

THE OIL AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE POLLUTION CONTROL ACT OF 1968

STATEMENT OF HON. HASTINGS KEITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. KEITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BLATNIK. Mr. Keith, proceed at will.

I notice you do have a prepared statement.

Mr. KEITH. I have a prepared statement. I would like to scan it quickly for you and than make a very short comment.

Mr. BLATNIK. Do you want to read it? Whatever may be your desire. It can appear in the record in its entirety.

Mr. KEITH. I will be happy to read it if your schedule permits.

Mr. BLATNIK. Yes, please.

Mr. KEITH. Mr. Chairman, I would like to add my strong endorsement to H.R. 15906, the Oil and Hazardous Substance Pollution Control Act, which I feel is essential to protect every coastal community in the Nation from the possibility of devastating oil pollution. My district includes the shoreline running from the outskirts of Boston, down to and including all of Cape Cod. It also has the shoreline south of the cape to the fishing port of New Bedford. We know from first-hand experience how vulnerable our shore communities are to pollution of their fish and shellfish resources, their resort beaches, wildlife habitats, and scenic retreats.

Almost 1 year ago today, Mr. Chairman, I visited the scene of history's worst oil pollution disaster. The supertanker *Torrey Canyon*, carrying 120,000 tons of crude petroleum, went aground off the coast of England, and blackened over 100 miles of the Cornwall shoreline. I was a Member of the congressional delegation which attended an emergency meeting of IMCO, the International Maritime Consultative Organization, which was called to discuss the legal and technical questions arising from this disaster.

Upon my return, I filed my report to the Congress which, among other measures, called for improved Government machinery to cope with offshore oil pollution, both of the small-scale "routine" kind, and large-scale disasters like the *Torrey Canyon*. Since that time, Mr. Chairman, Cape Cod and the entire New England coastline have suffered from repeated pollution incidents which have caused minor and major damage to valuable coastal resources.

Last month, as you know, the United States was confronted by its first major oil pollution disaster, in Puerto Rico's San Juan harbor. The oil carrier, *Ocean Eagle*, broke in two on submerged reefs in the mouth of the harbor, spilling a large portion of its 6-million-gallon cargo over 11 miles of the Western Hemisphere's finest resort beaches. I visited the scene of this incident in an effort to judge our Government's ability to cope with a serious oil spill, in the light of the *Torrey Canyon* experience.

AMENDMENTS TO ADMINISTRATION BILL PROPOSED

My conclusion, Mr. Chairman, were that new authority, new governmental machinery, and new technical means were urgently needed