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## Interview with Ohio's Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur: A Continuing Catalyst for Positive Change

Elizabeth Gingerich

Valparaiso University, [elizabeth.gingerich@valpo.edu](mailto:elizabeth.gingerich@valpo.edu)

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## Ohio's Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur:

### *A Continuing Catalyst for Positive Change* — by Elizabeth Gingerich



Official House Photographer (above) -  
Office of Congresswoman Marcy  
Kaptur

U.S. Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi,  
honors Kaptur on Capitol Hill marking  
her milestone as the longest-serving  
woman in House history (right).  
Courtesy, [house.gov/media-  
center/press-releases/](https://house.gov/media-center/press-releases/)

Marcia Carolyn Kaptur, a Toledo, Ohio native, serves as the U.S. representative for Ohio's 9th Congressional District. First elected to office in 1983, Kaptur is the longest-serving woman in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives.<sup>1</sup> She is a



member of the Democratic Party and is pursuing reelection in the Fall of 2022.

Congresswoman Kaptur's parents were both of Polish descent. Her family operated a small grocery and her mother was served on the original organizing committee of a trade union at the Champion Spark Plug factory in Toledo. Kaptur was the first person in her family to attend college, receiving her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1968 and subsequently a Master of Urban Planning from the University of Michigan in 1974. Kaptur pursued doctoral studies in urban planning development finance at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1981. During this time, Kaptur served as a domestic policy advisor during President Jimmy Carter's administration.



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<sup>1</sup> See <https://kaptur.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/congresswoman-kaptur-becomes-longest-serving-woman-us-house-history>

Ohio's 9<sup>th</sup> district has been subject to multiple attempts at redistricting to include more rural

Year	Democratic	Votes	%	Republican	Votes	%
1982	Marcy Kaptur	95,162	58%	Ed Weber	64,459	39%
1984	Marcy Kaptur	117,985	55%	Frank Venner	93,210	43%
1986	Marcy Kaptur	105,646	78%	Mike Shufeldt	30,643	22%
1988	Marcy Kaptur	157,557	81%	Al Hawkins	36,183	19%
1990	Marcy Kaptur	117,681	78%	Jerry Lammers	33,791	22%
1992	Marcy Kaptur	178,879	74%	Ken Brown	53,011	22%
1994	Marcy Kaptur	118,120	75%	Randy Whitman	38,665	25%
1996	Marcy Kaptur	170,617	77%	Randy Whitman	46,040	21%
1998	Marcy Kaptur	130,793	81%	Ed Emery	30,312	19%
2000	Marcy Kaptur	168,547	75%	Dwight Bryan	49,446	22%
2002	Marcy Kaptur	132,236	74%	Ed Emery	46,481	26%
2004	Marcy Kaptur	205,149	68%	Larry Kaczala	95,983	32%
2006	Marcy Kaptur	153,880	74%	Bradley Leavitt	55,119	26%
2008	Marcy Kaptur	222,054	74%	Bradley Leavitt	76,512	26%
2010	Marcy Kaptur	121,819	59%	Rich Iott	83,423	41%
2012	Marcy Kaptur	217,771	73%	Samuel "Joe the Plumber" Wurzelbacher	68,668	23%
2014	Marcy Kaptur	108,870	68%	Richard May	51,704	32%
2016	Marcy Kaptur	193,966	69%	Donald Philip Larson	88,427	31%
2018	Marcy Kaptur	152,682	68%	Steve Kraus	73,183	32%
2020	Marcy Kaptur	190,328	63%	Rob Weber	111,385	37%

Table showing percentage of vote between Kaptur and Republican contenders from 1982-2020. Courtesy, "Election Results." Federal Election Commission

conservative voters. Known as the "Snake on the Lake," the district has, for the past decade, encompassed a 140-mile stretch of Lake Erie coastline, from Toledo to Cleveland. As districts are typically redrawn every 10 years based on the results of the U.S. Census, Ohio's 9<sup>th</sup> has been recently subject to revision. Under current Ohio law, the state's legislature is primarily responsible for drawing the state's congressional districts – under the advice of a bipartisan legislative task force. However, a skewed map was passed in 2011. Using partisan indices to demarcate the districts, a map was designed that would allow Democrats to win 4 districts while ensuring Republican wins in the state's remaining 12 districts. Ohioans, who had voted as Democrats in past elections, were concentrated into 4 irregularly-shaped, minimally-contiguous districts, which had the effect of reducing the party's political power throughout the entire state.<sup>2</sup> These "gerrymandering" efforts included the 9<sup>th</sup> District which is comprised of portions of five counties, but none in their entirety, and fragments of Cleveland and Toledo, effectively splitting the Democratic vote in the remaining districts to intentionally dilute their votes.

