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DELTA QUEEN

DOCUMENTS

JUL 20 1973

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON

MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES
USE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 6049, H.R. 6188, H.R. 6189, H.R. 6693

BILLS TO EXTEND UNTIL NOVEMBER 1, 1978, THE EXISTING
EXEMPTION OF THE STEAMBOAT "DELTA QUEEN"
FROM CERTAIN VESSEL LAWS

MAY 23, 1973

Serial No. 93-9

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DELTA QUEEN

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1973

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:17 a.m., in room 1334, Longworth Office Building, Hon. Leonor K. Sullivan (chairman of the committee) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will please come to order.

Today, the full House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries is holding a hearing on H.R. 5649, and others, a bill to extend until November 1, 1978, the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel laws.

Let me state at this time that there are many conflicting meetings this morning, and you know that all the members of this committee have other committees to which they must give attention also. Some are going to be coming in late, but I think in view of the fact that we would like to get through with this we are going to start anyway.

On March 14, 1973, I introduced H.R. 5649, the initial bill exempting the *Delta Queen*. Since that time, I, and many of my colleagues, have introduced numerous bills with countless cosponsors giving this last overnight riverboat this necessary exemption.

For those who are not informed, the *Delta Queen* is a paddlewheel riverboat, the only overnight passenger vessel left on our river system. She is 285 feet long and weighs 1,837 tons. Her hull, over 50 years old, was shaped at Clydesbank, Scotland, her steel forged at the Krupp works in Germany. Her superstructure is mostly wood, and this is where the problem has arisen.

Under legislation enacted in the 89th Congress—Public Law 89-777—certain standards for the safe operation of deep draft cruise vessels were enacted into law. Inadvertently it would seem, this legislation was made broad enough to include passenger vessels carrying overnight passengers and operating in our inland rivers and waterways.

The original legislation gave the inland water passenger vessel owners a short period of time to permit the companies involved to assess their particular situations. As a result, one company operating on the Great Lakes went out of business, ceasing all its operations. The last remaining company, Greene Line Steamers, Inc., the owners and operators of the *Delta Queen* decided to attempt to construct a new vessel and thus continue its operations. An extension of time was enacted by the Congress in 1968—Public Law 90-435—allowing the *Delta Queen* to continue operating until November 1970.

The owners and operators of the *Delta Queen* found to their dismay that with the rise in cost of construction material and labor, a new replacement vessel would have to cost in excess of \$10 million, instead of the originally anticipated \$4 million. These costs stalled new construction at that time. The question then arose as to whether the *Delta Queen* would be able to continue in operation.

As everyone knows, I spearheaded the drive in Congress 3 years ago to get a 3-year exemption. Our efforts were successful with the passage of H.R. 6114 in the House of Representatives on December 15, 1970, by a vote of 295 to 73. The bill was signed by the President on December 31, 1970, and became Public Law 91-612.

As unbelievable as it seems, that 3-year exemption period is closing in on its termination date of November 1, 1973. Thus, we are once again faced with the possible demise of the only overnight passenger vessel left on our rivers. She is the last of her class, and if Congress fails to act, she will be forced into retirement, and another of our great American traditions will have passed from the scene. If that happens, it will mean the end of nearly 160 years of paddlewheel history in this country, and particularly on the Mississippi River.

I would point out that this grand old lady of the rivers makes port calls in some 17 States, and thousands of Americans each year enjoy the beauty of our Nation's waterways, and spend their vacations on this fabulous replica of the past.

Fortunately, the owner of the *Delta Queen* has found sufficient resources to enter into a contract for the construction of a new riverboat vessel. In order to continue this romantic link with our past, it will be necessary to provide the *Delta Queen* with another exemption. To this end, we have the bills which we are considering today, which will give the *Delta Queen* a 5-year exemption from the safety at sea laws.

[The bills and agency reports follow:]

[H.R. 5649, H.R. 6188, H.R. 6189, and H.R. 6693, 93d Cong., 1st sess.]

BILLS To extend until November 1, 1978, the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel laws

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the primary purpose of the amendment made by section 2 of this Act is to assure the continuity of operation of the overnight riverboat, the steamboat *Delta Queen*, by extending her existing exemption from the safety at sea laws. A new overnight passenger riverboat will be constructed by the owners of the *Delta Queen* and, in order to assure the preservation of this historic and traditional piece of American folklore and life, such amendment will provide for the continued operation of the present steamboat *Delta Queen* while the new riverboat is being constructed.

SEC. 2. The penultimate sentence of section 5(b) of the Act of May 27, 1936 (49 Stat. 1384, 46 U.S.C. 369(b)), as amended, is amended by striking out "November 1, 1973," and inserting in lieu thereof "November 1, 1978."

GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,

Washington, D.C., May 23, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: This is further reply to your request for the views of this Department with respect to H.R. 5649, a bill—

"To extend until November 1, 1978, the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel laws".

Public Law 89-777 (approved November 6, 1966) amended section 5(b) of the Act of May 27, 1936 (49 Stat. 1384; 46 U.S.C. 369) to provide that after November 1, 1968, no passenger vessel of the United States of one hundred gross tons or over, having berth or stateroom accommodations for fifty or more passengers, shall be granted a certificate of inspection by the Coast Guard unless the vessel is constructed of fire retardant material and unless the structural fire protection provided conforms to the requirements set forth in regulations for a vessel contracted for on or after May 28, 1936. The Act was amended by Public Law 90-435 to change the November 1, 1968, date to November 1, 1970. The Act was further amended by Public Law 91-612 to exempt from its provisions, until November 1, 1973, any vessel operating solely on the inland rivers.

H.R. 5649 would amend the Act to extend this exemption from November 1, 1973, to November 1, 1978. The only vessel still operating to which the bill would apply is the *Delta Queen*.

On April 15, 1968, Greene Line Steamers, Inc., the owner of the *Delta Queen*, applied to the Maritime Administration for ship loan and mortgage insurance to build a replacement for the vessel. The Maritime Administration approved the application in principle on February 11, 1972. The applicant revised and resubmitted the application on June 2, 1972. The Maritime Administration, on January 12, 1973, found the project economically feasible, and approved the application subject to certain statutory conditions which the applicant can easily meet. In its revised application, the owner has expressed its intent to utilize the *Delta Queen* for the period permitted by law and in a service for which it will qualify. Such continued operation will not adversely affect our finding of economic feasibility of the operation of the new vessel.

On January 12, 1973, Greene Line Steamers, Inc., entered into a contract with Jeffboat, Incorporated, Jeffersonville, Indiana, for construction of the new vessel.

The estimated delivery time is April, 1975.

The *Delta Queen* is the last overnight, paddlewheel, passenger vessel that is still in operation. It is an historic vessel and its extended period of operation undoubtedly would be helpful to Greene Line Steamers, Inc.

However, as to whether the statutory exemption from the provision of Public Law 89-777 should be extended, we would defer to the views of the Department of Transportation.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that there is no objection to the submission of this proposed report to the Congress from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

WILHELM N. LETSON,
General Counsel.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D.C., May 22, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter of March 19, 1973, requesting comment on H.R. 5649, a bill "To extend until November 1, 1978, the exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel laws."

The Department has no objection to the proposed legislation from the standpoint of foreign policy and would defer to the views of other government agencies more directly concerned.

The Office of the Management and Budget advises that from the standpoint of the Administration's program there is no objection to the submission of this report.

Sincerely yours,

MARSHALL WRIGHT,
Acting Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations.

THE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE TREASURY,
Washington, D.C., April 20, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: Reference is made to your request for the views of this Department on H.R. 5649, "To extend until November 1, 1978, the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel laws."

The bill would extend until November 1, 1978, the period for compliance with certain safety standards in the case of passenger vessels of the United States of one hundred gross tons or over, having berth or stateroom accommodations for fifty or more passengers which operate solely on the inland rivers. It is understood that the only vessel now operating that would be affected by the bill is the *Delta Queen*.

Since the proposed legislation relates to matters not of direct concern to this Department, we have no recommendation to make on the advisability of its enactment.

The Department has been advised by the Office of Management and Budget that there is no objection from the standpoint of the Administration's program to the submission of this report to your Committee.

Sincerely yours,

DONALD L. E. RITGER,
Acting General Counsel.

THE CHAIRMAN: As for myself—and I guess it is well known—I have long been a proponent of exempting the *Delta Queen* from safety at sea laws and continuing her in operation. My reasons for this position are many, and I believe reasonable and logical.

First, I believe she should be allowed to continue to ply the inland rivers of the United States because of her great historic and cultural value. At a time when change is the rule and not the exception, there should be kept intact marks of the old America which is a part of our history and tradition and culture. These marks should be kept with us. At a time when we are doing much to save the endangered species of fish and wildlife from extinction, why not also save this vanishing overnight paddlewheel riverboat from total extermination?

The advancement of technology and efficiency should not come at the expense of the great monuments of the past, it should include these things. If history allows us to stand on our predecessors' accomplishments and advancement, I hope it will let us stand tall enough to look over the trees and see a river system with the *Delta Queen* sailing majestically on it.

Another reason for preserving this romantic link with our past, and perhaps the really basic reason, is the undeniable fact that the people of the Nation want it. Few other subjects in the last several years have brought a stream of letters and outpouring of emotion as has this particular matter.

I think the other members of the committee, and our colleagues in the Congress in general will support my contention that this relic of our past has the well-wishes of millions of our fellow Americans. I firmly believe that this legislation will be enacted with but token opposition.

Another reason why I believe this legislation should be enacted is that the termination of the *Delta Queen* would be a misapplication of law. The first thrust of the safety at sea law of 1966 was the passenger trade out of the major ocean ports of the United States and the cruise trade to the Caribbean and other seaward locations. The owners of this vessel have had their vessels plying the waters of this great

country for 50 years without one loss of life due to an accident or an unsafe condition.

It must be considered that the *Delta Queen* is not a vessel engaged in international carriage or trade, nor does she encounter the stresses, strains, and dangers of a vessel on the high seas. Studies of the operation of the *Delta Queen* have convinced me and many others that the nature of her commerce and the many special precautions taken by her owners to protect her, make the *Delta Queen* as safe as if her superstructure were made of metal.

At this very moment, when we are considering this legislation to exempt the *Delta Queen* from the safety at sea law, thousands of Americans are aboard vessels on the various inland waterways of Europe which do not meet the standards established in this area by the laws we now have on the books. I do not believe that we need to be insensitive to the desires of our people, and if we wish to preserve this little piece of our romantic past and keep the *Delta Queen* available to the millions of Americans who have been enjoying her all these many years, then we should pass H.R. 5649.

I would like to point out that I am convinced that the vessel operates as reasonably safe in all circumstances as can be expected. It should be recognized that the owners have fireproofed the wooden portions of the vessel and have installed fire prevention sprinkler systems. In addition, these inland passenger vessels are never more than a few yards from any shore, presently meet certain Coast Guard safety standards, and are frequently operated in waters no deeper than the middle of the ship.

In closing, I am sure the members of this committee, and of the Congress in general, will give the same attention and energy to this matter that they have given to other important issues. I am confident that the Congress will resolve to let America continue to keep this part of her cultural heritage and romance of the past and that this grand old lady of the rivers will not be drowned in a tide of apathy and indifference. I hope that this vessel will be allowed to continue to share her grace and joy with millions of our fellow Americans.

Several of our colleagues have expressed an interest in being heard on this subject, so we shall hear from them now.

Due to the busy schedule all must have, I won't ask that they remain for questioning.

Mr. Johnson, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF HON. HAROLD T. JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam Chairman, it is indeed a pleasure to appear before this committee to express my support for the *Delta Queen*. In particular, I consider it an honor to have the opportunity to be a cosponsor of the legislation with your distinguished chairman. I think it is noteworthy that the importance of this legislation is manifested in its early consideration by your committee.

Today we are experiencing a strengthening of our desire to return to nature and to preserve those parts of our past which remind us of former days of glory in America. We are realizing the value of our heritage and are endeavoring to preserve it for our children.

The *Delta Queen* is a unique link to America's past. This, the last and most famous American riverboat, brings back the days of Mark Twain, Tom Sawyer, and Huck Finn. Today the big red paddlewheel and black smokestacks of the 285-foot white vessel are a familiar and welcome sight from St. Paul to New Orleans.

The *Queen* dramatically dwarfs her fellow travelers on the mighty Mississippi. Her paddles throw 40-foot plumes of water, and her famous calliope can be heard echoing as far away as 5 miles.

The overnight steamer's real drawing card is her 19th century charm. In this small world floating down the great American water highway, one is far from the clamor of cars and airplanes, the blare of radios, televisions, and stereos, and the ever ringing telephone.

The *Queen* was born in 1926 in the shipyards of Glasgow, Scotland. She was then shipped to Stockton, Calif., where her wooden superstructure was added. She was then placed into service between Sacramento and San Francisco. After being used as a troop carrier in World War II, the ship was purchased by Greene Line Steamers and towed to Pittsburgh for refurbishing. As a Mississippi steamer, the *Delta Queen* ferries passengers up and down the river, covering some 35,000 miles a year, visiting over 100 cities in 17 different States.

In 1966 we enacted a safety-at-sea law to protect Americans from hazardous voyages at sea. This was in response to two recent disastrous fires at sea on Caribbean cruise. Although the sternwheeler never leaves sight of the shore, she technically falls under the wording of the law which states that all ships that carry 50 overnight passengers or more must be of fireproof construction. Because the *Queen's* superstructure is of wood, the great paddleboat was condemned as unsafe.

In an effort to retain the *Delta Queen* as a unique historical vessel, the Congress granted the *Queen* a 2-year exemption from the new law. She has been granted a 2- and a 3-year extension since that time. Her current reprieve is scheduled to expire November 1 of this year. In view of this fact your distinguished chairman has introduced legislation to further extend the *Queen's* exemption for another 5 years.

Since the last exemption, the *Delta Queen* has been upgraded at the cost of nearly half a million dollars. Included among her modifications are at total repainting with fire-retardant paints approved by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, an installation of an automatic fire detection and warning system, and the addition of a shipwide sprinkler system.

I strongly urge the members of this committee to give serious consideration to a further extension for the *Delta Queen*.

This link with our historical past continues to offer many pleasures for travelers. A river cruise is a smooth, relaxing trip. There is no sea sickness. It is comparable to traveling across country in relative seclusion on a modern passenger train. It is considered by some as the most peaceful and relaxing experience one can enjoy in today's fast-paced world.

The shoreline becomes a kaleidoscope of sights along the river's grassy banks. Crowds invariably assemble at the locks meeting the *Queen* and requesting to hear a tune from her stern-mounted steam calliope. The passenger can enjoy the pleasure of quiet reading, basking in the sun, or watching the many variety of birds that nest along the river. Nights are particularly spectacular with the boat floating quietly on the water under a black sky blanketed with a million stars.

The *Delta Queen* has both a historical and a current purpose. I hope that in your wisdom, you will extend the exemption you have graciously given the *Queen* in the past. I am confident that such action will be widely acclaimed and will be in the best interest of the Nation as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Now we shall hear from the Congressman from Ohio, Mr. Clancy.

**STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD D. CLANCY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OHIO**

Mr. CLANCY. Mrs. Chairman and members of the committee, I am grateful for this opportunity to once again express my support for the *Delta Queen* and the uniquely American historic tradition which she presents so memorably to Americans.

As you know, the *Queen* was designed and built in 1926 for \$875,000. While the hull was constructed of riveted, galvanized, and wrought steel, the superstructure and paddle wheel were made of oak, walnut, teak, mahogany, and ironwood that was hand-fitted by California cabinetmakers. This wooden structure is a violation of safety-at-sea laws which require fire-resistant materials for ships carrying overnight passengers.

The owners have spent more than \$1 million to protect against fire hazards by installing sprinklers, emergency and detection systems, removing old paint and replacing it with special fire-retardant paint. As a result, Congress has granted exemptions to the *Delta Queen* three times. The last exemption is due to expire next November 1.

Looking at the situation in another way, the safety-at-sea laws discriminate against the *Queen*. They apply only to ships sailing under the American flag and the *Delta Queen* is the only such vessel carrying overnight passengers up and down America's inland waterways.

Another factor which Congress has always considered when it granted exemptions in the past is that, unlike ships at sea, the *Delta Queen* runs in shallow water only a couple minutes from the rivers' banks. A new diesel electric generation plant has been installed to provide electrical power in event of steam power failure, and emergency and standby radio and radar equipment have been installed to augment existing standard equipment. In 25 years of *Delta Queen* operation, there has never been a serious accident or loss of passenger life caused by fire or other accident.

