

HJR

54

Alaska  
MUNICIPAL  
League

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204 N. FRANKLIN ST.  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

January 23, 1984

To: House Resources Committee  
From: Ginny Chitwood, AML Executive Director *Q.C.*  
Re: HJR 54 - Supporting Variance Requests by Pulp Mills

The Alaska Municipal League urges your approval of HJR 54. Attached is a copy of the resolution in support that was unanimously adopted at the AML annual business meeting last November.

RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALASKA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE  
SUPPORTING A VARIANCE FROM NATIONAL E.P.A.  
REGULATIONS WHICH COULD FURTHER STRANGLE THE  
ALASKA TIMBER INDUSTRY

WHEREAS, much of the economy of Alaska is dependent upon the health and continuance of the timber and fishing industries, and

WHEREAS there are two pulp mills in Alaska which process all of the pulp timber in Alaska, and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency is considering forcing the pulp mills in Sitka and Ketchikan to upgrade to meet more stringent national waste water discharge standards, and

WHEREAS, to meet the national water discharge standards would entail burning the waste and thus cause further air pollution, and

WHEREAS, it is known that these more stringent standards would not significantly enhance the Alaskan environment, but it is also known that the cost of meeting the E.P.A. standards could force the pulp mills to close;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Alaska Municipal League and its member municipalities fully support the variance request of the two Alaska pulp mills and urge the Environmental Protection Agency to grant the variance requests. The economy of Alaska and the individual jobs of our citizens need to be given great weight in the decision.

Adopted this 5th day of November, 1983.

# Alaska State Legislature

BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Chairman  
ROBERT H. ZIEGLER, SR., Vice Chairman  
DICK ELIASON  
PAUL FISCHER  
VIC FISCHER  
BOB MULCAHY  
ARLISS STURGULEWSKI



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STATE CAPITAL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
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## Senate

### Committee on Resources

TO: Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Senate Resources Committee Staff

RE: Hearing on SJR 29, Supporting variance requests by pulp mills in Southeast Alaska.

DATE: January 13, 1984

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On Monday, January 16, 1984 at 2:30 pm in the Beltz Room, the Senate Resources Committee will hear SJR 29, Supporting variance requests by pulp mills in Southeast Alaska.

The Alaska Lumber and Pulp Company (ALP), near Sitka, and Louisiana-Pacific/Ketchikan (LP/K), near Ketchikan, both engaged in the production of dissolving sulfite pulp, have requested a waiver from the national water pollution standards. These standards are to be met by all point source dischargers pursuant to the Clean Water Act.

In 1972, standards were established to limit the effluent discharge from pulp mills nationwide. Because of the "peculiar land, energy, and logistic constraints" which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) associated with ALP and LP/K, in 1974 they applied for and were granted permits allowing greater effluent discharge than pulp mills nationwide. [75 lbs./ton daily average, as compared to 60 lbs./ton nationwide.] In 1977, national standards were changed to limit discharge to 46.8 lbs./ton.

When the ALP and LP/K permits expired in 1979, the pulp mills requested a continued variance from EPA to allow discharge at the level determined in 1974 (75 lbs./ton). EPA regulations provide that upon finding factors relating to a particular discharge that are "fundamentally different" from the factors considered by EPA in establishing the national standards, alternative effluent limitations may be established for that discharge. The basis of ALP and LP/K's variance request centered around four factors:

SJR 29  
1/13/84  
page 2

- 1) Lack of land for disposal of wastewater solids.
- 2) Non-water quality environmental impacts, particularly the unavailability of external power sources.
- 3) The cost of compliance with the standards.
- 4) The lack of effect compliance would have on water quality.

In August, 1983, EPA made a tentative decision to deny the Fundamentally Different Factors variance request, based on the following findings:

- 1) The wastewater solids can be incinerated rather than landfilled.
- 2) ALP and LP/K have the capability of generating sufficient electricity.
- 3) Costs of compliance would not be disproportionate to the costs used in the guidelines.
- 4) According to EPA regulation, water quality is not a factor on which a variance can be granted.

Public comment was accepted on the tentative decision through December; a final decision by EPA is pending.

SJR 29 urges EPA to grant the variances requested by the mills, citing the economic impact of compliance with the national standard, the air pollution problem that would be created if the wastewater solids were burned, and the finding by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that continued discharge will not violate state water quality standards.

TESTIMONY OF  
THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION  
BEFORE  
THE U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
CONCERNING EPA'S PROPOSED DECISIONS  
REGARDING  
THE TWO ALASKA PULP MILLS

MY NAME IS DOCTOR RICHARD A. NEVE', COMMISSIONER OF THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION. I AM HERE TODAY TO TESTIFY ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S PROPOSED DENIAL OF THE FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FACTORS VARIANCE REQUEST FROM THE ALASKA LUMBER AND PULP COMPANY, INCORPORATED, FOR THEIR SITKA MILL, AND THE LOUISIANA PACIFIC CORPORATION, KETCHIKAN DIVISION, FOR THEIR KETCHIKAN MILL.

