

February 16, 2010

Protecting Illinois Jobs, Stopping Asian Carp!

As we work to end this recession and help people get back to work, protecting and promoting Illinois jobs for Illinois families remains my focus.

Last week, true to this effort, I stood up with the Illinois Chamber of Commerce to talk about Illinois jobs and the waterways that help employ many individuals in my district and across our state. Spanning from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi river, many industries and farmers use them to ship grain, coal, building and other raw materials in a safe and efficient manner—keeping trucks off of our roads.

As you may have heard, there is concern Asian carp are making their way eastward along the waterways towards Lake Michigan. Asian carp can grow to be over 100 pounds and eat much of the food on which other fish depend. In order to stop the spread of carp, we've placed electric barriers on the waterway just outside our district, and I've fought for legislation that would provide funds for another barrier to be built.

However, legislators in Michigan would like to see the locks that help maintain water flow in the Illinois waterways closed off, meaning barges could no longer move through the waterways from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi. This would put thousands of Illinois jobs in jeopardy.

We should continue to protect the Great Lakes from these invasive species, **but we must do so in a way that is balanced and protects the jobs that sustain many Illinois families.**

In order to highlight the importance of the Illinois waterways and ensure the effect on the local economy is a factor considered by the Obama administration as they determine the best way forward, I held a press conference with the Illinois Chamber of Commerce to talk about pursuing a balanced approach. Closing the locks is an untested approach that could lead to flooding across the state, and is not guaranteed to stop the carp. That is why I'll continue working with my colleagues to find a balanced approach to address this challenge -- **but only in a way that protects the jobs on which families in my district and across the state depend.**



To watch a TV clip of our press conference click on the image above or [click here](#).

Sincerely,

Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson

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