existing Buy American requirements related to infrastructure projects and vessel construction and operation.

5. *Expand Federal Investment in Workforce Training and Apprenticeships*

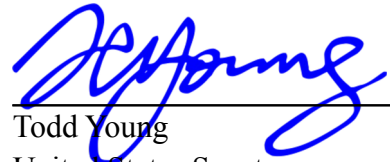
We must develop a next-generation workforce that can meet the demands of modern shipbuilding and marine technology. The White House should support targeted federal grants to high schools, community colleges, trade schools, and union training centers in the Great Lakes region to expand apprenticeship programs in welding, electrical systems, naval architecture, marine engineering, and precision manufacturing. A robust pipeline of skilled workers is essential to meet current and future demand.

We look forward to working with you to meet the current moment to restore America's maritime dominance.

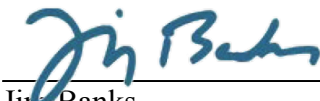
Sincerely,



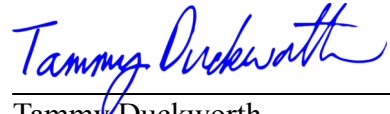
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Todd Young  
United States Senator



Jim Banks  
U.S. Senator



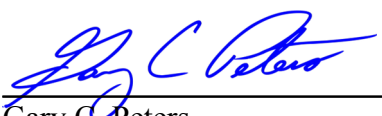
Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



Jon Husted  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



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Gary C. Peters

United States Senator



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Elissa Slotkin

United States Senator