

The State, in establishing rules and regulations for its infant copper-nickel industry, recognized the pollution and environmental control problems that could develop. As a result, the State leases contain provisions for protection of the environment and for reclamation.

Our State is concerned about the problems that this bill attempts to deal with. We are not negating the intent of this bill.

The State's concern for the effects of mining on our environment is further demonstrated by the fact that the department of conservation, which I head, has selected specialists in the fields of minerals, waters, forestry, game and fish, and parks to collectively study the problem for the purpose of making recommendations for the prevention of blight and restoration of mined lands. Meetings have also been held with mine officials and specialists to study and define problem areas.

The study committee is especially concerned with long-range problems relating to mine waste disposal, the stockpiling of lean ores and taconite, and future uses of exhausted pits. These preliminary efforts have been met with cooperation and success, and other State agencies have indicated their willingness to assist in studies and research.

We feel strongly that Minnesota is best qualified among all of the 50 States to cope with the unique problems associated with surface mining of its iron ore, problems which are identified and which are being worked on, and which no other State confronts to the same degree as Minnesota.

The State, therefore, agrees with those purposes of S. 3132 found in section 3, which read as follows:

"(d) That, because of the diversity of terrain, climate, biologic, chemical, and other physical conditions in mining areas, the establishment on a nationwide basis of uniform regulations for surface-mining operations and for the reclamation of surface-mined areas is not feasible;

"(3) That the initial responsibility for developing, authorizing, issuing, and enforcing regulations for surface-mining operations and for the reclamation of surface-mined areas should rest with the States; and

"(f) * * * to assist the States in carrying out such a problem."

We strongly oppose any Federal legislation which may result in the iron mining industry of Minnesota being placed at a competitive disadvantage internationally.

We also strongly oppose those portions of S. 3132 which inject the Secretary into the details of State planning, funding, and personnel practices, particularly when the State has recognized the problem and is competently and realistically working on solutions.

The involved paperwork connected with Federal programs has become the strangulation of many worthwhile programs and imposes an immense workload on State government. For example, Minnesota recently submitted a report on a \$50,000 Federal assistance program which required many man-hours of work and a stack of supporting documents 7 inches high by actual measurement. In the testimony today the reported discrepancies on disturbed acreage is illustrated by the difficulties involved in outside supervision.

It is our position, therefore, Mr. Chairman, that the Federal legislation can best assist Minnesota in surface mining reclamation by research and technical assistance.