Last year, the *Delta Queen* owners announced they were building a modern riverboat to succeed the *Queen*. It will be the world's largest and finest, they say, costing about \$15.5 million. It will be steam powered with a stern paddle wheel just like the *Queen*. It will be 365 feet long and carry more than 400 passengers and 110 crew members—more than twice the capacity of the *Queen*. Its decor will hue closely to the 160-year American steamboating tradition, but its modern conveniences will include passenger elevators, a swimming pool, air-conditioned rooms, and a movie theater.

Until the new *Delta Queen* is moored at her hometown port in Cincinnati for the first time, we want to keep the venerable—but safe—old *Queen* in operation. It will be particularly picturesque and significant to see her paddling up the Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, and

Ohio Rivers in 1976 as America celebrates its 200th birthday. As long as she fills us with nostalgic pride in our country's past, as long as we can be assured she is safe for passengers, as long as she pays her own way, we should preserve the *Delta Queen*. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. We appreciate your views. Thank you.

Next we shall have Mr. Alexander, of Arkansas, give us his statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL ALEXANDER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Chairman, I come before you today to ask your assistance in preserving one of the last existing reminders of a colorful period of our country's history. The *Delta Queen*, a living museum of fine riverboat design and engineering, will be banished from the Mississippi and her tributaries unless we in the Congress act favorably upon this legislation.

There are only five steam-powered paddle wheelers in operation today. The *Delta Queen* is the only steamboat in overnight passenger service—the last remaining operating member of that family of colorful and infamous riverboats that carried their cargo, gamblers, and riverboat queens up and down the rivers of our country linking the parts of a new Nation.

Because of the historic significance of this vessel, I, along with many of my colleagues, have sponsored legislation in the past which granted this ship temporary reprieves from her fate. Her latest reprieve expires on November 1, 1973.

I think we should again adopt legislation which would exempt the *Delta Queen* from the fire standards established for deepwater vessels. The *Queen* does not have the steel superstructure required of deep-sea vessels. However, she is not an oceangoing vessel and is never more than 4 minutes from land. And, since the enactment of the safety-at-sea regulations, her owners have spent more than \$1.5 million in safety equipment.

I think Tulsa Tribune Editor-Publisher Jenkin Lloyd Jones aptly summed up the situation in this way: "To knock off the *Delta Queen* because of a law designed for ocean liners would be like pulling down the Tower of London because it doesn't meet city fire escape regulations for public places."

The exemption we seek is not a permanent one. In 5 years a new \$15.5 million passenger riverboat is scheduled for completion by the owners of the *Delta Queen*. It is financially vital to the building of this new vessel that the *Delta Queen* be allowed to continue operation until her replacement is ready.

The country is approaching its Bicentennial celebration and the Mississippi River is nearing its tricentennial birthday. Organizations and citizens across the Nation are scrambling to prepare pageants, monuments, and other suitable tributes to a great land and her greatest river. Surely this is not the time to allow one of the last operating reminders of our river heritage to be banished from our waterways.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share my views on this matter with you.

The CHAIRMAN. We were happy that you could appear. Thank you. Mr. Mollohan from the mountainous State of West Virginia will appear now.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT H. MOLLOHAN, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Madam Chairman, I thank you for this opportunity to register my support of legislation pending before your committee that would extend the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from certain vessel safety laws.

The *Delta Queen* operates entirely on inland waters. It is never more than minutes from shore. While the vessel has a wooden superstructure, it has a steel hull and has proved itself durable and worthy since it was built and launched in 1926. In addition, Greene Line Steamers, Inc., has spent more than \$1.5 million in recent years to make certain that the *Delta Queen* is safe and seaworthy. For these reasons alone, I believe it is proper that the *Delta Queen* be granted an extension of exemption from vessel safety laws that were passed by Congress primarily to deal with oceangoing vessels.

But there are other reasons the *Delta Queen* should be granted an extension of exemption. Not least among these is that the *Delta Queen* represents a bygone era of Americana—an America of river life when not only goods and services were transported up and down our great inland waters but when steamboats not unlike the *Delta Queen* were used as conveyances between distant points. To hear its steam whistle echoing at sundown across the banks of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers is to be reminded of an era that produced the popular fictional characters of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn; it is also to have stirred one's wishes that he or she, too, could have experienced those days of not so long ago when the rivers of America's interior were the great thoroughways of the country.

If we were, then, to sentence the *Delta Queen* to mothballs we would be burying one of the last artifacts of our culture and of the heritage in which all Americans have a keen and fond interest.

I, therefore, urge, Madam Chairman, that you and the esteemed members of your committee give your approval to extending the exemption for the majestic *Delta Queen*, the last great steam wheeler plying America's inland waterways.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for your time and interest.

We shall continue with remarks by Mr. Baker of Tennessee.

**STATEMENT OF HON. LAMAR BAKER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TENNESSEE**

Mr. BAKER. Madam Chairman: My constituents, the people of the Third District of Tennessee, know the *Delta Queen* well. Many of us have enjoyed pleasant hours sailing the Tennessee River aboard the *Delta Queen* with our friends.

Thus, I was more than glad to join in past efforts and again in this Congress to keep the *Delta Queen* afloat. I thank you, Madam Chairman, for your leadership in this effort to grant this vessel—this warm and colorful living museum of fine riverboat design and engineering—

a temporary reprieve from the fate slated for her under the specifications of the Safety at Sea Act.

Most of us here, I'm sure, are aware of Jenkin Lloyd Jones' splendid summation of the *Delta Queen's* situation :

To knock off the *Delta Queen* because of a law designed for ocean liners would be like pulling down the Tower of London because it doesn't meet city fire escape regulations for public places.

It is right and proper that the *Delta Queen* be allowed to continue to proudly ply our great rivers until her replacement is ready. Extraordinary measures have been taken to provide for the safety of her passengers—updated electrical equipment, extensive fire protection and sprinkler systems—and she is, after all, never far from the shore where help would be available.

My interest parallels yours, Madam Chairman, and I sincerely hope Congress will agree to continue the operation of the *Delta Queen*.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for your support.

Next we shall have fellow Congresswoman Lindy Boggs give us her views.

STATEMENT OF HON. LINDY (MRS. HALE) BOGGS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Mrs. Boggs. Madam Chairman and members of the committee, I speak today in favor of romance and that romantic institution—the *Delta Queen*.

I have joined with numbers of my colleagues in asking for a stay of execution for this historic monument. We must act within the next few months, so that this grand lady who has continued a tradition begun nearly 160 years ago, of paddlewheels on our rivers—will not be permanently docked.

As you may know, some years ago Congress—perhaps inadvertently—passed such broad legislation covering the safe operation of deep draft cruise vessels that it included the *Delta Queen* although this vessel plys only the inland river and is not subject to the stresses, strains, and dangers of a vessel on the high seas.

Three years ago, your chairman spearheaded the successful drive to provide a 3-year exemption to this law for the *Delta Queen* so that the owners could build a replacement. Construction has taken longer than expected, and so as not to break the continuity of riverboats on the Mississippi, an additional exemption is necessary.

I have always felt sentimental about rivers, and particularly about the Mississippi on whose banks I was born and raised. To inspire this feeling within my own children, I took them often on trips on the Mississippi, the Atchafalaya, and the Old Rivers. They, in turn, put my feelings into proper perspective when in their childish enthusiasm over a river boat trip, they said they thought the history of the Mississippi was the most romantic part of American history.

They pointed out to me whereas European history is full of glamorous stories of kings, queens, and crusaders, American history comes alive in a child's eyes when he studies the intrigues and controversy which led to the opening of the great waterways into the heartland of America.

When they traveled up the Mississippi from New Orleans, they understood why Thomas Jefferson was so determined to secure the lands of the Louisiana Purchase so that American boats could always sail from the gulf into the heartland that eventually became parts of 17 States, and American frontiersmen could expand our Nation westward to the Pacific Ocean.

In saving the *Delta Queen*, we will save that vivid and living picture of what life was like before the advent of trains, cars, and planes—when the major road of commerce was the river and the major river in opening up the West was the Mississippi. Only by viewing and sailing on the *Delta Queen*—the last of the paddlewheel steamboats in overnight passenger trade where once there were hundreds of side and stern paddlewheelers taking freight and passengers to all the inland river ports—can today's children who need the assurance of their national traditions relive the romance of the river.

I agree with your chairman that "at a time when we are doing much to save the endangered species of fish and wildlife from extinction, why not also save this vanishing overnight paddlewheel from total extermination?"

I sincerely hope that you will agree that this last remnant of a more leisurely and gracious mode of travel which is so much a part of living history should not vanish from the national scene.

The CHAIRMAN. It was nice to have another woman's view on the subject, thank you.

We shall hear now from one of the many cosponsors, Mr. Gubser.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES S. GUBSER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. GUBSER. Madam Chairman, I appreciate this opportunity to comment on H.R. 6188 which I am cosponsoring to provide for extension of the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen*.

As you know, the *Delta Queen* is the last representative of the era when thousands of steamboats made their way up and down American rivers carrying freight and passengers.

Since the *Delta Queen* cannot meet the standards of the Safety at Sea Law, Congress has voted three times to temporarily exempt this last overnight passenger paddlewheel riverboat from the law. It is questionable as to whether the *Delta Queen* should have been subjected to the requirements of the Safety at Sea Law in the first place since she does not face the same hazards as oceangoing vessels. The legislation presently before us would provide an exemption for the boat until the new *Delta Queen's* construction is completed and she begins operation.

Safety should not be a concern when considering this exemption since it should be noted that more than \$1 million has recently been spent to provide the *Delta Queen* with the best safety devices available. In addition, there has never been a loss of passenger life due to a fire or accident in the more than 80 years the operators of the boat, Greene Line Steamers, have operated 28 different riverboats.

The new *Delta Queen* costing \$15.5 million will be a fine monument to America's historic past. Completion of this vessel depends financially on the continued operation of the present boat. Surely we cannot

refuse to grant this exemption and lose this valuable part of our country's cultural heritage.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Continuing along, we shall hear some supporting words, I believe, from Mr. Dennis.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID W. DENNIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Mr. DENNIS. Madam Chairman and members of the committee, we deal here with an attractive bit of the American past, which we hope to extend and to continue for 5 years, at least, into the American future.

Many of us will recall Huckleberry Finn and Jim climbing aboard the *Gloria Scott*. Abraham Lincoln had a favorite story about the steamboat on the Saugamon—every time the engineer used his steam to blow the whistle it stopped the boat. Lincoln himself, later on, was employed as counsel for the Rock Island Bridge Co., which was sued by the packet ship *Effie Afton*, which ran into one of the abutments of the Rock Island Railroad Bridge. This was important litigation in its day—pitting the steamboat interest against the railroads—and it established the right of the railroads to bridge the Mississippi River, and thus led, ultimately, to the demise of the river steamers, of which the *Delta Queen* is virtually the lone survivor.

The *Delta Queen* has operated, and with great pleasure to its passengers, in safety for 45 years. It is always possible, of course, that she, like any other mode of transportation, may meet disaster. Life cannot be made safe or sure by legislative or bureaucratic process. On the airlines and on the highways we have all too frequent disasters, in which large numbers of lives are lost. No one seeks to discontinue the airline or the automobile. It would appear probable that the *Delta Queen* is a good risk by comparison. Despite the bureaucrats and the modern lack of interest in history or in romance, it appears, as nearly as human ability can foretell, to be a reasonable risk we take in preserving for a few more years a grand old river steamer which has already operated with safety and success for 45 years.

As a cosponsor of legislation—H.R. 7244—to extend the life of the *Delta Queen*, I respectfully request that this committee give favorable and early consideration to our bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next we shall hear from the Delegate from the Territory of Guam, Mr. Won Pat.

STATEMENT OF HON. ANTONIO B. WON PAT, A DELEGATE IN CONGRESS FROM THE TERRITORY OF GUAM

Mr. WON PAT. Madam Chairman and members of the committee, I would like at this time to express my support for H.R. 7576, a bill to exempt the steamboat *Delta Queen* from the provisions of the safety-at-sea laws, introduced by Congresswoman Leonor Sullivan, chairwoman of this committee, myself, and others.

As cosponsor of this measure, I am very hopeful of its passage, in the belief that the American people are attached to a large number of

colorful American traditions currently in the process of being drummed out of existence in the name of progress.

The glory of the steamboat period in American history has been stamped indelibly on the American consciousness by Mark Twain and other chroniclers of 19th century Americana.

There was something very special about that moment in our national career, and something terribly depressing about the destruction of its glorious traditions.

The *Delta Queen* is the last of its kind—the last of the Mississippi riverboats afloat. As a relic of the past, it has the greatest charm in the eyes of many millions of Americans; but as a seagoing vessel, it is under threat of destruction by enforcement of the requirements of the safety-at-sea laws, of which it is currently in violation.

Having the greatest respect for the laws in question, it is not the purpose of the sponsors of this measure to prevent their application to this or any other vessel for any extended period of time. That is not the issue here.

H.R. 7576 provides merely for extension of an existing exemption of the *Delta Queen* from provisions of the safety-at-sea laws until November 1, 1978, at which time the vessel will be retired from service in favor of a new steamboat, currently under construction and being built to resemble the *Delta Queen*.

In this manner, we will be assured the preservation of this historic and traditional artifact of American folklore, to the advantage of our national heritage and in the interests of all Americans concerned for the preservation of that heritage.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next on the list of Members that would like to be heard is another Representative from the State of Louisiana, Mr. Long.

STATEMENT OF HON. GILLIS LONG, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Mr. LONG. Madam Chairman, as a Louisianian and representative of one of the few congressional districts bordering both sides of the Mississippi River, I must add my support to the movement to preserve the *Delta Queen* as a living link to the days when the Mississippi River steamboats were America's main inland transportation.

This magnificent ship is the last sternwheel steamer in the overnight trade in America. Her whistle is a call from the past to rivermen and riverside dwellers alike. With her mighty 26-ton paddlewheel driving her up the Mississippi, the *Delta Queen* is a powerful reminder of America's rich river heritage.

In addition to the legends she represents, the *Delta Queen* is a beautiful ship. Almost as long as a football field, over 50 feet wide and towering 6 stories above the water, she is an inspiring sight. Her high black stacks, her gleaming brass, her ornate grillwork and sweeping promenades have delighted thousands of Americans accustomed to the streamlined efficiency of modern living.

But now modern living threatens the *Delta Queen*. Her wooden superstructure fails to meet modern marine regulations for overnight passenger carrying ships, and it will require an act of Congress to

save her. Congress has granted the *Delta Queen* an exemption from the regulations before, and we should extend that exemption now.

In the past 2 years the *Delta Queen* has undergone large-scale renovations and elaborate new safety systems have been installed. Her hull has been checked and renewed. A new diesel generator has been installed to power a new standby fire and sprinkler pump system. An automatic fire alarm system has been installed to supplement the manual alarm system. The entire superstructure—exterior as well as interior—has been repainted with fire retardant paint, and all exterior wooden decks have been covered with a noncombustible compound. The *Delta Queen* is a safe ship.

Over and over I hear from constituents who are surprised and thrilled by the sight of the *Delta Queen* coming around a bend of the Mississippi. Tradition is important to the people of the lower Mississippi, and the *Delta Queen* is a reminder to us of riverboat days and our colorful history. Our children and their children should not be denied the lessons and legends of the *Delta Queen*.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Proceeding further, we shall have Mr. Hamilton of Indiana give us his statement.

STATEMENT OF HON. LEE H. HAMILTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Mr. HAMILTON. Madam Chairman, I support H.R. 6188, to extend until November 1, 1978, the existing exemption of the steamboat *Delta Queen* from the safety-at-sea laws. The present exemption expires next fall, on November 1, 1973, and this bill will permit the continued operation of the present *Delta Queen* for 5 years while a new riverboat is being constructed.

The *Delta Queen* is the last great riverboat of its kind still plying this Nation's rivers, and, in view of the special circumstances surrounding its operation, we would suffer a senseless loss if this majestic symbol of the past becomes a victim of safety provisions which should not apply to her.

The *Delta Queen* travels on our rivers and inland waterways—not on the ocean where safety requirements are different—but without an exemption she would be treated as if she were an ocean liner sailing the seven seas.

The *Queen* paddles at a tranquil rate in waters never as deep as she is tall, and never more than a few hundred yards from shore. Her staterooms open directly onto outside decks, with no enclosed corridors where passengers or crewmembers could be trapped in case of danger.

