



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02548**

BY: **MRS. STUBBS (LAKELAND)**

DATE: **JUNE 20, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE MARC GARNEAU**

Response by the Minister of Transport

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Navigable waters

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada recognizes that a strong economy and a clean environment go hand-in-hand.

The Government remains committed to the protection of our coasts and waterways based on scientific evidence, technology, and Indigenous knowledge. That is why in November 2016, the federal government launched the \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan, the largest investment Canada has ever made to protect our coasts and marine environments. This funding will enhance marine safety along Canada's entire coastline, the longest in the world – supporting new and ongoing prevention, preparedness and response measures.

The Government is dedicated to ensuring that Canada's resources are developed in a way that is informed by rigorous science and evidence, aligns to Canada's climate change plan, protects Canada's rich natural environment, including the oceans, respects the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and supports our economy. The Government priority remains to effectively advance both Canada's economic progress and environmental responsibilities.

With Bill C-48, Oil Tank Moratorium Act, The Government of Canada is delivering on its promise to formalize an oil tanker moratorium on British Columbia's north coast, one of the most pristine, bio-diverse habitats in the world. This will provide an unprecedented level of coastal protection around the waters of Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait and Queen

Charlotte Sound and is the first of its kind in the world. It is a precautionary approach that targets products that are likely to remain longest in the environment if spilled.

The proposed legislation will provide an important added level of protection to measures already in place, such as the voluntary Tanker Exclusion Zone. Since 1985, loaded oil tankers servicing the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System from Valdez, Alaska, to United States west coast ports must travel west of the zone in order to protect the shoreline if an oil tanker becomes disabled. Substantial emergency response capabilities already exist on the south coast of BC, whereas northern BC does not have the same infrastructure or response ability.

The Government of Canada has consulted extensively on the proposed legislation, including with Indigenous groups and coastal communities, and many diverse views were expressed. The Minister of Transport has engaged directly with all Indigenous groups along the north and central coast of BC that would be affected or expressed an interest in the moratorium. This included meetings with representatives from Coastal First Nations, Haida Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, Lax Kw'alaams Band, Nisga'a Nation and other Indigenous groups.

To further advance Indigenous partnerships, we are working with Indigenous groups along the BC coast on regional partnership agreements which consider the capacity of Indigenous groups to participate and engage in the marine safety system, and the substantive issues associated with key areas of interest, including the proposed legislation.

This proposed legislation also takes a precautionary approach that targets crude oil or persistent oil products that are likely to remain longest in the environment if spilled. Lighter petroleum products such as gasoline, light diesel oil and kerosene tend to dissipate more rapidly through evaporation. Amendments to the schedule could be considered following a review assessing such things as new science and evidence around the fate and behaviour of the petroleum product when spilled, clean-up technology, and institutional arrangements for responding to vessel-source oil spills. Environmental safety and science will be the main considerations for adding products to or removing products from the schedule.

It is important to note that along BC's north coast there are communities that only receive supplies by vessel. The oil tanker moratorium was never intended to affect resupply to these communities and local industries. The government gathered information that indicates that current resupply traffic supports a threshold of 12,500 metric tonnes. This threshold will allow industries to receive critical resupply materials to maintain jobs and their competitive position.

The Government of Canada will continue to move forward to enhance the protection of our marine environment coasts and waterways based on scientific evidence, technology and Indigenous knowledge. Working in close partnership with Canadians and Indigenous communities will enable a more effective protection of Canada's significant natural environment, while continuing to pursue economic development opportunities.