

they are pushing the parallel bridge, they have all the plans, consultant engineering fees are over \$5 million for duplicate plans—it is an exact bridge except for one little expansion. It has become a political issue in our State.

I think everyone has an answer.

Mr. FALLON. I might tell you it is 15 minutes before the House goes into session and we have two more witnesses, Senator, if you can sum up.

Senator McCURT. Actually I am through, Congressman, unless there are any further questions.

Mr. FALLON. Are there any questions?

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. FALLON. Thank you very much, Senator.

Is Mr. Fornos here?

Mr. Fornos, I said earlier that sometime during the hearing I was going to have to limit the time. Could you in 5 minutes give us what you would like the committee to hear?

STATEMENT OF WERNER H. FORNOS, MEMBER, HOUSE OF DELEGATES, MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. FORNOS. I would attempt to do so, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FALLON. We would appreciate that.

Mr. FORNOS. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you here this morning on a matter of great significance not only to the citizens of Maryland, but also for those who traverse our State and use it as a gateway to the Atlantic Ocean.

Federal permission for the construction of additional bridges and tunnels for the State of Maryland, as authorized in H.R. 11627, would benefit the millions of Americans who come to our State each year. It would also help insure the fiscal stability of Maryland in the face of growing financial burdens.

Equally as important in my mind, H.R. 11627 would, once and for all, clear away the unfortunate and often unfounded controversy that surrounds the construction of bridges across the Chesapeake Bay.

In this vein, the legislation before you, and you have here this morning, resembles House bill 348 passed by the last session of the Maryland General Assembly, where I am a member of the house of delegates.

Like H.R. 11627, it calls for the construction of three bridges and a tunnel, among them a span parallel to the existing Bay Bridge.

There are those who would have you believe that the parallel bridge is being pushed by the State roads commission. In reality the parallel bridge has the overwhelming support of the State legislature.

It is significant that the State legislature's vote in favor of this bridge came on the heels of a referendum site clouded by parochialism, innuendoes of land deals, and character assassination, all leading to massive voter confusion.

A total of 919,750 Marylanders voted in the general election last year, but 318,400 of these—more than a third of the voters—failed to cast a ballot on the bridge question. The measure lost by only some 40,000 votes.