She has an unblemished safety record, with 47 years of operation without the loss of a single life, but in the event of an emergency, a turn of the rudder would bring her safely to shore for evacuation before an ocean-going vessel could have its lifeboats in the water.

No expense has been spared to insure the safety of passengers on the *Delta Queen*, with a modern fire detection and warning system, fire-resistant materials and surfaces, and up-to-date emergency equipment, all subject to U.S. Coast Guard inspection.

As in the past, the public and the press all across the country, in a flood of letters and articles on her behalf, continue to recognize the importance of extending the *Delta Queen's* reign. The Congress has twice recognized the logic of the situation and the strong popular support for the *Queen* by exempting her from inappropriate safety-at-sea regulations.

In my own congressional district, seven counties of which border the Ohio River in Indiana, scores of residents have expressed to me their interest in preserving the *Delta Queen*, a symbol to them and to all of us of days gone by.

The great lady of the rivers must not be abandoned. The historic *Delta Queen* must be granted a further extension, for if she is forced into drydock to rot and rust an irreplaceable link with a great steamboat era and our own heritage will be lost to us and to future generations.

Madam Chairman, I respectfully urge you to take prompt and affirmative action to save the *Delta Queen*.

The CHAIRMAN. I shall attempt to, thank you.

To finish the list of Members with statements on the *Delta Queen* are two of our committee members, Mr. Snyder and Mr. Treen.

You may proceed, Mr. Snyder.

STATEMENT OF HON. GENE SNYDER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KENTUCKY

Mr. SNYDER. Madam Chairman, fellow members of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to state my views here today as we consider legislation to extend until 1978 the existing exemption of the *Delta Queen* from the safety-at-sea laws.

Madam Chairman, the Fourth Congressional District of Kentucky, which I have the honor of representing, consists of eight counties, all of which border on the Ohio River. Thus, the lives of all the people in my district are more or less intimately involved with the river, its history, its heritage, and its traditions.

One of these great traditions is the steamboat *Delta Queen*.

A hundred years ago there were thousands of steamboats plying their trade up and down the Mississippi and its tributaries. Today, just one paddlewheel riverboat, the *Delta Queen*, carries on the 160-year steamboat tradition.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has recognized her unique role in history by listing her in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Congress has also recognized the unique nature of the *Delta Queen* by noting that she does not face the same hazards as oceangoing vessels. Since the enactment of the safety-at-sea law in 1966, Congress has voted three times in favor of temporarily exempting America's last overnight passenger paddlewheel riverboat from these laws. Those reprieves were granted in 1966, 1968, and 1970. In the latter year, as my colleagues will recall, the exemption had to be accomplished by attaching a rider to a Judiciary Committee bill—due to the opposition of the chairman of this committee.

It is very fortunate that, under the wise and determined leadership of Chairman Sullivan, this committee is taking the lead in promoting the extension of the exemption this year.

This exemption will not only enable the *Queen* to continue her life on the river, but—more importantly—it will enable service to continue as a new, \$15.5 million vessel is built.

The new boat will be a steam-powered stern paddlewheeler of traditional design, constructed of noncombustible materials and with hull and outfittings which comply with Coast Guard regulations.

This new vessel is not intended to be a replacement for the *Delta Queen*—her historic value and nostalgic charm cannot be replaced. Instead, the new vessel is designed for those who prefer the comforts and conveniences of our modern age and the first of a new fleet of riverboats.

Madam Chairman, to make the new vessel attractive, it is in my opinion necessary to maintain the great tradition of the *Delta Queen* until the new boat is completed. This bill would do that—and would make a valuable contribution to the preservation of a vital part of our national heritage.

I therefore urge my colleagues to report this bill favorably.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Treen.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID C. TREEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Mr. TREEN. Madam Chairman, I have cosponsored H.R. 7576, a bill whose purpose is to provide for the continued operation of the *Delta Queen*, because I believe this last remaining paddlewheel riverboat presents a unique opportunity for Americans to relive an important part of our heritage.

I am privileged to represent the Third District of Louisiana, through which the Mississippi River flows. The Mississippi is a capricious giant, as the people of Louisiana and a dozen other States along her banks well know. The sophisticated and expensive results of many years of advanced technology have had limited impact in controlling the effects of the recent Mississippi flood, which has caused great anguish and destruction in thousands of communities.

At this point in time, it is particularly important to remember that the river is, on balance, a benevolent giant. The industry, commerce, and agriculture of half of the United States depend on the waters of the Mississippi system. The awesome natural beauty, and the vital role in American history, of the Mississippi, its tributaries and their valleys, must also be recorded in the ledger. The *Delta Queen*, our last remaining link with the era when hundreds of paddlewheel boats plied these waters, also provides a chance for many thousands of Americans annually to take a quiet, leisurely look at the cities, villages, plains, and forests of the South and Middle West.

Madam Chairman, it would be tragic and absurd if in our zeal to provide Federal safety standards for large oceangoing vessels, we were arbitrarily to deprive Americans of the delightful and enriching experience of sailing on the *Delta Queen*. I urge my colleagues on the

Merchant Marine Committee to approve this bill to allow her continued operation with the utmost speed and deliberation.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to express my appreciation and that of the committee for each of your statements. Thank you for your time, interest, and efforts on behalf of saving the *Delta Queen*.

Our next witness will be Rear Adm. William F. Rea, Chief, Office of Merchant Marine Safety, U.S. Coast Guard.

Admiral, do you have a prepared statement?

STATEMENT OF REAR ADM. WILLIAM F. REA III, CHIEF, OFFICE OF MERCHANT MARINE SAFETY, U.S. COAST GUARD; ACCOMPANIED BY CAPT. STUART S. BECKWITH, CHIEF, MERCHANT VESSEL INSPECTION DIVISION

Admiral REA. Yes, Ma'am, I do have a prepared statement.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Admiral REA. Madam Chairman and members of the committee, I am Rear Adm. William F. Rea III, Chief of the Office of Merchant Marine Safety, U.S. Coast Guard.

I am appearing today for the Coast Guard and the Department of Transportation to submit comments on bills H.R. 5649, H.R. 6188, H.R. 6189, H.R. 7575, and H.R. 7576.

The above-mentioned bills would amend the act of May 27, 1936, as amended, by changing the effective date for application of certain provisions of the applicable law, 46 U.S.C. 369, to domestic passenger vessels operating solely on the inland rivers and waterways of the United States from November 1, 1973, to November 1, 1978. The provision affected is that which would prohibit after November 1, 1973, the issuance of a certificate of inspection to a passenger vessel of the United States of 100 gross tons or over having berth or stateroom accommodations for 50 or more passengers if the vessel was not constructed of fire retardant material, and if the structural fire protection did not conform to requirements for vessels contracted for on or after May 28, 1936.

The United States has required since May 28, 1936, that passenger vessels be constructed essentially of fire retardant material. In 1966, the original act was amended by Public Law 89-777 which had as one of its basic provisions a section dealing with construction of domestic vessels. In essence, the act prohibited from operation those vessels of U.S. flag which did not conform to current standards of structural fire protection.

When Public Law 89-777 was enacted, it was recognized that its domestic application would terminate the service of two vessels operating on the inland rivers and waterways, the *Delta Queen* and the *South America*. These vessels, which had previously been exempted from the fire-retardant requirements of the 1936 act by a grandfather clause, were the only U.S. vessels affected by Public Law 89-777.

Original drafts of legislation culminating in Public Law 89-777 provided for an effective date of July 1, 1966, for compliance with these requirements by our domestic vessels. Prior to enactment of this law, however, the date was extended by Congress to November 2, 1968, in order to allow time for the development of replacement vessels. Since the expiration of the November 2, 1968 date, Congress has

extended the effective date on two separate occasions to the present expiration date of November 1, 1973.

The bills under consideration would permit the owners of the *Delta Queen* to operate it for an additional 5 years while a new riverboat is being constructed. Owners of the *South America*, a vessel of similar construction to the *Delta Queen*, removed their vessel from service when faced with the statutory deadline of November 2, 1968. The *Delta Queen*, built in 1926, and certificated for 192 passengers, therefore remains the sole inland vessel in operation, of 100 gross tons or over and with berth or stateroom accommodations for 50 or more passengers, which does not comply with the requirements for incombustible construction.

In the interest of maritime safety, the Coast Guard and the Department have consistently opposed legislation to prolong the service of the *Delta Queen* on the ground that the vessel, constructed primarily of wood, and operating in the overnight passenger trade, presents an unacceptable risk in regard to fire safety.

The United States, in international maritime safety negotiations has long championed fire preventive standards, as opposed to fire fighting capability standards as the primary aim of marine fire safety regulations. Fire preventive standards were written into the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea of 1960 at the insistence of the United States. The standards of that Convention are incorporated by reference in the act to be amended.

We feel compelled to emphasize that the *Delta Queen* represents a degree of fire safety risk substantially greater than that inherent in modern passenger ships constructed of incombustible materials.

We recognize that there are practical problems involved in discontinuing operations of the *Delta Queen*, and that the construction of a replacing vessel for the *Delta Queen* is in the immediate offing.

However, even with the knowledge that this exemption is merely to provide continuity of service of a historic river steamer, and that this goal is worthy in terms of a much desired service to the public, the Coast Guard and the Department of Transportation cannot support the enactment of H.R. 5649, H.R. 6188, H.R. 6189, H.R. 7575, and H.R. 7576.

For the record, there is attached a list showing inspections conducted by the Coast Guard since the exemption was last extended by Public Law 91-612. The Coast Guard will continue to inspect the *Delta Queen* and apply all applicable laws and regulations in an effort to make the *Delta Queen* as safe as possible.

[The list of inspections referred to follow:]

RECORD OF INSPECTIONS

The *Delta Queen* has received the following inspections by Coast Guard personnel since enactment of Public Law 91-612 on 31 December 1970:

(a) The vessel was examined on drydock and inspected for certification at New Orleans, La., during April 1971.

(b) First reinspection was conducted at New Orleans, La., on 12 July 1971.

(c) Second reinspection was conducted at St. Louis, Mo., on 5 November 1971.

(d) Inspection for certification was conducted at New Orleans, La., during February 1972.

(e) First reinspection was conducted at Louisville, Ky., on 9 May 1972.

(f) Second reinspection was conducted at St. Louis, Mo., on 28 October 1972.

(g) Inspection for certification was conducted at Cincinnati, Ohio, during February 1973.

(h) In addition to the scheduled inspections noted above, the following additional inspections were conducted by the Traveling Inspectors' Staff, Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C., while the vessel was underway: 1. Captain C. T. Newman—June 1971; 2. Captain A. S. Zabinski—August 1972; and 3. Captain A. S. Zabinski—November 1972.

Admiral REA. That concludes my prepared statement, Madam Chairman, and I am prepared to respond to any questions you have, or the committee may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I have a few I would like to ask you before I pass on to some of the others.

Admiral Rea, I understand there are some passenger vessels operating only in daytime service.

Does the Coast Guard distinguish between the safety regulations on an overnight vessel carrying 50 passengers, and a vessel that operates without staterooms, carrying as much as 2,000 or more passengers? And is it your experience that the former is less safe?

Admiral REA. Madam Chairman, there are different standards for those which have overnight and sleeping accommodations for passengers, and the law and the regulations relate to those which have accommodations for more than 50.

Our experience has been, as far as the day vessels, or vessels which do not carry overnight passengers, that generally their construction is such that they are wide open, there are less fire hazards, and just the manner in which they are built.

They do not have compartmentation and things like that, Madam Chairman.

I do not know if that is directly responsive to your question.

The CHAIRMAN. Then in your experience, you are saying the vessel that carries overnight passengers is less safe than the excursion boats?

Admiral REA. No, our experience as far as the safety record of the boat has been quite good, Mrs. Sullivan. Except for the *Delta Queen*, of course, the passenger vessels under the U.S. flag are all of the fire-proof construction and using preventive methods, rather than extinguishing methods in the event you had to fight a fire, but our experience is good in both areas.

The CHAIRMAN. I did not quite get that last answer, that the other vessels are constructed in a different way, is that what you said? Do we have any other vessels?

Admiral REA. Well, at this time as far as the American flag is concerned, there are only two other vessels which carry overnight passengers, and they are oceangoing passenger vessels.

The CHAIRMAN. Out in the sea?

Admiral REA. That is correct, they are not on the river.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral, are there any other passenger vessels on the inland waterways of any appreciable size that are not fireproof?

Admiral REA. Well, there are no others, Madam Chairman, which have accommodations for 50 or more overnight passengers.

Some of the passenger vessels have some wood construction in them, I am thinking perhaps of the *President* and the *Admiral*, but they are wide open.

There is not too much in the way of combustible materials on them, they are sort of wide open vessels with open decks for people to be on.

The CHAIRMAN. Do they have wooden hulls?

Admiral REA. No, Ma'am.

The CHAIRMAN. Steel hulls?

Admiral REA. Yes, Ma'am.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know of any vessels that carry, let us say, 30 to 50 overnight passengers on our rivers today?

Admiral REA. I am not aware of any.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral, in connection with the Coast Guard evaluation of danger on the rivers, do you have a record of what has caused the major fires on vessels which do ply the rivers?

Are we really dealing with the fireproof conditions a vessel might have built into it, or are we dealing with the risk of that vessel running into an oil barge or tanker or being enveloped in flames in the same sense as the *African Star* was?

Admiral REA. I think we are dealing with both.

As far as the vessels themselves, as opposed to the collisions, when you have passengers aboard and sleeping accommodations, and the passengers themselves bring on materials which are combustible, like they are smoking, you have that source of ignition.

You also have a potential source of fire there. You have in your own powerplants, the boilers and machinery, which are sources of fire, and we have been approaching this primarily from that standpoint.

There is also, of course, with the tremendous traffic on the river, the added danger and possibility of a collision which could envelop her in fire.

Your own committee has taken steps through safety measures to provide licensed personnel for towing vessels; there are traffic regulation schemes coming in.

The *Delta Queen*, in fairness to the owner, has radar aboard, and various devices to provide as safe navigation as possible.

Primarily, the first area which has been a major concern in maintaining this position, the fire which would occur onboard would come from some source of ignition right onboard.

The CHAIRMAN. I note in your statement the Coast Guard feels there is substantially greater fire safety risk on the *Delta Queen* than on modern vessels constructed of incombustible materials.

The owners of the *Delta Queen* have treated the combustible materials in their vessel with intumescent fireproofing.

Would you not say that this treatment substantially reduces the risk of fire?

Admiral REA. Madam Chairman, we do not share that view with the owners. We have not been able to reach any conclusion that this coating of the paneling or the wood in any way makes this material equivalent to incombustible materials that we find acceptable. It just does not meet that standard.

The CHAIRMAN. You did see the demonstration here, maybe 3 years back, I guess, when the other bill was before us where it was demonstrated that wood treated with this substance would not burn? The wood that was not treated would be burning, and the minute you hit the section that was treated, the fire would just go out.

Admiral REA. Yes, I saw that; but also I want to rely on one of my staff members, perhaps, because we have had some other tests made on this to try to follow up, and we have not found that this provides anywhere near the degree of safety, fire preventive measures that the owners of the *Delta Queen* would have us believe.

Madam Chairman, it perhaps reduces it somewhat, but it is not comparable to the incombustible bulkheads which we require, and will probably be on the new very fine vessel they are building.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you feel they have done everything that is possible with what they have in the material of the *Delta Queen* to make it as safe as they possibly could?

Admiral REA. I think certainly they have done a great number of things, and we can furnish for the record, if you wish, Madam Chairman, a list of things that the owner said he would accomplish if an exemption were granted.

Now, there are two lists we are talking about. The second list was one, if he got the temporary exemption, so to speak, and that was a list of some seven items, and I think there are at least five of them that have been done, and the other two have not been done.

At an earlier point in this business there was a much longer list when the owners were seeking a permanent exemption.

At that time, there was a very lengthy list, Madam Chairman, and we can furnish you summaries of either the last one, the shorter list, or both of them, and tell you what has been done.

By and large, they have done a great number of them, and in fairness to the owners, they have made a considerable effort in trying to improve the conditions.

In this regard, if I may say, we are put in a rather delicate position of treading a fine line. We do not feel that we should in any way harass the owners of the *Delta Queen*, and impose requirements beyond what the regulations or the intent of regulations are, but at the same time we do feel a responsibility and an obligation to insure that the vessel does meet the standards, and we hope through our continuing inspection process, and we have riding inspectors on board occasionally, and with very good cooperation from the owners that we are able to maintain this sort of a fine line we are treading here and providing as much as possible within the authorities given to us, a safe vessel for the passengers to sail on a long as the vessel continues to operate.