THE EPA'S TENTATIVE DECISION TO DENY THE MILLS' REQUEST FOR A VARIANCE IS THE RESULT OF YEARS OF COMPLEX STUDY AND TECHNICAL WORK BY BOTH THE MILLS AND THE EPA. THE EPA'S FINAL DECISION WILL SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGE OUR VIEW OF BOTH MILLS' DRAFT NPDES PERMITS AND THE STATE OF ALASKA'S CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATION. BOTH THE PUBLIC AND THE STATE OF ALASKA NEED ADEQUATE TIME TO EVALUATE THE RELEVANT VERBAL AND WRITTEN COMMENTS PRESENTED AT THESE HEARINGS BEFORE PROVIDING MEANINGFUL INPUT ON THE EPA DRAFT NPDES PERMIT FOR THE MILLS. THEREFORE, I PETITION THE EPA TO EXTEND THE PUBLIC HEARING COMMENT PERIOD ON THE DRAFT NPDES PERMIT UNTIL IT HAS REACHED A FINAL DECISION ON THE VARIANCE REQUEST AND THE PROPOSAL FOR A SEPARATE SUB-CATEGORY FOR ALASKA.

OUR COMMENTS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEPARATE ALASKA SUBCATEGORY OF THE PULP, PAPER, AND PAPERBOARD INDUSTRY WILL BE SENT TO ROBERT W. DELLINGER AS REQUESTED IN THE EPA'S PUBLIC NOTICE OF SEPTEMBER 23, 1983. I WILL MAIL YOU A COPY OF THAT LETTER FOR INCLUSION AS PART OF MY TESTIMONY HERE TODAY.

MY TESTIMONY, WITH THE ATTACHED WRITTEN DOCUMENTS, IS INTENDED TO HELP THE EPA AND THE ALASKAN MILLS SATISFACTORILY RESOLVE QUESTIONS SURROUNDING THE VARIANCE REQUEST. THESE WRITTEN DOCUMENTS IDENTIFY THE ITEMS WHICH MY DEPARTMENT BELIEVES NEED ADDITIONAL ATTENTION BEFORE THE EPA REACHES ITS FINAL DETERMINATION. THEY INCLUDE THE DEPARTMENT'S ANALYSIS OF THE EPA'S DECISION ON RESTORATION OF EXISTING COSTS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVING BEST PRACTICABLE TECHNOLOGY EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS AND A DISCUSSION OF COST ESTIMATES OF EXPANDED TREATMENT SYSTEMS THAT MAY BE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE BPT EFFLUENT LIMITATIONS.

THE EPA'S DECISION DOCUMENT DATED AUGUST 24, 1983, INDICATED THE NEED FOR BETTER QUANTIFICATION OF ADVERSE IMPACTS ON AIR QUALITY THAT WOULD RESULT FROM THE BURNING OF ADDITIONAL WASTEWATER SLUDGE. THE DOCUMENT ALSO POINTED OUT A LACK OF SUFFICIENT DATA TO IDENTIFY THE NON-WATER QUALITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WHICH MAY RESULT IF THE VARIANCE REQUEST IS DENIED. MY STAFF HAS REVIEWED THE DECISION DOCUMENT WHICH SET THE STAGE FOR THE EPA'S PRELIMINARY DECISION TO DENY THE VARIANCE. OUR REVIEW OF THE EPA'S ANALYSIS REVEALED SOME AREAS THAT NEED FURTHER EXAMINATION BEFORE A FINAL DECISION IS MADE.

A PORTION OF THE COSTS INCURRED BY THE INITIAL EXPANSION OF THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS IN THE LATE SEVENTIES HAS BEEN ESTIMATED BY THE INSTALLATION OF AN OIL BOILER. WHILE THIS MAY BE VALID TO ACCOUNT FOR THE POWER REQUIRED TO OPERATE THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM, THERE IS NO CREDIT ALLOWED FOR AN INCINERATOR TO BURN THE SLUDGE, THE POWER LOST IN EVAPORATING THE SLUDGE, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE COST OF CONTROLLING THE AIR POLLUTION FOR THE EMISSIONS FROM SLUDGE BURNING.

INCINERATION OF THE SLUDGE GENERATED BY OPERATION OF EXISTING SECONDARY WASTE-WATER TREATMENT CONTROLS HAS DELAYED BOTH MILLS' PROGRESS TOWARD COMPLIANCE WITH AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS. EXTENSIVE STUDIES AND THE INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL PROCESS CONTROLS HAVE BEEN NEEDED TO MINIMIZE THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS. ADDITIONAL CONTROLS ARE STILL NEEDED AT BOTH MILLS TO COMPLETELY CONTROL THE INCREASED AIR POLLUTION CREATED SINCE THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SYSTEMS WERE INSTALLED IN THE LATE SEVENTIES.