Indisputably, partisan gerrymandering deprives voters of the opportunity to cast a meaningful ballot – a substantial burden on the constitutional right to vote – and violates voters' 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment right to equal protection and treatment under the law. Arguably, this partisan gerrymandering has been intentionally used in the 9<sup>th</sup> District to deprive communities of color, and Black communities in particular, of political power. And then on September 16, 2021, with a 5-2 vote along strictly partisan lines, Ohio's Redistricting Commission enacted maps that were intended to further guarantee a Republican veto-proof supermajority in Ohio's General Assembly for the next 4 years. One complaint before the Supreme Court of Ohio asserts that this extreme partisan gerrymandering flouts the clear commands of Article XI of the Ohio Constitution that "[n]o general assembly district plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party" and that the number of seats held by a party in the Ohio General Assembly "shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of the voters of Ohio."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas-Lundborg, Alora (2018). Why Ohio's Congressional Map Is Unconstitutional. Available at: <https://www.aclu.org/blog/voting-rights/gerrymandering/why-ohios-congressional-map-unconstitutional>

<sup>3</sup> Original complaint before the Ohio Supreme Court available at [https://www.acluohio.org/sites/default/files/field\\_documents/leagueofwomensvotersofohio-v-ohioredistrictingcommission\\_complaint\\_2021-0923.pdf](https://www.acluohio.org/sites/default/files/field_documents/leagueofwomensvotersofohio-v-ohioredistrictingcommission_complaint_2021-0923.pdf)

A constitutional amendment to end partisan gerrymandering was put forth in response to the manipulation of the last decade and since the Ohio's Supreme Court previously found it lacked the constitutional power since Article XI did not explicitly require political neutrality. Subsequently, on November 3, 2015, Ohio voters, by a 71.5% to 28.5% majority, amended Ohio's Constitution by adding a mandate that districts not be drawn "to favor or disfavor a political party" and that the distribution of seats "shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of the voters of Ohio."<sup>4</sup> The constitutional amendment established the state's bipartisan *Ohio Redistricting Commission*, charging that entity with redistricting in accordance with the objectives of increasing transparency, ending partisan gerrymandering, and bestowing upon that Court jurisdiction to hear claims that the Commission failed to follow constitutional standards. Recently, after a 4-3 decision by the Ohio Supreme Court which



The World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Courtesy, Rdsmit4 - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28113>

struck down the latest proposed congressional map, candidates, including Kaptur, are now left in limbo as they wait for the lines to be redrawn yet again. One of the dissenters objecting to the striking down the latest redrawn map was associate justice of the Ohio Supreme Court, Pat DeWine, the son of Mike DeWine, Ohio's Governor.<sup>5</sup>

Congresswoman Kaptur's tenure in the House to date has been highlighted by a series of notable accomplishments. For decades, she has advocated for veterans' issues, and was pivotal in the creation of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Additionally, she has championed those

those whose mortgages might be subject to unscrupulous financing schemes. For example, in 2008 when Congress passed the *Emergency Economic Stabilization Act* (EESA),<sup>6</sup> designed to deal with the subprime mortgage crisis by authorizing the Treasury Department to purchase up to \$700 billion of unsecure assets and restore liquidity in financial markets, Kaptur was one of a very few who opposed its enactment, labeling it a U.S. bank bailout.<sup>7</sup> Along this vein, Kaptur introduced a bill in 2011 to restore the *Glass-Steagall Act*<sup>8</sup> which would reestablish separation between commercial banking and securities investments originally provided in 1933.

