

sets a time limit on construction. Passage of this legislation would leave technical questions to be answered by engineers and would leave the systems of priorities to the State roads commission. It is permissive legislation only that we are asking for.

Delay in this authority will put additional burdens on our State's financial picture. If the bridge had been approved in 1966, it would have cost \$73 million. If we approve it now, it is going to cost \$90 million. We have already wasted \$17 million and are undergoing a very long wait to the bridge.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FALLON. Thank you very much, Mr. Fornos.

Thes rest of the statement you want to go into the record?

Mr. FORNOS. Yes, sir.

I also have a breakdown on the votes I would like to submit.

Mr. FALLON. All right, you may put that in the record.

(The prepared statement and breakdown on votes follow:)

STATEMENT BY DELEGATE WERNER H. FORNOS, HOUSE OF DELEGATES,
ANNAPOLIS, Md.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss with you a matter of great significance not only to the citizens of Maryland, but to those for whom our state represents the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean.

Federal permission for the construction of additional bridges and tunnels for the State of Maryland, as authorized by H.R. 11627, would benefit the millions of Americans who traverse the 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 construction of bridges across the Chesapeake Bay.

In this vein, the legislation before you resembles a bill—House Bill 348—passed by the Maryland General Assembly in its history making 1967 session.

Like H.R. 11627 it calls for 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 fight 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 one-third of the voters—failed to cast a ballot on the bridge question. The measure lost by only some 40,000 votes.

The fact that so many voters neglected to cast ballots on the bridge questions is clear evidence of the lack of understanding on the issue.

One fact that escaped many voters was that without some type of bridge authorization bill, no bridge—neither northern, southern, nor parallel—could be built.

In considering this matter, the Committee should be aware that the confusion and ultimate defeat of that proposal traces to a drive led by the Congressman from Baltimore County, who now opposes the bill before you. In the Congressman's home county 102,093 votes were cast against the referred law. This single county's vote defeated the proposal despite the fact that residents of 15 other counties voted in favor of the parallel bridge.

The parallel bridge might have died there if the Maryland General Assembly had not recognized the voters confusion and the seriousness of the traffic problem at the existing two-lane bridge.

That problem, no doubt, was vividly brought home to the members of this Committee, this summer when the congestion and delay at the Bay Bridge became more acute than ever. I'm sure the motorists delayed for hours on both sides of the bridge would give avid testimony on the need for a parallel span, they would find little merit in the baseless allegations being espoused by the opponents of the parallel bridge.