

Dennis L. Schornack, Chairman, United States Section



Dennis L. Schornack was appointed to chair the U.S. Section of the International Joint Commission by President George W. Bush and assumed office on April 8, 2002. At the same time, Mr. Schornack was appointed as U.S. Section Commissioner to the [International Boundary Commission](#).

Mr. Schornack served in senior positions under Michigan Governor John Engler (1991-2002), including Special Advisor for Strategic Initiatives, director of the Office of Health Care Reform and Policy Development and Senior Policy Advisor. During this time, Mr. Schornack and his staff developed and analyzed proposed policies for the Administration regarding health-care reform, both at the state and national levels. Mr. Schornack had been on John Engler's staff since 1984 when he was Executive Assistant for Legislative Affairs to the Senate Majority Leader.

Before moving to the Senate with Mr. Engler, Mr. Schornack worked for over five years in the House of Representatives as a Health Policy Analyst. Mr. Schornack began his career as a Rehabilitation Counselor with the Greater Lansing Urban League in 1976.

Mr. Schornack did his undergraduate work at Michigan State University in biology, and speech and hearing science. He graduated with "high honors" in 1975 with B.A. and B.S. degrees. He entered counseling graduate school in the spring of 1975 at Michigan State University and graduated with a Master of Arts degree in 1976. In 1978, Mr. Schornack returned to graduate school at the University of Michigan and graduated a year later with a Masters in Public Health. In 1985, Mr. Schornack entered a unique "on-job, on-campus" doctoral program at the University of Michigan in health policy, which he attended for three years. During the summer of 1993, Mr. Schornack was selected to attend the John F. Kennedy School of Government Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government, at Harvard University. This three-week program provides participants the opportunity to sharpen their problem-solving and analytic skills.

During the early months of the Engler Administration, Mr. Schornack was named Acting Director of the Michigan Department of Public Health and Acting Administrator for Substance Abuse Services, positions he held until full-time administrators could be appointed and confirmed. Governor Engler appointed Mr. Schornack to be Michigan's Commissioner of Low-Level Radioactive Waste (1991-2002). In addition, Governor Engler appointed Mr. Schornack to the board of the regional Great Lakes Protection Fund in 1991, and reappointed him for four additional two-year terms. The Great Lakes Protection Fund is an endowed environmental grant-making fund established by the eight Great Lakes states to support innovative research.

Mr. Schornack co-led the development of Annex 2001, an agreement between the eight Great Lakes states and two Canadian provinces to manage Great Lakes water uses and diversions. He was instrumental in the establishment of the only fresh water national marine sanctuary in America at Thunder Bay, near Alpena, Michigan. Through his leadership on the Great Lakes Protection Fund, he has pioneered efforts by Great Lakes states to develop new technologies to stem the introduction of alien invasive species to the Great Lakes ecosystem and to restore natural hydrological flows in the basin.

Mr. Schornack is an avid golfer and scuba diver who lives in Williamston, Michigan, with his wife, Linda Gobler. He is also an active member of the Potter Park Zoological Society board of directors and St. Luke Lutheran Church.