

Approved: 1/18/96  
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ben Vidricksen at 9:00 a.m. on January 17, 1996 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department  
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes  
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department  
Martha Ozias, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Dean Carlson - Kansas Department of Transportation

Others attending: See attached list

**HCR 5011 OPPOSING THE CONVERSION FROM THE UNITED STATES CUSTOMARY MEASUREMENT SYSTEM TO THE METRIC SYSTEM**

Dean Carlson gave a brief up-date on the history of trying to convert to the metric system since the days of Thomas Jefferson. It was stated that Congress had originally wanted the states to convert to the metric system voluntarily and both the President and Congress have directed it but the issue has remained controversial over the years. Mr. Carlson went on to explain what KDOT was doing toward converting its plans, contracts, computer programs and other internal documents and explained that at this point it would be more costly to stop than to go ahead. Inasmuch as Congress seems to be unwilling to abandon its position, KDOT plans to continue to move forward on schedule. (Attachment 1)

Senator Brady presented a letter on behalf of Adolph Wildegrube of Independence, Kansas who not able to be in attendance at this hearing. Mr. Wildegrube has done consider research on this matter and strongly supports this Resolution. (Attachment 2)

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 10 and 11 meetings was made by Senator Jones. This was seconded by Senator Harrington. Motion carried.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 18, 1996.





## KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Secretary of Transportation

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Bill Graves  
Governor of Kansas

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES  
January 17, 1996**

**REGARDING HCR 5011, OPPOSING METRIC CONVERSION**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you this morning to provide testimony regarding HCR 5011. This resolution expresses opposition to the conversion from the United States Customary Measurement System to the International (or metric) System of Measurement, specifically addressing the conversion requirements that the U.S. Department of Transportation has imposed on the Kansas Department of Transportation.

Although one of the concerns about metric conversion that is frequently expressed by the public relates to the cost of converting highway signs to metric, the requirement to design plans and let contracts in metric has had far greater impact on the Department. The Department has estimated that a complete metric conversion of all highway signs on the State Highway System would cost possibly up to \$2.5 million. No estimate is available of the additional costs that local units of government would experience in converting signs within their jurisdiction. We wish to repeat forcefully that we have no intention of converting to metric signs.

As the U.S. Congress developed the National Highway System (NHS) legislation that was recently passed, committees considered deleting the metric conversion requirements. This suggestion did not prevail because Congress determined it does want the U.S. to convert to the metric system eventually. The NHS legislation did delay the conversion of highway signs indefinitely. The requirement for the conversion of plans and contracts was retained, but pushed back to the year 2000. Although metric conversion requirements have remained somewhat controversial, state transportation agencies have taken them seriously and most of them are on schedule to meet the original deadlines. Most states, including Kansas, do not expect to delay their plans for conversion even though more time has been allowed. In response to an informal survey by the American Association for State Highway and

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Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 39 state transportation agencies have indicated that they do not anticipate that their states will delay their metrication efforts.

Economically, Kansas is so far down the road toward converting its plans, contracts, computer programs, and other internal documents that, at this point, it would be more costly to stop than to go ahead. The Department has already spent approximately \$2.8 million in readily identifiable expenditures. This includes nearly \$2.5 million to convert computer programs and an additional \$300,000 for reprinting publications and general administrative expenses. There are other resource commitments that are not as readily quantifiable, including training, procedure adjustments, data format changes, and software for personal computers.

Additional costs have been incurred outside the Department. For example, the standard specifications we use for construction projects are a joint effort of AASHTO. The current version was converted to metric and reissued at a cost of several million dollars. As a member of AASHTO, Kansas shared in that cost. If we were to try to reverse our conversion efforts now it would double all of these expenditures.

Trying to "back up" at this point would also create serious problems in our construction program. We already let 75 projects in metrics last fall. Beginning in July, we will begin letting major projects in metric and, over the next two to three years, we will see a mixture of metric and English contracts until complete conversion is achieved.

Based on the history of the issue, the money already spent on conversion, the difficulty in addressing standards prepared by national organizations, and the unwillingness of Congress to abandon its position, KDOT will continue to move forward on schedule.

Senate

#1

(Testimony for House Committee hearing) on HCR 5011 Jan. 17, '96

I am Adolph Wildgrub 76 years old, live near Independence Mo. retired from Junk Mfg. Coffeyville Mo. after 27 years in quality control.