THE COSTS OF THESE CONTROLS MUST BE CONSIDERED IN THE ANALYSIS OF WHETHER THE MILLS ARE BEING ASKED TO SPEND CONSIDERABLY MORE DOLLARS THAN EPA'S MODEL MILL.

A SECOND AREA THAT IS UNCLEAR IS THE ELIMINATION OF A LARGE PORTION OF CREDIT FOR THE REVISED SOLIDS HANDLING FACILITIES AT BOTH MILLS. THE REVISIONS PERFORMED AFTER THE INSTALLATION OF THE SECONDARY TREATMENT FACILITY ARE A RESULT OF THE WATER DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS, AND SHOULD BE ALLOWED.

FINALLY, IN THE EVALUATION FOR THE COSTS OF WHAT WILL BE NEEDED TO BE INSTALLED TO MEET THE GUIDELINES TREATMENT, IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW THE ADDITIONAL SLUDGE GENERATED WILL BE HANDLED AND BURNED. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT THE ONLY VIABLE OPTION IS THE REPLACEMENT OF A POWER BOILER. IF THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE, THEN THE COSTS TO MEET GUIDELINE LIMITS WILL NEED TO REFLECT THIS POSSIBILITY.

ALSO, THE COSTS OF ANY NEW PERMITS REQUIRED BY THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW BOILER OR SLUDGE INCINERATOR OR BY THE MODIFICATION OF AN EXISTING WOODWASTE BOILER MUST BE INCLUDED. ADDITIONAL SLUDGE BURNING WILL PROBABLY FALL INTO THE REQUIREMENTS OF A PREVENTION OF SIGNIFICANT DETERIORATION AIR QUALITY

PERMIT. THESE PERMITS CAN REQUIRE UP TO ONE YEAR OF BACKGROUND METEOROLOGICAL AND AIR QUALITY MONITORING DATA AND EXTENSIVE COMPUTER MODELING TO SHOW VIOLATIONS OF AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS WILL NOT OCCUR ON THE NEARBY HILLSIDES. THIS ANALYSIS CAN BE VERY EXPENSIVE.

OTHER PORTIONS OF THE DECISION DOCUMENT ARE UNCLEAR BUT IT IS MORE APPROPRIATELY DISCUSSED BY THE PULP MILLS. I REQUEST THE PULP MILL REPRESENTATIVES PROVIDE SPECIFIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE ADDITIONAL COSTS IN THESE AREAS ALONG WITH PROOF OF NON-WATER QUALITY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AS REQUESTED BY THE EPA.

SINCE THE EXPANSION OF THE SLUDGE HANDLING AND DISPOSAL SYSTEM IS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE EPA'S PROPOSED DENIAL OF THE VARIANCE, PROOF THAT THE PROPOSED SOLUTION TO SLUDGE DISPOSAL WILL NOT IMPACT AIR QUALITY IS NEEDED BEFORE THE VARIANCE REQUEST IS RESCINDED. WE DO NOT WANT TO BE IN THE POSITION WE WERE IN, IN 1980, OF COPING WITH AN AIR POLLUTION PROBLEM CAUSED BY WATER DISCHARGE CONTROLS. IN FACT, THAT PROBLEM STILL EXISTS TODAY.

MY DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO REQUIRING THAT BOTH ALASKA LUMBER & PULP AND LOUISIANA-PACIFIC, KETCHIKAN DIVISION, MEET THE AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS FOR THEIR PULP MILLS. WERE THERE NO WASTEWATER SLUDGE TO INCINERATE IT IS PROBABLE THE MILLS WOULD ALREADY BE MEETING AIR QUALITY REQUIREMENTS. MY DEPARTMENT IS ALSO ON RECORD AS STATING THAT WATER QUALITY NEAR THE PULP MILLS, SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED OVER EARLIER YEARS, WOULD NOT BE MEASURABLY BETTER AS A RESULT OF EPA'S REQUIREMENTS. THE ADDITIONAL END-OF-PIPE TREATMENT TO REMOVE BIOLOGICAL OXYGEN DEMAND BY 28 POUNDS PER TON OF PULP PRODUCED WOULD NOT RESULT IN A MARKED IMPROVEMENT OF THE WATERS NEAR THE PULP MILLS.

THE PROPOSED VARIANCE WOULD ALLOW THE PULP MILLS TO MAINTAIN A WASTEWATER DISCHARGE WITH A BOD<sub>5</sub> LEVEL OF 75 POUNDS PER TON OF PULP PRODUCED. BASED ON OUR WATER QUALITY SURVEY IN 1980, IT IS OUR OPINION THAT THE EXISTING LEVEL OF BOD<sub>5</sub> CONTROL IS NOT CAUSING AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE RECEIVING WATERS.