The CHAIRMAN. I do not think we can expect them to make steel out of wood.

Admiral REA. No, Ma'am.

The CHAIRMAN. And you are always going to find a risk of wood burning, but when you mention that there are two things that they did not do, if you do not have them at hand, would you furnish them to me?

Admiral REA. I can furnish them for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

PROJECTS FOR DELTA QUEEN

<i>Proposed</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>
Emergency electric pumps—for emergency operation of critical bilge pumps, sprinkler system, fire hydrants and fuel system.	This commitment has been partially completed. Standby electric pumps for the fuel oil service system and electric bilge pumps have not been installed. Changes have been made to the sprinkler system and fire hydrants; however, our inspection has revealed that the new electric pumps will not maintain sufficient water pressure for proper operation of the sprinkler system.

Proposed

Fire retardant coatings—as a result of our extensive discussions with NASA and independent fire consultants, we have selected several fire retardant coatings and materials which, when applied to wood surfaces in state-rooms and public areas, will greatly reduce the combustibility and flames spread characteristics of the surfaces. This will provide greater containment and make control easier as well as greatly extend the time available for safe evacuation of the areas. Fire experts are now recommending these coatings for use on even all steel surfaces which cannot prevent combustion when conventional paint ignites.

Accomplished

The owners have reported that this commitment has been accomplished. Coast Guard inspectors have confirmed that these two areas have been painted; however, there is nothing to indicate that the fire retardant characteristics claimed in the commitment have been met.

The CHAIRMAN. I am curious as to the history of fires on rivers, of any kind of passenger ship in recent years, say the last 30 years.

Have there been any fires on river passenger vessels in this time where lives were lost?

Admiral REA. Maybe I could provide that for the record. I do not have it at my fingertips, but the history of our whole inspection relates to fires on passenger vessels, but of much older vintage than what you are speaking of, the last 30 years.

The CHAIRMAN. You may furnish that for the record.

[The information referred to follows:]

CASUALTY RECORD

Only casualty records for the past 10 years are available for our review. Examination of these records indicates that we have had no casualties involving a loss of life or serious damage to a vessel in overnight passenger service resulting from a fire during this period.

The CHAIRMAN. In the last 30 years, to your recollection, do you know offhand of any fires that have occurred?

Admiral REA. I do not. Serious fires?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, where lives were lost through some negligence of even a passenger on the boat or the boat itself, not such as happened with the *African Star*.

Admiral REA. If I may, the only one that comes to my mind is not of the nature I think you have in mind.

There was a collision in the 1940's in the lower Mississippi River between the *Alcoa* and a cargo vessel, which resulted in a fire because of the materials the cargo vessel was carrying, but as far as generating onboard, I do not know of any, but I would like to take a look, and if it is, we will furnish it to you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Pritchard?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Admiral, just a couple of questions.

As you know, I come from Seattle and Puget Sound. You have probably been out there.

We have had a ferry system for a number of years, and we for many, many years had wooden hulls and wooden superstructures. We are just now replacing them with steel.

We have made thousands and thousands of trips with a large fleet, and we have never had a serious fire, never had any serious trouble. That is perhaps due to your good work in inspections.

We did have wood superstructures, as you know—but we did not have 50 overnight accommodations—but hundreds and hundreds of people and cars scrambled on the boat.

I think weighing the possible calamity that could happen on those ferryboats which were of wooden construction and the lack of fires that we had compared to the boats on the river, that close to a bank, I am concerned, and as I think we are all concerned with the safety factor, and I think you people have the responsibility to come in here and say this is not as safe as we would like.

The hard thing is to weigh this with the other needs we have, the desire to keep this part of the American heritage afloat. You are saying it is not as safe as we would like.

It is hard for me to jibe that with the fact that a great number of wooden ships that have superstructures are carrying passengers in the United States.

Now, this business of "overnight," is this the crux of it, an overnight passenger ship?

Admiral REA. That is correct, sir.

In Seattle, I assume you are talking about the ferries that go to, say, Bremerton. They have large numbers, and they run at night.

On the *Delta Queen* you have overnight passengers sleeping actually, and the trade on the *Delta Queen* is, generally speaking, elderly people, although we do not get into that.

The crux of the matter, as far as the differentiation, those that are fast asleep in the room, and something happening on that occasion, and if a fire is started with the wooden superstructure, the possibility of those people to escape and save their lives is what I am talking about.

This is the difference, as opposed to those with the open deck, Mr. Congressman. The people are up and around.

In the event there is some fire, since we are talking about fire safety, the people are all awake, and would be aware of it.

The odds on it, on those fires, even though they may be wood, they are pretty wide open, and you are sitting in lounges, and all of that, and there is not as much to burn. The chances of a major conflagration starting on those is much less than where you have the sleeping passenger.

Mr. PRITCHARD. You are equating the *Delta Queen* with a small hotel or rooming house that is of wooden construction, and which we have all over the country.

The *Delta Queen* is never all that far from shore.

Admiral REA. We hear that. The chairman spoke of it and we hear this continually.

Sometimes the vessel, when the river is low, it may not sink very much. The river is quite high now. Fortunately, I see in the press it is starting to fall, and I am sure this is good for the whole industry on the western rivers.

I do not think it follows that when they are close to the bank, all the people can get off safely. If something happens in the middle of the night, you are asleep and a fire would occur, getting over to the bank of the river and grabbing a willow tree and evacuating may not be possible because the wood is so combustible, they may not have a chance to get off. There may not be enough time.

The exits may not be that easy, even though they are near the bank.

MR. PRITCHARD. Just one other question.

If this vessel is given the extension, while I gather you would object to it now, would you strongly object to its continuing service after this replacement comes along. Is that correct?

Admiral REA. I think that is a very fair statement.

It is our understanding that the purpose of this legislation is to grant the exemption in order to permit a replacement. Although it is not worded specifically that way, we would be quite hopeful that the extension would only be until the replacement vessel, the model shown here, would get into service.

MR. PRITCHARD. But then this vessel, the *Delta Queen* that is operating now, would be allowed to, after this extension, carry day passengers?

Admiral REA. They could, that is correct.

MR. PRITCHARD. That is all.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Leggett?

MR. LEGGETT. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

As the chairman indicated in her questions, disregarding the law, I do not believe that you can really say that 50 people traveling in a theoretically fireproof ship is more dangerous to life and limb than 2,000 people traveling as day passengers in a nonfireproofed combustible ship.

I guess it all depends on the circumstances of the situation; is that not so? One could be far more dangerous than another in one situation covered by the law and, as I understand the other situation, not covered by the law; is that right?

Admiral REA. That is correct.

MR. LEGGETT. Now, as far as this particular ship is concerned, I suspect that while you have indicated that the fireproofing is reasonably effective, on the other hand if there were certain type of explosions, let us say zinc or magnesium aided and abetted fire, combustible material might not withstand the fireproofing that has been put upon her; is that right?

Admiral REA. Not quite, sir. I perhaps conveyed the wrong impression.

The vessel is still wood. They have applied their fireproofing material on certain areas. This is our feeling, that it in no way effectively reduces the combustibility of this material. The hazard is still there. This is both our understanding and based on some tests that we had made or were made, there was no such thing as equating this wood, which was treated with incombustible material which would either hold back a fire for 30 minutes or an hour or whatever standard you need, depending on which space it is.

The hazard is still there.

Perhaps to a degree it has been improved and certainly anything that is done is better than doing nothing.

MR. LEGGETT. It does deter fire but you do not think it does the job that incombustible materials do?

Admiral REA. No. This vessel depends primarily on fire extinguishing. The model before you, with incombustible materials, then the main fire preventive method on there would be whatever fire occurred would be contained right in the space.

The *Delta Queen* is dependent on firefighting and fire detecting, sprinklers and things like that, in the event a fire starts.

Mr. LEGGETT. Of course, this is one of the primary hazards, the fire on the ship, not so much the combustible material itself, but many times the things that a ship carries, flammable substances as an example. The fire that occurred in a solid steel hull out in the middle of the Pacific, and this was a rather devastating fire, perhaps due to the steel structure and still, because of the very lethal combustible materials that were on board, the ship was in real havoc, and you had loss of life with it.

Admiral REA. Well, on a passenger vessel, I think the main source of fire would be the fuel which perhaps an engine room fire, and there are safeguards against that, such as CO₂, fixed firefighting equipment for the engine room.

Mr. LEGGETT. That fuel on the ship is contained in a steel structure; is it not?

Admiral REA. Oh, yes.

Mr. LEGGETT. I think that is all I have.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Grover?

Mr. GROVER. I think I will reserve my questions for later.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Downing?

Mr. DOWNING. No questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Stubblefield?

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Madam Chairman, we have been down this road before, and I am sure, Admiral, we know the name of your game; but, as the chairman has pointed out, the American people want this to stay afloat, and in my district we have a network of rivers that this boat plies very often—the Mississippi River and the Ohio River.

My People are rather emotional about this boat, and I just want to be on record in favor of continuation of the operation of the *Delta Queen*.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Cohen?

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Just one question or perhaps two questions, Admiral.

I noticed in your statement that there have been approximately eight inspections conducted since the enactment of the Public Law in 1970.

Can you tell us whether or not those inspections revealed any deterioration in the ship itself? Has there been any improvement?

Admiral REA. The inspections I say in every occasion, whether we are talking about the very new vessel or one operating for years, the inspections themselves usually reveal deficiencies before the certificate is renewed, before they continue to run, and these are corrected, and that has been the case with the *Delta Queen* as with other vessels.

Mr. COHEN. What sort of deficiencies would there be?

Admiral REA. When they went on drydocking, for example, there was quite a bit of the hull that had to be repaired, some new steel plating put in the hull.

This is the purpose of putting the vessel on drydock, to see if the underside of the vessel is sound as it is periodically hauled out.

You have the life preservers and you inspect them. You do this annually. You look at every lifejacket and when you are satisfied you stamp it.

I am certain, without having the record in front of me, probably some of the lifejackets needed to be replaced. We can provide for the record, if you wish, a summary of the inspection records themselves, if this would be of some use to you.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Chairman, I am simply trying to get to the point to try to determine whether or not the owners, the managers of the ship have made attempts to actually improve the safety of the ship, assuming we cannot change the structure.

Have they taken adequate steps to actually assure the safety from fire?

Admiral REA. They have taken a number of steps and I am providing for the record a summary of the things they said they would do if they got the exemption last time. That was seven items and five they have done, and the other two were not done. The ones they have done have been of some significance.

Let me say that they have taken significant steps, but you do not remove the basic problem in all of this process, and the basic disability is the construction itself.

Mr. COHEN. Let me ask you your opinion. Would the safety of passengers be greater or lesser if you have an oceangoing vessel which meets the requirements now required by the law. Are the passengers more endangered in that situation assuming a fire, or a situation where we have the *Delta Queen* which does not meet the standards but has great proximity to the shoreline and the passengers can get ashore if the ship is abandoned, would there be a greater hazard with a fire at sea with the required structure or one here on the *Delta Queen*?

Admiral REA. It would be our view that the *Delta Queen* would be the greater risk because the other vessels meet a standard where the fire we would expect would be contained and not spread, and even though on the high seas and remote from any fire department, the chances of saving life or the less likelihood of loss of life, is on the oceangoing vessel, it is better than on the *Delta Queen*, even though on inland waters, even though accessible to the banks.

I would not want to say to what degree, but certainly to some degree. There is more of a hazard on the *Delta Queen* and her type of construction.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I cannot buy that, Admiral.

When we read of the terrific number of lives lost in these ships at sea since the safety at sea law was passed, they are not accessible to any fire department or fireboats or anything in any small or short period of time. I think it is much more accessible if they are near the shore as the *Delta Queen* would be, but we are not here to go into that. I think we have records that point out the number of lives lost at sea by ships that were not fireproofed the way they should have been and this is why the safety at sea law was enacted.

I just wonder. We talk about inspections and see some of these ships that we still allow our American passengers to buy passage on, I just wonder how many defects they have; and yet they are passed what-

ever the Coast Guard inspection requires there, but if they cannot pass it they just go to an island a short distance away and fill their cruise boat with American citizens. We try to make it safe. We cannot guarantee that either because they are boarding day after day.

Mr. Downing?

Mr. DOWNING. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

What would be the furthest point of distance between this vessel and the shore at any time?

Admiral REA. At whatever the widest part of the river is, but the river is a couple of miles wide in some places. It is within the confines of the Mississippi and Ohio and the Lower Mississippi and high water even then you might be talking about 1 mile at the most and as they go through some passage, but are certainly always within sight of land.

Mr. DOWNING. Thank you.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. What are the additional safety measures involved, increasing the personnel of the boat? Do they not have 75 or 80 persons on the boat now?

Admiral REA. Are you referring to the *Delta Queen*, sir?

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Yes.

Admiral REA. I do not know that.

Perhaps the next witness could tell you, but the manning scale is prescribed by the certificate of inspection and we feel it is adequate.

There has been no effort on the part of the owner to have us reduce the numbers so they have been carrying the number specified in the certificate of inspection.

If he has been carrying any additional numbers other than service to passengers, I am not aware of it.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. I understood that was one of the safety additives they have adopted.

Admiral REA. Well, I would say, Mr. Stubblefield, it was not a Coast Guard requirement or we did not impose additional manning requirements on the vessel.

If the owner has done that, that is to his credit but I am not aware of it.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. As far as you are concerned they have adequate personnel?

Admiral REA. Yes, their manning requirement has a required crew of 21, but this 21 is for the safe operation and navigation of the vessel and the owner carries a great number more, the cooks and stewards and people to service the passengers.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. No questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Breaux?

Mr. BREAU. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Thank you, Admiral, for your testimony. Most of the relevant points have been covered this morning but my colleague Mr. Cohen and I are impressed with the number of inspections that the Coast Guard has made of the *Delta Queen*.

Is this more than the number ordinarily given a ship operating in this area?

Admiral REA. Yes. Referring to the record of inspections, we are required by law to inspect this vessel annually, to renew the certificate.

On the reinspections we are required to do that on all passenger vessels.

In addition to that we add down at the bottom the three inspections by the traveling inspectors. Captain Zabinski has made two inspections. This was in an effort to sort of hew the fine line I was speaking to earlier, to just assure the public and ourselves that this vessel was meeting the standards and trying to do it in a fashion that we are not harassing them, although I had some people say you ought to do this and some say not to try to harass. We thought we had no business harassing.

To come back to your question, inspections are frequent because we think of the risk involved here and it is warranted. The owner has been very cooperative. There has been no objection that there has been more than the minimum we have had to do.

Mr. BREAU. I am not criticizing the inspections. I think they are good. I think extra inspections are good considering the condition of the ship, but do you not agree that this increased number of inspections would be an added safety measure to insure the fact that the ship is seaworthy?

Admiral REA. No question about that and particularly the underway inspections. We see the vessel in operation. The passengers see us on there. They know we are down there. They do add to the safety.

Mr. BREAU. Does the ship have a person who serves as a fireman or a permanent crew member who travels with the boat who keeps an eye out for fire hazards?

Admiral REA. Like a fireman in a firehouse?

Mr. BREAU. The person who would be in charge of fire prevention.

Admiral REA. They have an organization on there, sir, and they have a regular, what they call watch porter; and everybody has responsibilities but, basically, it is the responsibility of the master and he is in charge of the safety of the vessel. They have alarm systems and drills.

Mr. BREAU. They would have someone on board or several people on board on a 24-hour basis who would be responsible for fire prevention?

Admiral REA. During the night when people are asleep they have people taking turns around but they are responsible to the mate on the watch at the time when underway.

Mr. BREAU. That is being done?

Admiral REA. Yes, sir.

Mr. BREAU. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Ginn?

Mr. GINN. No questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Studds?

Mr. STUDDS. No questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Bowen?

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

As a resident of a Mississippi River district in the State of Mississippi I have received a number of communications from my constituents on this. In fact, a number of them have asked me to convey to the chairman their congratulations and commendation for the outstanding effort on her part for the retention of the *Delta Queen* in the last several years.

It is somewhat ironic that we find the Coast Guard here simply in effect testifying on behalf of a law which we passed in the Congress and which we in the Congress certainly are in a position to amend, and I certainly hope that we will do so in this instance, just as in other areas of important public endeavor. As you mentioned in your statement, Madam Chairman, just as we must sometimes act to protect endangered species of fish and wildlife, so I think that it is appropriate that we consider overriding national concern, historical and cultural interests, in the *Delta Queen*, and I want to be on record as strongly in favor of this extension of the life of the *Delta Queen* and in disagreement with the position taken by the Coast Guard.

