

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress Massachusetts Seventh District

For Immediate Release:
December 13, 1995

Contact:
Jeff Duncan
(202) 225-2836
Joe Dalton
(617) 396-2900

GOP SUPERFUND BILL WILL SLOW MASSACHUSETTS CLEANUPS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Congressman Ed Markey (D-MA) today released a 37-page report entitled "SALUTING POLLUTING: A Report on the Republican Superfund Reform Plan and its Effect on Massachusetts." The report details the adverse consequences which proposed legislation to amend the Superfund law would have on cleanups of toxic waste sites in Massachusetts.

"This report shows the devastating impact on Massachusetts of the House Republican plan to gut the Superfund law," said Rep. Markey, a senior Democratic member of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Hazardous Materials, which has jurisdiction over the Superfund program.

Rep. Markey explained, "The Republicans want to 'reform' Superfund the same way they want to reform Medicare -- by letting it wither on the vine. They've promised cash rebates to polluters, special interest exemptions from Superfund liability, weaker cleanup standards and more opportunities for delays and litigation. This radical and extreme legislation will result in many sites in Massachusetts being fenced off instead of cleaned up."

The Superfund program was established fifteen years ago to clean up the nation's worst toxic waste sites. This year, the new Republican majority abandoned previous efforts to craft a bipartisan reform legislation and instead introduced H.R. 2500, the so-called "Reform of Superfund Act" or ROSA. ROSA was approved by the Hazardous Materials Subcommittee last month and is now awaiting action by the Commerce Committee. The report Rep. Markey released today concludes that if enacted, ROSA would have a devastating impact on the cleanup of each of the 30 contaminated Superfund sites in Massachusetts. Specifically, H.R. 2500 would:

- * Provide polluter rebate checks partially paid for by Massachusetts taxpayers to the parties responsible for contaminating 12-13 Superfund sites in Massachusetts, including Atlas Tack, Blackburn & Union Privileges, Cannon Engineering, Groveland Wells, Hocomonco Pond, Industri-Plex, Iron Horse Park, Norwood PCBs, Nyanza Chemical, perhaps Re-Solve, Rose Disposal Pit, Wells G & H, and W.R. Grace Acton. EPA preliminary estimates are that these rebates could total \$100 million;
- * Delay cleanups at numerous sites in Massachusetts including the Atlas Tack, Blackburn and Union, Groveland Wells, Hocomonco Pond, Industri-Plex, Iron Horse Park, Norwood PCB, Nyanza Chemical, Re-Solve, Salem Acres, and Wells G & H, and W.R. Grace Acton;
- * Potentially interfere with groundwater cleanups at almost every Superfund site in Massachusetts including the Federal facilities by weakening the statutory preference for groundwater treatment; and
- * Open the door to potential new litigation regarding natural resources damages relating to the Nyanza Chemical Waste Dump in Ashland, Massachusetts.

Rep. Markey concluded, "Increased public awareness of the devastating environmental impact of this bill on our communities will be needed in order to defeat this ill-conceived legislation."