

GULF INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY—continued

From Corpus Christi, Tex., to—	Miles
Beaumont, Tex.....	300
Orange, Tex.....	295
Morgan City, La.....	463
New Orleans (Canal St.), La.....	567
Gulfport, Miss.....	645
Biloxi, Miss.....	658
Mobile, Ala.....	733
Pensacola, Fla.....	761
Panama City, Fla.....	864
Carrabella, Fla.....	954

Controlling depth 9 feet.

Mr. MULLER. I think that exhausts the witnesses representing Texas, and our presentation has probably exhausted the committee.

I am going to ask permission, at the conclusion of the presentation of our case, to make a brief concluding statement.

There are quite a number of witnesses here from Florida, Representative Sikes is here, and I will ask him if he will be kind enough to present these witnesses from his State.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT L. F. SIKES, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. SIKES. Mr. Chairman, I will be glad to present the witnesses from Florida. Before doing that, if I may, I would like to have the permission of the committee to insert a preliminary statement in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(There was no objection.)

Mr. SIKES. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: I urge in unqualified terms the construction of additional facilities to expedite the movement of oil and gasoline from the Gulf coast across Florida and to the north and east, and the greater utilization of facilities now existing for that purpose.

In Florida we have long been convinced that the carrying power of the Intracoastal Waterway and of the dock and storage facilities of our State have been used for but a very small part of their potentialities. We believe that through barges, pipe lines, and railroads we can speedily and effectively diminish the present emergency in gasoline and oil shipments. We ask this committee to give us the opportunity to show how quickly we can put to work men and materials not now engaged in the war effort.

In particular do I stress the importance of the proposal to extend an additional pipe line from northwest Florida's Gulf coast across the State to Jacksonville. A protected waterway plus ample harbor and dock facilities are available for the transportation of oil to a number of Gulf coast ports. Many available barges are not now in use. I can name a dozen yards which are ready to build additional barges and towing craft. Many of them are in my own district. Contrary to oft-repeated statements, there is no scarcity of material, for wooden barges and towing craft can be built to release the metal barges needed for gasoline shipments. It is only for gasoline shipments that metal barges are required. We people down South know how to make tractors and Ford automobiles run with baling wire.