EVEN THE AMOUNT OF CONTROL REALIZED BY THE DENIAL OF THE VARIANCE IS MISLEADING. UNDER THE PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR BOD<sub>5</sub> CONTROL THE MILLS WOULD LOWER THEIR BOD<sub>5</sub> DISCHARGE BY ABOUT 28 POUNDS PER TON OF PULP PRODUCED. THE GUIDELINES, HOWEVER, WOULD ALSO ALLOW THE MILLS TO RAISE THEIR WASTEWATER EMISSIONS OF TOTAL SUSPENDED SOLIDS IN THE WASTEWATER DISCHARGE BY ABOUT 12 POUNDS PER TON OF PULP PRODUCED. THIS OCCURS BECAUSE THE VERY ACT OF TREATMENT TO REMOVE BOD<sub>5</sub> FROM THE WASTEWATER STREAM CREATES SLUDGE AND SUSPENDED SOLIDS.

PREVIOUS COMMISSIONERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION HAVE VOICED THIS SAME CONCERN, THAT THE REDUCTION OF BOD FROM THE EFFLUENT RESULTS IN SLUDGE TO BE BURNED AND ADDITIONAL SUSPENDED SOLIDS TO BE DISCHARGED. OUR OBJECTIONS TO PERMITS PROPOSED IN 1973 AND 1980 WERE BASED ON THAT VERY SAME POINT.

WE AS REGULATORS IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT HAVE AN EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY TO REALIZE AND CONSIDER THE EFFECTS THESE REGULATIONS WILL HAVE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ON THE PEOPLE FOR WHOM THE ENVIRONMENT WAS CREATED. IN THIS CASE, IT APPEARS TO BE A MATTER OF MINIMAL GAIN IN ONE AREA FOR AGGRAVATED LOSSES IN OTHERS. IF THE PULP MILLS WERE PROVEN TO BE DESTROYING THE WATER QUALITY NEAR THE MILLS AND IF THE SECONDARY TREATMENT HAD NOT AND WILL NOT IMPACT THE AIR QUALITY OF THE AREA, YOUR DECISION WOULD MORE THAN LIKELY BE EASIER.

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD LIKE TO STATE THAT THE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT PRESENTLY SUPPORT THE EPA'S TENTATIVE DECISION TO DENY THE PULP MILLS' REQUEST FOR A VARIANCE. IT APPEARS TO US THAT RECENT, UPDATED INFORMATION ON THE ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING THE MILLS' VARIANCE REQUESTS IS VITAL TO THE FINAL DECISION AND MUST BE GIVEN SERIOUS ATTENTION. I URGE THE EPA TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE TESTIMONY BEING PRESENTED HERE, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A REALISTIC RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUE OF WASTEWATER CONTROL FOR THE PULP MILLS.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT MY DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS.



Luke Popovich is contributing editor-national affairs for Pulp & Paper.

## Treatment for its own sake

Press reports last month confirmed our doubts about the future of the Administration's dwindling effort to deregulate business. Officials at the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) told reporters the effort for now was dead—"ended," as they delicately put it. Since OMB was the locus maximus of the deregulation effort, sadly we must take these officials at their word that little will be done to discourage environmental regulation until after the 1984 election, assuming the home team wins.

Vice President Bush chaired the President's Task Force on Regulatory Relief, which closed down this summer, leaving to OMB the day-to-day vigilance over unnecessary rules. In signaling an end to the much-touted deregulatory effort, the Administration has borrowed liberally from the Vietnam antiwar strategy propounded by former Vermont Senator George Aiken: simply declare a victory, allow a self-satisfied smile, and withdraw. But if a thumping victory has been won against environmental regulation, the paper industry has yet to be informed.

**AN ALASKAN CASE.** Battlefield conditions still suggest that the war against treatment for treatment's sake is far from over. A story from Alaska illustrates the enemy's tenacity. Ketchikan Paper Co. and Alaska Lumber & Pulp Co. of Sitka applied to the Environmental Protection Agency for variances from secondary-treatment requirements under the Clean Water Act in December 1981. The companies had good reasons for asking a waiver from compliance with costly best practicable technology (BPT) requirements beyond the secondary treatment they had already employed.

First, the companies cited insufficient sites for installing sludge disposal facilities. Second, alternative power sources were not available to run generators during installation of control technology. Third, the additional treatment would harm other, nonwater values. Together, they said, additional requirements to treat then-nonhazardous wastes would cost more than EPA's model for similar reductions in the lower 48 states had suggested was proper. Nor would the treatment result in cleaner water.

Their case looked persuasive. The state's Department of Environmental Conservation and congressional delegation okayed the variance. So too did EPA's then-Region X administrator John Spencer on Dec. 28, 1981 recommend that the variance be approved. Again on May 10, he wrote to his EPA superiors in Washington for a variance, citing EPA's own view, dating back to 1974, that "the Alaska

mills are entitled to different treatment . . . because of peculiar land, energy, and logistical constraints." Not only were the companies entitled to a variance, he said, but since EPA staff thought the BPT rule for the sulfite pulp category was "too stringent," the rule ought to be reviewed for immediate suspension.

