

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

January 27, 2012

Chairman David Dreier  
House Committee on Rules  
233 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dreier:

As the Committee on Rules considers including the RAMP Act (H.R. 104), in the surface transportation reauthorization, I ask that you strongly consider the positive benefits this legislation will bring to the Great Lakes and America's waterways.

Since the surface transportation bill has been promoted as a "jobs bill," I can think of no better way of strengthening this bill than by adding language that will grow the shipping industry and create good paying jobs. The RAMP Act has been labeled by supporters as a "game changer" for Great Lakes shipping, which is facing severe hardships due to the closing of ports as well as other maintenance issues. As the representative of the only Congressional district that borders three of the five Great Lakes, I am confident this measure has the potential to create jobs in an important sector of this country's economy.

The good news is this "game changer" will not cost taxpayers a single dollar. Instead, it merely fixes budget gimmickry that has robbed more than \$6 billion from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). The fix will require HMTF funds be used for dredging waterways and harbors. This measure is a similar fix to what Congress implemented for the Aviation Trust Fund.

Please consider including the RAMP Act in the surface transportation bill. As a "point of order" to the bill, the RAMP Act will not increase spending, but instead reform budget gimmickry.

Thank you for your service on the Rules Committee. If you have any questions please feel free to contact my Legislative Director, Mr. Tad Rupp, at [Tad.Rupp@mail.house.gov](mailto:Tad.Rupp@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



Dan Benishek M. D.  
Member of Congress  
Michigan's First District