Kaptur is a representative who does not vote blindly with the tide. During the Clinton years, she helped to led opposition to the ratification of the North American Free Trade Agreement<sup>9</sup> and opposed permanent normal trade relations for China as well as fast track authority in global trading activities for the president.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Tebben, Susan (14 January 2022). Ohio Supreme Court rejects congressional map days after Statehouse maps struck down. Available at <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2022/01/14/ohio-supreme-court-rejects-congressional-map-days-after-statehouse-map-s-struck-down/>

<sup>6</sup> 12 USC 52.

<sup>7</sup> Several of Kaptur's positions were featured in Michael Moore's 2009 documentary, *Capitalism: A Love Story*.

<sup>8</sup> 12 USC 227, also known as the *Banking Act of 1933*.

<sup>9</sup> See <https://kaptur.house.gov/issues/trade>



Congresswoman Kaptur currently serves on multiple House committees, including Appropriations, Agriculture, and Veterans' Affairs. She also chairs the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development and co-chairs the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, Auto Caucus, and the Great Lakes Task Force. With many of her constituents emanating from Lake Erie coastal areas and from urban centers, the issues of water quality, clean energy provision, and regional clean-up programs are paramount. In this regard, Kaptur has backed the *American Clean Energy and Security Act* after adding an amendment that authorized the creation of power marketing authorities in regions like the Great Lakes. Her commitment to foster greater economic growth and cleaner energy sources in her district led to the announcement that the St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation could administer up to \$3.5 billion to stimulate economic development through creation of green energy sources.<sup>10</sup>



US President Joe Biden announcing information concerning the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur addressing members of Congress on Great Lakes Day in Washington, D.C. Courtesy, Wikimedia

Kaptur is continuing to fight in Congress to ensure that the *Great Lakes Restoration Initiative* (GLRI) is fully funded through her role as Great Lakes Task Force Co-Chair as well as from her seat on the Appropriations Committee.<sup>11</sup>

— Elizabeth Gingerich, JVBL Editor-in-Chief

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The following is an interview conducted by the JVBL with the Congresswoman on May 13, 2022.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://en-academic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/399599>

<sup>11</sup> See <https://kaptur.house.gov/issues/great-lakes-restoration>

May 13, 2022

Q: Good afternoon, Congresswoman. Greetings from Valparaiso University. And by the way, our newly-installed president, Jose Padilla, is a native of Toledo, and a former constituent of the 9<sup>th</sup> District. By way of introduction, I teach undergraduate business law at the university – with an emphasis on environmental impact – and international trade and governance at the MBA level. I am also editor-in-chief of the *JVBL*, having worked with former Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) on the inaugural issue.

***A: I actually worked with Senator Lugar on ethanol development.***

Q: Excellent!

Let's just jump right in. Back in February of this year, you hosted President Biden when he delivered remarks in Lorain at "The Shipyards," announcing a \$1 billion program to clean up and restore the Great Lakes as part of the bipartisan infrastructure law. The key objectives cited for this investment included strengthening the region's economy, providing clean drinking water, cleaning up coastal communities, and creating good-paying jobs.

Two questions here:

How does the creation of good-paying jobs and growing the economy square with combatting the ravages of climate change and how exactly will the lakes be cleaned up?

***A: Climate change provides us with the opportunity to create new products and to improve the way that we make and grow things because what America makes and grows makes and grows America, right? So, what you had were hundreds of thousands of people who were brought to Lorain for the steel industry and you also have a thriving agricultural industry in Lorain County by including the greenhouse industry. But in the last century, steel-making generated a lot of effluents that went into the Black River which empties into the Great Lakes, into Lake Erie, creating a lot of waste problems like slag. So, before people started becoming environmentally-conscious which***



*The Black River at its mouth at Lake Erie in Lorain, Ohio (above). Shale cliffs along the Black River in the Lorain County Metroparks' Black River Reservation in Elyria (right). Courtesy, Tim Kiser (w:User:Malepheasant), CC BY-SA 2.5.*



*really did not happen until the last quarter of the twentieth century, these slag heaps just lined the banks. I mean it looked like a snowstorm with all of this black gook so what happened is that the Black River became completely contaminated. All the fish and plants were dead – that place along with a lot of places in industrial America, harmed the environment. As so, as we move forward in Lorain and other places like Lorain, what we see happening is the result of federal action and money. The river is being cleaned up, the slag heaps are being removed, you see the natural plants coming back along the banks – it's really quite something to see.*



Sept. 23, 1923: The SS Greater Detroit, a steamship for the Detroit and Cleveland Navigation Company, being launched from the American Shipbuilding Company Shipyards in Lorain, Ohio.