I realize they are doing their duty in attempting to appear before us as I say to interpret the language we have passed as the Congress.

By the same token, I hope we can give them new instructions as a result of our action on this legislation.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Grover?

Mr. GROVER. No questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Admiral, this boat calls or passes 17 States. There are a lot of people in this country who are aware of this little *Delta Queen* and you have done a good job to uphold your responsibilities, Admiral, and you cannot do otherwise that what you have done this morning.

What we hope to do is to convince you that there is still life left in the old gal and we are going to keep her running if at all possible and insist that the owners adhere to the safety features, and I am sure they will.

I thank you very much.

Admiral REA. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity here this morning.

The CHAIRMAN. Our next witness is Mr. William Muster, president, Greene Line Steamers, Inc., and I think you have Mr. John McKay with you. Has he come in?

Mr. John McKay is executive vice president of Jeffboat, Inc., which is the company building the new ship.

I see that Miss Blake is with you also. I want to say this is one of the best PR people I have ever met, and not just because she is a female.

Anyone else with you, Mr. Muster?

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM MUSTER, PRESIDENT, GREENE LINE STEAMERS, INC.; ACCOMPANIED BY J. F. MCKAY, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, JEFFBOAT, INC., JEFFERSONVILLE, IND.; STEEDMAN HINCKLEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, GREENE LINE STEAMERS, INC. AND ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF OVERSEAS NATIONAL AIRWAYS; MISS BETTY BLAKE, VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER, GREENE LINE STEAMERS, INC.

Mr. MUSTER. Madam Chairman, on my left is Steedman Hinckley, chairman of the board, Greene Line Steamers, Inc. and also chairman of the board of Overseas National Airways.

On my right is Mr. John F. McKay, executive vice president of Jeffboat, Inc., Jeffersonville, Ind.

On my far right is Miss Betty Blake, vice president and general manager of Greene Line Steamers, Inc.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Now, I notice you have a statement that should take you 15 or 16 minutes to get through. We do have many, many questions for you.

With that, you may proceed.

Mr. MUSTER. Thank you.

When the Safety at Sea Law was passed in 1966, Congress did not intend to include the *Delta Queen* because she is never at sea and operates solely on the inland rivers. Recognizing this inconsistency, the Conference Committee agreed to a 2-year delay of enactment on those provisions which would have destroyed the *Delta Queen*. We needed those 2 years. We had to find out if it was practical to reconstruct the *Delta Queen* and meet the fireproof standards. If not, we had to consider designing a replacement vessel.

Rebuilding the *Delta Queen* turned out to be a total impossibility. It meant virtually destroying her down to the keel plates. Building a new vessel presented extraordinary problems too, but it appeared to be the only way we could continue in business.

In 1968 I presented testimony before this committee that we had completed the naval engineering for a new vessel. We were doing the final architectural drawings and bids were expected in the fall of 1968. We thought we could have a new vessel built by the beginning of the 1971 season. We therefore asked for a congressional reprieve of 2 more years.

After we were granted the reprieve, we did go out for bid but the results were devastating. We had planned a 275-passenger vessel costing \$7 million—it came in at \$10 million.

A vessel at that price could only be economically feasible if it carried more passengers—at least 350—and that required a total re-evaluation of passenger facilities and engineering requirements. So it was back to the drawing board.

By this time it also became apparent that the owners of Greene Line had to raise well over a million dollars for the downpayment. We had tried to find conventional financing through third parties, but no one was willing to underwrite such a speculative high-cost project. Finally the stockholders authorized me to find a new owner that could raise the money. That search led me to dozens of large U.S. transportation companies. I soon learned that river steamboats were not in high demand.

However, one company, Overseas National Airways, was intrigued with the concept. They were accustomed to pioneering new travel concepts, having been a major factor in the revolutionary charter air travel business.

Under ONA's direction we did start all over again. This time we not only had the advantage of our prior experience, but also the professional help of a larger corporation—with architects and designers who were currently engaged in the construction of passenger vessels for the ocean trade.

When our exemption expired in 1970, however, we were empty handed. All we had was more engineering specifications, new drawings, and a sincere, but difficult-to-prove intent to build the vessel.

The chairman, at that time, of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, told me that since we had failed to deliver a new vessel, he could not support legislation to extend the life of the *Delta Queen*. It was only with the help of dedicated friends in the Congress, and amongst the public, that we were able to obtain the 3-year reprieve under which the *Delta Queen* is now operating.

Today I am pleased to report that our situation has changed. A huge, beautiful new riverboat is under construction at Jeffboat in Jeffersonville, Ind. Jeffboat is America's largest inland shipyard. They are the best qualified in the United States to build our vessel. In fact, Jeffboat was one of the largest builders of steam packet boats in the days when thousands of them plied the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

Our new vessel will carry over 400 passengers. It will be built in accordance with the latest Coast Guard regulations and fireproof construction standards. Passengers will enjoy comfort, luxury, and safety unknown in the old riverboat days. However, they will still enjoy the glamor of real steam engines, a huge paddlewheel, a steam calliope, and decor and service just like in the good ole days.

We are aiming for completion in 1975. Thus, by 1976 when the *Delta Queen* celebrates her 50th birthday, and the United States celebrates its 200th birthday, we will be in full operation. Our new vessel will be the first major U.S.-flag passenger cruise vessel, ocean or inland, built in the 20 years.

Our new vessel will signal the rebirth of a colorful era in the transportation industry—when steamboat packets opened mid-America to passengers and commerce. Now, while busy barge traffic carries the freight, our new vessel will carry the adventurous in spirit to the still unspoiled wilderness of our rivers, to fascinating little river towns that once were hustling and bustling with steamboat trade—and to the beautiful, modern skylines of major cities such as Cincinnati, Louisville, Memphis, St. Paul, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and New Orleans.

Yes, thanks to the confidence of the Congress, the *Delta Queen* has survived these past 7 years. We worked hard to improve the *Delta Queen* and our officers and crew have operated safely and successfully. Now money, engineering skill, architectural effort, and shipbuilding skills have been combined to meet the challenge of creating a new riverboat. One with yesterday's charm, but today's safety, comfort, and convenience.

In her struggle for survival, the *Delta Queen* attracted the attention of millions of Americans who didn't know steamboats were still around.

Our big red paddlewheel, the steam calliope and our old-fashioned style has captured the imagination of millions—we have sparked a revival of interest in old steamboats, riverboat gamblers, and the colorful history of our Midwest and South.

I come before you today to ask once again that the *Delta Queen* be spared. I think it would be a disaster for a legislative act to destroy this historic vessel. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have voiced their desire to see the *Delta Queen* protected—only a few isolated voices, advocating total safety at any cost, have condemned.

But even the U.S. Coast Guard has published learned papers pointing out that safety is a relative thing. They explain that social value must be weighed against risk.

For example, despite occasional disasters, the social value of operating airplanes, automobiles, and buses is very high.

By comparison, the risk is small, and necessary, if our society is to function efficiently. Statistically the risk of operating the *Delta Queen* is zero—not a single passenger life has been lost in a steamboat accident since 1903—and in fact—never in the 83 years of our own company's history.

The social value of operating the *Delta Queen* is overwhelming—here is a truly historic vessel, still self-supporting in her trade, operating more efficiently and more safely than when she was first built.

I also ask that the *Delta Queen* be reprieved because without the ongoing operation of this vessel, the completion and success of our new vessel is in serious doubt. The new boat will be a steamboat and that means we need steam engineers.

The *Delta Queen* is the only vessel where they can be trained and licensed in equipment that is comparable. The same is true of captains, mates, pilots, and other boat personnel. There are very few of the old-timers left and we must get new people in training. The *Delta Queen* is our training vessel for future steamboat crews.

Protecting the *Delta Queen* and building a new vessel will bring hundreds of side benefits to Americans. It is more than just a delightful, almost forgotten, form of recreation. It is a vital stimulus to tourism in hundreds of small towns in rural areas along our rivers. Now our company employs about 100 people, but when the new vessel is commissioned, we will employ nearly three times as many directly, and literally thousands will be engaged in providing the shore services and supplies we need along the way. Even now hundreds of shipyard workers are being engaged to build this uniquely American product.

And speaking of American product, it is significant that, in her own way, the *Delta Queen* contributes favorably to our balance of trade. Not only do we carry foreign tourists, but we epitomize for the foreign traveler the spirit of American pioneering and enterprise. With the new vessel, and in conjunction with ONA, we will actively promote foreign tour groups to come to the heartland of America.

Right now, the *Delta Queen* is the only scheduled public transportation on America's rivers. Other countries are far better served. Modern riverboats offer regular cruises on the Rhine, the Danube, the Volga, the Nile, and the Amazon. I might add these vessels carry 50 or more overnight passengers, and all of them are at least partially constructed of wood. Under their safety regulations the *Delta Queen* could operate unhampered, and our new vessel would cost several million dollars less.

The success of foreign river cruises is even more significant when you consider that none of those countries have rivers as beautiful or as extensive as our own Mississippi River system. The Rhine River, for example, is only navigable for 850 miles. Our own system is navigable for well over 3,500 miles. Yet on the Rhine they have literally dozens of overnight passenger vessels and on our rivers we only have the *Delta Queen*.

River steamboats are a picturesque part of U.S. history. Both the *Delta Queen* and our new vessel will utilize reciprocating steam engines to power a traditional stern paddlewheel. Each in its own way is an engineering marvel—with the *Delta Queen* literally a living museum.

In fact, she has been so dedicated and officially listed in the National Register of Historic Structures.

Both vessels will be good citizens—they will utilize fuel and energy more efficiently than any form of public transportation and with their modern facilities, they will not contribute pollution to the rivers or the atmosphere.

Both vessels are officially part of the U.S. merchant marine. In fact, the *Delta Queen* is one of only three major passenger vessels in the world still flying the American flag. The other two are the *Mariposa* and *Monterey* which operate in the Pacific Ocean trade.

We believe that the *Delta Queen* should be permanently exempted from the safety at sea law. She should be permitted to continue operating, under the control of the U.S. Coast Guard, for as long as passengers want to experience the thrill of riding a genuine old-fashioned steamboat.

However, the 5-year reprieve proposed in H.R. 5649, and the several other like bills now pending before this committee, will meet our immediate need. In fact, it permits us to make some additional safety improvements in the *Delta Queen*. Now we will also be able to offer career opportunities to masters, mates, pilots and engineers, who have been reluctant to enter the field because the future of both the *Delta Queen* and the new vessel were in doubt.

In the past few years we have invested over a million dollars in remodeling, repairs, safety improvements and restoration of the *Delta Queen*. We have replated more than half of the hull. We have installed new wiring and electrical equipment throughout. We installed an auxiliary diesel electric generator to provide electricity, whether or not steam is up.

The original steam powered automatic fire sprinkler system has been modernized and augmented with electrical equipment. We have replaced the original fire alarm system, and we have added a complete modern automatic fire detection system—such as the one used in these chambers, in fact. We have voluntarily added inflatable life rafts, dual radio and dual radar, modern telephones and the latest communications equipment.

We have fireproofed every stateroom; on the exterior we stripped off old paint and treated the bulkheads and overheads with fire retardant, intumescent coatings recommended by NASA. We use fireproof bedspreads, fireproof carpeting, fireproof upholstery and fireproof drapery. Even all our exterior deck surfaces have been recovered with fireproof Dex-O-Tex.

Crew quarters and work areas have been similarly fireproofed.

We have also made major changes in our galley and boiler room to reduce fire hazard and we intend to do more.

Our crew performs a fire and boat drill at least once a week and every night clock-punching watchmen patrol the boat while passengers are sleeping.

All of our officers and crew are alert and dedicated to the safety and welfare of our passengers. We have cooperated and we will continue to cooperate with the Coast Guard, the Public Health Service and other regulatory bodies who have, themselves, devoted extra effort and patience to the unique problems of running the *Delta Queen*.

I want to thank the members of this committee whose objective, but friendly, concern has been a major factor in guiding us in our continuing battle to stay alive.

I will give you my personal reassurance that we are all aware of our responsibility. We will do everything possible to justify your confidence in our continued operation.

The *Delta Queen* is a small but important part of America. I believe it would be a tragedy if we lose this opportunity to preserve and protect her. I fervently hope you will recommend this legislation favorably.

Madam Chairman, I do have appended to my statement the history of the *Delta Queen* and also *Delta Queen* facts and statistics, information about the new riverboat, that I would like to have inserted in the record at this point.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it is so ordered.
[The information follows:]

HISTORY OF DELTA QUEEN

The *Delta Queen*, as originally designed and built in 1926, was the most expensive (\$875,000), luxurious and safest paddlewheel passenger riverboat ever built.

The hull was fabricated on the River Clyde in Glasgow, Scotland, and shipped to Stockton, Calif., for final assembly. The superstructure of oak, walnut, teak, mahogany, and ironwood was hand-fitted by California cabinet makers. The boat was originally commissioned by the California Transportation Company to operate overnight between Sacramento and San Francisco on the Sacramento River.

During World War II, the U.S. Navy recommissioned the *Delta Queen* to ferry troops and wounded in San Francisco Bay. In 1947, the vessel was auctioned off to the highest bidder, Capt. Tom Greene, then President of Greene Line Steamers.

After painstakingly "crating" the superstructure, the *Delta Queen* was towed down the Pacific Coast to the Panama Canal and up through the Gulf of Mexico to New Orleans. Under its own power, the boat proceeded up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, where she was remodeled and outfitted for Mississippi River trade at a cost of nearly \$750,000. During the next 20 years, the *Delta Queen* carried hundreds of thousands of passengers on memorable river journeys in historic mid-America.

In 1966, when the *Delta Queen* was enmeshed in the Safety at Sea Law, the owners voluntarily undertook a major program of restoration and safety improvements that by 1973 totaled more than one million dollars.

Today, the *Delta Queen* is a familiar and stirring sight as she serenely steams up and down the Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee, Cumberland, Arkansas and Illinois Rivers. She is a living museum of fine riverboat design and engineering—impossible to duplicate in our day and age.

DELTA QUEEN FACTS AND STATISTICS

Construction: Molded hull of riveted, triple galvanized, wrought steel. Superstructure and paddlewheel of various hardwoods with reinforcing steel.

Power: Steam powered (225 PSI) horizontal cross-compound, 2,000 horsepower reciprocating engines. Water tube boilers are fueled by Bunker C oil.

Size: 1,650 gross tons, 285 feet long overall—including 35 feet of paddlewheel structure; 58 foot beam; 7½ foot draft, 52 feet above waterline.

Capacity: Authorized and equipped to carry 192 overnight passengers with 75 officers and crew.

Documentation: Regularly inspected and certified by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Public Health Service. Authorized by the Interstate Commerce Commission and U.S. Customs to carry passengers on the Mississippi and its tributaries.

Major ports of call: New Orleans, Vicksburg, Natchez, Memphis, Little Rock, St. Louis, Peoria, Hannibal, Muscatine, La Crosse, Wisconsin; Davenport, St. Paul, Evansville, Louisville, Nashville, Pittsburgh. The *Delta Queen* travels 35,000 miles each year in 17 states and visits over 110 river towns.

INFORMATION ABOUT NEW RIVERBOAT

The plight of the *Delta Queen* focused the attention of millions of Americans on the excitement and pleasure of riding a riverboat. As a consequence, the *Delta Queen* has enjoyed ever-increasing success and the owners are convinced that a new vessel will be a successful and worthwhile enterprise.

But building a new vessel is a major undertaking—far more complicated and expensive than anyone anticipated. After six years of designing and planning, the vessel was successfully bid for shipbuilding by Jeffboat, Inc., a subsidiary of Texas Gas Transmission.

The new vessel will be the world's largest and finest. She will cost approximately \$15.5 million. She will be steam powered with a stern paddlewheel of traditional design. While she will be constructed of modern materials, she will have the old-time glamour and charm that *Delta Queen* passengers enjoy so much. The vessel will be the first major U.S. passenger vessel built in a U.S. shipyard in the past 20 years.

The financial success of the new boat will depend upon the continued operation of the *Delta Queen*. Without the on-going organization to promote and sell river passenger travel the success of the new vessel would be in doubt.

The new vessel will be 365 feet long with a 68 foot beam and an 8 foot draft. She contains 200 staterooms with a total passenger capacity of over 400 and a crew complement of 120. The vessel will cruise at approximately 12 miles per hour and the gross tonnage is approximately 4,500 tons—more than twice the capacity of the *Delta Queen*. While the new vessel will have many traditional steamboat features, she will also include conveniences and facilities unknown to riverboats when the *Delta Queen* was constructed 47 years ago. Some of the innovations are passenger elevators, a swimming pool, individual room air-conditioning, a motion picture theater and a complete internal telephone and communication system.

