

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 108

Senator Schmidt offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge the President and the Congress of the
2 United States to declare the waters of the Straits of Mackinac as
3 "designated" for purposes of Great Lakes commercial ship pilotage.

4 Whereas, The Great Lakes are integral to Michigan's
5 environment, economic development, and recreation; and

6 Whereas, The federal Great Lakes Pilotage Act of 1960
7 established two distinct categories of pilotage on the Great Lakes
8 - designated waters and undesignated waters - and authorized the
9 President of the United States to determine designated waters. In
10 1968, President Dwight D. Eisenhower declared designated waters on
11 the Great Lakes, including all United States waters of the St.
12 Marys River, the Soo Locks, and approaches thereto. There have been
13 no significant changes in designated waters since that time; and

1 Whereas, The act requires both United States and foreign-
2 flagged vessels sailing in designated waters to be under the
3 navigational direction of a United States or Canadian registered
4 pilot to ensure marine safety and effective use of navigable
5 waters. Further, foreign-flagged vessels operating in undesignated
6 waters on the Great Lakes must have a United States or Canadian
7 registered pilot on board to direct the navigation of the vessel or
8 be available to assist in navigation if necessary; and

9 Whereas, Pilotage of foreign-flagged vessels on the Great
10 Lakes is an important function provided by individuals with years
11 of experience sailing on the largest freshwater sea in the world.
12 Pilots are charged with the safety of the vessel and boating public
13 as well as protection of infrastructure and the environment; and

14 Whereas, The Straits of Mackinac, an environmentally sensitive
15 area of great importance to the entire Great Lakes ecosystem, is an
16 undesignated water. The Straits are often congested with commercial
17 and recreational vessel traffic. Additionally, the area has
18 restricted visibility, narrow waterways, and important
19 infrastructure including the Mackinac Bridge and pipelines
20 contributing to the unique navigational challenges that exist in
21 the Straits of Mackinac; now, therefore, be it

22 Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the President and the
23 Congress of the United States to declare the waters of the Straits
24 of Mackinac as "designated" for purposes of Great Lakes commercial
25 ship pilotage; and be it further

26 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
27 President of the United States, the President of the United States
28 Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
29 the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the

1 Commandant of the United States Coast Guard.