The Shipyards today. Courtesy, Rona Proudfoot, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sunset\\_at\\_the\\_Lorain\\_lighthouse\\_-\\_Flickr\\_-\\_ronnie44052.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sunset_at_the_Lorain_lighthouse_-_Flickr_-_ronnie44052.jpg)

*I'm glad I've lived as long as I have because I can see what was and what is today. It is still not finished and it still remains an area of concern. But the trout have come back in the river and they will be declared safe to eat which is astounding compared to having a dead river. In addition to that, if you come to Lorain, and I am sure like other places in America, you will see the riverfront being completely rebuilt. You will see new condominiums going up where no one would have lived before. You see old transmission towers that have been taken down now and the river opening up. The freshwater river is a major asset in that community and there is still a lot of work to be done. The local communities are working on it very, very hard and more and more fish are safe to eat. You see people coming back to the river – they have a FireFish celebration every year that is simply beautiful. We could not control the invasive species that came in with ballast water all along the Great Lakes and Lorain is impacted by that with its water system just like every other Great Lakes' water system. We haven't completely solved the problem of algal blooms because of the nonpoint source runoff but you can see the beginning of real recovery there. And I think it's a great model for other places.*

Q: We are actually experiencing the same thing with the Calumet River flowing through Gary/East Chicago and into the Great Lakes – Lake Michigan here. In fact, my first communique when the *Journal of Values-Based Leadership* was launched was with Senator Lugar – this was back in 2007. I had emailed him saying that it had been reported that US Steel was dumping 400,000 gallons of ammonia-laced water directly into Lake Michigan and we hadn't had the requisite commentary period in terms of regulatory procedural law. He wrote back and said that the Southern tip of Lake Michigan was our (Indiana's) own Yosemite Park and it had to be protected.

A: *Did he really?*



Q: Yes. And he wrote the letter of introduction for our journal back in 2007-2008. So, in terms of this metamorphosis that we are all seeing with clean-ups and renovation, climate change is causing many of us to reconsider where we live. New Mexico, Arizona, and parts of Texas and California are currently facing debilitating fires and drought and now parts of Colorado are under a similar threat. Coastlines are receding and catastrophic weather events abound. In fact, there is a recent report entitled “Best Places to Live in the U.S. if You’re Concerned About Climate Change” which includes Toledo and Cleveland as top picks. This is amazing because I remember back when the Black River was known as the “River of Fish Tumors.” And with the billion-dollar injection of capital now in the restoration of the Great Lakes, they are removing some of these historical deposits? Are you physically seeing anything being done right now or is this a plan in waiting?

*A: The additional billion dollars means that each community will have to decide with the help of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative which is administered out of Chicago for the region. And they are pretty good about coming around and looking at what needs to be done. They*



60-millimeter mortars recovered from Lake Erie.  
Courtesy, USACE

*have lists of which waste dumps need to be cleaned up. One of the areas I am interested in – and frankly we have not made much progress as a country – is the use of dredged material. We have so much – when you are talking about Indiana’s harbors like in Gary, and then go East to Toledo, Lorain, Cleveland – if you go all across just that area of Ohio on Lake Erie, this material would fill up the Cleveland Brown Stadium every year, 400 feet high. That’s how much dredged material comes out and then what they have done – and I’m sure they have done this in Indiana though I don’t know for sure – but they just take and put it in a big confined disposal facility (CDF) and it costs a lot of money. And I keep looking at this and think scientifically. We started this 4 years ago so I have no progress to report because the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) Office in Vicksburg examined this material and said, “Yours is pretty safe.” And I said, “Can you get us beyond that point? Can we get to where we can reuse this or just don’t put it in a CDF where it be there for a thousand years?” Let’s think about how we can use it for bank restoration and so forth. I don’t think our science on soil separation is very advanced. I think it is very poor.*

Q: Do you look to institutions of higher learning to help this process?