I have dedicated much time & resources on the state Leg. and also on Congress starting about Oct '93 thru Dec '95 to address the metric conversion effect on highway system by F.H.W.A.

HCR 5011 addressing the issue of the Federal mandate of conversion of our highway system to metric. At the time in '95 I thought and supported its passage in the Kansas Leg. The language was well thought out.

#2 Now in 1995 after Congress passed PL 104-59 addressing the metric highway sign issue and the Sept. 1996 mandate for the metric conversion of our highway system, the climate has changed.

The metric sign issue is dead, also a mandate for metric conversion of the Federal highway system is no longer under mandate to convert to metric.

The date Sept. 30, 2000 is simply a bench mark saying the Sec of Transportation shall not require states metric conversion of our highway system in any way before that date. Further action after that date is not identified.

#3 So where does KDOT get their authority for their ambitious program for conversion to metric of our Kansas Highway System? More unfunded mandates

Wasting a part of money that should be used on roads.

PL 104-59 & The KDOT memo are part of this presentation.

I share with news media &

Thank for the opportunity. Sincerely, Adolph Wildgrub

RR#4 Box 298  
Independence Mo.

Copy: file

SENATE TRANSPORTATION  
DATE: 1/17/96  
ATTACHMENT: 2-1

## House Concurrent Resolution No. 5011

By Committee on Transportation

2-1

9 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION opposing the conversion from the  
10 United States Customary Measurement System to the International  
11 (metric) System of Measurement as it pertains to the requirements  
12 and conditions the federal department of transportation imposes on  
13 the Kansas department of transportation.

14  
15 WHEREAS, The United States Congress has passed legislation to re-  
16 quire the conversion of our current measurement system (the United  
17 States Customary Measurement System) to the International (metric)  
18 System of Measurement under the Metric Conversion Act; and

19 WHEREAS, The costs, expenses and frustration of implementing such  
20 a conversion on the federal and state transportation systems might not  
21 have an ultimate positive benefit; and

22 WHEREAS, Requiring such a conversion could have an adverse effect  
23 as to disrupt and virtually paralyze all governmental operations involved  
24 in operating our transportation system; and

25 WHEREAS, Our current measurement system has served the United  
26 States and the Nation's transportation systems throughout our great his-  
27 tory: Now, therefore,

28 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas,*  
29 *the Senate concurring therein:* That we oppose the conversion from the  
30 United States Customary Measurement System to the International (met-  
31 ric) System of Measurement as it pertains to the requirements and con-  
32 ditions the federal department of transportation imposes on the Kansas  
33 department of transportation; and

34 *Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of State be directed to send  
35 enrolled copies of this resolution to Federico Pena, Secretary, United  
36 States Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Wash-  
37 ington D.C. 20590 and to each member of the Kansas Congressional  
38 Delegation.

*Passed by Kansas Leg March 22 1995  
by a vote of 109 for 14 against, 2 absent.  
APW*

planning, preliminary engineering and design, and final engineering for a new crossing of the Potomac River as part of the Project, as defined by section 404 of the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge Authority Act of 1995.

"(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of any project funded with amounts expended under paragraph (1) shall be 100 percent."

SEC. 411. AVAILABILITY OF PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS.

In addition to the funds made available under section 104(i) of title 23, United States Code, any funds made available for the rehabilitation of the Bridge under sections 1069(i) and 1103(b) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (105 Stat. 2009 and 2028) shall continue to be available after the conveyance under section 407(a) of the Bridge, in accordance with the terms under which the funds were made available under such sections 1069(i) and 1103(b).

Approved November 28, 1995.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM DESIGNATION ACT OF 1995

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 440 (H.R. 2274):

HOUSE REPORTS: Nos. 104-246 accompanying H.R. 2274 (Comm. on Transportation and Infrastructure) and 104-345 (Comm. of Conference).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 104-86 (Comm. on Environment and Public Works).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 141 (1995):

June 16, 19-22, considered and passed Senate.

Sept. 20, H.R. 2274 considered and passed House; S. 440, amended, passed in lieu.

Nov. 17, Senate agreed to conference report.

Nov. 18, House agreed to conference report.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS, Vol. 31 (1995):

Nov. 28, Presidential statement.