So it was somewhat surprising that on Aug. 29, EPA announced it had tentatively decided to deny the variance, citing the absence of "fundamentally different factors" in the Alaskan case that would justify suspension of the additional secondary treatment requirements. "We did a thorough economic test and didn't find that their costs were out of line" with those facilities in the lower 48, said one EPA official in Washington.

**INSIDE EPA.** But an internal EPA memo from the Washington staff to EPA's acting water chief dated Feb. 3, 1982 suggests a different motivation for the denial. "A variance based on these problems does not appear to be entirely foreclosed," conceded EPA staff. "Nevertheless," the memo continued, "this [approval] could present a legal problem" because the "Natural Resource Defense Council has been closely following" the case. Worse, the memo alluded to the many other variance applications EPA would be forced to answer if it granted this one, thus upsetting its priorities for approving industrial permits.

Instead of granting the variance, EPA staff suggested the agency grant the two firms a temporary suspension of the BPT rules for the pulp category. And what of the quality of receiving water in all this decision making? It seems that consideration was irrelevant; water quality per se is expressly forbidden to bear on the issue of BPT compliance, and so it is irrelevant to the approval or disapproval of a variance. "If what these companies must do doesn't affect water quality one bit, they still have to install [BPT technology]," said EPA water effluent expert Bob Dellinger in Washington, D.C.

Treatment for treatment's sake is not only pointless but expensive. If the tentative decision isn't overturned after the Nov. 15 comment period expires, officials of Alaska Lumber & Pulp claim they'll be forced to spend \$51 million to achieve mandated reductions of 28 lb/ton. That's in addition to the \$45 million they've already spent to get from 275 lb to 75 lb/ton. "We don't have \$51 million to dump into this project," complained one company spokesman. Too bad money, like environmental quality, has nothing to do with the issue.

Introduced: 1/10/84  
Referred: Resources

BY WENDTE, GRUSSENDORF  
AND MCBRIDE

1 IN THE HOUSE

2

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 54

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

Supporting variance requests by pulp

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mills in Southeast Alaska.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

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WHEREAS the Environmental Protection Agency is now considering vari-

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ance requests from the pulp mills in Southeast Alaska; and

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WHEREAS the pulp mills in Sitka and Ketchikan provide an economic base

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by employing many residents of Southeast Alaska; and

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WHEREAS the quality of water and marine life <sup>is not</sup> [has not been] adversely

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affected by the current effluent discharge from the pulp mills; and

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WHEREAS the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has found

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that continued discharge will not <sup>impact</sup> violate state water quality [standards] and

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supports the issuance of the variance; and

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WHEREAS the former Environmental Protection Agency Regional Adminis-

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trator issued a tentative decision on December 28, 1981, that would have

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granted the variance; and

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WHEREAS the variance being considered would enable the pulp mills to

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continue to treat their waste products in a more efficient and economical

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manner; and

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WHEREAS the denial of the variance would constitute treatment for

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treatment's sake, would create an air pollution problem if the mills did

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comply and would most likely cause the pulp mills and related facilities to

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cease operating because the cost of additional waste treatment is prohibi-

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tive; and

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WHEREAS the United States Forest Service has determined that the

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closure of the pulp mills would cause a <sup>\$147.6</sup> \$143 million per year loss of

1 income in Southeast Alaska;

2 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges that the vari-  
3 ances requested by the mills be granted; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Environ-  
5 mental Protection Agency to consider the loss of income in the event of the  
6 mills' closure as part of the cost of achieving guideline best <sup>Practical</sup> [practicable]  
7 technology in determining whether the cost of compliance is wholly out of  
8 proportion to the model mill.

9 COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ronald  
10 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable William Ruckelshaus,  
11 Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; Ernesta Barnes,  
12 Regional Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and to the  
13 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and  
14 the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delega-  
15 tion in Congress.

Offered: 1/18/84  
Referred: Rules

*Louisiana Pacific*

Original sponsors: Eliason, Ziegler  
Ray, et al

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
2 CS FOR SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29 (Resources)  
3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
4 THIRTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 Supporting variance requests by pulp  
6 mills in Southeast Alaska.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 WHEREAS the Environmental Protection Agency is now considering vari  
9 ance requests from the pulp mills in Southeast Alaska; and

10 WHEREAS the pulp mills in Sitka and Ketchikan provide an economic base  
11 by employing many residents of Southeast Alaska; and

12 WHEREAS the quality of water and marine life is not adversely affected  
13 by the current effluent discharge from the pulp mills; and

14 WHEREAS the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has found  
15 that continued discharge will not impact state water quality and supports,  
16 the issuance of the variance; and

17 WHEREAS the former Environmental Protection Agency Regional Adminis-  
18 trator issued a tentative decision on December 28, 1981, that would have  
19 granted the variance; and

