

is really not controversial. This project bears all of the criteria necessary to be, and entitling it to be, put in the omnibus bill.

For instance, the local sponsor has made all assurances of local cooperation. The project was approved by the district engineer in New Orleans, the division engineer in Vicksburg, and the Chief of Engineers in Washington, the Governor of Louisiana and the Secretary of the Army. It bears a favorable cost-to-benefit ratio and finally and most importantly this bill has the blessing of the Budget Bureau. So I say I don't think there is really much point in my taking the time of the committee.

I would like to file, however, a more detailed statement for the record.

Mr. BLATNIK. Without objection.

(The statement follows:)

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE EDWIN E. WILLIS IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT
"ATCHAFALAYA RIVER AND BAYOUS CHENE, BOEUF, AND BLACK, LOUISIANA"

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I come before you today to offer testimony in support of perhaps the most significant navigation project which has been proposed for my Congressional District since I first came to Congress twenty years ago.

This project, known as the Lower Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black, Louisiana, is proposed for Congressional authorization by my bill, H.R. 6525, referred to your committee on March 2, 1967, and intended for incorporation into the 1968 Omnibus Rivers and Harbors Authorization bill.

The proposed improvements are described in detail in House Document 155 of the 90th Congress, 1st Session, dated August 10, 1967. As the committee knows, that Document carries the highly favorable agency reports of the District Engineer, the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, the Chief of Engineers, the Secretary of the Army, the Bureau of the Budget, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The House Document 155 also carries the strong endorsement of the State of Louisiana, acting through its Department of Public Works. Full assurances have been given by local interests that they will furnish all lands, easements and rights-of-way; will make alterations to roads, bridges, pipelines, cables and other utilities; and will hold and save the United States free from damages.

These assurances of local cooperation (totaling an estimated \$881,000 of the total project cost of \$9,526,000) are reinforced by a formal pledge of support by the Honorable John J. McKeithen, Governor of the State of Louisiana, in a letter of May 26, 1967, addressed to Colonel Thomas J. Bowen of the New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers. The Governor's letter reads as follows:

STATE OF LOUISIANA,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Baton Rouge, May 26, 1967.

Col. THOMAS J. BOWEN,
District Engineer,
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers,
New Orleans, La.

DEAR COLONEL BOWEN: The rapid expansion of offshore and related industries makes it imperative that adequate channels of sufficient widths and depths be constructed in the Morgan City area. I am, therefore, in full support of the improvements proposed for the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black, Louisiana project.

As Governor of the State of Louisiana, I give the assurances to the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, that the requirements made of local interests will be carried out by the appropriate local governmental units.

Inasmuch as there are a number of Parishes to be dealt with, I hereby designate the Louisiana Department of Public Works as the agency to coordinate the efforts of local interests and to see that local commitments are carried out promptly.

The State of Louisiana appreciates the fine work the Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army, has been doing over the years within the State.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. McKEITHEN,
Governor of Louisiana.