

S P E E C H  
OF  
HON. CUSHMAN K. DAVIS.

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The Senate having under consideration the bill (S. 1631) making appropriations for improving the St. Mary's River and for improving the Hay Lake Channel—

Mr. DAVIS said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: Early in the present session the Senator from Ohio [Mr. PAYNE] presented to the Senate the petition of the Board of Trade of the city of Cleveland upon a subject of the greatest importance to the people of the Northwest. It is a subject which also immediately concerns the interests of his own State and all the communities, domestic and foreign, that have commercial relations with the regions whose products find an outlet at Lake Superior or a market in the territory west of that great inland sea. In a more remote, but scarcely less important degree, it involves the general welfare. It is not merely of present importance. Great as that importance is, a wise consideration of a future that is very near vastly increases it. That subject is the improvements at the falls of the St. Mary's River, consisting of a new lock, and at the same time the deepening of the Hay Lake Channel. The prayer of the petition is that the total amount required for the completion of these indispensable avenues of traffic be at once appropriated and placed at the disposal of the War Department, to the end that the work may be prosecuted to completion within the shortest time possible. Similar petitions have since been presented from the Chambers of Commerce of the city of St. Paul and the city of Duluth.

This matter has been favorably considered for several years by many business interests, acting through their various organizations, in all the States bounded by the Great Lakes. It was the occasion of a convention of the most representative character, convened at the Sault in 1887. That the necessity for the immediate completion of these great public works is most urgent is the matured conviction of public sentiment in the communities whose interests are immediately involved in them. These petitions express their unanimous desire, their pressing need, and tersely demonstrate the justice of their prayer.

It is my purpose to submit to the Senate, somewhat at large, the views which are correctly entertained upon this subject by these great constituencies.

The distance from the city of New York to Duluth, at the head of Lake Superior, is 1,400 miles, of which 800 miles are deep-water navigation, by way of the Great Lakes. The only outlet from Lake Superior is the St. Mary's River, which is 75 miles in length. The fall in this distance is 20 feet and 4 inches, and of this 18 feet and 2 inches are at the falls. The only channel now navigable is, for the first 35