*Adolph  
S. Wilson  
D. W. Wilson  
V. Wilson*

*Congratulations, Adolph - You East  
pushing to success -  
Nancy London Casselham*

gated as of the date of the enactment of this Act to carry out such project.

(C) CMAQ AND STP TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT FUNDS DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term “CMAQ and STP transportation enhancement funds” means—

(i) funds apportioned under section 104(b)(2) of title 23, United States Code; and

(ii) funds apportioned under section 104(b)(3) of such title and available only for transportation enhancement activities under section 133(d)(3) of such title.

(3) INTERSTATE CONSTRUCTION BALANCES.—A State may not designate under subsection (b) more than 1/3 of funds apportioned or allocated to the State for interstate construction and not obligated as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 1 OF TITLE 23.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts designated under subsection (b) shall be made available for obligation in the same manner as if such funds were apportioned under chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code. Such amounts shall be available for obligation for the same period for which such amounts were originally made available for obligation. Obligation limitations for Federal-aid highways and highway safety construction programs established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and subsequent laws shall apply to obligations made under this section.

(e) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect calculations under section 157 of title 23, United States Code, and sections 1002(e), 1013(c), 1015(a), and 1015(b) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991.

(f) STATE.—In this section and section 202, the term “State” has the meaning such term has under section 401 of title 23, United States Code.

#### SEC. 205. RELIEF FROM MANDATES.

(a) SUSPENSION OF MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.—Section 303 of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) STATE ELECTION.—A State may elect, at any time, not to implement, in whole or in part, 1 or more of the management systems required under this section. The Secretary may not impose any sanction on, or withhold any benefit from, a State on the basis of such an election.”; and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking “(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not” and inserting the following:

“(f) REPORTS.—

“(1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not”;

(B) by moving the remainder of the text of paragraph (1), as designated by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, 2 ems to the right; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than October 1, 1996, the Comptroller General, in consultation with States, shall transmit to Congress a report on the management systems under this section, including recommendations as to whether,

to what extent, and how the management systems should be implemented.”.

(b) ASPHALT PAVEMENT CONTAINING RECYCLED RUBBER.—Section 1038 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (23 U.S.C. 109 note; 105 Stat. 1987-1990) is amended by striking subsection (d).

(c) METRIC REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) PLACEMENT AND MODIFICATION OF SIGNS.—The Secretary shall not require the States to expend any Federal or State funds to construct, erect, or otherwise place or to modify any sign relating to a speed limit, distance, or other measurement on a highway for the purpose of having such sign establish such speed limit, distance, or other measurement using the metric system.

(2) OTHER ACTIONS.—Before September 30, 2000, the Secretary shall not require that any State use or plan to use the metric system with respect to designing or advertising, or preparing plans, specifications, estimates, or other documents, for a Federal-aid highway project eligible for assistance under title 23, United States Code.

(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions apply:

(A) HIGHWAY.—The term “highway” has the meaning such term has under section 101 of title 23, United States Code.

(B) METRIC SYSTEM.—The term “metric system” has the meaning the term “metric system of measurement” has under section 4 of the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 (15 U.S.C. 205c).

(d) REPEAL OF NATIONAL MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in section 141 by striking subsection (a) and redesignating subsections (b) through (d) as subsections (a) through (c), respectively; and

(B) by striking section 154.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis to chapter 1 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 154.

(3) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall be applicable to a State on the 10th day following the date of the enactment of this Act; except that if the legislature of a State is not in session on such date of enactment and the chief executive officer of the State declares, before such 10th day, that the legislature is not in session and that the State prefers an applicability date for such amendments that is after the date on which the legislature will convene, such amendments shall be applicable to the State on the 60th day following the date on which the legislature next convenes.

(e) ELIMINATION OF PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE FOR MOTORCYCLE HELMETS.—Effective September 30, 1995, section 153(h) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by striking “a law described in subsection (a)(1) and” each place it appears.

