

Senator Allen offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 44.

A resolution honoring the 150th Anniversary of the Soo Locks in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan.

Whereas, For over 2,000 years, the Sault Sainte Marie area has been a settlement; the city being the oldest in Michigan and third-oldest in the United States. Native Americans began to gather there for the wealth of fish and fur found along the rushing waters of the wide, turbulent river that linked the Great Lakes of Superior and Huron. They called the area "Bahweting," or "The Gathering Place"; and

Whereas, At this strategic location, Lake Superior is 21 feet higher than Huron and a treacherous series of rapids falls over 20 feet, connecting the two bodies of water. The area was given its name, Sault Sainte Marie, by the French missionaries and fur traders of the 1600s. Though there is debate on the exact meaning of "Sault," one translation is "jump," referring to the place where one had to jump or put into the St. Mary's River because the rapids prohibited boat traffic. The other means "rapids," St. Mary's Rapids; and

Whereas, The need to traverse this natural obstacle has been and remains necessary for the commerce to flow freely in our nation. In 1797, the first lock was built by the Northwest Fur Company and could accommodate vessels only slightly larger than canoes. After being destroyed by American troops during the War of 1812 to prevent the British from invading from Canada, primitive lock systems followed, until the first state lock was built in 1855 by civil engineers for a cost of \$1 million. The federal government took control in 1881, and the locks remain in the care of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Poe Lock was finished in 1896 and is the only lock in the Great Lakes Seaway System that can handle vessels of 1,000 feet and more. These leviathans hold over 60,000 tons of cargo. Three others locks would follow: Davis Lock in 1914, Sabin Lock in 1919, and MacArthur Lock in 1943 to complete the system. In 1969, the new Poe Lock opened. Still the largest of all, it took nearly six years to complete; and

Whereas, Using the natural drop in the elevation, water not traveling through the locks or down the St. Mary's River is diverted into a canal as used to generate over 150 million kilowatts of hydroelectric power each year. The first priority for this energy is to power the machinery of the Soo Locks. Any surplus is sold to private companies and distributed to the homes and businesses of Sault Sainte Marie and the surrounding communities; and

Whereas, The world-famous Soo Locks have overcome the natural barriers of rock and rapid, providing a vital link for commerce in the Great Lakes Seaway System. Each year, thousands of boats pass through these locks, from pleasure crafts to commercial fisherman and freighters. Apart from moving economic goods and personal watercraft, the locks have played an important role in our history. Notably, 100 percent of the iron ore used in World War II passed through these locks. To protect them from an Axis bombing, giant air balloons secured by steel cables hovered above to prevent a squadron of planes from flying over. Indeed, the mineral-rich resources of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, with its great deposits of iron ore and copper, have fueled our economy and helped our nation win its wars. The locks made their transportation possible; and

Whereas, From canoes filled with furs to tankers filled with iron ore, the evolution and history of our locks has been important to our state and nation, allowing for ships to reach ports in Lake Superior and linking them to ports throughout the Great Lakes and ocean ports the world over. Over their century and a half of operation, the Soo Locks have remained an engineering marvel and continue to be a source of great pride for area residents and our country. They are the busiest locks in the world, containing the largest single lock in the Western Hemisphere and handle more cargo each year than the Suez and Panama Canals combined; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we hereby honor and commend the 150th Anniversary of the Soo Locks, giving special thanks to the engineers who designed, built, and continue to run this feat of

American know-how. We are certain that the locks will continue to serve us well in the centuries to come. It is a pleasure to recognize this important structure and the vital purpose it has served in commerce, travel, and our economic well-being; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the city of Sault Sainte Marie, and the Sault Sainte Marie Convention & Visitors Bureau organization as a token of our esteem.