



RESPONSE TO PETITION

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

PETITION No.: **421-02722**

BY: **MR. CULLEN (SKEENA-BULKLEY VALLEY)**

DATE: **OCTOBER 5, 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 believes that a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand and that the protection of Canada's waters and marine ecosystems is of utmost importance.

Canada has a comprehensive marine safety regime that includes legislation, regulations and policies necessary for the safe conduct of marine activities in harmony with international standards. Building on our robust system, in November 2016, the government announced the Oceans Protection Plan, which will see an unprecedented investment of \$1.5 billion over five years. The new measures will increase the strength and capabilities of Canada's marine safety regime, build world-leading federal environmental response capacity, reduce risks associated with natural resources being imported and exported by ship, and improve economic prospects for the middle-class. This work would be done in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, local groups and communities leading restoration activities.

Furthermore, as part of a suite of measures that the government is putting in place to protect Canada's coasts and waterways, on May 12, 2017, Bill C-48, the Oil Tanker Moratorium Act, was introduced in the House of Commons. Formalizing the proposed oil tanker moratorium on British Columbia's north coast is a key government priority. Through this proposed legislation, the government is seeking to prohibit oil tankers carrying more than 12,500 metric tons of crude or persistent oils as cargo from stopping, loading or unloading at ports or marine installations in northern British Columbia. 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.

Through extensive consultations, we heard that community and industry resupply should be protected. Therefore, shipments below 12,500 metric tons will continue to be allowed to ensure communities can receive critical shipments of heating oils and other petroleum products.

The 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. Environmental safety and science will be the main considerations for adding products to or removing products from the schedule.

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, notably Indigenous communities, will enable a more effective protection of Canada's significant natural environment, while continuing to pursue economic development opportunities.