#### SEC. 206. DEFINITIONS.

In this title, the following definitions apply:

23 USC 109 n.

23 USC 141 n.

Effective date



# Kansas Department of Transportation

December 4, 1995

#3  
DEC - 5 1995

BLP Memo 95-20

MEMORANDUM TO: County Engineers/Road Supervisors/Hwy. Administrators  
Public Works Dir./City Engrs./Street Superintendents  
(Greater than 5,000 Population)

RE: Metric Requirements and National Highway System Legislation

On November 27, 1995, the President signed into law the National Highway System (NHS) Designation Bill. This Bill approved the NHS and made revisions to specific sections of the previously passed Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. The main issues that will be covered in this Memorandum will be the metric provisions of the Act and the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) position for implementing and conversion to an all metric system. Other issues and implementation schedules due to the Bill will be covered in a later memorandum.

The metric requirements portion of the Bill states the following:

"(1) PLACEMENT AND MODIFICATION OF SIGNS.

— The Secretary shall not require the States to expend any Federal or State funds to construct, erect, or otherwise place or to modify any sign relating to a speed limit, distance, or other measurement on a highway for the purpose of having such sign establish such speed limit, distance, or other measurement using the metric system.

(2) OTHER ACTIONS — Before September 30, 2000, the Secretary shall not require that any State use or plan to use the metric system with respect to designing or advertising, or preparing plans, specifications, estimates, or other documents for a Federal-aid highway project eligible for assistance under title 23, United States Code."

## Signing

This information is good news, it allows KDOT, cities and counties to continue their current signing policy. This section of the legislation does not require the use of metric units on warning, regulatory or message signs. KDOT will continue to use English units for all sign messages.

December 4, 1995

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As we begin the transition to metric units for construction bid lettings, projects let in metric units will specify metric dimensions for the sign blanks. Projects let in English units will specify English dimensions. As noted above the messages, however will be in English units.

### Project Plans

KDOT has adopted a policy to continue on the present implementation schedule for metric conversion. KDOT expects by September 30, 2000 to have all projects being let in metric units and no projects in English units.

KDOT has made a major investment in resources to convert specifications, standards, computer programs, equipment, project plans development, etc. to a system which uses metric units. This was done to comply with the initial FHWA implementation schedule which required federal-aid projects to be let in metric units by October 1, 1996. This new Legislation relaxes the mandated schedule, however there is still a mandated conversion date. With the major investments made, there are resources now available to continue the conversion and establish a realistic schedule. KDOT's policy for letting State and Local (federal-aid) projects will be as follows:

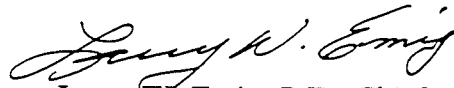
1. It will be KDOT's policy that "all" State and Local agency projects (Using federal funds for projects in the City and County Five Year Programs) let to contract after July, 1996 will be in metric units. There will be an exception for the projects that are on the metric exempt list which will be let in English units.
2. KDOT will continue with its current implementation schedule to let State Highway System Projects to contract in metric units. This schedule began with letting some projects in October, 1995 and phasing in all others beginning in July, 1996. The only exceptions will be those with early starts in English units and were granted a metric exemption.
3. For City and County Projects which have not been surveyed as of December 1, 1995, the plans **must** be surveyed and designed in metric units regardless of their letting date. This applies to all current and future projects in the federally funded Five Year Program.
4. City and County projects included in approved Five Year Programs (State Fiscal Years 1996-2000) may be let in English units only if they are at or beyond the field check stage and they are on the KDOT approved metric exemption list. **However, projects designed in English units that are not let by September 30, 2000 will be required to be redone in metric units. (No exceptions).**

December 1, 1995  
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We are providing to you a list of exempt projects which are in the current Five Year Program. If your city or county feels we have omitted a project that qualifies to be let in English units and be on the metric exempt list, please send it to us immediately. Projects on the approved exemption list will be noted on approved Five Year Plans. Gerry Montgomery will maintain the Bureau of Local Projects exempt list of projects.

Mr. Dean Testa, Chief of Construction and Maintenance is the KDOT Metric Coordinator. If you have questions regarding the metric conversion, status, schedule or other concerns, please contact Mr. Testa at (913)296-3576 or myself at (913)296-3861.

Sincerely,

  
Larry W. Emig, P.E., Chief  
Bureau of Local Projects

LWE:ekv

Attachment

cc: Mr. W. M. Lackey, P.E., Assistant Secretary and State Transportation Engineer  
Mr. Warren L. Sick, P.E., Director of Engineering and Design  
Mr. James Jones, P.E., Director of Operations  
Board of County Commissioners  
Consulting Engineers