

STATE OF ALASKA

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

WATER RESOURCES BOARD

323 E. 4TH AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
PHONE: (907) 279-5577

April 12, 1982

Honorable Ted Stevens
United States Senate
127 Russel Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Stevens:

At the last Water Resources Board meeting in December, a continued discussion of the state oil spill response procedure took place. There was major concern expressed over two issues. The first is the automatic fine levied in the event of any oil spill. The second is the confusion regarding the authority to which the spiller must report.

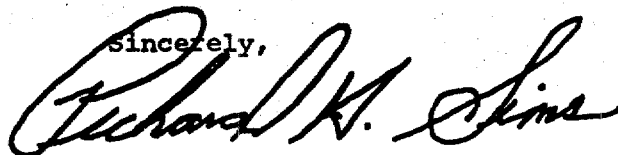
We recommend abolition of the mandatory fine as an unfair assessment, particularly in the case of the small business owners who respond promptly and correctly to oil spills for which they are responsible. We realize that there are many cases where deliberate negligence requires a fine, but we believe people should not be penalized when they make appropriate responses to situations.

We see inherent dangers in a mandatory fine. People may not report spills in the first place; people may report smaller spills than have actually occurred in an attempt to avoid a heavier fine. The state and the U.S. Coast Guard do visit the site in the case of offshore oil spills, but in some cases evidence may be obscured.

In addressing the confusion regarding the reporting responsibility, it is our understanding that the U.S. Coast Guard is the first overseer for offshore spills, and EPA has responsibilities for spills on inland waters. The State of Alaska, and sometimes local municipalities, may require reports too. It is often unclear to the spiller what hierarchy of reporting must be followed. It would help to publish a brochure or instruction sheet and advertise its availability. Another suggestion is one statewide toll-free number for oil spills. The person operating this reporting line would then assume the notification responsibilities, enabling a "one-window" approach for the spiller. It may be possible to share the expense of such a line among the state and federal agencies involved in the reporting procedure.

We appreciate any cooperation you can lend to this effort.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Sims
Chair

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April 12, 1982

Honorable Don Young
House of Representatives
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Young:

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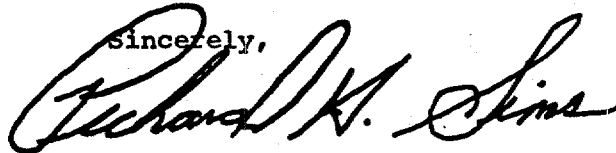
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April 12, 1982

Honorable Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senate
2140 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Murkowski:

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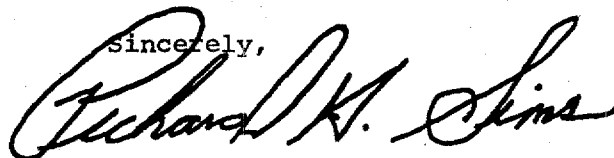
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