



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: 421-01053

BY: Ms. MAY (SAANICH-GULF ISLANDS)

DATE: DECEMBER 12, 2016

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: THE HONORABLE MARC GARNEAU

Response by the Minister of Transport

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Navigable waters

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is committed to providing extra protection for the Great Bear Rainforest, a unique and ecologically-sensitive region, which spans approximately 400 kilometres along the central and north coast of British Columbia. One of the Government's top priorities is to formalize a crude oil tanker moratorium on British Columbia's north coast to protect this area from potential spills. Over the past year, the Government has been engaging Indigenous groups, communities, and stakeholders across the country to hear their perspectives and to better understand the potential impacts around a moratorium.

Canada has a comprehensive marine safety system, which includes a voluntary Tanker Exclusion Zone (TEZ) that was adopted by the Canadian Coast Guard and United States Coast Guard in the 1980s. The TEZ ensures that loaded oil tankers transiting between Alaska and US west coast ports transit west of the zone boundary to protect the shoreline in the event a tanker becomes disabled. The TEZ extends up to 70 nautical miles offshore and narrows down to 25 nautical miles as tankers approach the Juan de Fuca Strait to enter US waters. More than 300 tankers transit annually along British Columbia's coast and to date there have been no reports of non-compliance with the TEZ.

In recent years, changes have been made to the marine safety system to prepare for growth in marine shipping. These changes have largely focused on prevention and preparedness for large ship-source spills. The recent announcement on the national Oceans Protection Plan will build on these investments to achieve a world-leading marine safety system. The Government will be investing \$1.5 billion to put in place concrete measures to enhance marine safety, protect the environment, and support inclusive economic development. The plan will help ensure our coasts are protected in a modern and advanced way that ensures environmental sustainability, safe and responsible commercial use, and collaboration with coastal and Indigenous communities.
