

Mr. Chairman, since this is a special hearing, I will reserve my own formal statement in full support of this project until the regularly scheduled time.

I do not want to take the time of my colleagues from Alaska who are here. The case for the project will be presented to you by, I think, a very distinguished group of Fairbanks citizens.

As you have already indicated, among them is the former distinguished Congressman, a member of this committee, the Honorable Ralph Rivers; and present with him is the Honorable H. A. "Red" Boucher, mayor of Fairbanks, Alaska; Mr. Harold Gilliam, chairman, North Star Borough, Fairbanks, Alaska; Mr. Ralph Bailey, president, Alaska National Bank and Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce Flood Control Committee, Fairbanks, Alaska; Mr. Dwayne Carlton, president, AFL-CIO of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska; Mr. Edward Merdes, Fairbanks city attorney, Fairbanks, Alaska; Mr. Harry Porter, member of the city council, Fairbanks, Alaska; and Mr. Conrad Frank, chairman, Municipal Utilities Board, Fairbanks, Alaska.

It is my honor to introduce these fine Alaskans to the committee, and I will turn the chair over to the first witness who I believe is our former colleague, the Honorable Ralph J. Rivers.

Mr. JONES. Thank you, sir.

STATEMENT OF HON. RALPH J. RIVERS, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Mr. RIVERS. Mr. Chairman, thank you, Congressman Pollock, for introducing me.

It is my privilege and pleasure to have this opportunity to participate with several of my leading fellow Alaskans in making a group presentation to this distinguished subcommittee in support of the vitally needed Tanana Valley flood control project in the area of our home city of Fairbanks and adjacent Fort Wainwright. The flood area includes the Chena River, a tributary of the Tanana River.

In the interest of brevity and to minimize repetition, the members of our group have divided the subject matter, and each will speak and be prepared to answer questions on the phase in which he is specially qualified.

My wife and I shared the awesome experience of going through the monstrous flood during mid-August of 1967 when our house and 95 percent of the homes and other buildings in Fairbanks were inundated; and 10,000 to 15,000 people were evacuated to higher ground and to Anchorage and other communities in Alaska.

Such a devastating catastrophe should not be allowed to happen again.

We saw the valiant efforts of all the rescue and emergency organizations and individuals, such as the military, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the University of Alaska which housed and fed 7,000 homeless people, the civil defense personnel, the radio stations and ham operators, the helicopter crews, the Corps of Engineers, the hardy boatmen of our area, and our own Mayor H. A. "Red" Boucher, who went several days without sleep while he coordinated and en-