

The CHAIRMAN. I saw the letter. If there is no objection, it will be made a part of the record.

(The letter referred to is as follows:)

SANFORD SERVICE CO.,

De Funiak Springs, Fla., May 14, 1942.

HON. JOSEPH J. MANSFIELD, M. C.,

*Chairman, Rivers and Harbors Committee,
Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. MANSFIELD: I have given very careful consideration to the barge and pipe-line bill, which was proposed by Senator Pepper, to go across the State, and his further suggestion of using the Fort Myers to Stewart Canal for distributing petroleum products. If you will secure the regulations governing the use of barges in the Gulf or outside waters you will find that in order to be used in outside waters barges must be equipped with houses, lifeboats, carry crews of two or more men, and it would cost from \$3,000 to \$5,000 to equip each barge and would take thousands of tons of steel and thousands of man-hours of labor of welders who should not be taken away from shipbuilding work. Then it would put each barge out of service from 2 to 4 weeks while the work was being done. In addition to that, and the most serious objection that I see to it, is that these barges would have to be towed in the Gulf by tugs which would be going so slowly that they would be ideal targets for torpedoing by submarines. I see the same objections to a barge line across from the Withlacoochee River to the east coast. I believe that I am safe in saying that not 2 percent of the steel oil barges in service along the Gulf coast and on the inland waters are fitted up to go outside.

It seems to me that the only way that the barge canal from the Withlacoochee River across the State could be utilized by tugs and oil barges would be to complete the Intracoastal Canal from near Apalachicola to St. Marks, and from St. Marks along the west coast to the Withlacoochee, so that barges could be handled on inland waters all of the way to the east coast and as far north as Washington and Baltimore. If a pipe line were put across from the Withlacoochee River, the eastern terminal would be where there is only a 6- or 7-foot channel as far as Jacksonville, and it would be impractical to serve this pipe line with tugs and barges on account of the submarine menace, while if the pipe line were put across from Apalachicola or Carrabelle to Jacksonville they would strike a deeper canal going from Jacksonville to as far north as Washington and Baltimore, and 98 percent of the steel oil barges could immediately begin making deliveries along the intracoastal waterways to the western terminals of such a pipe line.

The provision which was made in the Mansfield bill for widening and deepening the intracoastal waterways from Corpus Christi to Apalachicola and building this other canal would be a great improvement, for the present width of 100 feet in the channel and a 9- or 10-foot channel slows up our speed with loaded barges very much. With a 12-foot channel, our tugs can pull the same loads at from 1 to 2 miles more per hour, or an increase of 20 to 25 percent in their speed, which would, in my opinion, enable each outfit to make at least one more round trip monthly between New Orleans and Apalachicola, and this should increase their deliveries by 25 to 35 percent.

At present we have two 150-horsepower tugs and three barges. We have another 300,000-gallon barge under construction which will be delivered within the next week or 10 days. In addition to that, we have another 300,000-gallon barge which will be delivered about July 1, and a new 220-horsepower steel tug. When we get these in, we shall be in position to deliver more than a million and a quarter gallons at each round trip of the three tugs and barges.

One of our 150-horsepower tugs with 2 barges transports the equivalent of 80 railroad tank cars at a trip and can make 4 round trips a month.

I am writing every Congressman in the States along the coast from New York to Texas, telling them of these conditions and asking their support for your bill, which carries an appropriation to do the work. This is very necessary because of the delay which will be caused if the bill merely authorizes the building of the canal without providing funds with which to do the work.