

March 15, 2018

The Honorable Scott Walker  
Governor of Wisconsin  
115 East Capitol  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Walker:

We are very concerned with your recent withdrawal of support for the designation of a National Marine Sanctuary along Wisconsin's Lake Michigan coast. Local stakeholders have worked very hard for years to develop this proposal, make the marine sanctuary a reality and secure the substantial benefits it would provide to our lakefront communities and the region.

In 2014, you recognized the unique value of this area of Lake Michigan and importance of protecting it by nominating it for designation as a National Marine Sanctuary. In your nomination proposal, you stated that a sanctuary in this area would, "help conserve the largest freshwater system in the world, expand recreational and tourism opportunities, and provide education opportunities and job skills for the next generation." We strongly agree with this assessment.

Status as a National Marine Sanctuary would acknowledge what we already know to be true: the cultural and recreational resources off our Lake Michigan coast are world-class, and merit recognition among our nation's most spectacular coastal destinations. A federal designation would enhance the ability of our coastal communities to tell their stories and leverage this resource, adding value to the existing efforts of local leaders, businesses, educators and the state.

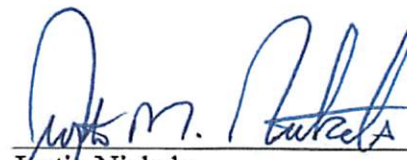
A National Marine Sanctuary presents a unique and valuable opportunity to both preserve our past and secure a bright future for our vibrant lakefront communities. With your recent announcement, you are turning your back on the years of hard work that Wisconsin's Lake Michigan communities and stakeholders have put in to secure a National Marine Sanctuary on our shores.

We understand you have concerns that need to be addressed, and we encourage you to stay engaged with the process to resolve the concerns to your satisfaction and allow the designation of the Wisconsin Marine Sanctuary to be approved. Local leaders, communities, and stakeholders stand ready to work with you to find a way to build on this long-standing effort, and ensure our Lake Michigan coast gets due recognition as a national treasure.


Sincerely,



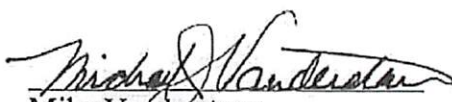
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator




Justin Nickels  
Mayor, Manitowoc



Tom Mlada  
Mayor, Port Washington



Mike Vandersteen  
Mayor, Sheboygan



Greg Buckley  
City Manager, Two Rivers