

not have a sign on the freeway, when it is just one more object you see. The proliferation of signs cannot only damage the motorist's ability to read them all, but adds to the safety problems as well.

Mr. CONSTANDY. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

Mr. RICKER. Could we have Mr. Wilkes' comment on the problems, if any, involved in mounting signs directly on a roadway bridge?

Mr. CONSTANDY. I think it would be very fine.

Mr. Wilkes? So that we understand what the question is: The sign bridges which we have seen in the photographs sometimes appear not too far from a grade separation or other structure. The question is whether those sign messages can be mounted directly on the bridge structure and save the additional hazards of the support of the sign bridge and the cost of the sign bridge. How about that, Mr. Wilkes?

Mr. WILKES. Most of the problems of attaching signs to overhead bridge structure are in the minds of the designers who do not want to clutter up their bridges. I expect this is not a real problem, but it has to be a job of salesmanship to convince responsible people in the highway organizations that this is a desirable goal. Then it just remains to detail the connections, because the sign itself really is an insignificant part of the total load that would go on to the bridge.

It is a matter of detail more than anything else.

Mr. CONSTANDY. You believe, more frequently, they can be mounted on bridges?

Mr. WILKES. Yes; I do. We are encouraging that.

Mr. McEWEN. Mr. Wilkes, does the objection come from the esthetics standpoint? Someone is proud of a rather attractive bridge that he has designed, and he does not want it encumbered by a sign? Do you think this is a factor?

Mr. WILKES. Yes, Mr. Congressman, it definitely is. Bridge designers spend considerable time on trying to develop an esthetically pleasing structure, and then they resist any efforts to place signs on them. As I say, this is case for a little better salesmanship.

Mr. McEWEN. I have been impressed, as I know other members of the committee have, with seeing the massive concrete abutments on many of our bridge structures on Interstate and other high-speed highways, which follow the same pattern of being three- or four-tiered, and quite nicely designed esthetically.

I must confess having passed many of those on our Interstate express highways, traveling 60 to 65 miles an hour, and I don't believe I ever noticed the tiered effect of those concrete abutments until I had the benefit of looking at them in a stationary position here, as shown on the screen to the committee.

I just wonder how many of us are able to appreciate this, traveling at high speeds? We so seldom have an opportunity to notice a really fancy abutment.

Mr. WILKES. I think I will agree with you.

Mr. CONSTANDY. If they stop long enough to notice it, it is apt to be they are dead.

Another comment relative to esthetics of bridges, frequently the sign structure is built in advance of the bridge and I do not mean to impose my own taste on others; I am not a bridge engineer—but they look kind of ugly to me, and frequently you cannot see the bridge for the sign bridge structure.