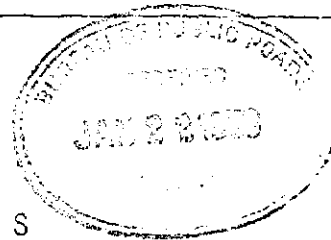


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MINNESOTA HIGHWAYS
FOR the FUTURE

STATEWIDE
CONFERENCE

Thursday, Feb. 14, 1957
St. Paul, Minn.

Sponsored by the Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce and the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the American Municipal Association, League of Minnesota Municipalities, American Association of State Highway Officials, Minnesota Highway Department, and Minnesota Good Roads, Inc.

C. C. Ludwig, Executive Secretary, League of Minnesota Municipalities; and we also have

M. E. Fisher, vice-chairman of this conference, Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, Minneapolis Star and Tribune.

Now, exercising my rights as a moderator, I am going to take the liberty of starting the session by asking each one of our four experts to explain in a single sentence the one most important problem facing his level of government in respect to the new highway program.

Chairman Marzitelli: Glenn:

Glenn C. Richards: Before I answer that question, I would like to say a few words, Frank, if you don't mind, about the panel. I don't like to be introduced as an expert, to tell you the truth. Just because we're away from our home town doesn't mean we are experts, because you people here are much better experts about your problems than we are, and we can't say very much on how to do your job. But I would like to say a few words about this panel you happen to have here with you today. Each one of us is dedicated to the highway program and we are here because we are hoping we can be helpful to you. These men have, for year after year, been testifying before Congress in behalf of the federal-aid highway program for their various associations, and when the President decided that we ought to do something about this highway program we were talking about for so long, he appointed General Clay to find out what could be done. General Clay named Frank Turner the first (and who probably would say that he was the least) expert, to be his right arm -- he was -- and also, General Clay named representatives of the associations. Mr. Johnson was the chief one of these fellows to work with him on developing a proposed program. And so this panel is quite familiar with the program as proposed by General Clay, which is the basis of your federal-aid highway act. Since that time we found, working together, that we could do a much better job if we worked as a team, and since that time we have worked as a team. We hope that we can have the spirit of cooperation extended throughout the country so that the cities, the counties, the states and the Bureau of Public Roads can all work as a team throughout the country to see that this job is done. We have a selfish goal. We were quite active in getting the federal-aid highway act adopted -- we want to see it work. So anything we can do to help the cities in the country, or the state and county officials to see the program is effective and see that it is built according to the time table, we want to do. We are here in that category; we are trying to be helpful -- we hope that from this will come a pattern for other states to follow. This is the pilot meeting of this kind. We hope it will be a pattern for other states to follow and bring together all of the realms of government responsible for getting this job done. Thank you.

Now, then, to answer your question. I think the most important thing for cities is to see how we can get in this program, how we as cities can be helpful to the State Highway Department and the Bureau of Public Roads in seeing this job is done.

Chairman Marzitelli: Mr. Frank Turner, representing the Bureau of Public Roads.

With respect to the level of government you represent, in one sentence, what is the most important single problem facing the highway program?

Mr. Turner: The same thing that Mr. Richards has just said -- how to develop cooperation, team work, bring to bear on this problem all of the resources that are available to us; to make a team out of the counties, cities, state highway departments, federal government, legislators, engineers, contractors, materials men, and all the others that must play a part in carrying out this program.

C. C. Ludwig: Now, to get to the details. I would like though for you to start by telling us something about this term "Interstate" system; we've had "Federal-aid" for many years, but this is a new term. What is meant now by the term "Interstate System"?

Mr. Turner: The word "Interstate" has appeared probably more often in connection with the new program than any other word we have heard. This program is not all interstate. It must be remembered that this is an old program that has been going on for many years, but the emphasis in the last few years has been on what we call the "Interstate Highway System". The interstate system is what we might say is the "main tree" of our highway system in this country. It is an old system. Work was begun on this interstate program as much as 15 years ago. The interstate system is, we think, the most important part of our 3½ million miles of public highways. It is a system that ties together the principal metropolitan areas, cities, the principal manufacturing areas of our country -- and all are tied together at the borders of Mexico and Canada. It is the system that military people feel is most important for our defense; not only the movement of troops, but the movement of goods and commodities which must be available in order to be safe in the military machine zone.

Ralph Kayes: -- Mr. Turner: We, of course, are very much interested to know what you mean by the interstate system -- for myself, I would like to get down to the hard facts of life and ask you this question: How much will this interstate system cost and how much will each of the various levels of government contribute to that total cost?