The vessel will be constructed entirely of non-combustible materials and the hull and outfitings will comply with the latest Coast Guard regulations.

Construction is expected to require approximately 2 years with a tentative completion of mid-1975. A name for the new vessel has not yet been selected. Her home port will be Cincinnati, the same as the *Delta Queen*.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Muster.

Would any of the other people accompanying you wish to have any kind of statement or just to be there to respond to questions?

Mr. McKAY. I am executive vice president of Jeffboat which is a part of the inland waterways division of the Texas Gas Transmission Co. and I am here this morning to report to you that the vessel is actually under construction and I would like to read to you my report, if I may.

My letter to you, Madam Chairman, is dated May 21, 1973, and reads as follows:

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: Jeffboat, Incorporated is progressing rapidly and enthusiastically on the preliminary phases for the construction of the new stern wheel steamer for the Greene Line Steamers of Cincinnati, Ohio, which for identification purposes we have unofficially entitled the *Delta Queen II* or Hull No. 5999.

To accommodate this new vessel, Jeffboat is currently constructing new building ways by demolishing old existing structures in the East End of the shipyard. This will be a completely new facility.

Simultaneously with physical site preparation the following preconstruction events are in progressing stages:

1. Mold Loft work, which commenced on February 6, 1973, is currently about 33 1/4 percent complete.

(a) Stern and Bow Lines are complete with table offsets.

(b) Templates on three bottom sections are 75 percent complete.

(c) Personnel in the Engineering Department, Planning, Estimating and Mold Loft currently working on the *Delta Queen II* Project No. 22.

2. On April 19, 1973, contracts for steel purchases were let with delivery date set for June 20, 1973.

3. A Jeffboat purchase list has been prepared from the specifications [Exhibit 1] and to date 16 of these items have been placed on order in accordance with the sequence of required dates.

4. Keel laying date is set for mid-September 1973 [Progress Report No. 2].

5. Planned launch date has been scheduled for December, 1974, with final completion set for April, 1975.

6. To date, \$1,150,000 has been invoiced and paid to Jeffboat by Greene Line Steamers, Inc.

As evidence of continued mutual effort on this project, we offer as Exhibit No. 2, Jeffboat internal memos of progress meetings between owner, builder, naval architects, and production personnel for purposes of finalizing and discussing various sequential preconstruction events.

Exhibit No. 3 is a Jeffboat internal memo, dated April 19, 1973, confirming the purchase of steel from major domestic steel corporations, complying with the "Buy American provisions of the contract." This is not the entire steel purchase program, but represents the initial and substantial part of the procurement.

Jeffboat is pleased to report at this point in time, the project is going well. With the present cooperation continuing from all concerned parties the project should proceed as planned.

Respectfully submitted.

J. F. McKAY,
Executive Vice President.

Madam Chairman, attached to my report to you as exhibit 1 are Jeffboat purchased items; conference minutes of meeting No. 2 held at Jeffboat, Inc., in Jeffersonville, Ind.; TQMS comments, dated April 25, 1973, and a memo dated April 19, 1973, subject steel—*Delta Queen II*.

I would like to have those put into the record if I may.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. McKay, I will ask counsel to take a look at the exhibits and other papers as to their appropriateness for insertion in the record.

Mr. McKay, I think this is one thing the committee wanted to be assured of as I told Mr. Muster before, is that I wanted to see a contract sealed, signed, and delivered before we introduce legislation. I just hope that when this boat is finished and on the rivers I think it will serve as a test for the future growth of river cruises right here in the United States. People are cruise minded. This is why we are seeing hundreds of millions of dollars going overseas for the payment of cruise fares on boats sailing under any flag but the U.S. flag because we have not, except as Mr. Muster said, but two left and they are sailing from the west coast.

I know our people want cruises and certainly there has been more advertising of this little river cruise given by the *Delta Queen* than I have seen in all the years I have been on this committee, which is going on 21 years, of our own passenger vessels going overseas.

We do see advertisings for the foreign vessels with very enticing cruises, but we never did see advertising for our own U.S. cruise ships. I think this can serve as a real impetus to build up a cruise trade right here and this is what I had hoped.

Now, I would like to ask you, Mr. Muster, what safety improvements do you plan to the *Delta Queen* if a 5-year reprieve is granted? Just give it briefly and then if you want to enlarge upon it, you could later in the record.

Mr. MUSTER. I will be happy to enlarge if anybody wants me to. At the moment our plans for the winter work include some major rework in our boilers to design them along more modern construction standards.

We are also planning to rebuild substantial sections of the crew quarters which are substandard in terms of living conditions and they are also, of course, our third greatest fire hazard on the boat.

We will wipe out most of those old bulkheads and replace them with fireproof bulkheads of fireproof construction. We are planning to enlarge our electrical capacity and also our water pumping capacity. We will hopefully put a thruster on the bow to substantially improve our navigability. We have some technical problems with that because putting a modern bow thruster in a 50-year-old boat requires some pretty involved engineering, but we expect to be able to do that.

The CHAIRMAN. What assurance can you give this committee that you will continue to operate the vessel in maximum safety?

Mr. MUSTER. Well, I think first of all the track record that we have already made.

I would like to digress a moment here. When the opportunity arises I would like to respond to the five points, I believe it was, that we supposedly had done as opposed to the seven we promised. I believe I can demonstrate that we have completed all seven. We have done what we promised to do.

Our people have proven by their longevity and by their care and interest that they are going to operate the *Delta Queen* in the safest possible manner.

The parent corporation, Overseas National Airways, has enthusiastically endorsed everything we have done in a safety direction and has initiated several new projects that we had not originally planned. We have done quite a few things voluntarily and our personnel have performed their jobs quite well.

I would like to also add that I personally feel a very close personal obligation to fulfill the promises that I have made. I intend to take every step I can to personally make sure that we do fulfill the obligations we have assumed.

The CHAIRMAN. With another major safety investment in safety improvements can the *Delta Queen* make a profit?

Mr. MUSTER. At the present time we are operating in the black. We have come pretty close to being nonprofitable on occasion when we have had to depreciate some of these improvements over a short period of time. However, Madam Chairman, with a 5-year extension and by restructuring our depreciation, I believe that we can operate profitably during the next 5 years and pay off all of the obligations that we have assumed and all the capital improvements that we have made.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, there is one point I want to bring up because I have had many, many letters as you know expressing the hope that we let the *Delta Queen* continue. Several people, I think in fact it was three, brought up one item. They said, well, we want to see it keep going. What we would like to ask is what happens when handicapped people are the passengers and what you do for their safety?

Mr. MUSTER. Mrs. Sullivan, the handicapped have appealed to us to make the new boat suitable for carrying handicapped and we have been asked on many occasions to carry handicapped aboard the *Delta Queen*. In every case where we had prior knowledge that they were handicapped, we have been forced to refuse them passage.

We regret this, but we feel that the handicapped, on a vessel operating on the inland waterways must navigate a lot of stairways, door combings, and obstruction in getting on and off the boat. With landings on cobblestone riverbanks, and things like that, we just do not feel the handicapped can operate easily and function efficiently.

In addition, Madam Chairman, in the event of an emergency we feel they would hamper our efforts to properly care for the other people on the vessel. We do not now carry handicapped and do not intend to.

The CHAIRMAN. If you were denied a further exemption for the *Delta Queen* would you still go on building the new boat?

Mr. MUSTER. I think we are a little far down the road to turn around and go back. Let me say that we are operating on faith at this point. If the *Delta Queen* is denied an exemption I think our new boat project might turn out to be a financial disaster and therefore, while we could not stop it now it would be pretty painful.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course, I think this is right, that if you lose the continuity of this kind of a cruise being offered to the people and then have to wait for a new boat to be completed you would be in a great danger and I think that is true in any kind of business venture. This is why I hope that I can convince our fellow members that there is a great need to keep this alive for the next few years. What is the home port of the new vessel?

Mr. MUSTER. The home port will be Cincinnati, Ohio.

The CHAIRMAN. What ports will you call at? Any additional or are you still staying with the approximate schedule that you have been operating on?

Mr. MUSTER. We plan to call on the same ports as we do now. We may eventually, as the rivers continue to open more and more, add some other ports. I understand that Tulsa, Okla., is going to be available.

The CHAIRMAN. If we get water in the river.

Mr. MUSTER. Yes, but at the present time our plans are to operate basically in the same trade as the *Delta Queen*.

The CHAIRMAN. And you refer to a Coast Guard study on safety standards.

Mr. MUSTER. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you elaborate on that or is it in the statement?

Mr. MUSTER. This is a statement that was prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard and submitted to the naval architects and engineers.

I think it is an interesting document since it shows the safety of passenger vessels, of all types, to be substantially greater than any other form of public transportation.

Obviously, they are including in their history, since it goes back 10 years, vessels that do not meet today's standards.

The *Delta Queen* itself has a safety record that would tend to more than corroborate that information.

The CHAIRMAN. I think you mentioned your vessel is equipped with communications gear so you can communicate with most oceangoing vessels in the area, both western river traffic and the high seas traffic.

Mr. MUSTER. That is correct. We carry a radio which constantly monitors channel 13 and also constantly monitors channel 16 which is the river traffic channel and used by other vessels, too.

We have actually three complete separate sets of radio on the boat and we plan to add—that is another improvement we plan to make—another radio system next year of a different type.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you tell us what portions of the river you have a pilot aboard the *Delta Queen*?

Mr. MUSTER. We carry a first-class pilot at all times in the pilot-house. We operate what is known as a square watch—6 on, 6 off; 6 on, 6 off—and for 24 hours a day there is a first-class licensed pilot in the pilothouse steering the boat.

I might add that that is his sole duty on the vessel and accompanying him at all times is another officer of the vessel.

The CHAIRMAN. How many months out of the year does the boat not operate on the river, and does your company operate any other type of boat on the river system?

Mr. MUSTER. We normally operate 10 months a year. The November 1 deadline on the law will force us to operate only 9 months unless we receive an extension well in advance. Ten months seems to be about the longest practical run.

Last year, we actually operated 10½ months.

The CHAIRMAN. Does your company operate any other type of boat on the river system?

Mr. MUSTER. Not any longer. Of course, in the old days Greene Line Steamers operated a large number of vessels, 28 in all, and they did carry a great deal of freight but they had been out of the packet business now for 15 or 20 years.

The CHAIRMAN. I have always been amazed at the river passenger traffic. Has it grown? Although you have certainly carried on almost full capacity since I have been involved in this matter, I wonder whether river passenger traffic in your opinion is static or is it growing?

Mr. MUSTER. I think judging by the number of new vessels being constructed it must be growing rather rapidly. My understanding is that Koln Dusseldorf Rhine Kamp Shiffahrt Gesellschaft, the outfit on the Rhine, is adding a new vessel every year.

The CHAIRMAN. They are really making an effort.

Mr. MUSTER. Also riverboat service was just inaugurated on the Volga River last year and I believe they have added another vessel to the Danube River this past year.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the average cost per person per day to go from Cincinnati to New Orleans?

Mr. MUSTER. Depending on the stateroom accommodations, it varies between \$40 a day and \$55 or \$70 a day and that includes steamboat passage, entertainment, three meals, three snacks each day, and berthing and lodging.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Grover?

Mr. GROVER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Mr. Muster, you may well not be aware of the fact that I with great reluctance supported the Coast Guard's position a couple of years ago and after the terrible beating we suppose the Coast Guard took on the House floor I walk here with great trepidation.

I think the Congress did speak its mind when it voted in favor last time and then the President signed the bill into law giving you the reprieve until late this year, but in examining the hearing minutes of 1968, June 13, the thrust of your request at that time was one which was fairly consistent with your position now. You stated several times in your testimony that with these facts in mind, we are compelled to petition the Congress to grant the *Delta Queen* a full 2-year extension of the present law so that our river passenger business can continue uninterrupted until the new vessel is completed. That was on page 112.

On page 114 you said, however, we are not here to argue about the application of Public Law 89-777 for the *Delta Queen* but rather to plead for a 2-year extension that will permit us to stay in business until the new boat is ready.

Then on the same page you say we want the opportunity to finish our new boat. Then incorporated into those minutes is a letter you wrote to Mrs. Sullivan on January 29, 1968, and in which you stated that there should be a complete exemption in your mind but, in effect, that you would be satisfied with a reprieve.

You say further that, we are compelled to appeal to the Congress to grant a reprieve for the *Delta Queen*. You say, if we cannot continue to operate our business during the construction of the new boat we will lose the continuity of our passenger river business.

You further say, our passenger travel agents need to know.

Later in the same letter you say, but short of a complete reprieve we hope that Congress will recognize our plight and at least extend the life of the *Delta Queen* long enough to assure completion of our new vessel.

Now, in your statement you say we believe the *Delta Queen* should be permanently exempted from the law which, of course, you said back in 1968 and should be permitted to continue to operate.

Now, the only question is why do you need 5 years if the boat is going to be completed in the next 2½ years?

Mr. MÜSTER. That is a good question. I think there are quite a few reasons.

First of all, we do not know when the new boat is going to be completed. The contract with Jeffboat does specify that they will try to finish it in 2 years. However, there is also a clause in the contract that does not place a penalty on them until after 3 years.

Putting a new boat in operation in the middle of a season is not a very economically sound idea. To begin with, you need at least 6 months or a year to sell passage. People do not make up their minds overnight, as they might to take a trip to Chicago. Our people plan a 10- to 20-day cruise sometimes as much as a year or a year and a half in advance. You must market the boat that far in advance in order to be successful.

From the standpoint of coming back to the Congress over and over again, which has been quite repetitious and, I might add, it has placed the company in constant economic jeopardy, it would seem to me that we should ask for the longest reasonable extension.

Now, the overriding reason why we feel that 5 years is reasonable is that I do not believe the new vessel in its first couple of years of oper-

ation can be assured of financial success. It is a huge boat. It will carry 400 to 500 passengers. We have never sold a boat that big in this country. We are hoping that we can sell it out, but if we cannot we are going to have to patiently build our trade and our traffic with travel agents. It will not happen overnight.

Consequently, the *Delta Queen* which is a successful operating vessel with a good reputation and a long list of regular passengers, will actually help us support, if you will, subsidize the operation of the new vessel during the first formative years.

We will not get any form of Government subsidy after building this vessel. If we do not operate it right off the bat, perfectly, we could go broke within the first 6 months or year.

I think that the *Delta Queen* is insurance not only to keep our business going but also to help underwrite any losses we might take on the new vessel in the first couple of years.

Mr. GROVER. I can appreciate your concern. It is quite a big venture you are undertaking but from the mail I get even up in New York people who have been on the old *Delta Queen*, I think they will want to be on the new one and I might add that I would like a ride myself sometime. I am sure you will be a success but I still have that reserved question about the future of the present *Delta Queen*.

Is it your intention then if this law is enacted, to keep her in service overlapping your experience with a new boat but after a period of time has run and you have reached the point of economic break even or breakthrough with a new ship, is it your intention to retire the present *Delta Queen* or come back and say we have gone this far, why not go a few more years?

Mr. MUSTER. I am devoted to two things. One is to keep my company going. The other is I sincerely and devoutly believe the *Delta Queen* should continue operating.

I can assure you if we have a successful 5 years of operation, and I can come back to the Congress I will do so. I will ask for another exemption because I believe the boat should keep right on going as long as it is operated safely and as long as people want to ride it.

Mr. GROVER. Well, then, in fact you are changing somewhat your position. You are riding both horses and in 1968 one heavily weighted on the concept of we must stay in business until the new boat gets here and we will take that since we do not expect to get the other.

Now you are saying we would like to keep the boat going until the new boat is in business and we are going to do our best to keep it going after that.

Mr. MUSTER. Yes, sir: I believe that is what we are saying.

Mr. GROVER. Very frankly and candidly. Tell me, what is your liability insurance structure?

Mr. MUSTER. We operate under the safety at sea regulations that were passed in 1966. I do not recall the exact figure but I think our limitation of liability is \$20,000 per passenger. We carry a total of \$4 million liability insurance at the present time. The hull is insured for approximately \$1.2 million.

Mr. GROVER. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Stubblefield?

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Mr. Muster, you have a calliope on your boat?

Mr. MUSTER. Yes, sir; we got the best one going and we plan to put one on the new boat.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. That was the point of my question. I heard a rumor down in Louisville that you might be highjacking the calliope down there.

