

governments of the United States and the State of Louisiana in particular for a good many years. This is the problem posed by the discovery of mineral wealth on the continental shelf.

I do not think there is even a shred of an argument that the revenue derived from these mineral deposits should not be used for the greater welfare of the people of this country. The problem is how to divide these revenues among the governments in an equitable way, so that the greater benefits accrue to the people of the states and of the Nation.

At this point I must respectfully register my opposition to the proposal which the committee is now considering, to use the Federal Government's share of undisputed revenues from mineral leases on the Outer Continental Shelf to fund the land and water conservation fund.

In the first place this would constitute a unilateral action in an area still very much under deliberation. And in the second place, I fear such action will detract from the efforts now going on in the Congress and at the State level to bring the tidelands dispute to a successful and mutually agreeable conclusion.

I feel quite certain that the State of Louisiana does not want to prolong the tidelands controversy, for the very simple reason that tidelands revenues would go far to bolstering the State's fiscal position. With this in mind last year, I made myself a party to the introduction of H.R. 10429, a bill which would make what the State of Louisiana and the entire Louisiana Congressional delegation considers an equitable division of tidelands revenues among all the States of the Union.

For the Congress to pledge the Federal Government's share of undisputed tidelands revenues to the land and water conservation fund, however commendable that action may be, would effectively scuttle the measure the Louisiana Congressional delegation introduced. The dispute would surely continue under such conditions, and vitally needed revenues in those disputed areas of the offshore oil fields would be denied to both the United States and to the individual states party to the tidelands controversy.

Allow me at this time to respectfully request the committee to consider the prudence of any actions related to offshore mineral revenue and act in such a manner that a final solution to the tidelands controversy can be found, which would certainly benefit the greater number of Americans.

Let me assure the committee that I personally support the principles which sustain the land and water conservation fund. It is today being used to great advantage in my own Congressional District. However, I feel there are other means of funding this vital program without placing in danger the delicate balance which solution of the tidelands controversy requires.

H.R. 10429, which I introduced in the House last July and similar bills introduced by my fellow members of the Louisiana Delegation would establish a formula for dividing the revenues derived from royalties and fees from offshore mineral fields in such a way that these funds will serve the greatest number of Americans.

Briefly, the Louisiana formula calls for 37½ percent of the offshore revenues to be paid to those States bordering tidelands from which minerals are extracted, and 62½ percent to be paid according to population to the fifty states, under the provisions of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act.

Under the Mineral Leasing Act, which affects interior as well as coastal states, 60 percent would be paid to those states in which Federal lands, mineral interests, trustee lands, and offshore lands are located, and 40 percent would be paid to the Federal Government.

Such revenues under both acts would be used by the States to support public education and public highways.

This formula, I feel, gives sufficient attention to all interested parties and directs the funds into areas in which the individual States are hard pressed for available funds. The weight of raising sufficient public revenue at the State and local levels is becoming almost unbearable, and a solution along these lines would serve to end the long-standing dispute over tidelands revenue and give to the various States an added source of revenue which they sorely need and which does not weigh heavily upon the ability of individual citizens to pay for education and highway services.

While the funding of the land and water conservation fund is a commendable and praiseworthy action, demanding the sincere attention of all Members of Congress who are interested in the cultural growth of the Nation, I think the benefits of a prudent division of tidelands revenues, which H.R. 10429 provides, far