

Second, drilling in the lakes threatens fresh waters not salt waters, and a spill would compromise drinking water for millions.

Third, drilling in and along the lakes would yield only miniscule increases in energy supply for our nation.

When the risks are so high and rewards so low, it makes no sense to move forward with plans to implement drilling of any kind.

Finally, I wish to highlight an often overlooked fact about Michigan's relationship with the Great Lakes. They are the foundation of our state's robust tourism industry. In fact, tourism is the second largest industry in our state.

Americans from throughout the Midwest and beyond come to our lakeshores for recreation and relaxation. Just as Florida fears significant negative economic consequences when fuel spills threaten her coastline, so does Michigan.

The Great Lakes supply fresh water to many. They offer recreational resources to millions. They contribute to the ecology of a significant portion of the United States. We would be foolish to endanger.

Vote yes on this amendment.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2311) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, I strongly oppose drilling of any kind beneath the Great Lakes and urge my colleagues to support the Bonior amendment.

Visit Minnesota's North Shore and you will immediately know why.

Lake Superior is a constant source of wonder. It helps shape our landscape and climate, it supports our economy and it enhances our quality of life.

Mr. Chairman, water is a precious resource in my state. We have over 10,000 lakes. Lake Superior, of course, is the most identifiable of Minnesota's lakes, its familiar wolf head shape visible from outer space.

Did you know the greatest of the Great Lakes (Lake Superior) is over 31,000 square miles, the same size as the entire state of Maine? Lake Superior also holds more fresh drinking water than all the other Great Lakes combined—Lake Ontario, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and four Lake Erie's.

Each year, millions of people from all over the world visit the lake in Minnesota for sight-seeing, fishing, scuba diving and boating.

Lake Superior is also important to the economies of Minnesota and the entire Upper Midwest. Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin make up the busiest international inland port in America.

Our lakes, especially Lake Superior, are not isolated.

We are a part of a great chain of lakes. What happens in one lake does have an impact in all of the Lakes.

Mr. Chairman, the Great Lakes provide over 35 million people with their fresh drinking water. These lakes constitute twenty percent of the Earth's fresh water, 95% in the United States.

Why would anyone put our nation's largest source of fresh drinking water at risk?

Data from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality shows that only 28.5% of one day's consumption of natural gas and 2.2% of one day's consumption of oil in the United States has been produced. Not enough for even one day has been produced in over 20 years.

The House last week wisely stopped the President's proposal to drill off the shores of Florida and in our national monuments. The Great Lakes are no less important.

I oppose drilling of any sort for oil and natural gas beneath the Great Lakes. Not because we do not need to find additional resources. We do. These lakes are just too vital to too many families and it's not worth the risk.

We are making progress in using energy more efficiently and reducing our reliance on oil and natural gas through energy efficiency technology and conservation. We must make bigger investments in current programs. Investments don't have to cost money either. We can and we must reduce our consumption by supporting wind and solar power and renewable fuels like ethanol.

Future generations depend on us not to jeopardize our nation's greatest natural resource. An oil spill or any related disaster on the shores of a Great Lake would impact the fresh drinking water for 35 million people. And for what? Less than a day's worth of oil and natural gas.

The Great Lakes are important to this nation. They are important to my state and to millions of families. They have been crucial in the historical and economic development of our communities and they continue to play a significant role in Minnesota, the nation and the world.

I urge my colleagues today to protect the drinking water of future generations. I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2311) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my strong support for

setting aside sufficient funding for Beach Protection projects, and to keep the current language in the bill which states that 65 percent of the initial construction costs of beach replenishment projects are to be financed by the Federal Government, and 35 percent of the costs are to be paid by states and local governments.

The fact of the matter is that our beaches are national assets that deserve national protection. Just like our national parks, our beaches are not enjoyed solely by those who live near or on them. Just the opposite is true: our beaches are visited by tens of millions of people from all over the country. Foreign tourists come from all parts of the globe to visit our coasts and beaches.

My good friend, Representative TOM TANCREDO of Colorado, has offered an amendment today to strike language in the bill that directs the Secretary of the Army to honor existing Federal contracts with States, counties, and cities throughout coastal America. Under the gentleman's amendment, the Federal government would essentially shirk its responsibility, and shuffle it onto the shoulders of state and local governments, by switching the cost share ratio to 35 percent federal/65 percent local.

I rise in opposition to this amendment, because it is bad national policy, as well as bad for local taxpayers in coastal communities.

Mr. Speaker, the record is clear: states and local governments have consistently shown their commitment to assist in the preservation and replenishment of beaches along the Nation's coastlines. The proposed Federal change in cost sharing would result in the delay or elimination of several important Corps of Engineers projects, which would potentially increase the property damage from hurricanes and severe storm events. Additionally, states and localities would not be able to absorb the increased costs without raising taxes or cutting other vital priorities.

Our nation's beaches contribute to our national economy—four times as many people visit our nation's beaches each year than visit all of our National Parks combined. And yet Congress provides copious funding for national parks—as it should. It is estimated that 75% of Americans will spend some portion of their vacation at the beach this year. Beaches are the most popular destination for foreign visitors to our country as well. The amount of money spent by beach-going tourists creates an extensive economic benefit—a portion of which goes back to the Federal government in the form of income and payroll taxes.

So to suggest, as the amendment from Mr. TANCREDO does, that beach protection confers benefits to only a handful of beach-house owners, is simply false. Just look at my own State of New Jersey. Tourism is the second greatest contributor to the New Jersey economy. In 1999, tourism brought \$27.7 billion to the state. Out of the 167 million trips made to New Jersey in 1999, 101 million were to the Shore area.

I would also like to thank the Committee for setting aside \$413,000 in funds to complete the next stage of the Manasquan Inlet Project, which extends from the Manasquan Inlet to the Barnegat Inlet and includes the beaches of several coastal towns in Ocean County, which are in my district.