

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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March 16, 1938

Honorable James C. Oliver, M. C.  
House Office Building  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Commissioner Greenleaf of the Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries has sent in copy of a letter written by the Manager of the Natural Resources Production Department of United States Chamber of Commerce, Mr. W. Dub. Brookings, to Mr. Waldron Manager of the Chamber of Commerce in Portland, calling attention to the Joint Resolution (S. J. Res. 208) in Congress.

The letter states that hearings were to be held on this Joint Resolution on February 28d, and that the matter involved is the ownership by the Federal Government in coastal lands below low water mark and within the three-mile limit on all coasts of continental United States. Apparently this Resolution asserts ownership by the Federal Government in such coastal lands below low water mark and limits its present instructions to such lands containing petroleum.

If, as the letter intimates, the present Resolution is confined simply to lands containing petroleum, it would seem to be a matter in which this State has no present interest. On the other hand, if the Resolution is more general than above stated and a precedent is to be established which might ultimately affect the ownership of other coastal lands, apparently it would be something in which our State would be interested especially from the standpoint of its fisheries.

I have also received from the Attorney General of Louisiana copy of a brief which has been filed by that State in opposition to Senate Joint Resolution No. 208,

Honorable James C. Oliver, M. C.  
March 16, 1938  
Page 2

with the suggestion that the matter be called to the attention of our Congressmen and their support in opposing this bill be secured.

Would you be willing to write and tell me what the present status of the matter is, and if it is anything in which our Sea and Shore Fisheries or some other State department would be interested.

The information has just come to me and I assume the hearing was held on February 23d, as stated in the letter.

I assume that you have had some knowledge of this matter and, therefore, I am taking the liberty of asking your opinion on it.

With kindest personal regards,

Very truly yours,

Franz U. Burkett  
Attorney General

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