

STATEMENT BY CONGRESSMAN LES AuCOIN
Before the Subcommittee on Public Works
of the House Committee on Appropriations
March 30, 1977

Congressman AuCoin Testifies in Behalf of funds for
the Completion of the South Jetty Tillamook
Bay and Bar, Oregon

Mr. Chairman:

I wish to express to you and the distinguished members of your committee my deep appreciation for this opportunity to testify in behalf of the vitally-needed \$6 million appropriation to complete construction of the south jetty project, Tillamook Bay and Bar, Oregon.

With me this morning to explain more fully why the need is so critical is Basil Edmunds, manager of the Port of Bay City, and several other witnesses whom he will introduce to you. He will present and summarize their testimony, full copies of which have been presented to your staff for inclusion in the record. Also here this morning is Mr. Dan Goldy, the Director of Oregon's Department of Economic Development. He was sent here by Oregon's Governor Bob Straub to tell you personally of the State's urgent desire that the south jetty project be completed.

All of us are here to urge you to add this request to next year's budget so the jetty can finally be built to its full authorized length of 8,000 feet. That was the length recommended by Army Engineers when the project was approved by Congress in 1965. However, when work stopped on the project in 1974, the jetty was only 6,500 feet long. The Corps originally thought the channel would be navigable year-round with the jetty at that length, so Army Engineers decided to study effects of the jetty at the shorter length.

With two years experience now in trying to operate vessels in the Tillamook channel with the shorter south jetty, the Corps now believes finishing the project is justified.

As the other witnesses will tell you, it's more than justified. It's essential if this community is to survive, economically. Since the expectation of a year-round channel has never been realized, the anticipated economic

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development hasn't occurred. In fact, tow-boat operators can use the channel only seven months a year; fishermen, some six months, and charter boats, an estimated five months.

This is a crippling blow for a community which, on the good faith expectation of a year-round channel, substantially invested in docking facilities and other economic development works dependent on access to the channel.

What is more, unless this jetty is completed soon, the remaining economic base of lumber mills and commercial fishing cannot survive.

Tillamook has been on an economic see-saw for years, and finds itself among the highest areas of unemployment. The plain fact is it just can't wait any longer for that jetty.

Local interests are unanimous in their support for finishing the jetty. And not finishing it risks wasting a substantial federal investment in the project. I respectfully request your committee approve the addition of \$6 million for completion of the south jetty during fiscal year 1978.