

and study you have given this matter and all of us wish to express our sincere appreciation for the practicality of your solution.

I also feel that the proposed exposition and transportation interchange, which we fully support, is entirely in accord with the Visitors Center as contained in the bill on which we are testifying.

We became extremely interested in this proposed exposition and transportation interchange when we confirmed the great interest of national industry in a permanent exposition in Washington. Several meetings were held with industrial leaders and it was established that they preferred a downtown location provided there was assurance of easy access by both private and public transportation. This exposition will not be a trade mart; it will be an exhibition of the latest in American ingenuity in modern methods and machinery. As such it will be a living example of the depth and strength of our country's industrial economy. This will be most impressive to the millions of our citizens, school children, and foreign visitors coming each year to Washington.

Our organization has always been interested in the acute parking problems in Washington. With 4,000 parking places at the Visitors Center, and 3,500 in this project, 7,500 off-street parking sites will relieve at least some of the present need. We are equally interested in business conditions downtown. There is no question that business is now drifting west, but the major retail establishments are all located immediately adjacent to this site. We know that this project will have a profound impact on the revitalization of this area. Of equal importance is the elimination of downtown street congestion which has already reached the saturation point. The removal of the interstate buses from the city streets, the replacement of the present inadequate terminal facilities, and the provision for the first time of modern commuter bus facilities will all combine to make a lasting and needed improvement to Washington.

One point I should like to bring to your attention is the close relation between this exposition and the Smithsonian Institute. The latter shows the development of American ingenuity from earliest times to the present. The exposition shows that this perfection of every type of mechanism still goes on; that America is a young, healthy, growing industrial nation and has lost none of its skill in providing better living and more employment for its citizens.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity of appearing before your committee on these two matters which mean so much to Washington, and I appreciate your accepting me in place of the president of the board of trade.

Mr. GRAY. Thank you very much for a very fine statement. On yesterday I announced that the tourists are spending on the average of \$350 to \$400 million a year here in Washington. I also announced for the record that the National Park Service in their studies show that the average tourists stays less than 2 days, primarily because of the frustration of no place to park, et cetera.

On that basis, if we were to consider that we could get the Visitors Center established and allow people to park their cars, they could see Washington in an orderly manner, and, say, if we could double their stay to an average of 4 days, this could mean an additional \$400 million to the merchants and the people in the Washington area spent by tourists.