*A: They would sure help. The dredging project is quite expensive; on Lake Erie, it is the biggest expense and I don’t have on me right now the statistics for Lake Michigan but if you look at how much money we put into dredging every year, and it’s all of these washed particles that come off the land. There has to be a way. I could not get the cooperation of our ports, but really, I think there is tremendous potential there to reuse those water-washed materials but where it is contaminated, we’ll separate and put it elsewhere for now. But it seems like soil science is a very primitive science right now. And I just think that we could do so much better on this earth material.*

Q: You mentioned working with the EPA in Chicago – are you referring to Region 5? They worked years ago with the citizens of East Chicago, especially with regard to the Superfund



site that was established there and with the lead and mercury that was found in the local water system. It took a while, but they began assisting the residents and that's back when they had actual scientists involved. And then we had 4 years of the Trump administration and these folks were replaced by political hacks, by cronies, who were put into their place with no science background. Do you see a transition back to folks who do have a scientific background, in Region 5 in Chicago?

**A: Yes, I think we are making great progress but some of the people were put into civil service positions so I honestly don't know how effective they are at this point regionally. But they are very important to us because we have so many sites on the Great Lakes that are still areas of concern and we have to clean those up. So, we have a major job and that's just what the EPA is willing to do. If you come to Lake Erie, for example, there is a defense base there that has been there for years and if you look at the unexploded ordnance (UXO)<sup>12</sup> in Lake Erie that goes all the way out in a plume, they sort of decided that even though they bought the 50 mm shells, that they were just going to let it be and not try to get them out. And then I asked the Department of Defense for a map of the whole Great Lakes to look at the unexploded ordnance and the contamination along the Great Lakes and ... oh, my goodness ... oh, my goodness ... it's enormous. So, the billion dollars in the GLRI (Great Lakes Restoration Initiative) will help but many of those responsible for some of the pollution that is there aren't very willing to help us remediate.**



A mounted Sidewinder missile. Courtesy, U.S. Air Force

**Q: There was a civil lawsuit regarding the East Chicago site against those who dumped the lead and mercury originally in the Gary-East Chicago-Whiting area and it ended in a consent decree, a settlement. And those monies are helping. So, I hope that there is potential legal action against those polluters and their successors in interest – the businesses that basically laid waste to these areas.**

**A: We have a place called the Toussaint River in Ohio which I represented. All of the marinas had to shut down because of the unexploded ordnance in the river and no element of our government – even though our government was responsible for all these shells. People in Port Clinton pick them up when they wash in with the waves and use them as doorstops – 5 mm shells. Our government would not take responsibility; the Navy wouldn't go in and said that they were not in charge of that kind of ordnance. The Army would not go in. Basically, we had to close down the river to business because of all the unexploded ordnance and nobody is responsible.**

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<sup>12</sup> GreatLakesNow reported in 2021 that one Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) on western Lake Erie “is home to a project which focuses on locating and mapping old military munitions – including some that could still be live. The results of the study will be used in planning future remediation of UXO sites which could pose a hazard to the public not just on Lake Erie, but at FUDS everywhere UXO are found in marine environments.” With respect to the FUDS program created by Congress in the mid-1980s, “the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was tasked with its execution. The program covers a wide range of remediation projects including demolition of buildings, cleaning up hazardous, radioactive and toxic waste, and removing munitions and explosives which pose a hazard to people. USACE has identified in excess of 15,000 properties which had been used by the military across the U.S. and territories, including the Lake Erie site in Port Clinton. Accessed from <https://www.greatlakesnow.org/2021/01/unexploded-ordnance-lake-erie-shoreline-site-munitions-study/>

Q: You know that when President Biden made his remarks this past February, he stated that we were going to look harder at “Made in America” and “Made by American Workers” and see much more of this economic growth coming from our steel industries. But it has been the steel industry that laid waste to a lot of these areas. And the 25 primary waste areas that were cordoned off and basically identified as contaminated in 1987 – four years after you originally took office – were pretty much polluted by the waste and discharge of the steel industries. So, going forward, how are we going to regulate and grow this economy on the back of our steel industries, keep the pollutants down, and restore coastal communities?