20 WHEREAS the variance being considered would enable the pulp mills to  
21 continue to treat their waste products in a more efficient and economical  
22 manner; and *Environmental*

23 WHEREAS the denial of the variance would constitute treatment for  
24 treatment's sake, would create an air pollution problem if the mills did  
25 comply and would most likely cause the pulp mills and related facilities to  
26 cease operating because the cost of additional waste treatment is prohibi-  
27 tive; and

28 WHEREAS the United States Forest Service has determined that the  
29 closure of the pulp mills would cause a \$147.6 million per year loss of

1 income in Southeast Alaska;

2 BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges that the vari-  
3 ances requested by the mills be granted; and be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the Environ-  
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7 technology in determining whether the cost of compliance is wholly out of  
8 proportion to the model mill.

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10 Reagan, President of the United States; the Honorable William Ruckelshaus,  
11 Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; Ernesta Barnes,  
12 Regional Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and to the  
13 Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and  
14 the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delega-  
15 tion in Congress.

Forest Service Presentation to the House Resources Committee,  
Alaska Legislature, Regarding  
HJR 54 -- "Supporting Variance Requests  
by Pulp Mills in Southeast Alaska"

3:00 p.m., January 23, 1984, Room 118, Alaska Capitol Building  
Konrad B. Reinke, Director, Office of Information

The Forest Service is pleased to provide testimony on House Joint Resolution 54 relating to EPA's decision to deny the Fundamentally Different Factor Variance for secondary treatment of effluent from Alaskan pulp mills. James S. Watson, former Ketchikan Area Forest Supervisor, presented testimony on this matter to the EPA at a hearing in Ketchikan on May 11, 1976, concerning secondary treatment for the Ketchikan Pulp Company. Forest Service Supervisors Gee and Green also provided testimony to EPA on the subject at two hearings in November, 1983.

The significance of the timber industry to the economy of Alaska is fully recognized by the Forest Service. At the same time, the Forest Service is in full agreement with objectives of the Clean Water Act. We believe that a healthy timber-based economy can exist within the framework of this Act.

The value of the pulp industry to the economy of Southeast Alaska has been recognized since near the turn of the century. The efforts of many Alaskans during the first half of the century were instrumental in the development of the pulp industry in Alaska during the early 1950's. Some of the original and still valid objectives are: (1) encouraging the development of Alaska, (2) the establishment of new industry with a commercially sound and permanently economical basis while providing due regard for the protection of the natural resources of Alaska, and (3) specifically for the establishment of the pulp mill industry for the efficient utilization of forest products.

The nature and composition of the commercial forests of Southeast Alaska along with Pacific Rim markets dictate the type of industry needed to efficiently utilize the timber. Most of the timber stands are mature and overmature western hemlock with considerable defect. The optimal market for these stands is pulpwood. Without the pulp market, less than one-half of these stands would be marketable. There is no feasible economical opportunity to harvest saw logs only with such operations being silviculturally or environmentally acceptable. Integrated and balanced markets for both pulpwood and saw logs are key to sustaining the timber base economy of Southeast Alaska.

The Sitka and Ketchikan pulp mills provide the only economic outlet for pulpwood in Southeast Alaska. The plants have a total capacity of 392,000 short tons of pulp annually. Approximately 334 MMBF of logs are required each year for this production level. The material comes from National Forest, State of Alaska, and Alaska Native Corporation lands.

Closure of one or both mills will have a significant impact on Southeast Alaska and reverse decades of effort on the part of many to strengthen and diversify the economy. Well over 2,500 jobs could be lost to the Regional economy with the closure of these pulpmills.

We have recently evaluated the effects of closure of both pulp mills upon the economy of Alaska. A conservative estimate of the direct and indirect reduction in income as a result of the closure of both mills is \$147.6 million annually. This estimate assumes no alternative market for pulp logs and hemlock cant production can continue independent of pulp production.

This was derived by using the Alaska Interactive Policy Analysis Simulation System developed by the Forest Service (Pacific Northwest Forest and Range Experiment Station) in cooperation with the University of Minnesota.

Indirectly, the pulp industry has also provided benefits to Alaska and the country as a whole that exceeded the original objectives. These benefits relate to the continuing development of a critically needed ground transportation network in Southeast Alaska and the balance of payments through heavy export of timber products from Alaska.

An example of the benefits to the transportation network is the approximately 70 miles of State highway system on Prince of Wales Island which links several island communities to the Alaska Marine Highway system. These State highways were developed by improving existing roads that were originally constructed for the harvest of timber. Currently there are about 300 miles of State highways in Alaska that were developed in this fashion, and more are planned.

