

By: Senator Holland

SENATE RESOLUTION

TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE COMPLETION, FUNDING, AND
MAINTENANCE OF A TWELVE-FOOT DEEP CHANNEL FOR
NAVIGATION ALONG THE ARKANSAS RIVER.

Subtitle

TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE COMPLETION,
FUNDING, AND MAINTENANCE OF A TWELVE-FOOT
DEEP CHANNEL FOR NAVIGATION ALONG THE
ARKANSAS RIVER.

WHEREAS, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System is a 440-mile waterway that serves the heartland of the United States with cheap, reliable, and environmentally friendly transportation; and

WHEREAS, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System serves Arkansas, Oklahoma, and the surrounding states with ports on the nation's 25,000-mile inland waterway system, and foreign and domestic ports beyond by way of New Orleans and the Intracoastal Waterway; and

WHEREAS, in an average year, 13 million tons of cargo are transported on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System; and

WHEREAS, on average a ton of cargo can be transported on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System for one-third of the cost of other forms of transportation; and

WHEREAS, a full "tow" on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River System



consists of 8 barges lashed tightly together and pushed from behind by a single towboat with each barge holding between 1,400 and 1,500 tons of material; and

WHEREAS, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River System has been in operation for 42 years without any major renovations during that time; and results in billions of dollars' worth of trade for the states it serves; and

WHEREAS, the navigation channel of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System is currently a nine-foot deep channel. Public Law 108-137, Section 136, the Energy and Waste Water Development Appropriations Act of 2004 authorized a twelve-foot deep channel on the Arkansas River, and the Record of Decision was signed on September 27, 2005, by Major General Don T. Riley after a multiyear study; and

WHEREAS, currently many barges in the Arkansas River are lightly-loaded for the presently maintained nine-foot deep Arkansas River channel. Each foot of draft represents approximately 177 acres of soybeans and therefore gaining 3 feet of draft on a fifteen-barge tow equals an additional 7,965 acres of soybeans that can be moved with the same equipment and very little extra fuel; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas River has an estimated capacity of between thirty-five and forty-five tons per year but the 2010 tonnage was less than 11.5 million tons. The restrictive nine-foot deep channel is preventing growth; and

WHEREAS, if the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System were maintaining a twelve-foot deep channel, states utilizing the channel would be competitive in attracting new industries and jobs, helping to prevent the loss of industries and current jobs,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS THAT THE SENATE:

(1) Encourages Congress and the Arkansas Congressional Delegation to support the completion, funding, and maintenance of the twelve-foot deep channel on the Arkansas River;

(2) Encourages the Governors and Legislatures of Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Texas, and Colorado to investigate the benefits of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and to join Arkansas in calling on their congressional delegations to support the completion, funding, and maintenance of the twelve-foot deep channel on the Arkansas River;

(3) Encourages the Congress of the United States to authorize an interstate compact with the specific purpose of commerce on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System so that the several states served by the system can work together to promote job industry and creation; and

(4) Encourages the Legislatures of Arkansas and Oklahoma to have a joint meeting in Fort Smith to discuss actions to promote the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and to invite representatives from any other interested state legislature to attend.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, the Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, and to all the members of the Arkansas Congressional Delegation with the request that this resolution be officially entered into the Congressional Record.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy to the Governors and the Legislatures of Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Texas, and Colorado with the request that the resolution be officially entered into the legislative records of each state.