

Bates College

**SCARAB**

---

Congressional Records

Edmund S. Muskie Papers

---

2-14-1971

## **Press Release - Muskie Opposes Sears Island Refinery**

Edmund S. Muskie

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scarab.bates.edu/mcr>

---

# *MUSKIE*

*Maine*

(202) 225-5344

FOR RELEASE

Sunday  
February 14, 1971

## MUSKIE OPPOSES SEARS ISLAND REFINERY

As I said last October 23, in Portland, the Machias hearings into the proposals to build an oil refinery in Washington County convinced me that "if the oil industry is permitted to come to Maine, it should do so only on terms which Maine writes....and if those terms cannot now be met, then oil should not now come to Maine."

A tight harness on coastal pollution means that we... and our children...and their children... can continue to enjoy the coast itself--not only as a recreational outlet... but also as an experience of the spirit. For the coast of Maine is unique. It has a character of its own--a character of rugged and quiet beauty. And that character must be preserved.

Since the Machias hearings, there has been no appreciable advance in the technology of shipping, pumping, refining and storing oil to guarantee against environmental risks and to meet Maine's terms.

For the reasons that I opposed the Machiasport proposals I now oppose the Sears Island oil refinery proposal.

Fortunately, Maine has a mechanism for weighing the environmental risks of industrial development, and for safeguarding the State's environment against industrial spoilage. The Environmental Improvement Commission, under the Site Approval Law, will hold hearings to gauge the environmental risks, and I commend Governor Curtis for emphasizing the Commission's responsibility to face up to the challenge of the Sears Island proposal.

I wish to reiterate the proposal I made last fall to set aside sections of Maine's coast to be preserved for posterity. Certainly portions of Penobscot Bay, which are among the nation's most handsome coastline, should be considered for inclusion in such protected areas.

The Northeast is faced with a potential crisis of a fuel shortage. We also are burdened with unreasonably high fuel costs. As a region, New England must continue to press for liberalized oil import programs. We should also seek increased research into the technological problem involved in the shipping, pumping, refining and storage of oil. At the same time, we must guard the quality of our environment.

\*\*\*\*\*