

You have already heard some of the reasons why we feel that the report "Surface Mining and our Environment" in many respects does not present a representative picture of the iron ore mining industry.

I refer to table 1 and table 2 of appendix 1. Copies are attached to my statement for your convenience. Under the column entitled "Iron Ore," we note that iron ore mining is said to have disturbed 164,225 acres. Regrettably, in table 2 we are not told the land disturbed by iron ore mining that needs reclamation. In view of this, we endeavored to locate some of this acreage that may require restoration.

Because of its proximity to our office, we started in Ohio where 4,000 acres were said to have been disturbed. We did locate the counties where the mining had been done but since no mining had been done since 1924, the areas "disturbed" were now reforested or used for grazing land with one exception.

We found several hundred acres of this land said to have been disturbed by iron ore mining, are now being mined for coal and are also included in the acreage said to be disturbed by coal.

In Virginia, where 7,700 acres were said to have been disturbed, we were able to locate the counties but except for some mining of "paint rock" or "pigment," we were unable to locate the 7,700 acres referred to in the report. If, as we are led to suspect, they included all disturbed land since iron ore mining in Virginia began in 1619, this could be a close estimate but we believe it totally unrealistic.

We found several hundred acres of this land, said to have been disturbed, in Louisiana where another 50 acres were said to have been disturbed, and in Massachusetts where 1,100 acres, half as much as had been disturbed in Michigan, were reported as disturbed. We even went back in the records of the U.S. Department of the Interior but found no iron ore mined during the past 40 years attributed to these and several other States listed.

Gentlemen, we oppose this legislation because:

1. The type of operations carried out by the iron ore mining industry are of a localized and extremely long-lived operation totally unlike the cast mine and reclaim operation that characterizes modern-day mining technology generally seen in the eastern part of our country.

2. Iron ore mining operations today, particularly with their new lean ore and taconite breakthrough do not and cannot lend themselves to legislation such as proposed in S. 3132.

3. Such legislation would hamper and interfere with the ability of the iron ore mining industry to serve the Nation as it has historically done in the time of emergency.

4. The report, "Surface Mining and Our Environment," does not accurately reflect the mining industry.

If S. 3132 were to be recommended by this committee, and subsequently became the law, it would place an unnecessary economic burden of administrative costs and rehabilitation costs on a society that is fast costing itself out of a competitive posture with the free world economy especially as far as iron ore is concerned.

The conclusion of damage from disturbed land appears to be exaggerated and completely unwarranted especially since any related problems of air and water pollution to our environment are adequately comprehended in both existing Federal and State regulations.