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## **Press Release - Senator Edmund S. Muskie Challenges Anson-Madison Decision**

Edmund S. Muskie

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# MUSKIE

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FOR RELEASE

FOR RELEASE: 4:00 PM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 1971

MADISON - Senator Edmund S. Muskie today announced that he has challenged the decision of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to deny federal funding to a major portion of a joint municipal-industrial waste treatment project planned by Anson and Madison.

He further cited the Anson-Madison project as an example of a nation wide problem which may lead him to propose changes in Federal water pollution control laws when the Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution begins consideration of amendments next week.

The Senator's position is stated in two letters, one to municipal officials and the other to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, which were released by an aide to Senator Muskie following a tour of the site of the proposed facilities on the Kennebec River.

The visit by Charles Micoletau, Executive Assistant to Senator Muskie, was made at the request of the Senator.

"You have provided a singular opportunity," the Senator wrote to officials of the two Somerset County Committees, "for the Federal Government to avoid possible economic dislocation by a positive interpretation of existing law and Congressional intent. To date, the Federal Government has not seen fit to take advantage of this opportunity."

In an earlier letter to William D. Ruckelshaus, Chief of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Muskie stated "in view of the express intent of Congress and in light of the compelling circumstances of the proposed project, I am at loss to understand either your justification for this decision or the guidelines promulgated by the Federal Water Quality Administration.

"Clearly, the intent of the Clean Waters Restoration Act of 1966 is to encourage the construction of integrated treatment systems such as that proposed by the Anson-Madison Sanitary District."

The Senator said he believes both communities and industries could realize considerable savings through construction of joint municipal-industrial systems for waste treatment. Such systems, he indicated, should be financed by user charges levied upon the basis of each user's share of project costs.

In addition to the question of Congressional intent, Senator Muskie pointed out to Federal officials the difficult economic situation faced by Anson and Madison. "The very existence of the two communities is dependent upon the operation of the Kennebec Pulp and Paper Company at a time of generally worsening economic conditions in Maine," the Senator noted.

Senator Muskie also indicated to town officials that the problem faced by Anson and Madison is presently the subject of hearings before his Subcommittee on Air and Water Pollution and could result in amendments to existing Federal water quality legislation.

"If the economic livelihood of the citizens of Anson, Madison and other communities is to be threatened because we have resolved to protect our environment, how and by what means shall their personal health and welfare also be protected?"

"This is the broad question which my Subcommittee shall examine in the coming months. But this is also the question which the citizens of Anson and Madison have already posed to the Environmental Protection Agency."

To substantiate his charge that the Federal agency had violated Congressional intent, Senator Muskie cited not only the 1966 law but his own statements as author of the legislation, made during Senate debate over the water quality bill. He concluded his letter by requesting funds for the Anson-Madison project as well as major revisions in national guidelines for industrial waste treatment projects.

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(NOTE: Copies of the two letters are enclosed.)