COMMITTEE REPORT

February 10, 2011

**S. 471**

Introduced by Senators Grooms, Campsen, Davis, Shoopman, Alexander, Anderson, Bright, Bryant, Campbell, Cleary, Coleman, Courson, Cromer, Elliott, Fair, Ford, Hayes, Hutto, Jackson, Knotts, Land, Leatherman, Leventis, Lourie, Malloy, L. Martin, S. Martin, Massey, Matthews, McConnell, McGill, Nicholson, O’Dell, Peeler, Pinckney, Rankin, Reese, Rose, Ryberg, Scott, Setzler, Sheheen, Thomas, Verdin and Williams

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Read the first time February 10, 2011.

**THE COMMITTEE ON**

**INVITATIONS AND MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS**

To whom was referred a Concurrent Resolution (S. 471) to oppose any plan to expand the Savannah River that does not provide mutual economic benefits to the people, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass:

LISTON D. BARFIELD for Committee.

**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO OPPOSE ANY PLAN TO EXPAND THE SAVANNAH RIVER THAT DOES NOT PROVIDE MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, flowing 350 miles from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean, the Savannah River forms much of South Carolina’s border with the State of Georgia; and

Whereas, the Savannah River Basin is home to seventy-five species of rare or endangered plants and animals and the river itself supports at least 108 native fish species, the greatest number of any river that drains into the Atlantic Ocean; and

Whereas, the Savannah River supplies drinking water to over 1.5 million people, including residents in the South Carolina lowcountry and other areas; and

Whereas, the Savannah River Basin supports significant industrial, agricultural, and power production facilities; and

Whereas, on January 27, 2008, the State of South Carolina entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the State of Georgia for development of a Jasper Ocean Terminal on the Savannah River within the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, to this end, representatives of the State of South Carolina, in good faith, have negotiated with representatives of the State of Georgia; and

Whereas, on November 15, 2010, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, prepared a draft General Re‑evaluation ReportandTier II Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate deepening the Savannah Harbor Federal Navigation Project; and

Whereas, these reports call for dredge disposal from the Savannah Harbor deepening to be placed on the very same sites upon which the Jasper Ocean Terminal is to be built; and

Whereas, the Corps of Engineers plan to use these sites for at least the next fifty years; and

Whereas, the corps’ *de facto* dismissal of the Jasper Ocean terminal as a viable alternative to the Savannah Harbor project is not consistent with a 2007 directive from the Congress of the United States; and

Whereas, this directive authorizes the corps to determine the feasibility of improving the Savannah River to support a Jasper Ocean terminal; and

Whereas, this directive also instructs the corps to remove from the Jasper site the easements used by the federal government for placement of dredge fill materials from the Savannah Harbor; and

Whereas, dredging the Savannah River to the length the corps recommends would place undue strain upon wildlife and marine life and upon hundreds of acres of pristine wetlands located in South Carolina; and

Whereas, this dredging would effectively consume the safe carrying capacity of the river, preventing the State of South Carolina from pursuing other economic projects along the river; and

Whereas, after due consideration, the State of South Carolina finds the Corps of Engineers’ evaluation of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project to be based upon contradictory and unsound conclusions; and

Whereas, the Savannah River’s importance to the people of the State of South Carolina as an ecological, economic, and historic asset cannot be overstated. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the State of South Carolina calls upon the corps to reveal all implications of this project for the Jasper Ocean Terminal;

Be it further resolved that the State of South Carolina calls upon the corps to examine the Jasper Ocean Terminal as an alternative to the proposed full expansion;

Be it further resolved that the State of South Carolina opposes any plan to expand this shared river that does not provide mutual economic benefits to the people of South Carolina or meet state water quality standards or any other provision of state or federal law.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor of Georgia, the President of the Georgia Senate, the Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the President of the United States.

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