Mr. MUSTER. Well, that is one good way to get a calliope. They are pretty hard to find.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Pritchard?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Well, just to follow up, your financial projection, is it going to be necessary to keep the *Delta Queen* going after 5 years to really make this venture pay off?

Mr. MUSTER. No, sir; I believe that after 2 to 3 years of operation of the new vessel it will have to be viable on its own and if it is viable on its own I believe we will have already by that time started construction on another vessel.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Well, that was my second point. You have done some market surveys, I am sure. If you dump \$15 million in this project, what do you say is the potential? You must have a 10-year program.

Mr. MUSTER. I suspect that the potential of river boat cruises in the United States is greater than that on the Rhine River because we have more people, more river and more things to do on the river. The Rhine has been adding a boat nearly every year for the past 10 years.

I would like to be more conservative than that, Mr. Pritchard, but I do not think there is any reasonable long-term limit to how large an industry we could build. I do know that there are other people who are talking about building a vessel.

I know also that one new vessel will go into service next year that will carry under 50 passengers, but overnight.

I suspect that we are looking at a very large industry for purposes of entertainment and recreation over the long haul.

Mr. PRITCHARD. I wonder if I might ask the chairman of the board a question.

Do you see anything to stop the investment in this type of program?

Mr. HINCKLEY. No, I think it really depends on the market demand for it. I think the lid on the market demand is really the pricing structure. Where we are at a distinct disadvantage compared to other parts of the world, they do have riverboat operations because of the very high cost of building a boat in this country and the very high cost of crewing the boat in this country.

Before we engaged to build this, we were building a cruise ship which is the *Cunard Adventurer* that operates out of Puerto Rico and New York. Another example of foreign flags taking all the business. We had it built by one of the best yards in Europe and we had them price this boat here and it would cost one-third less to build it over there, by the yard that built the *New Amsterdam* for a third of the price and foreign-flag crews generally run about a quarter of the price on passenger ships so that the big problem is the very high cost of constructing and crewing in this country.

I do not know if it is something your committee would ever like to entertain because I know there are a lot of associated problems, but

I can well see that crewing the American-flag vessels with American citizens will be a very tough thing to be up against and I am in kind of favor of American crews anyway.

One might want to consider sometime whether or not they should be allowed to have passenger vessels built overseas to operate under the American flag as long as they meet Coast Guard standards.

When the capital cost is one-third of this, that would create perhaps a lot more building. The interest cost is \$11 per day per berth and I don't know whether anybody is aware of that or not.

Mr. PRITCHARD. That is based on 10 months?

Mr. HINCKLEY. Yes, sir; 25-year amortization.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Yes, Madam Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The interest on this \$50 million boat that is in front of us is costing you that now?

Mr. HINCKLEY. It will.

The CHAIRMAN. What will it cost in foreign countries? Wouldn't it cost you a great deal more because the interest rates are much higher?

Mr. HINCKLEY. Well, not when we had our oceangoing cruise ship built. We actually got a low interest rate because the governments over there, the Dutch Government in particular, actually consumed some of the interest cost.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, now, from our information that is why we are beginning to compete with foreign yards—I would say the foreign shipyards are beginning to be able to reach our cost, not because of manpower or the workmen but because of the high interest rates at building foreign. Is this not true, Mr. Counsel?

Mr. CORRADO. Yes, Madam Chairman; together with rising foreign labor costs and component costs and the dollar devaluations.

The CHAIRMAN. In Japan and all over where the cost of building ships is so much less, the cost of money is the big thing by building foreign.

Mr. HINCKLEY. I think that is true for the general money market. I do not wish to argue with you but in some countries—and we checked several because we were then going to build another or convert another oceangoing ship and in some countries they do have interest subsidy for foreign purchasers of vessels built in that country and there is enough of them that do that. There is competition among them.

The CHAIRMAN. I hope we never live to see the day when we have to run boats inland within our country that were built abroad. Otherwise, what are we going to do with our shipyards and the people who would be thrown out of work here?

Mr. HINCKLEY. I was not recommending it.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand. This is something that is altogether different, but I know the trouble that this company has had trying to get a suitable replacement for the *Delta Queen*.

I do not blame them for wanting to continue to run the old *Delta Queen*, but this is going to be 5 years from now.

I might say that if we can get this exemption, who knows what is going to happen 5 years from now and what the complexion of the Congress is going to be and what the problems will be. I think they are doing a yeoman's job to sell a service and a pleasure service to this country by investing this money in this boat. I think it is marvelous

and they could not have done it without your company coming in and helping to supply the money.

This is a tremendous expenditure and with the hope that they are going to continue to get more and more Americans or anybody else to cruise on our rivers.

Mr. HINCKLEY. Madam Chairman, I should add that it would not have been possible to build this boat without the support of the Maritime Administration's financial support.

The CHAIRMAN. I recognize that because that was one of the first bills we passed for this *Delta Queen*, to be able to have her get a replacement with the mortgage insurance under the Maritime Administration.

Mr. HINCKLEY. It would have been out of the question without that program.

The CHAIRMAN. I think we have so many problems on the replacement of these things but what we want to do is, after all we are trying to keep our own country growing and not have everything taken away by foreign countries because they can do it cheaper.

Mr. STUBBLEFIELD. Is a motion in order, Madam Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. I would like it to be, but I think we lost too many members to do what I think you want to do.

Mr. Bowen?

Mr. BOWEN. Just one brief question. How long do you estimate it would take at, say, the widest point in the river along the area where I live which is Greenville, Miss., about 2 miles wide, and I am sure you do not sail down the middle of the river all the time, but have you estimated how long it would take the *Delta Queen* to get ashore should a fire break out and even estimated the time to disembark even at the rough points along shore where you do not have natural conditions for landing?

Mr. MUSTER. When we were going down river we were moving faster than going up river and we are in the middle of the stream. Going down river we would move into the shore at about 10 to 13 miles an hour and, usually, the shore is less than maybe 1,000 feet from where we are. I would say it is just a matter of minutes, probably less than 3 or 4 minutes in most cases.

When we are going up river we are literally hugging the shore and as a matter of fact we have to be careful to avoid it because going up river we are trying to stay in the eddy current and that means literally running with the willows.

Mr. BOWEN. How long would it take you to disembark the passengers say in the middle of the night? Have you had some fire drills and attempted to estimate the time?

Mr. MUSTER. To actually swing the stage over and lower it and start the passengers disembarking, we are talking about, as a rule, less than 4 or 5 minutes.

The passengers themselves, I do not know how long it would take them to physically get off, but it is a very quick landing procedure.

Mr. BOWEN. Do you have appropriate lights on board for emergency landings at night, and that sort of thing?

Mr. MUSTER. We do and we have all types of emergency provisions in communications that are battery operated and we also have a manual method of lowering the stage in the event we lose steam power.

Mr. BOWEN. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Mr. MUSTER. I would like to add something on that.

The impression that many people have of our vessel is that the staterooms are in a labyrinthian corridor as on an ocean vessel.

At this time most of our staterooms open on an outside deck, so that all a passenger has to do to get outside is open his door and step on the outside deck. They are not internal or below deck or anything of that sort.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you do that on this new boat?

Mr. MUSTER. The new vessel has more inside staterooms but many of them still have outside doors.

Mrs. Sullivan, I would like to either now or later for the record submit the comparison of what we promised we would do versus what we actually did do. I can do a complete job in writing or I can summarize it verbally.

I have the Congressional Record with all the information of what we promised to do. I would like to reassure you we did do those things.

The CHAIRMAN. Since the House is now in session I think if you would furnish that as quickly as you can for the record because I hope to bring this up very soon.

In fact, if we had had enough Members here today I was going to attempt to bring it up. Get it to us as soon as possible, anything that would be pertinent to questioning when it comes on the floor.

As I said, we are not going to have 100-percent acceptance of this request. I have great confidence that we can pass it because as I mentioned in my opening statement and before that, to break up the continuity of this kind of pleasure craft in offering it to the public would be a great detriment to the continuation of operations.

Mr. MUSTER. I will get it to you immediately.

[The information follows:]

STEAMER DELTA QUEEN,
Los Angeles, Calif., May 25, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: I submit the following statement to be added to the hearing testimony regarding H.R. 5649 in rebuttal to the testimony by the U.S. Coast Guard. Admiral Rea III stated that according to his information we had completed only five of the seven items in our letter to Congressman McCulloch dated November 25, 1970.

After the hearings were completed I discussed the matter with Captain Beckwith and he acknowledged some confusion over which items were incomplete. Therefore, for the record, I would like to itemize the promised improvements and the action taken as follows:

Item and description	Action taken
1. Replate hull as necessary-----	Avondale Shipyards replated approximately one-third of the hull to the USCG approval. Prior drydocking since 1966 included replating approximately 15 percent additional. Total replating to date, approximately 50 percent.
2. Standby diesel electric power-----	Avondale installed a 200 kw caterpillar diesel electric generator and performed all the necessary rewiring and switching to integrate the new generator into the <i>Delta Queen</i> electrical system.

Item and description	Action taken
3. Emergency electrical pumps:	
(a) Bilge pumps -----	On reevaluation we determined that replacement of bilge pumps was not necessary since the ones we had operate quite well. However we did purchase a portable diesel bilge pump which can be moved to any bilge and used to pump the bilge dry. We believe this is a more practical solution than more fixed pumps which would be extraordinarily expensive and place a heavy drain on our electrical system.
(b) Sprinkler system -----	We did install a new electrical sprinkler system pump. It and/or two other steam pumps can maintain full pressure on the sprinkler system.
(c) Fire hydrant pump -----	We installed a new 75 horsepower electric fire pump which can serve the entire fire hydrant and vessel system according to Coast Guard specifications.
(d) Fuel pumps -----	We rebuilt three steam fuel pumps and installed a new electric air compressor. The compressor is used to initiate steam so that we can use compressed air to drive the steam fuel pumps and power the boiler turbines. As a practical matter this accomplishes the safety objectives for installing electric fuel pumps, and it does so with less mechanical complications and electrical load.
4. Automatic fire detection -----	We did install throughout the work and lower crew areas an automatic fire detection system which has proven very reliable for early warning of smoke, heat or flame. In addition we have since also installed a manual fire alarm system tied into the same master control panel.
5. Fire retardant coating -----	Every place we ordinarily use paint on wood we have used Albi fire retardant intumescent coatings and fireproof paints. While this material does not make wood into steel, it does effectively insulate the wood and substantially retard the spread of fire.
6. Improved communications -----	We installed extensive new communications equipment and a new telephone system for regular vessel communication. A new bridge-engine room sound-power emergency telephone. A new battery operated emergency radio. An additional radar unit. And greatly expanded and improved the coverage and microphone facilities on our vessel public address system. We employ Capt. R. S. Jacobs, former U.S. Coast Guard Safety Inspector in Louisville, Ky., as our safety officer. He makes frequent visits to the vessel and submits itemized reports summarizing his investigation.
7. General maintenance and repair ---	We did everything that had to be done and we substantially exceeded our budget. The vessel was also subjected to further extensive repairs and improvements in the winter of 1972 and 1973.

As a matter of actual fact, we have spent far more money and have done far more safety improvements than we promised. We completed much of the longer list of improvements submitted to Chairman Garmatz when we applied for a permanent exemption. Some of the additional work done voluntarily includes the following. A new fireproof paint locker, a new and higher capacity steering pump, four inflatable life rafts, fireproofed doors on the galley, a new manual fire alarm system, fireproof drapery, upholstery, bedspreads, etc., a new passenger emergency procedure, new boiler feedwater pump, new air ejector, replacement of open front DC switchboard with safety front type, manual device for lowering stage, remote sprinkler switchover control, new river water filtering and purification system and an EPA approved sewage treatment plant.

There have been many other improvements in the *Delta Queen* during the past three years which are largely for passenger comfort and convenience and/or operating efficiency. As a result the total vessel is more reliable, safer and more suitable for the passenger trade in which she is engaged.

I trust the above information will clarify our position and substantiate our claim that we have met our promises, and exceeded them.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM MUSTER, *President.*

The CHAIRMAN. I appreciate your coming. I think you have given a very good statement. I am glad to have you here, Mr. McKay, so we can know that money has been spent and the project is in operation.

I just want to say in closing that the 5-year exemption is asked for because nobody knows what could happen to delay the completion of the vessel and put her in operation. We have seen this happen many times on oceangoing vessels and other matters.

It was nice to have you all here and I appreciate you coming, Admiral Rea, and your group staying to hear the witnesses. May I say that I have a letter that just came in this morning from The Seafarers International Union which evidently is the union operating on this ship, although I do not know that, but they are in complete support of this legislation. I have other letter that have come in.

I do not think we will attempt to put the letters in that have come from individuals, but we may add to the record letters that have come from mayors of the cities of ports where the *Delta Queen* calls.

All of these letters will be placed into the record.

Again, I want to thank everyone for being here with us today. With that, the committee stands adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.

[The following was submitted for inclusion in the record:]

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR,
North Little Rock, Ark., May 11, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: It has come to my attention that a bill will be introduced soon to, hopefully, permanently exempt the paddlewheeler, *Delta Queen*, from the Safety at Sea Act which came about, I understand, in 1966. If this is true, I urge you to do everything possible to get this boat an exemption.

The *Delta Queen* favored our area in 1972 and again in 1973 by bringing tourists to the greater Little Rock area from both Memphis and New Orleans. The benefits derived from these tourists coming into our area aided our economy immediately and more in particular, the national publicity from this vessel's having been here will aid our area tremendously for years to come—in both the field of Recreation and Tourism recognition.

Greater Little Rock is divided by the newly navigable Arkansas River and we, in the City of North Little Rock, have noticed many, many areas of growth for our city because of this new navigation system and the national publicity

caused by the *Delta Queen* will mean more than we could possibly estimate in the future to the people that live and work in our area.

Please help us all you can to get this great vessel the exemption it deserves.
Respectfully,

R. L. "BOB" ROSAMOND, Mayor.

STATE OF TENNESSEE,
May 21, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth Office
Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: I am told that your committee currently is holding hearings on a proposal to permanently exempt the paddlewheel steamship *Delta Queen* from the requirements of the 1966 Safety At Sea Law.

I urge that you grant this unique vessel full and permanent exemption from those construction specifications that are properly enforced on operating commercial vessels manufactured in recent years. Although a variety of fine woods are used in her superstructure, the *Delta Queen* has a steel hull and has been carefully equipped with special fire detection and fire control devices to afford a large margin of safety to her passengers and crew.

The *Delta Queen* calls at Memphis and Nashville on her scheduled cruises and adds a valuable and colorful dimension to the recreational opportunities Tennessee offers to our citizens and to our visitors. I urge that this vessel's safety be controlled by means of regulations specifically suited to her unique character and commercial purpose, rather than by enforcing compliance with the Safety At Sea Law.

Sincerely,

WINFIELD DUNN, Governor.

CITY OF CINCINNATI,
Cincinnati, Ohio, May 21, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth House
Office Building, Suite 1334, Washington, D.C.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SULLIVAN: On May 23, your committee will entertain testimony regarding the *Delta Queen* legislation. I wish to go on record as one who strongly urges the preservation of the *Delta Queen*.

The *Delta Queen* has contributed richly to the development of Cincinnati through the years. As valuable as I find her history that is not my only concern for her continued life.

The *Delta Queen* is an important source of revenue in the Cincinnati economy. The *Delta Queen* through Green Line Steamers contributes approximately \$80 to \$90,000 each month, of the ten month season, in salaries to personnel and expenditures to purveyors in Cincinnati. This is a vital part of the tourist business in Cincinnati. To halt or severely curtail the *Delta Queen's* river life would cause a severe wound to Cincinnati, eliminate a major tourist attraction and reduce our competitiveness for conventions and visitors among the river towns.

Sincerely,

GERALD N. SPRINGER,
Vice Mayor.

CITY OF PEORIA,
Peoria, Ill., May 22, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth Office
Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: As Mayor of the City of Peoria, I wish to indicate my support for renewal of the *Delta Queen* contract for 1974.

An annual event attracting people from a very large area in the Midwest have been and will be making an excursion to Peoria to help us celebrate our annual Steam Boat Days. The main attraction, of course, is a race between the *Delta Queen* and Peoria's *Julia Belle Swain*. Each year the event has created greater interest and greater crowds. It's important to our community that the *Delta Queen* be available to participate in the annual race in July 1974.

Your support in the renewal of the *Delta Queen* contract will be greatly appreciated by the City of Peoria. If we can provide you with information pertaining to Steam Boat Days, please feel free to call on me.

