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This Week In Congress Radio Address: Senate Debate on St. Lawrence Seaway,  
1954 January 20

Speaker: Senator J. Allen Frear  
Transcribed by: David Cardillo

**[00:00]**

Announcer: The Week in Congress, recorded on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1954, and played on WDOV on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1954.

Mr. Kelly: From Washington, DC, transcribed, United States Senator J. Allen Frear brings to the people of Delaware the third in a series of briefly reports on current congressional affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Frear.

Senator Frear: Thank you. Well, for the first time in quite a while, a subject other than national affairs in politics took the spotlight in Washington as it did elsewhere during the past week. I refer, of course, to the weather. (Unintelligible **[00:49]**) the snow and low temperatures had the effect of slowing down activities here as in many other sections of the country, including Delaware. However, the congressional pace is again picking up rapidly. This week, the Senate has resumed debate on the (unintelligible **[01:09]**) Seaway Project. This is the legislation which, if approved, would authorize the (unintelligible **[01:15]**) of the United States in the construction of a waterway for the expanded use of ocean-going vessels into the Great Lakes. The price of this project at the present time to the American taxpayer is estimated at the staggering sum of one hundred and five million dollars. And this (unintelligible **[01:39]**) is not the final cost of the seaway by any means. For purely economic reasons, it seems to me that at a time when the United States has a national debt approaching two hundred and seventy-five billion dollars, and in the midst of our efforts to reduce government spending and taxes, the idea of expending such a sum as this one is most impractical. We have, in the United States, a coastline of about seven thousand miles and many fine ports. Delaware is one of these ports, and I am frank to state my belief that the interests of Delaware had better be protected without the Saint Lawrence Seaway. (Unintelligible **[02:28]**) facts to support arguments against this project. Time does not permit them to be detailed here. However, it is worthy enough to mention the fact that the seaway, because of winter conditions, will probably be icebound four or five months out of each year. Most of us who have been endeavoring to secure funds for needed improvements for waterways adjoining Delaware, such as the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and sections of the Delaware River, feel very strongly that these obligations should be carried out prior to the consideration of a seaway. For those who say that (unintelligible **[03:11]**) project is needed as a

defense measure, it must be emphasized that, in addition to its unusable state in winter months, the (unintelligible [03:23]) locks, which would have to be constructed as a part of the project, would most certainly be vulnerable targets in enemy bombings. The construction of the Saint Lawrence Seaway, with a probable diversion of shipping to that waterway and away from the east coast, would affect not only our ports, but such things as our railroads, and other shipping, who employ thousands of Delawareans in which (unintelligible [03:50]) the water-borne commerce and arrive in one state and in other coastal cities regularly from all sorts, all parts of the world. If Canada intends to build a seaway with or without United States participation, I see no reason why she could not succeed. After all, the various congresses of the United States have been examining this legislation for about thirty-five years now, and have yet to approve it. It could be evident to Canada by now that this country is not willing to expend such an enormous amount of money for a project of doubtful value. Canada has long been our friends and allies. I believe she will continue to be, even if we do not build the seaway. The vote in the Senate on this legislation is expected to be very close and may occur sometime during this week. Another matter of much interest is the farms program. And in that connection the Secretary of Agriculture, this week, has begun the presentation of the administration's view before the Senate Agriculture Committee. [05:03] There will be more opportunity to discuss this subject later on. This week in Delaware, I am personally looking forward to (unintelligible [05:14]) two events. One of them is the (unintelligible [05:18]) national treasure of the Lady (unintelligible [05:21]) foreign war. And the other is the program honoring (unintelligible [05:28]) the ambassador of (unintelligible [05:31]), who will spend several days in the state, beginning on Friday morning.

Mr. Kelly:

Thank you, Senator Frear. From the nation's capital, you have heard United States Senator J. Allen Frear in the third of his series of brief, weekly reports to the people of Delaware on current congressional affairs. Senator Frear will be heard again next week at this same time.

[End 05:58]