

Senate Bill No. 51—Discharge of Bilge and Oily Waters

AN ACT to add new Section 40A to Article 66C of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1957 Edition), title "Natural Resources", subtitle "In General", sub-heading "Water Pollution Control Commission", to follow immediately after Section 40 thereof, providing for the affixing of seals to the valves of the ~~oily and other~~ BILGE water systems of certain vessels bound to ~~or from~~ waters of this State, relating generally to such seals and to the discharge of oily ~~and other~~ waters from vessels.

April 6, 1962.

Honorable George W. Della
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with the provisions of Article 2, Section 17, of the Maryland Constitution I have today vetoed Senate Bill 51, and am returning this Bill along with my veto message.

The Bill would attempt to curb the pollution of the waters of our State by making it mandatory that bilge pumps on all ships entering the waters of our State be sealed to prevent the discharge of oil.

Objections to the Bill have been registered by many organizations connected with the shipping industry, including the Maryland Port Authority, as well as the Department of Tidewater Fisheries, which Department was charged with enforcing the provisions of the Bill.

Their objections are summarized in the following excerpts from a letter I received from the Maryland Port Authority:

1. Compliance with the proposed law would place an undue hardship on vessels engaged in international trade between Baltimore and other world ports. Ship operating efficiency and safety require taking on and discharging of water ballast in keeping with weather conditions, cargo aboard, and other factors.
2. Sealing of bilge pumps is believed to be not practical inasmuch as the bilge pump system on some vessels is an intricate part of the ship's overall water system.
3. While the seals could be distributed by members of the Maryland Pilots Association on such vessels as they board, there is no provision for placing the seals aboard the large number of ships that do not take on pilots to transverse the Bay, nor is there any provision for sealing pumps of the many smaller craft, such as self-propelling oil barges, that operate within the Bay.
4. This measure, if enacted, would cause considerable confusion among ship operators. To our knowledge, no such law applies in any other water areas of the United States nor abroad.
5. One of the principal objectives of the Maryland Port Authority is to make the Port of Baltimore as attractive as possible to the operator of ships in world trade. The restrictions called for in