

have seen here in the last few days, many changes could be made at modest cost on the construction job itself, which would enhance the safety of the motorist.

Mr. CONSTANDY. That is fine. That is a very good statement.

Are you pleased or unsettled—what word would you use to characterize your overall impression?

Mr. WILSON. I think I am deeply concerned about this problem, and I think that, not only to use an old excuse, but I think that the matter of communicating some of the very latest developments to our people in the field who can do the most about it would be most helpful here.

Mr. CONSTANDY. Thank you. Mr. Skeels?

Mr. SKEELS. During these 3½ days of hearings, Mr. Prisk has shown the committee many examples of questionable highway design. I would like to point out that the good features were not emphasized.

Probably 95 percent of the design is excellent. The remaining 5 percent is what we have been seeing.

The deficiencies we have been shown are mainly concerned with details that are safety hazards and indicate to me that the safety of the traveling public has not always been the primary concern of the highway designer. And this neglect has undoubtedly been unintentional.

I do not for a moment believe anyone would accuse the designers of our Interstate System of being unconcerned with the safety of the traveling public. Rather, it is the result of other design pressures, such as cost, terrain problems, drainage problems, esthetics, the necessity used to establish standards and procedures, and the lack of information on this state of the art at the designer's level.

Overriding all of this is the necessity to have the enthusiastic support of top management at both the State and national levels. Without this, the best qualified and most safety motivated design engineer is helpless to put his design engineering in effect. With active top-level encouragement, even a mediocre design engineer using only ordinary commonsense should be able to improve on many of the design and construction deficiencies that we have seen.

I hope these hearings will inspire the agencies responsible for highway design to compete with each other to produce the safest road.

Surely the influence of this committee will go far to achieve this end. The following steps might be considered:

First, that safety design review boards be established at appropriate levels to catch as many deficiencies as possible at the design stage for new highways.

Second, that trained inspection teams check the finished highway for areas in which improvements could be made.

Third, that proven safety designs be immediately adopted by all States, even though they were developed by another State or another agency.

Fourth, that new but unproven designs be evaluated by an unbiased testing agency, and neither be adopted nor rejected on the basis of opinion alone. Most of the designs of which we are critical were thought to be good by somebody.