

Committee on Resources

Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans

Statement

March 16, 2000

Honorable H. James Saxton
339 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: February 22, 2000 - Field Hearing: Ocean Dumping

Dear Congressman Saxton and Members, Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans:

My name is Mark Mutter. I am the Mayor of Dover Township and I think that I speak for our entire community when I say that it is our honor to serve as host town of today's hearing. Thank you for coming here and thank you for listening to "We the People."

The Township is already on record, in writing and public pronouncements, as to the issue before you. We fully stand by those comments.

Today, however, one further thought - and an observation about our future.

Our thought is, simply, that there is a need for federal legislation on ocean dumping. Congressman Christopher Smith (R-4th District) and you have introduced legislation in the House of Representatives which would, respectively, stop all dumping in our ocean and stop dumping at the HARS site. We support these efforts.

The time has come for someone to say in a loud and clear voice that we just cannot rely on or even trust the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers anymore. A generation ago, the Army Corps hurt our State with the now aborted Tocks Island Dam Project in northwest New Jersey. Families were ruined, private property was taken, and lives were lost - because of an idea that was mismanaged from the start and ultimately abandoned by this agency.

Today, for us, history is, unfortunately, repeating itself. The Army Corps is again at work hurting the interests of New Jersey - this time, the Jersey Shore. They mismanaged the so-called "public hearing" at Fort Monmouth last month, they mismanaged how the renewed permit to dump was to be issued, they mismanaged the entire process.

Only through "We the People" - through our elected federal representatives - can we be saved from another Tocks Island Dam type debacle. So, we need legislation - and we need it now.

Last, an observation about the future. A few yards from this meeting room, in our Town Hall courtyard, stands our flag pole which proudly flies our "***Don't Dump On Us***" banner which has come to symbolize

our movement. I had hoped, today, to have introduced the maker of that banner - the "Betsy Ross" of our cause. Unfortunately, she could not be here today - her name is Svetlana, she is a friend of mine from Church, she is a retired seamstress, and she is the grandmother of five grandchildren. She literally made that flag from scratch surrounded by little boys, little girls and a toddler.

When I asked her back in January after Church one day, with all of her obligations as a loving grandmother, if she would sew a flag for me as a personal favor for this worthy cause, she said:

Yes, Mark, I will do it. I will sew you a flag. I will do it as a favor for you. But, I will do it more as a favor for my grandchildren."

That, Congressman Saxton, is what this issue is all about. It is about the future - our children and our grandchildren's future.

The future is now. Let us act - now.

Thank you.

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