

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING -- FEBRUARY 25, 1971

The Roads and Highways Committee met in room 535 at 2:45 P. M. on February 25, 1971. Chairman Dierdorff called the meeting to order and all members were present except Ossmann.

Paul Fleener, Manhattan, Kansas Farm Bureau was a conferee on House Bill 1245.

Guests present were Harry Blizzard, Topeka, Central States Construction; Dale Carls, Wakarusa, Shawnee County Farm Bureau; Glenn Coulter, Topeka, Kansas Consulting Engineers; a group of students representing the Christian Citizenship Seminar.

HOUSE BILL 1245 - AN ACT providing for the issuance of highway bonds of the state of Kansas payable from revenues accruing to.....

Chairman Dierdorff asked for comments from opponents of House Bill 1245.

Paul Fleener said that he felt duty bound to speak on behalf of the Kansas Farm Bureau. They reaffirm their position of many years in opposition to bonding for highways. They feel the roads should be built on a pay-as-you-go basis. Mr. Fleener said his people went along with the gas tax increase and at that time it was spelled out where the highways were largely to be built. He said they had kept faith with the legislature and wanted them to keep faith with the Farm Bureau by not passing a bonding bill.

Mr. Lady said that he does not object to the bill for the same reason that Mr. Fleener does. He feels that if two years ago the legislature thought it was necessary to give the Commission some direction, he does not know why it should be changed now.

Mr. Dugan said if we do need the highways over the next few years, the cost of the bonding program will make sense if we can match the interest against the rising costs. Inflation has been caused by materials and labor and due to the ever increasing federal standards. His question is, do we need the bonding program? He thinks we should consider stretching it out more than twenty years.

Mr. Davis said it seems ridiculous to pay that kind of interest for a bonding program. He said after twelve years up here, he is convinced we should forget the bonding program and just pay as we go. He said an increase in the gas tax would be ridiculous too -- that we should do the best we can with what we have.

Mr. Ratner said that we have two main differences in the Senate and House bills. His personal feeling is that he is a little scared to give someone the authority to issue as much as they want to of \$300 million - that there should be a yearly limit and not construct something so fast that our Kansas road builders couldn't do. He said he is opposed to cutting the freeways or corridors from the bill. Once we take that off they are going to be turned around. He thinks we should look at both bills.

Mr. Jacobs said he is satisfied the feeling of the people in the United States is the war is going to end. He thinks it is silly to go into a bonding program - that we should get some of the war money that is going down the drain.

Mr. Hayes said that he has supported every bill that has

come out of the committee the last few years for highways, but he cannot go along with omitting the freeway system and he will have to vote against the bill.

Mr. Dugan said that without a way to finance the freeways, they are so much hot air.

Mr. Lady pointed out that Mr. Peyton said 60% of the money is now being spent on freeways and 40% on the rest of the roads. At least more money is being concentrated in the area of the routes.

Mr. Weaver said he thinks the money should be designated more specifically. He feels there should be limitations.

Mr. Bush said we feel like we need highways -- we either fund as we go or find an instrument for funding. He said he is sure no one knows what is best -- it looks like we are between the devil and the deep and it might be that whatever we do is wrong, but by the same token there is an answer. He said if we adopt this bill and abandon our present expressway and freeway system, where are these roads going to be built? What kind of control are we going to have? Will we have some control?

Mr. Dierdorff said they would report back to the legislature every year.

Mr. Wilson said that he is concerned that if we spend all of this money on the new roads, what are we going to do for money for repairs for our present roads?

The Chairman announced discussions would continue at a later date.

Mr. Ratner explained that he had been requested to introduce a bill on bus drivers and certain violations against their license.

They would like some relief so these wouldn't count against their personal cars. He asked permission to introduce a committee bill and give the people a chance to be heard.

Mr. Ratner made a motion, second by Mr. Lady, that this legislation be drawn up and introduced as a committee bill.

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.

Fran Stafford, Recording Secretary

APPROVED:

  
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ARDEN DIERDORFF, CHAIRMAN

March 1, 1971