

JOINT MUNICIPAL INDUSTRIAL WASTE TREATMENT

The most feasible mechanism from an economic standpoint to solve many of these problems appears to be the joint municipal industrial treatment plant, which is built with public funds with the industry paying a proportionate share of the original and operating costs in line with its contribution to the waste load. We are presently witnessing a strong growth of interest in our industry in public treatment of mill wastes. A survey in this area recently completed by the National Council of the Paper Industry shows the following interesting facts: Of 753 separate pulp and paper manufacturing locations, 123 now discharge their process effluents to publicly owned treatment facilities. These mills account for approximately 11 percent of the total production capacity of the industry. Some 93 additional mills are presently considering discharge to public facilities. The production capacity of this group of mills also totals approximately 11 percent of the industry figure. Thus 216 mills, representing an impressive 22 percent of the industry's production capacity, have already become involved to one degree or another in public treatment of their waste waters. We are, therefore, vitally interested in the ability of the municipalities concerned to finance their share of the investment in these facilities.

Since our industry is wholeheartedly in support of the orderly and prompt solution of pollution problems, we have felt that this tripartite approach to plant financing a distribution of the financial burden among Federal, State, and local jurisdictions, with the industry paying its share of the cost to the municipality, is a logical one. The authorizations enacted in past water quality improvement acts have been a step in this direction. Unfortunately, through circumstances that are in no way connected with this subject, adequate appropriations have not been made by the Congress to implement the objectives of previous legislation. It would indeed be presumptuous of me to suggest that funds for this purpose should be given priority over any of the other problem areas which the Congress is faced.

CONCEPT OF H.R. 15907 ENDORSED

It is, therefore, for this reason that we endorse the concept of H.R. 15907 as a mechanism to direct funds to the State and municipalities in support of the Federal share of these projects.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF BILL OPPOSED

Although we endorse the purpose of this proposed legislation, there are, nevertheless, a number of specific provisions in H.R. 15907 which we cannot endorse and must in fact oppose, as in our opinion their overall effect would be to retard the momentum for waste treatment plant construction now being developed across the country rather than to enhance it. I would like to explain why we are concerned about those provisions we feel we must oppose.