Sincerely,

RICHARD E. CARVER, *Mayor.*

STATE OF LOUISIANA,
Baton Rouge, La., May 17, 1973.

HON. LEONOR SULLIVAN,
U.S. Representative, Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Commission, Suite 1334, Longworth Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SULLIVAN: During the hearings on extension of passenger service to be permitted the *Delta Queen*, I wish to convey, on behalf of all Louisianians, the affection and admiration we all have felt for this venerable sternwheeler.

The *Delta Queen* has long been a familiar and welcomed sight along the Mississippi River in our state. It has brought not only a nostalgic reminder of the days when a parade of steamboats served our major waterways, but many travelers to our state, as well. These visitors have come to see and to savor the attractions of our state, and, thereby, have contributed to our growing tourism industry.

I sincerely hope that all our efforts will be made to save the *Delta Queen*, so that she may travel to and from Louisiana, as long as she is capable of traversing the rivers of Mid-America.

Sincerely,

EDWIN W. EDWARDS, *Governor.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE—STATE OF MISSOURI,
Jefferson City, Mo., May 17, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth House Office Building, Suite 1334, Washington, D. C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: On May 23rd, I understand that the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries committee will consider special legislation to exempt the Steamer *Delta Queen* from the Safety at Sea Law and to allow the *Delta Queen* to continue its memorable river excursions during the next five years.

The *Delta Queen* is not only a significant reminder of this nation's history and cultural heritage, but it also generates important tourist industry for Missouri citizens and communities. There appears to be little evidence to indicate that exemption from the requirements of the Safety at Sea Law, formulated for ocean-going vessels, will endanger the safety of passengers on this historical but carefully designed riverboat.

On behalf of the many Missourians who have experienced the enjoyable excursions on the *Delta Queen*, I would like to urge the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee to act favorably on this legislation.

I am most appreciative of your own efforts in introducing H.R. 5649, and you have my full support and encouragement in seeking passage of this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, *Governor.*

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,
Frankfort, Ky., May 17, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

MY DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN: On behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, I wish to address myself to your distinguished committee regarding an exemption from the Safety at Seas Act for the Greene Line's *Delta Queen*.

This venerable but sturdy vessel has long been a familiar sight along Kentucky's northern border, the Ohio River, and elsewhere on our inland waterways. She is one of the last of the paddle wheel steamers that once plied our nation's river system in great numbers, and today is a tourist attraction of considerable

note. Each summer hundreds of persons take advantage of her vacation cruises for an opportunity to enjoy viewing America from the river. Additionally, thousands come to Louisville in May just prior to Derby Day to witness the "Great Steamboat Race" between the *Delta Queen* and the *Belle of Louisville*.

So, in an effort to preserve and maintain this nostalgic bit of Americana for our citizens to enjoy, with its commercial value to our region, I respectfully urge the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee to grant the *Delta Queen* an exemption from the provisions of the above mentioned Act.

Sincerely,

JULIAN M. CARROLL,
Acting Governor.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Columbus, Ohio, May 17, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,

Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Suite 1334, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SULLIVAN: As Governor of the State of Ohio, and as a lifelong resident of the City of Cincinnati, I have a deep and abiding interest in the heritage represented by the steamboat *Delta Queen*.

Therefore, I want to offer my wholehearted support for H.B. 5649, which would exempt the *Delta Queen* from existing vessel safety laws and permit its continued operation while the owners are constructing a new riverboat.

The *Delta Queen* is important to the economy of Ohio and all of the other states served by its cruises along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

But far more important, her continued operation is important to maintaining the folklore and cultural heritage of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys.

I commend you for your sponsorship of this important legislation, and I urge the members of your committee to approve this legislation. I am confident that the members of the House and Senate will recognize the great contributions made by the *Delta Queen* to culture and economy of the river valleys and will vote to permit the continued operation of the *Delta Queen*.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. GILLIGAN, Governor.

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,
Little Rock, Ark., May 11, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,

Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: The *Delta Queen* is not only of historic value, a replication of our heritage and object of sentimental reminiscence, but is of even greater value to us economically as a consequence of the *Delta Queen's* trips to Little Rock.

We have received considerable attention which reacted favorably to encourage tourism, and other ancillary activities connected therewith.

We should commend your considering the prospect of keeping "The Queen" alive for the economic benefits she brings to her ports of call and for the tourist interest created by her presence. We hope that Congress will view this project with its favor.

Respectfully,

DR. BOB RILEY,
Lieutenant Governor.

STEAMER DELTA QUEEN,
Los Angeles, Calif., May 25, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,

Chairman, Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: In retrospect it may be appropriate to qualify and/or amend a portion of my testimony at the hearings regarding the *Delta Queen* on May 23rd.

When Congressman Bowen of Mississippi queried me on how long it would take the *Delta Queen* to reach the shore, I responded to his query literally. As

a practical matter it would be a rare calamity that would force us to take the shortest and quickest route to shore. We normally pick and choose our landings quite carefully. We try to find a small boat ramp and/or a natural levy so we can easily off-load passengers and vehicles. After we have selected a landing our normal maneuvering takes fifteen to twenty minutes to make the proper turn, tie up and lower the landing stage.

I don't believe the above statement is really in contradiction to what I testified, but it would be misleading if somebody thought we could really *land* the *Delta Queen* in two or three minutes without taking pot luck on the shore facility and possibly running the boat aground precipitously.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM MUSTER,
President, Greene Line Steamers, Inc.

AVONDALE SHIPYARDS, INC.,
New Orleans, La., May 18, 1973.

HON. LEONOR SULLIVAN,
Chairman, Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

YOUR HONOR: In the hope of preserving a part of America's heritage by continued operation of the overnight passenger steamer, the *Delta Queen*, I wish to list a few of the repairs, conversions and new installations performed on this unique vessel by Avondale Shipyards, Inc. in the years of 1971 and 1972.

We drydocked the vessel, thoroughly tested the shell plates for wear and erosion and renewed approximately one-third of the plating.

We installed a new diesel electric power plant to make the vessel independent, in case of steam failure, for operation of fire pumps, sprinkler pumps and emergency lighting.

We installed new stand-by fire sprinkler pumps powered by this generator and a new air compressor for emergency operation of fuel pumps and stage hoist engine in case of emergency.

We installed a new automatic pyra-alarm warning system for fire protection, supplementing the existing manual alarm system.

We removed existing paints from the superstructure exterior and applied intumescent type paint to these surfaces, as well as, overcoating the interiors of quarters with this same type paint. All of this was overcoated with a coat of fire retardant finish paint.

We covered the exterior wooden decks with an incombustible compound which gave a skid-proof and fire proof surface.

Respectfully yours,

G. E. SMALLWOOD,
Repair Engineer.

THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA,
Brooklyn, N.Y., May 22, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Chairman, House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM CHAIRMAN: The Seafarers International Union wishes to express its support of the legislation you have introduced, and which is presently being considered by your Committee, to allow the Mississippi river boat *Delta Queen* to continue to operate through 1978.

We believe that passage of this legislation is in the national interest by virtue of the *Queen's* role in our nation's history and heritage. Additionally, the *Delta Queen* provides a service which appeals to, and is used by, thousands of Americans each year. Should the vessel's services be discontinued, it would deprive Americans of an opportunity to enjoy what is both an entertaining and a rare educational experience.

While the vessel would be exempt, as it has been since 1966, from the provisions of the Safety at Sea Act, we understand that very substantial improvements have been made in its structure and operations to ensure the maximum possible safety.

Our support for continued operation of the vessel is reinforced by the knowl-

edge that the operators of the *Delta Queen* are proceeding with plans to build a modern replacement so that the river boat tradition is not lost to this country.

We sincerely hope that in the deliberations you and your Committee will see fit to approve H.R. 5469 and companion legislation, and to move for passage of the law in the Congress. Be assured that our organization will give its full support toward this end.

Respectfully yours,

PAUL HALL, *President.*

FIRST CLASS PILOT ON OHIO AND MISSISSIPPI RIVERS,

Louisville, Ky., May 18, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
U.S. House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: I have devoted a large part of my life to the river and I am a staunch advocate of preserving the *Delta Queen*. In the hope that my experience and opinions are of value, I have prepared the attached statement for your consideration to be placed in the Record of the hearings on your bill H.R. 5649.

I know I speak for hundreds of river men like myself who see the *Delta Queen* as an important last link with a great tradition.

Very truly yours,

C. W. STOLL.

STATEMENT OF C. W. STOLL

The continued operation of the Steamboat *Delta Queen* is a matter of considerable importance to a sizeable number of people who look on this with somewhat more depth than mere sentiment, or in the light of another historical monument, regardless of its significance.

I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Steamship Historical Society of America, Inc., whose membership is in excess of 1700, and am Vice President of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneer Rivermen, an historical society concerned with the Ohio and Mississippi River system.

It is significant that the sternwheel and sidewheel steamboats that populated our inland rivers, known as "packets", were primarily freight carriers, beasts of burden, as it were, with passenger accommodations as a convenience to the residents of the regular route the boat traveled, plus a relatively few summer excursionists.

Yet when the hard-surfaced road took the revenue freight away from the packets by farm trucks and regular truck lines, at least two of these "packet boats", one at Cincinnati and one at St. Louis, successfully made the transition to a "tourist steamboat," catering exclusively to vacationers and cruise passengers, on a varied and extended schedule. These boats, operating at least ten years before the *Delta Queen* arrived on the Mississippi system, had minimal comfort in their accommodations. But they demonstrated that there is a natural attraction in seeing the river itself, and that there is economic justification in the operation of a vessel with the luxury to comfort-plus appointments of the *Delta Queen*. The patronage which the *Delta Queen* today enjoys confirms this thesis.

I would like to point out also that the *Delta Queen* is the only window available today to Mr. Average American, as well as Mr. Business Executive, to the economic importance of the inland river system in our industrial complex, the very logistics of the power-agriculture-import/export-manufacturing complex of the heartland of America.

Whether you travel on the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Arkansas, the Illinois, the Cumberland, the Tennessee, one cannot but be impressed by the plethora of terminals for grain, soybeans, coal, oil, all sorts of minerals which appear on the shores at frequent intervals. Likewise the parade of towboats transporting the cargos emanating from and destined to these terminals.

All this is a part of the American Merchant Marine, probably the least known part, and in my opinion, it is in the public interest that it be better known and understood. Unless you own a houseboat or yacht and take long trips, or are a guest on such a voyage—the *Delta Queen* provides this only opportunity for travelers to fully be exposed to the significance of the Mississippi Valley commerce in our total economic picture.

Referring specifically to the *Delta Queen*, a steamboat I know very well—it is ironic, to say the least, that she should be threatened by a "Safety at Sea" law.

She is a river vessel. Her safety record is spotless. And in the past, although many old wooden boats were destroyed by fire, the casualty record among passengers was amazingly low. Sprinkler systems did not come into the picture until 1936—after the Morro Castle—which again had nothing to do with inland rivers. Since then have come fire resistant paints and coverings, smoke detection systems, and other devices unheard of or undreamed of previously.

Yet—the most recent passenger death by fire on the Mississippi River system was in 1903 when an old, wooden-hulled packet, her hulls stowed with a cargo of hay—caught fire through the negligence of a deck passenger, another long forgotten anachronism—was burned. Our record on the rivers in this respect has been perfect for seventy years.

And yet a finger is pointed at the *Delta Queen* and her continued existence threatened. I request that this comfortable, safe vessel be permitted to continue to operate and perform the valuable and useful functions that have characterized her existence since she entered her career as a tourist steamer on the Mississippi River system in 1948.

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION,
Washington, D.C., May 14, 1973.

HON. LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: It has come to my attention that the matter of the *Delta Queen's* exemption from the Safety at Sea Act is once again coming before the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has often stated its position that this last survivor of a once thriving fleet of steam paddleboats plying the inland waters of the United States deserves to, indeed, must, survive as a living reminder of an important era of American history. Three years ago when the boat's existence was threatened, the Trust took part in a national effort to save her; and that effort, I am glad to say, succeeded. Since then, the Secretary of the Interior has entered the *Delta Queen* in the *National Register of Historic Places* under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. A better warranty of the *Delta Queen's* historic worth scarcely needs to be sought.

The loss of the *Delta Queen* as an operating vessel carrying overnight passengers on the Mississippi and its tributaries would be an irreplaceable one and would remove the last remaining link with the steamboating tradition of nineteenth and early twentieth century America.

I urge that the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee grant the exemption now applied for.

Sincerely,

JAMES BIDDLE, *President.*

KANSAS CITY, Mo., May 9, 1973.

Representative LEONOR K. SULLIVAN,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MRS. SULLIVAN: I am writing this letter as a result of a four day excursion aboard the *Delta Queen*. The letter was suggested by a representative of Green Line, Inc., but I would have written anyway.

My wife and I found that our trip on the *Delta Queen* not only exceeded our expectations but was the most enjoyable vacation either of us has ever had. We would like to do it again someday, but as you probably know, the old steamboat is due to be taken out of overnight service later this year. Her superstructure is constructed of wood and thus cannot be considered fireproof.

The *Delta Queen* is the last overnight steamboat operating in the United States, and perhaps she should be considered a special case if for no other reason. But there are others. The *Delta Queen* is governed by laws intended for transportation vessels, but in fact she does not provide transportation, as such. She meanders around the rivers of the central part of the country on a sort of annual basis, and the chance of catching her, headed where you want to go, and when you want to go, would be a rare coincidence. And of course, you would have to be in no hurry at all.

If speed is a drawback, let us consider her assets. She is no longer a means of transportation but a floating resort, the last operating example of an exciting yet tranquil era. After leaving the boat we realized that for four days we had not seen nor heard T.V., radio, telephone, or newspaper. For a while time had stopped for us. We had the exquisite luxury of complete detachment from the hubbub of our normal lives.

The wooden superstructure of the *Delta Queen* could not feasibly be replaced. In my personal opinion it should not be. It would be a shame. The *Delta Queen's* pumps and hoses can supply firefighting water to any part of the boat quickly. A round-the-clock watch is kept (I believe at twenty minute intervals), and of course she is never away from a supply of water for firefighting.

I think the right to ride this old steamboat and the pleasures derived from it are far more important than the technical aspects of the laws involved. Laws should protect our rights, not destroy them. Would you deny my right to ride a motorbike, or occupy a trackside seat at the Indianapolis, or prevent me from taking up sky-diving? All would involve dangers to me, and none of them interest me, but if I can enjoy these or any other pastimes without injuring or annoying anybody, I would like the right to make my own decisions. Since, as I pointed out earlier, the *Delta Queen* is hardly a valid means of transportation, the only reason for getting aboard must be a genuine desire to be there. Incidentally, there were a number of people aboard who had been there before, some frequently, and one had reservations for two more trips this year.

I have stayed in a number of resorts, and in complete honesty, I don't feel that I was any safer in any of them than aboard the *Delta Queen*. The food and service in the dining room were wonderful at all times. The Charm and tranquillity are beyond compare. This feeling was unanimous among all the passengers I talked to, and I talked to many. Even people I have talked to since returning home feel that you should prevent the destruction of this last example of a good way of life. She should be preserved and enjoyed, not obliterated.

I realize that the Legislatures have a right to protect the public from dangers beyond its control, but it is just as important to preserve our treasures and our rights to enjoy them. I would prefer that you direct your attentions to areas in which we need protection and cannot protect ourselves on an individual basis. We need courts which will enforce our criminal laws, not with malice, but realizing that they have a responsibility to protect the public as vigorously as the person accused of a crime. We need laws promoting ecology, both to prevent excess exploitation of our natural resources, and to control disposal of wastes, and I might add that these laws must have large teeth and small loopholes if they are to be effective.

Greene Line Steamers, Inc. has plans to build another boat. She will not be completed for a few years and they hope to get a reprieve for the *Delta Queen* in the meanwhile. I personally would hope for more. I would hope for a permanent exemption for the reasons mentioned above. I feel that realistic safety standards are being maintained and with the periodic inspections which are undoubtedly made, they will continue to be so.

The proposed new boat will have a swimming pool and many other facilities which the *Delta Queen* does not. She will undoubtedly be longer, wider, faster, and perhaps diesel-powered but with a fake paddle-wheel for atmosphere. I would imagine there will be larger staterooms with T.V., elevators to replace the stairs, and Hi-Fi to replace the old Calliope on the Sun Deck. Still, I would rather spend a few more days on the Old *Delta Queen* if I am permitted any choice in the matter.

We all would appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

DONALD M. EDINGER.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the committee adjourned to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]





