WHEREAS, Water quality protection, the costs and benefits of its attainment, and the respective roles in that area played by different levels of government and the private sector are themes that transect a range of current issues from oil spills in Alaska to stormwater runoff in Texas; and

WHEREAS, The recent Valdez disaster, combined with lesser spills in Rhode Island, Delaware, and Texas, has called into question the adequacy of federal government and oil industry preparedness and necessities that this state have independent capabilities to safeguard its waters when oil spills occur; and

WHEREAS, The Alaskan tanker accident has raised also the issues of how resultant damages should be quantified in monetary terms, how corresponding penalties should be assessed, and how the costs of preventative investments to reduce environmental injury should be balanced against the benefits of the associated economic activity; and

WHEREAS, Similar questions as to the tradeoff between the benefits of water quality ideals and the costs of their practical attainment have a bearing on the development of appropriate effluent standards, nonpoint source pollution controls, stormwater treatment regulations, and other regulatory requirements; and

WHEREAS, Pending requirements in these areas have a potentially heavy taxpayer impact and suggest a need for the legislature to address comprehensively a host of issues relating to water quality, including an examination of the functions and perspectives of federal regulators, state agencies, local citizens and governments, and industry;

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the presiding officers of the Texas Senate and Texas House of Representatives, respectively, acting under the authority vested with us by House Concurrent Resolution 142, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, 1989, do hereby establish a joint select committee, the Joint Committee on Oil Spills and Water Pollution Abatement, subject to the directives given below:

1. The composition of the committee shall be as identified in Attachment A.

2. The committee shall be assigned to:

   (a) make recommendations regarding means of effective state-government response to oil spills affecting or threatening the Texas coastal region, including proposals, if any, for coordination with federal or local governments, the oil industry, or other elements of the private sector;

   (b) monitor the implementation of Senate Bill 1525, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, 1989, enabling delegation to the State of Texas of NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) authority;

   (c) monitor the implementation of House Bill 1567, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, 1989, authorizing local governments to establish stormwater drainage utilities funded by user fees on impervious cover;

   (d) study associated issues relating to wastewater discharges and nonpoint source pollution affecting sewer and drainage systems;
3. The committee shall be subject to House Concurrent Resolution 142, 71st Legislature, Regular Session, 1989, and to the procedures manual for select committees adopted pursuant thereto.

4. The committee shall issue a report to the legislature and governor in accordance with the requirements of House Concurrent Resolution 142 and shall expire when the 72nd Legislature convenes on January 8, 1991.

William P. Hobby
Lieutenant Governor of Texas

Gibson B. "Gib" Lewis, Speaker
Texas House of Representatives

DATE APPROVED: 9/15/89

DATE APPROVED: 9-15-89
Attachment A

JOINT COMMITTEE ON OIL SPILLS AND WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT

Honorable Jim McWilliams—Chairman
Honorable Robert Earley
Honorable Dan Shelley
Honorable Robert Saunders
Honorable Bob Armstrong (Citizen Appointee)