**A: I would answer with 3 words: “high science” and “engineering.” We are working with the Department of Energy now, for example, on partnerships with industry to modernize their manufacturing. One example is a company called Cleveland-Cliffs in the City of Cleveland. It has now placed a billion-dollar facility in Toledo which is my home and on property that we, for 30 years, have cleaned up – way back to when Sherrod Brown (Sen. OH-D) visited that particular company. It is really amazing to see this.**

Q: Cleveland-Cliffs is here now as well. It acquired ArcelorMittal, one of the largest steel makers in the world. They took a controlling share in 2020. The factory is located in Porter County, Indiana, so this is in our backyard. The question is whether Cleveland-Cliffs is going to mimic what it is doing in Ohio? Time will tell? But Cleveland-Cliffs appears to be a leader in this area.



Soo\_Locks-Sault-Ste\_Marie.png, Courtesy, Army Corps of Engineers

**A: Yes, they are. I am very proud of them. The way this facility went up, for the most part, there were very few industrial accidents ... it's like being in a nuclear power plant. It is very, very clean and very, very organized – the work ethic, the way the people perform – it's like you are at a space launch. The facility in Toledo cost about a billion dollars and they take the taconite<sup>13</sup> from Duluth, from the iron range, and they heat it in order to produce the ingot that goes into steel-making. So, a lot of that effluent is all now contained – it's not thrown into the river, it's not stacked outside the building – it is just very interesting to watch. And that is modern technology at work. And by the way, some of the money that we were able to get for the billion dollars for the clean-up efforts are**

**complemented by money that we got from the Army Corps of Engineers to build new locks up in Mackinaw at the “Soo”<sup>14</sup> so that we have redundancy in transport since sea-borne transport is the most economical and most environmentally clean – other than they brought in all of these invasive species that we are finding every day.**

<sup>13</sup> An iron-bearing sedimentary rock, in which the iron minerals are interlayered with quartz or carbonate.

<sup>14</sup> The Soo Locks (sometimes spelled “Sault Locks” but pronounced “soo”) are a set of parallel locks, operated and maintained by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District. They enable ships to travel between Lake Superior and the lower Great Lakes. The locks share a name with two adjacent cities Sault Ste. Marie, in Ontario and in Michigan.



Inter-Great Lake transportation routes through the locks. Courtesy, Alexrk2 - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7083864>

***Michigan, what happened in Illinois this year, they had to open the locks to send everything out into Lake Michigan. These actions are happening which are not usual.***

Q: And the Great Lakes represent 20% of the world's freshwater resources?

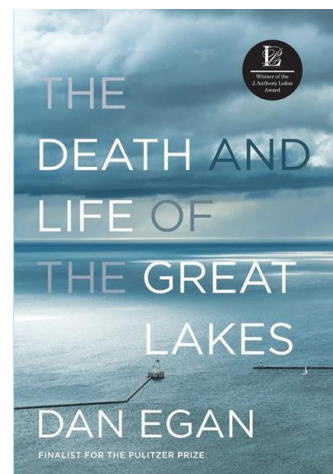
A: Yes.

Q: Let me ask you about EVs and REs – electric vehicles and renewable energy. Ohio has long been the mainstay of the automobile manufacturing process. And now there is the transition to electrification. I have been mapping new solar sites, windmill sites, and hydro sites throughout the country. It makes sense for solar to be in the Southwest; it makes sense for wind to be in the Plains states; it makes sense for hydro to be in the Northeast and Southern-Southeastern states – especially with climate change bringing in additional precipitation to those regions. It no longer makes sense to have hydro at the Hoover Dam or in Oroville in California. And it has been the first time in 50 years that Oroville has been shut down as that state has been in a 7-year drought. What do you see happening in terms of solar, wind, and hydro as well as EV battery<sup>15</sup> making in your district as well as throughout the greater state?

***A: First of all, solar has already taken off. We have companies like First Solar that started way back in the 1970s and 80s. Growing out of the glass industry – which is one of our loadstar industries. But for solar use, a technology that even the Department of Energy didn't know about. And it makes me want to say to you being a Hoosier and I a Buckeye that educated Americans are extraordinary. They are still inventing in ways that even with some of the top scientists in our country don't know about. And so when First Solar was founded, originally, they used a cadmium telluride technology, not a cadmium sulphide. The Department of Energy***

Q: Like Zebra mussels and Asian carp?

