

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. I notice we have another gentleman from Texas who was supposed to be our first witness today, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. We all know how busy the chairman is and I am sure when we ask for legislation for additional miles, the subcommittee and the full committee will get this first and then we have another hurdle and that will be the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. chairman, in my opening remarks I said last year when hearings were held and debate was heard on the floor of the House on legislation reported by the committee, you remember that this was the additional 200 miles that we had passed the latter part of the last session, I advised the membership at that time that I would give full consideration to any and all requests for an increase in the interstate mileage. Now, this is one of the purposes of these hearings today in particular, and at this time when we have our colleagues here who wish to testify on the matter. We will of course hear from all who wish to testify at any time and on all points.

At this time we will hear from my good friend and great American, the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the Honorable George H. Mahon of Texas.

Mr. Mahon, the witness chair is yours and you may testify as you wish.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEORGE H. MAHON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. MAHON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. We are glad to have you with us. We need you.

Mr. MAHON. Thank you very much for this glowing introduction.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to appear before the committee and I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the aggressive position which you have taken with respect to the road system of our country.

I realize that all of the requests presented to you cannot be met. Legislation is a matter of compromise and we can only take one step at a time.

Now, I think we must extend the Interstate System. There are those who think we should not. But there are certain areas that have been omitted from the system.

Perhaps the decisions made in the past were then fully justified, but we come to the time when at least a minimum number of additional metropolitan areas just must be added to the Interstate System.

There is a certain imagery involved in the term "interstate." Even cities and metropolitan areas with good road systems, if not designated on the highway map and otherwise recognized as being on the interstate, are at some disadvantage with areas that are on the interstate.

I do not speak of certain cities, certain metropolitan areas which the interstate has bypassed by a relatively few miles. It is understandable that the interstate cannot pass directly through each city. But my hometown of Lubbock, Tex., is the best illustration I can give of areas to which I refer. Lubbock ranks very near the top of the list of the metropolitan areas that are not included in the interstate. It is more than 100 miles from an interstate in any direction.