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The Honourable Noël A. Kinsella, Speaker

Transport

Cruise Ships—Dumping of Sewage in Coastal Waters

Hon. Pat Carney: Honourable senators, coastal Canadians in British Columbia have raised concerns about the dumping of sewage by cruise ships in their waters, turning coastal waters into cruise-industry toilet bowls. The April 19, 2007, issue of *The Georgia Straight*, a local British Columbia publication, featured an article by Andrew Macleod entitled "Cruise on down to our dumping ground." The report describes how cruise ships dump tonnes of sewage in Canadian coastal waters with impunity. Checking out the story, because it seemed to be bizarre, I found that, incredibly, Canada has no legal recourse to prevent cruise ships from dumping sewage other than to defer to Transport Canada's voluntary guidelines. Developed in 2003 by Transport Canada in conjunction with Environment Canada, the Pollution Prevention Guidelines for the Operation of Cruise Ships under Canadian Jurisdiction set out the current regulatory requirements as well as the practices that cruise ships have voluntarily agreed to follow. However, because they are voluntary, there are no enforcement mechanisms or legal sanctions for breach of the regulations and practices. For example, a ship owned by Celebrity Cruises Incorporated was fined \$100,000 in Washington State for spewing sewage into Juan de Fuca Strait, which borders my home on Saturna Island, but to Canada, CCI paid nothing, despite admitting that it fouled Canadian waters three times.

Coastal communities welcome the cruise ship industry, but they are also justifiably concerned about the pollution left behind by the ships. Vancouver Port Authority

estimates that the cruise sector generates more than 13,000 jobs annually and that each ship brings \$2 million to the region every time it ties up at the dock.

The problem is that the 33 Vancouver-based cruise ships that will churn through B.C. about 300 times this summer will carry nearly 1 million passengers, each of whom produce 3.5 kilograms of garbage per day, not including liquid waste. Many of these ships carry more than 2,000 people, making them the equivalent of floating cities, with all the consumer needs and wastes you would expect from a luxury resort of that size. Much of the ships' time will be spent in the confined waters of Hecate Strait, the Inside Passage and between Vancouver Island and the mainland, where the whale population is already vulnerable.

Although a number of pollution regulations have been made under the authority of the Canada Shipping Act, currently none of them apply to the discharge of sewage by ships. Transport Canada published proposed regulations in the *Canada Gazette* Part I on June 17, 2006 that would consolidate the various existing regulations regarding ship-source pollution and include many new provisions not contained in existing regulations, including provisions to prohibit or control sewage discharges from all vessels, including cruise ships. Transport Canada officials state that these regulations have not yet been finalized or put into effect.

I hope that honourable senators will agree with me that the government should act as soon as possible to enforce these new regulations and to put them into effect so that those who live in coastal communities can be assured that their waters will not be one giant septic tank.