***A: And Quagga mussels. As for the Asian carp – we have the money to build the Joliet Barrier but the book by Dan Egan from Milwaukee – The Death and the Life of the Great Lakes – that is such a great book, however, I am left with this feeling that even though people are catching big salmon now in Lake Erie and they have been fishing a lot this year that the loss of plankton because of the invasive species is like cancer in the lake. And I really don't know where it is headed. I do not know what nature will do in the years to come. I think this is serious. And in Lake***



<sup>15</sup> Already a powerhouse in the automotive supply chain, Ohio has a unique opportunity to capture EV supply chain manufacturing investment and establish the state as a hub for the EV and battery industries. The recent GM and LG Chem announcement of the Ultium Cells battery factory has opened up new possibilities for Ohio.



*was not responsible for this. We did bring in some photovoltaic research going way back but what happened in Ohio was that they could not get the venture capital to bring up their company. And so they had to go to some place out West to get venture capital. And so this company is actually headquartered out there – I think it's Tempe, Arizona. First Solar has advanced over the years and has a major manufacturing plant in Ohio – it's the largest solar plant in the country. And now they have increased the size of their panels from a TV-screen to 2-3 times that much. And they continue to advance. Unfortunately, Ohio as a state, is against renewables. And so one of the projects I am working on is legislation to create what I call a "Great Lakes Authority" which will be a mechanism where if you have a bunch of dunderheads that hinder state government, they cannot hold progress behind in the parts of the state that are making progress. If we had this Great Lakes Authority back when First Solar was first founded, that would have been a source of financing. At least there would be economic development people here who would have seen a future – would have understood a little bit more about science and about renewable energy. But I think that one of the problems we face in the Midwest and in the Great Lakes States – other than certain schools and Valparaiso University might be one of them as is the University of Michigan, etc. – we don't easily connect to venture capital and to innovation. It is much harder I think in our region just based on my experience. And so I saw solar struggle at the beginning. And now the Department of Energy has discovered it. And now it is like – what did these people do out here? And it is even a discovery for them but I just know how hard the road has been.*

Q: You have had an added problem with the likes of Larry Householder<sup>16</sup> and basically "dark money" going to a previous nuclear bailout as well as a fossil-fuel fundamental prop-up with \$60 million dollars in play.<sup>17</sup>

**A: I am glad you mentioned that.**

Q: And he is going to trial, I believe, in January of 2023?

**A: After the elections!**

Q: Yes – and I believe that he was arrested in July of 2020 so this is a long time coming.

**A: And did you see where the federal judge in Southern Ohio has entered the first judgment against First Energy – the perpetrator – for wire fraud, racketeering, and bribery of 230 million dollars. It is the largest fine in Ohio's history for a public crime ruled by a federal judge. Now, would you believe that people in Ohio don't know that?**

Q: How do you communicate this? There is a newsletter called *The Grist* – I refer to them as the *New York Times* of clean energy news. They recently reported that Ohio has the worse energy policy because of the whole First Energy incident.

**A: I need that article.**

Q: I will send it to you.

**A: That is the reason I proposed this legislation for the Great Lakes Authority – we must get out from under them – we must. There must be a way to do this.**

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<sup>16</sup> Larry Lee Householder is an American politician and a member of the Republican Party who was a state representative for Ohio and a two-time Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives.

<sup>17</sup> A recent report from *Gabel Associates*, an energy consulting firm, suggests the law will cost Ohioans \$2 billion in excess utility bills and \$7 billion in health care costs stemming from pollution over nine years.

Q: Well, you mentioned venture capital – Indiana is a red state and it has been for a long time. It did go for Obama in 2008. But our governor has done something substantial – perhaps because now Republicans are seeing that you can make money with clean energy. And with the venture capital, they have gone beyond the United States. The State of Indiana has now partnered with Doral Renewables of Israel. They broke ground last fall for Mammoth Solar – which is being installed just South of us. And it will cover 2 counties – Pulaski and Starke, over 13,000 acres. Over 1.1 million solar panels will go up. This will be the largest solar installation in North America and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest array in the world... going up in sunny Indiana! So, you can tell that money was to be had here. And then we have the 8<sup>th</sup> largest onshore windfarm in the world – and that is closer to West Lafayette, Indiana. It is called the Fowler Wind farm and one of its chief owners has been BP – trying to rebrand itself since the Gulf of Mexico disaster. Focusing on *Beyond Petroleum*, it adopted the Helios Greek flower – donned in colors of orange, yellow, and green that you see on the gas stations.