Mr. Turner: Without appearing to give a facetious or trite answer, I would say that it will not cost you anything. By that I mean that it will not cost us anything in terms of expenditures of money. We are going to pay for this system whether we have it or not. It will save us more than we are going to put out for its cost. The cost has been calculated for the average motorist at about \$8 or \$9 a year, or something like 75 cents a month. But that is not a cost, to my way of thinking; that's an investment -- an investment making for better highway transportation, lower transportation costs not only for himself but for the commodities that he uses, and for a safer, more efficient, more pleasant highway system on which to travel. So I say it doesn't cost him anything; he is making an investment which will return him dividends.

Mr. A. E. Giere: Mr. Turner: Regarding the federal funds -- how are these funds apportioned or distributed among the states?

Mr. Turner: For the first three years of the program, 1957-1958-1959, they are to be distributed in the way that our federal-aid funds have been distributed for many years; that is, on the basis of area of a state, of population of a state, the mileage of roads within that state in relation to the total area of this mileage in the nation. For the 10 years after 1959, that is, 1960-1969, the moneys are to be distributed to the states on the ratio in which the cost of the highway system in each state bears to the national total. In other words, Minnesota will get as much money as Minnesota needs to complete the system in Minnesota -- no more, no less.

Mayor Hoyer: Mr. Turner, if I could leave the question of finances for a minute, I would like to ask you this question. It has two parts -- No. 1, I would like to ask you what is meant by access control; and No. 2, what provision has been made for an adequate law with respect to access control?

Mr. Turner: -- Again Mayor, I don't want to appear trite or facetious, but access control means just exactly what the words say -- control of access. By that, from

the engineering standpoint, we would say that it means properly designed and planned access and exit points to the highway. We mean that no highway user, no vehicle, can enter or leave the highway main line, except as he can be brought in or taken off at a point where he will not create a safety hazard. That's overly-simplified as to what we mean by access control. It is simply that the state exercises the authority and determines, from the engineering standpoint, how is the best way to let the motorist get on or off of the system. I would emphasize to you very firmly that control of access does not mean denial of access.

A. E. Giere: Mr. Turner, going back to the matter of cost -- how do you arrive at the estimate of the cost of the whole system; and is this the final estimate of the cost?

Mr. Turner: It's not the final estimate, I'm sure. The 1954 Congress asked the states and the Bureau of Public Roads to make an estimate of the cost of completing all of various systems of highways in our country, including the interstate. We worked on that for the good part of a year and came up with an estimate which was submitted to the Congress. I am sure you will recognize it when I say it was to cost 101 billion dollars. But that was not the cost of the interstate system; that was not the cost the federal government was expected to bear; that was the total estimated cost of completing all of our highway systems over a period of 10 years' time. The interstate system was estimated to cost about 27 billion dollars. That is the current going estimate of costs which was developed by the state highway departments, the cities, working with the Bureau, and that estimate is to be revised; is being revised right at the present time. We are under a mandate of Congress to present during the first 10 days of January, 1958, a revised estimate of costs of completing the interstate system in all of the states. That estimate will be used as a basis of apportioning funds as I referred to a while ago. Subsequent to that, another estimate will be made in 1962; another one in 1966; another one in 1967 and another one in 1968; so four more estimates will be made after the one on which we are now working.

Mayor Hoyer: In your estimates, are you considering those states which have already constructed part of this interstate system, such as toll facilities, and so forth -- Will they be reimbursed for these roads, or what will happen, or will these roads continue to be toll roads?

Mr. Turner: Mayor, that's a question that in the discussions in Congress during the last two sessions, you might say was the "64 dollar question" -- whether or not we would reimburse those states. It has not been settled -- whether or not you will be reimbursed is something that Congress will determine next year. We are engaged at the present time in making a determination of the amounts of money represented by these toll facilities in the states. We must present that to the Congress next January. What they will do with it at that time I don't know any more than you do, but there is a provision in the law as it now stands that those toll facilities which have already been built and which form logical parts of the interstate system, will be included in the system. There will be no effect on them and they will continue to collect tolls and go on just as they do at the present time. Whether or not Congress will reimburse them out and out, make them free, or whether they will take any action on it at all, we don't know. We are making this study which will be used as a basis for determination of the present policy next January.

Mr. Keyes: Mr. Turner, speaking now of those toll systems that are presently in existence, I would like to pose the question in these terms: Has it been contemplated that federal funds can be used to construct, in the future, a toll system?

Mr. Turner: No, sir. The law is very clear - that federal funds cannot be utilized for the construction of a toll road. Under certain very high restrictions in the law, we can, and have in the past, participated in the construction of toll bridges and tunnels when those things are constructed by the state, when they are owned and operated by the state and all the funds and all the revenue of the tolls is applied to the cost of repair or maintenance. When it has all been paid the structure is turned over to the state and it becomes a free facility, but only under those conditions can we participate in toll facility construction. The law has a special mandate in it that we cannot participate in the construction of a toll road. But whether or not Congress will take any new steps to change it I don't know. Based on the historic policy, I would say they would not change.

