

# Lake Carriers' Association

For Immediate Release

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## U.S.-Flag Great Lakes Fleet Finishes 2018 on Strong Note

CLEVELAND — U.S.-flag Great Lakes freighters (“lakers”) carried 8.5 million tons of cargo in December, an increase of 17.5 percent compared to a year ago. Driving the surge was a 16-percent increase in iron ore cargos. Limestone and coal cargos also registered increases, 31 and 19.5 percent, respectively.

For the year, U.S.-flag lakers carried 83.7 million tons of cargo, a decrease of 2.3 percent compared to 2017. Iron ore cargos totaled 45.8 million tons, a decrease of 0.4 percent. That the iron ore total essentially pulled even with 2017 is noteworthy; the delays that resulted from heavy ice in March and April had the trade 16 percent off 2017’s pace at the end of April. In fact, the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards continued to break ice in Whitefish Bay at the eastern end of Lake Superior and the St. Marys River that connects Lake Superior to the lower four Great Lakes into May.

Coal cargos totaled 11.8 million tons, a decrease of 11.4 percent. Limestone loadings approached 22 million tons, an increase of 1.9 percent.

Most U.S.-flag lakers have arrived at their winter berth. Two vessels in the ore/stone/coal trade are proceeding to their lay-up docks. Two cement carriers are still in service.

### About Lake Carriers' Association

Lake Carriers' Association (“LCA”) represents 13 American companies that operate 45 U.S.-flag vessels (“lakers”) on the Great Lakes and carry the raw materials that drive the nation’s economy: iron ore and fluxstone for the steel industry, aggregate and cement for the construction industry, coal for power generation, as well as salt, sand and grain. Collectively, its members can transport more than 90 million tons of dry-bulk cargo per year and employ more than 1,600 men and women, all of whom are U.S. citizens or legally admitted aliens, and provide annual wages and benefits of approximately \$125 million. In turn, the cargos its members carry create and sustain nearly 116,000 jobs in the eight Great Lakes states and generate more than \$20 billion in economic activity, \$8.3 billion in personal income, \$16.4 billion in business revenue, \$4.1 billion in local purchases and \$3.7 billion in taxes. For more information contact Glen Nekvasil - 440-333-9996 / [Nekvasil@lcaships.com](mailto:Nekvasil@lcaships.com).

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*Information based on data from knowledgeable sources. However, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Lake Carriers' Association assumes no legal responsibility for the outcome of decisions or commitments made on the basis of this information. This report represents the views of Lake Carriers' Association and may not necessarily represent the views of its individual members.*

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