**A: Which county is this in?**

Q: This is primarily in Benton County, Indiana. When you travel South on I-65 you can't miss it. Indiana is also big agriculture and big steel. And what is happening with the farmers with respect to Mammoth Solar and already with Fowler – is that farmers are being paid, I believe, approximately one thousand dollars per acre annually to lease their lands. And they will be making money. And I know with your recent redistricting in Ohio – your maps seem to be changing every week – do you expect more rural voters?

**A: Could we have cross-border projects?**

Q: Actually, there is one in Ashley, Indiana, very close to the Ohio border. Last fall, I conducted an interview with Bob Powell, CEO of San Francisco-based Brightmark – it is in the current issue of the JVBL. The company put up a 263-million-dollar facility in Ashley. They take plastics from all over the world and convert that into energy. And once again, the farming communities have come together to embrace this project because they are going to be making money. So, wind, solar, and plastics leads are moneymakers for the rural sector and again, with your redistricting – under Bob Latta and Jim Jordan I believe – you have got more MAGA-Trump voters. If you can bring in these cleaner projects ...

**A: They are innovators. Farmers are innovators.**

Q: And that's what you said – innovation is critical. And that's where you came up with the *Competes Act* which is now, I believe, in conference to synthesize both the House and the Senate versions?<sup>18</sup> I believe that it is still in conference now? What is happening there?

**A: I think it is just now working out some of the provisions – I am on one of those committees – but the House and the Senate bills differ. I assume that it will pass the House first and then the Senate has provisions that are different.**

Q: And then there is the Lorain/Lordstown shipping project?<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The *America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing Pre-Eminence in Technology and Economic Strength* (COMPETES) Act 2022 H.R. 4521 as well as the Senate's *U.S. Innovation and Competition of 2021* (USICA). The synthesis document, the "Bipartisan Innovation Act" (BIA), has advanced into a formal conference.

<sup>19</sup> The project has the backing of the AFLCIO and seems to be moving forward after transportation concerns through the St. Lawrence Seaway are figured out. Invariably, Kaptur's efforts are a major reason for these historic investments as well as for securing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) monies in the past.

*A: Well, I hope that the Navy can find the Great Lakes – that is my line there. Our enlistment levels are significant and they ought to pay some attention. I just had that conversation with the head of Space Force this morning. I sort of stepped into a tank by asking him where their physical assets were located and he said...out West, in Los Angeles, in Texas...and he kept going on. And I said that there was an area that he did not mention – he did not mention the Great Lakes. So, I am just putting in a plug for the Great Lakes.*

Q: Well, this has been a pleasure. Thank you.

*A: I thank you so much for making your acquaintance. You have given us all ideas. I have taken some notes. We worked with farmers years ago when I was representing rural counties and then they took them all away from me because we won traditionally Republican counties. But we were able to raise with our farmers sterile hogs and now we live in a world where China owns our hog production and bacon is through the roof in price. Our families who survived all this are really astounding. But we were able to develop sterile hogs and we were able to harvest their hearts and put them in people and it has been working ever since. I would like to work with farmers and identify ways in which we can help humanity but make money for them too with what they have been facing. By the way, the last thing that I will say that I think is very important to cure Lake Erie's sickness, what we have to deal with is this non-point source runoff and pollution...into the St. Marys River, into the St. Joseph River, into the Maumee River and ultimately into Lake Erie. But half of the land that is in the Maumee Basin that comes into Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan and Western Ontario, is absentee-owned. You know they are all down in Florida collecting their checks. How do we take care of the land? How do we re-plumb the most piled area of the United States? We need a separate bill on that.*

Q: Eminent domain. When it comes to something this critical. It may be justified by finding public use and giving reasonable compensation as per the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment. They have used it for projects much less in importance.

*A: Well, this is a big one. I guess we need the names of the landowners of those properties. But it is pretty hard to heal Lake Erie when we have so many people who don't really tend the land. They don't tend the land. The other thing I wanted to mention to you are the legumes and manure ... I don't think I have a single project in my region ... I'll find out as we are going out there. We have actually put in methane collectors to provide an energy source on the farm – if you know of any of those, let me know. Because that is technology I want to bring to our region.*

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