

Mr. CONSTANDY. They are strong enough to hold up the sign?

Mr. WILKES. Yes.

Mr. CONSTANDY. But what we are really concerned with is from the standpoint of being hazards where they are placed and in the form in which they are placed.

Mr. WILKES. I think I would agree with the rest of the members of this panel, that most of these signs could be relocated to provide a more generous lateral clearance, and many of the signs could be eliminated.

Mr. CONSTANDY. I take it your answer then, is "No"?

Mr. WILKES. That is right.

Mr. CONSTANDY. Mr. Huff?

Mr. HUFF. I think the advantage of the breakaway sign has proven itself over and over. I know it has in my State. We have saved many, many lives by the installations we have. Whether it be wood or some other method I think is immaterial. We have not used wood, but we would have no objection to using it.

I might state here that I have thought for sometime the signposts themselves were overdesigned. I know that is argumentative.

I believe there would be some advantage in having them blow over once in a while rather than to build such a strong structure, even though it might break away.

We have begun coming down on the size of those by two methods. We have gotten approval from the Bureau of Public Roads to reduce the wind stresses some—I believe about 80 percent on the ground-mounted signs. On the ground-mounted signs and others, we are bringing it down some more by using high-strength steel. Of course the higher the strength steel, the less protection you need. I have no other comment.

Mr. CONSTANDY. That combined with your breakaway feature?

Mr. HUFF. Yes.

Mr. CONSTANDY. We will hear more on the experience Texas has had with those signs later. Mr. Skeels?

Mr. SKEELS. I cannot help but agree with the other members of the panel on the need for improvement. One item which might bear quite a lot of looking into is a better and safer support for the large overhead bridge type sign. The only solution we have so far is to make the bridge sign longer, to get the support farther away from the traveled way, or to protect the supports with guardrails or some other method.

I am not sure that a breakaway type of support could not be made for these, and perhaps even if one leg were knocked down, the whole bridge would still remain in the air.

I think this is a challenge for the structural people.

The breakaway sign mount, as we have seen here, is so well proven and so well engineered at this point that it certainly should, in my opinion, be made mandatory on all new signs, or accomplish an equivalent result.

I do not really care how it is accomplished, but we certainly have to eliminate the exceedingly strong sign support which in many cases appears to be designed not to be damaged by automobiles.

This would also imply that guardrails around the sign supports could then be eliminated. A breakaway sign or a sign mounted on breakaway post is safer than a sign protected by any type of guardrail I know of.