

We are now heading westbound. This is Seminary Road passing over I-495. Notice the speed sign does not have guardrail. The bridge piers do not have it. And there is no guardrail in the median. On April 7 a man traveling westbound hit this bridge pier in the median and was killed.

And about 2¾ hours or 3 hours later another vehicle came along. The debris from this accident had not been cleared up. He stepped on his brakes, skidded across this median, and hit another car head on, we had two fatalities within 3 hours in this section.

That concludes my presentation on the beltway.

Mr. W. MAY. Mr. O'Hara, I want to thank you for a most beneficial presentation.

Mr. HOWARD. Thank you very much, Mr. O'Hara. The chairman is about to return very shortly to the subcommittee, so the subcommittee will be in brief recess, pending the return of the chairman.

(Short recess.)

(Mr. Blatnik resumed the chair.)

Mr. BLATNIK. The subcommittee is reconvened from its brief recess.

We have heard testimony today on the Capital Beltway, officially known as Interstate 495.

Previous to today our investigating subcommittee, the Special Subcommittee on the Federal-Aid Highway Program, has heard testimony pertaining to highway design safety in the Greater New York-New Jersey-Connecticut area, and in the State of Michigan.

Some of the things we heard were appalling, in that they showed conditions where roadside hazards were designed right into the newly completed roads.

But what we found even more appalling was testimony that these conditions are not local in extent, but exist nationwide. Even many of the most recently completed sections of our great Interstate System were found by our staff to contain the same built-in hazards that were found elsewhere.

The unnecessary dangers described thus far in our hearings have been mainly of the roadside hazard type, as demonstrated so clearly and in so many, many categories by our very effective first witness, Mr. Linko. These include such things as improperly installed guardrails, which often are a head-on, spearlike structure that will impale the vehicle and quite often the driver or other occupants of the vehicle.

We have the overdesign. By that I mean the overly strong structures and design of sign supports, consisting of steel pipe mounted on high concrete bases, which will withstand tremendous and violent impact, in many cases demolishing the vehicle and causing fatal injuries to the driver and the occupants.

We have concrete bridge piers and concrete abutments exposed with no guardrail. In many instances the abutment should not be there to begin with. In other instances, where guardrails were installed, they, instead of protecting the motorist, become the first impact point.

There are a whole series of sign structures and light poles and other types of structures along the roadside, adjacent to approaches to bridges or curves, which number as many as five to seven possible impact points, and if you are traveling at 60 to 65 miles an hour along the highway, it would be a matter of merely a fraction of a second in between these impact points, giving the motorist of course abso-