

waterway, along with the Canal, for the transporting of missiles from the space flight center at Huntsville, Alabama, to the launching site at Cape Kennedy. They are of a size which can only be accommodated by specially constructed barges. The security of the movement of the missiles is mandatory, but there is a time factor involved, as well.

I am encouraged by the favorable survey report of April 11, 1968, made by the Corps of Engineers. Allow me to stress the affirmative reaction on the part of the reporting officers who believe the construction of the "missing link" would benefit navigation and recreation in the amount of about \$9,987,000 annually and with a ratio of benefits to the cost at 1.7 to 1.0.

It is hoped and urged that you take favorable action in behalf of the Intra-coastal Waterway and increase its "strength" by the completion of the St. Marks to Tampa Bay route; eliminating not just the weakest link, but the missing link!

STATEMENT OF RANDOLPH HODGES, DIRECTOR, FLORIDA BOARD OF CONSERVATION; ACCOMPANIED BY I. J. STEPHENS, REAR ADMIRAL, U.S. COAST GUARD (RETIRED)

Mr. HODGES. Mr. Chairman, I am Randolph Hodges, the director of the Florida Board of Conservation.

Mr. BLATNIK. We welcome you, Mr. Hodges.

Mr. HODGES. I am the director of the Florida Board of Conservation which is composed of the Governor and six members of his cabinet.

Our Florida Legislature is in session and prevented those gentlemen from appearing personally before you this morning.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Public Works Committee, it is my pleasure to have this opportunity of discussing with you our Florida program of water resources development. It is also my honor to be able to join with the members of our Florida delegation in presenting to you our statewide program of public works projects desired to be accepted by the Public Works Committee and recommended by you for authorization by Congress.

This program I present to you has been mutually developed and agreed upon by local interests, State government, and our congressional delegation. Each project included has been developed by the Corps of Engineers and is recommended by the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors. It is not a fragmented, sectionalized program; but is the unified position of all recognized interests representing Florida, and includes our position on all water-related projects in the State concerning flood control, beach erosion control, and rivers and harbors. We know of no opposition to these projects but would like for you to know how important this unified program of public works is to our delegation, to our State, and to the people of Florida.

The Florida Board of Conservation is composed of the Governor and the six cabinet members. Under our State law, the board of conservation has the duty of supervising and coordinating development of the water resources in Florida and preparing the unified statewide program for presentation to Congress.

Last week we appeared before Congressman Bob Jones' Flood Control Committee and made our presentation on projects within his purview. Members of our Florida delegation consider it important that our actions show equal respect for the Rivers and Harbors Committee. We have come back from Florida to prove this point, but we will make our appearance brief because we know you have an overloaded schedule. We appreciate the loyal and diligent efforts of our