Since most of Alaska's wood products are exported, indirect benefits may be more significant than the direct contribution to the Nation's economy. Alaska has historically exported many of its resource-based products in raw or semi-processed form. Logs, lumber, dissolving pulp, minerals, fish, and natural gas are the primary exports. Alaska major trading area is the Pacific Rim, accounting for nearly two-thirds of Alaska's domestic and foreign trade. Japan is Alaska's principal trading partner, representing more than 90 percent of Alaska's foreign import/export trade. The value of forest products exported has increased roughly 65 percent since 1976, with the greatest growth in round log and pulp exports. Forest exports represent approximately one-quarter of the total value of exports from Alaska, or about \$190 million dollars in 1983.

However, Alaska is supplying less than 1 percent of the total volume of wood being used in Japan, South Korea, the Peoples Republic of China, and Taiwan. Competition from Canada and other exporting countries is keen. Purchasers of National Forest timber in Alaska must meet much higher utilization, environmental practices, and primary manufacturing requirements than those required by these competing countries. These requirements add to the cost of production, and with the current poor market situation both the long-term pulp

timber sales are at or near "base rates" with little room to absorb additional production costs. Under present markets, these two pulpmills may not be able to operate if these requirements are to be imposed at this time.

Although we foresee some improvement in markets for the next rate redeterminations on the long-term sales, there is little chance that markets will improve to the point of absorbing the construction and operating costs of the additional secondary treatment requirements being considered. To date the mills have spent approximately \$49 million for environmental protection measures.

In our statement we have avoided making judgments on the impacts of effluent discharge on water quality. We recognize that the law simply does not provide for consideration of effects on receiving waters as the criterion for granting a variance. However, requiring sizeable expenditures if there is no improvement in water quality would seem inconsistent with the objective of environmental protection as well as the efforts to improve the competitive position of the United States in world markets.

GOOD AFTERNOON. MY NAME IS BILL SHEFFIELD, AND I AM THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA. I AM HERE TO DISCUSS THE STATE'S POSITION IN REGARD TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S PROPOSED DENIAL OF WAIVERS TO CERTAIN WATER POLLUTION CONTROL REQUIREMENTS REQUESTED BY TWO PULP AND PAPER MILLS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA.

I HAVE RECEIVED MANY, MANY LETTERS OF CONCERN LATELY FROM CITIZENS OF MY STATE ABOUT EPA'S TENTATIVE DECISION. THEREFORE I AM PRESENTING IN MY TESTIMONY THE STATE'S SENTIMENTS -- WHICH ARE SHARED BY MY CONSTITUENTS -- ABOUT THE SOLID REASONS WHICH WE BELIEVE SHOULD BE CAUSE FOR EPA TO REVIEW AND HOPEFULLY GRANT THE REQUEST FOR WAIVERS.

I SHOULD ADD THAT DUE TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE TO THE STATE, I HAVE REQUESTED COMMISSIONER NEVE' OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND COMMISSIONER LYON OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO WORK WITH EPA AND OTHER RELEVANT PARTIES TO ACHIEVE A RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE THAT WILL BE REASONABLE, FAIR AND JUST.

THEY WILL BE TESTIFYING SEPARATELY ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE MILLS' SITUATION, SO I WILL CONFINE MY REMARKS TO THE BROADER POLICY ISSUES. MY HOPE TODAY IS TO MAKE A CONVINCING CASE FOR EPA TO ACCEPT OUR OFFER OF TAKING ANOTHER LOOK AT THE PULP MILLS' REQUEST, AND TO WORK WITH THE STATE TO DEVELOP A EQUITABLE DECISION FOR THE MILLS.

THE CRUX OF OUR CONCERNS IS THAT EPA'S PROPOSED ACTION WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE ECONOMIC EFFECTS ON THE MILLS. EPA'S ACTION WILL BE TAKEN MERELY TO ACHIEVE WASTE DISCHARGE REDUCTIONS WHICH ARE NOT NECESSARY IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

I RECOGNIZE THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND THE TWO PULP MILLS HAVE BEEN IN DISCUSSIONS OVER THIS ISSUE FOR A LONG TIME. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE THRUST OF EPA'S CASE SUPPORTING ITS PROPOSED ACTION DOES NOT FUNDAMENTALLY HAVE TO DO WITH THE EFFECT OF THE MILLS' DISCHARGE ON LOCAL WATER QUALITY. RATHER, IT CENTERS AROUND THE CONCLUSION THAT THE COSTS OF INSTALLING ADDITIONAL POLLUTION CONTROL EQUIPMENT ARE NOT EXCESSIVE, ACCORDING TO EPA'S CURRENT INTERPRETATION OF LAW.

