STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

November 29, 2012

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Bingaman and Ranking Member Murkowski:

This letter is in support of S. 140 the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act, introduced by Senator Carl Levin, which would designate as wilderness 32,557 acres within the lakeshore.

Voted as the "Most Beautiful Place in America" by viewers of "Good Morning America," this lakeshore is spectacular, with magnificent sand dunes towering over Lake Michigan, serene inland lakes, historic maritime structures, and beautiful rolling countryside. The lakeshore is a destination for recreationists of all types, nature lovers, photographers, and families. Enacting this legislation would provide important protections while also improving access and overall management of the lakeshore without affecting state hunting and fishing regulations.

This bill is supported by the National Park Service, and reflects the Park Service's 2008 wilderness proposal that was the result of a lengthy public process. It also enjoys strong local community support. "Citizens for Access to the Lakeshore," a community group that had opposed a previous wilderness proposal, has come out in vocal support of this legislation. In addition, a companion bill in the House of Representatives, H.R. 977, introduced by Congressmen Dave Camp and Bill Huizenga, has strong bipartisan support in the Michigan delegation.

The bulk of the land that would be designated as wilderness is in fact already managed as wilderness, and this legislation would help ensure that magnificent sand dunes and other ecologically significant areas are protected from harmful development. In addition, this legislation would remove restrictions on land that is currently managed as

wilderness so that access to popular recreational areas could be provided and historic assets could be restored and enjoyed by the public.

Sincerely,

Keith Creagh
Director
517-373-2329

cc: United States Senator Carl Levin
United States Representative Dave Camp
United States Representative Bill Huizenga
Mr. Bill McBride, Governor's Washington Office
Mr. Bill Rustem, Governor's Office
Dr. William Moritz, Natural Resources Deputy, DNR
Mr. Trevor VanDyke, Legislative Liaison, DNR