

Trans-Alaska Pipeline-

Gravel, Stevens Introduce Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senator Mike Gravel appeared before the Senate Interior Committee to urge that panel to report to the entire Senate at the same as other, less comprehensive bills, legislation that would give final and complete authorization to construct the the trans-Alaska pipeline.

The legislation, S. 970, introduced by Senators Gravel and Ted Stevens, would not only permit a right-of-way of sufficient width to construct the trans-Alaska pipeline, but would also find that all environmental requirements had been satisfied.

This would remove the pipe line from further consideration by the Courts.

The other legislation, expected to reach the Senate floor by mid-May, deals only with the right-of-way problem.

It is not yet known if the Committee will report a bill setting national policy for all utility corridors over public lands or another, more simple bill, that amends the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act to provide discretion for the Secretary of the Interior in granting permits for right-of-way.

"I believe it important that the Senate have the opportunity to consider at the same time both the narrow bill on right-of-way and the more complete

measure on the entire trans-Alaska pipeline," Senator Gravel commented.

"This will maximize our ability to get the most far-reaching legislation possible from the Senate. The Nation's energy crisis and balance of payments problem demand that the Congress do as much as it can to get North Slope oil moving to market.

"The bill by Senator Stevens and myself will do this. In the course of debate I believe we can persuade many Senators and Congressmen of the rightness of our cause and enlist their support for our bill," he said.

Senator Gravel spent most of his testimony before Senator Henry M. Jackson's Interior panel refuting several myths about the trans-Alaska pipeline and its supposed alternative pipeline through Canada.