

Stopping The Threat Of Asian Carp

U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown



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The Great Lakes region and the Ohio River basin are invaluable resources—providing a source of water for countless households, generating economic activity for the region, and providing jobs through commerce, fishing, and tourism.

In fact, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, some 450,000 people fish in Lake Erie annually – contributing about \$680

million to Ohio's economy. But our fishing and tourism industries are threatened by Asian carp.

Protecting the Great Lakes region and the Ohio River basin from Asian carp is about protecting our regional economy and the livelihood of thousands of Ohioans. These invasive species, with their voracious appetites, significantly alter the habitat— by crowding-out native bass, catfish, and walleye—and are also a threat to boaters. The time to act is now as Asian carp have already been identified in the Ohio River – at the mouth of the Little Miami River, near Cincinnati.

Although several federal agencies have already been combating Asian carp, we have yet to designate an agency as the lead. Simply put, we need a coordinated federal response.

Last June, I helped pass the bipartisan Stop Invasive Species Act to expedite a strategy to block Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes. And though the bill was signed into law last summer, there is still more we must do. While we rightly focus on keeping the carp out of the Great Lakes in the Chicago region, we must also protect other pathways into the lakes.

That's why I'm re-introducing bipartisan legislation, Strategic Response to Asian Carp Invasion Act, with Senator Pat Toomey, a Republican from Pennsylvania, to stop Asian carp from entering streams and rivers in our states.

The Strategic Response to Asian Carp Invasion Act would coordinate a new federal effort with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Army Corps of Engineers, and state wildlife agencies to share best practices and technology to stop the threat of Asian carp. It would also require a yearly report to Congress on the efforts and movement of Asian carp within the Ohio and Upper Mississippi River region.

We must all work together to protect the Great Lakes region and the Ohio River basin from this invasive species. The Strategic Response to Asian Carp Invasion Act is another much needed step to secure the economic drivers shoring up Ohio's multi-million dollar fishing and recreation industries