Mr. Ludwig: Mr. Turner, I think everyone in this room knows how the state's share of this great cooperative program is financed - our automobile industry and taxes and our state gas tax, and as far as the local share is concerned, some general tax money and special assessments, but what about the 90 percent of this cost that the federal government is going to finance? Will you tell us briefly how the federal government is going to raise its 90 percent share?

Mr. Turner: The 1956 Federal Highway Act created what we call a "Highway Trust Fund". All of the expenditures of the program are made out of that trust fund. But I am sure you are more interested in what goes into the trust fund. The federal government puts into that trust fund the revenue that it gets from the 3-cent federal gasoline tax, at the present time, which you know was raised from 2 cents to 3 cents last July for this particular program and puts in the revenue from diesel fuel - both of these items being revenues for the highway portion of those items. We do not get the taxes, for example, of diesel fuel used by railroads in locomotives - just the highway portion of them. We also get the tax on tires, retreads, manufacturer's excise tax, and a new tax on heavy trucks. Those are the sources of revenues that the federal government gets.

Mayor Hoyer: Of course, it will take a tremendous amount of planning which will fall upon the shoulders of the local communities, be it county, state or be it on the city level. If you will be kind enough, Mr. Turner, to discuss with us what federal funds are available for such highway planning and how they can be obtained, and how they may be used by the various levels of government.

Mr. Turner: Planning is the most important part of this operation, and the federal government and the Bureau has been working on that for many years. For almost 20 years federal legislation has had in it a provision that 1½ percent of the federal funds are normally to be matched by an equivalent amount of funds from the states, and are to be made available for advance planning of projects. Most of the states have been utilizing that all these years. They have been making various highway planning surveys, at least those highway departments I am familiar with. Those funds can be used for the necessary highway planning for this program within the states. That, I believe, is ample money to do the planning job that certainly must be done. In addition, there are some funds available through the Urban Renewal Administration of the Federal Housing Administration, Housing Finance Administration and other sources. Those funds can also be used for planning, not only for highway planning but for general city planning. Those can be combined with our 1½ percent highway planning survey funds to make available to you all highway planning, and general city planning money you should need for this purpose. I believe that you already have utilized some of that here in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area,

Mr. Keyes: Mr. Turner, looking to one of the details of that planning, and so on, we all know that one of the major problems is the acquisition of right of way, particularly in view of some of the frustrating experiences in the past in right of way acquisition. Now I would like to ask you this question: Is there any provision in the federal highway act to allow for advance requisition and acquisition of right of way?

Mr. Turner: Yes, there is. The law wisely put in a provision that permits the acquisition of right of way, using federal funds from this program, to acquire portions of property known to be needed for the highway program, as far as 5 years in advance of construction. That gives us an opportunity to adequately plan the program, and for the community and individuals affected to make the necessary adjustments that are always present when private property must be taken for right of way. We think that that is one of the most important provisions of the legislation. I believe that here in Minnesota you have been dealing the last few days with a provision which is tied to this for the establishment of a revolving fund by which you can acquire right of way in advance of its need. We feel sure that use of that device will save millions and millions of dollars in this program.

Chairman Marzitelli: Mr. Alfred Johnson, representing the State Highway Officials; with respect to the level of government you represent, in one sentence, what is the most important single problem facing the highway program?

Mr. A.E. Johnson: Mr. Chairman, I have the honor of representing the state highway departments. I don't believe that I can state that in exactly one sentence, but I'll make it a short paragraph. First of all although the highway departments must keep work going on all systems even while concentrating and keeping up progress on the interstate system, we can't let one system of roads go while we concentrate entirely on another. The next thing is to make the maximum use of the technical and engineering personnel that the highway departments have and also to attract additional personnel of that type and they will have to compete with industry for which that type of personnel is needed. The next is selling the control of access concept to the public where they have not known the modern advantages so that they will know the advantages that will be gained (directly to them.) The next thing is what amount of right of way that will be needed for this monstrous program.

Mr. Keyes: Mr. Johnson, who will actually build the interstate highways?

Mr. Johnson: The states will build and maintain the interstate highways, just as they do the trunk highways.

Mayor Hoyer: What are the standards to which the Interstate system is to be constructed and how are they determined?

Mr. Johnson: The Bureau of Public Roads is charged with administering the funds and obtaining uniformity of plans. In reality it is your state highway department that initiates the projects, determines the location, makes up the mileage within the state. But this project involves a 41,000-mile system which will be built to what we might call Super Highway Standards, in layman terminology. It will be designed for the traffic needs of 1975 and that is a mandate, from Congress which is written into the Bill. Generally, when we get through with that we will have 7,000 miles of modern two-lane highways in the more sparsely settled parts of the United States, out in the far west where traffic demands are not so high; we will have some 26,000 or 27,000 miles of controlled access divided highways, and we will have some 7,000 or 8,000 miles of urban freeway sections.