OUR DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION HAS MONITORED THE TWO SITES IN QUESTION EXTENSIVELY FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. WE CONCLUDE, CATEGORICALLY, THAT THERE IS NO APPRECIABLE ADVERSE EFFECT ON WATER QUALITY BY THE MILLS AT THE CURRENT LEVEL OF DISCHARGE. THEREFORE THE EPA DECISION, IF SUSTAINED, MAY WELL BE A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF IMPOSING ADDITIONAL POLLUTION CONTROL REQUIREMENTS FOR THEIR OWN SAKE, AND NOT FOR ANY IDENTIFIABLE AND NEEDED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

I AM SURE EPA IS SUBJECT TO LEGAL AND POLICY CONSTRAINTS WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE TENTATIVE DECISION. BUT I MUST BELIEVE THERE IS FLEXIBILITY TO ENABLE THE AGENCY TO REACH A DIFFERENT CONCLUSION BASED ON ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OR ON THE RESULTANT COSTS TO THE MILLS.

AS GOVERNOR, I CANNOT STAND BY WHILE UNNECESSARY COSTS AND SEVERE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP TO MANY OF OUR CITIZENS IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA ARE LOOMING AS A RESULT OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE EPA'S DETERMINATION TO PREVAIL IN THIS MATTER, DESPITE THE MERITS.

WE ARE ASKING EPA TO AVOID A NEEDLESS THREAT TO THE VIABILITY OF THE TWO PULP MILLS AND TO THOUSANDS OF PRIMARY AND ASSOCIATED JOBS IN OUR STATE. WE ARE NOT ASKING EPA TO

18 matter, despite the merits.

19 We are asking EPA to avoid a needless threat to  
20 the viability of the two pulp mills and to thousands of  
21 primary and associated jobs in our State. We are not  
22 asking EPA to avoid this threat at the risk of degrading  
23 the environment or abandoning their official responsi-  
24 bilities.

25 In EPA's effort to develop our nation's water  
1 quality program, it has an obligation to consider the  
2 effects of its controls on specific geographical areas  
3 and in light of other environmental impacts. In the case  
4 of Alaska's two pulp mills, EPA must consider this.

5 The two mills, in Sitka and Ketchikan, are  
6 still reeling from the effects of a nation-wide depres-  
7 sion, as is the nation's entire timber and pulp industry.  
8 The mills are being told to spend millions of dollars for  
9 an environmental improvement that cannot be measured in  
10 terms of appreciable or significantly improved water  
11 quality, and which may result in discernible air quality  
12 degradation.

13 In the past, when we faced the question of how  
14 to achieve the mutually-shared goal of cost effective  
15 environmental protection, the Federal EPA and the State  
16 Department of Environmental Conservation have always  
17 worked closely together to obtain a satisfactory resolu-  
18 tion. Usually, everyone has engaged in some give-and-  
19 take and then concluded an agreement. In order to con-  
20 tinue this history of cooperation, I hope these hearings  
21 do not serve to start a confrontation. They must be the  
22 beginning of a new attempt at dialogue. A fresh effort  
23 focused on reaching an agreement acceptable to the State  
24 and to EPA is of crucial importance to me. I commit  
25 myself and my Administration to this goal and ask that

1 EPA do the same.

2 At my request, Commissioner Nevé has developed  
3 options available to the State to deal with EPA's tenta-  
4 tive decision, including a review of the State's respon-  
5 sibilities and obligations under Section 401 of the Clean  
6 Water Act, and the Coastal Zone Management Act. They  
7 have been provided to me and we are assessing these op-  
8 tions carefully. To allow time to work together with EPA  
9 and to explore collectively these options, I would like  
10 to request that EPA extend the public comment period on  
11 the proposed water discharge permits.

AND THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT. THEY HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO ME, AND WE ARE ASSESSING THESE OPTIONS CAREFULLY. TO ALLOW TIME TO WORK TOGETHER WITH EPA AND TO EXPLORE COLLECTIVELY THESE OPTIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST THAT EPA EXTEND THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON THE PROPOSED WATER DISCHARGE PERMITS.

TO BE SURE THAT THE PUBLIC DOCKET IS COMPLETE, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SUBMIT AS WRITTEN TESTIMONY THE LETTER I SENT LAST MONTH WITH ATTACHMENTS TO EPA ADMINISTRATOR RUCKELSHAUS. THE ATTACHMENTS INCLUDE THE ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION'S TESTIMONY AT THE PREVIOUS HEARING ON THE ISSUES BEING DISCUSSED TONIGHT AND VARIOUS LETTERS FROM ALASKA RESIDENTS WHICH DISCUSS THESE ISSUES.

IN CONCLUSION, I WOULD SIMPLY LIKE TO REITERATE THAT DENIAL OF THESE WAIVERS, IF IT WERE TO OCCUR, WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON MY STATE -- BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY. THUS, I URGE EPA TO RE-EXAMINE ITS POSITION AND ASK WHETHER THESE IMPACTS ARE REALLY NECESSARY -- ON GROUNDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS, ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES, OR AS A MATTER OF SOUND PUBLIC POLICY. THE STATE OF ALASKA REMAINS HOPEFUL THAT EPA WILL CONCLUDE THAT A DIFFERENT COURSE OF ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN.

THANK YOU.