

Mr. SEACREST. A current question of very great importance to the I-35 problem is the bridge across the river at the point of Sioux City. You would not believe it, gentlemen, but there is only one bridge for this standard metropolitan area, and it is a 60-year-old, and it swivels on a railroad turntable, and it rusts and it jams, and there are times when actually Nebraska and Iowa are completely severed in their intercourse with each other.

Mr. CLAUSEN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. SEACREST. Yes.

Mr. CLAUSEN. It seems we have heard something about that bridge. You had a very vigilant and effective Congressman present it to this committee before.

Mr. DENNEY. Mr. Chairman, that is the bridge that when pulled up in hot weather it swelled so badly that when they let it down it would not fit.

Mr. SEACREST. This is a pleasant joke, too; but there are eight counties in Nebraska with no hospitals, and no medical facilities, and when this bridge does not work, they are absolutely cut off from life and limb protection by the medical facilities in Sioux City, Iowa.

There are traffic counts of about 25,000 cars a day using this bridge, and the projected growth for the area suggests, by the time any interstate extensions would be built, there would be 50,000 cars crossing at this point.

So this area does very much appreciate the interest of your committee on behalf of the Sioux City Bridge crossing the Missouri River.

There is a second bridge problem. Northeast Nebraska has no bridge connecting with Interstate Highway 29. You go 60 miles in South Dakota before there is another bridge. Therefore, when the bridge is out at Sioux City, you are about 90 miles from the bridge the chairman referred to, where they put the Missouri River under the bridge, and Decatur and Aiken, S. Dak.

Now, Interstate 29 carries a tremendous amount of traffic and has a great deal of interest with Nebraska, and yet we have no connection with the two Dakotas at the present time.

I think that Congress, in writing the interstate law, originally said that the idea of a national system of highways was important enough to justify extra Federal participation above 50/50.

I think many of the people who have testified before you have enumerated some equivalency problems that are just as much a part of the national highway problems, and which probably should get favorable consideration for receiving something like the original 90/10 percent allocation.

There are five metropolitan standards, census areas, connected by this proposed route. They are Duluth, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Sioux City, Omaha, Lincoln, and Wichita, and, of course, we go down through Oklahoma City, Fort Worth, Dallas, into Mexico.

These are explosive-growth areas. My own community at Lincoln has grown 33 percent in basically one to two census periods.

As you can see from the small map, in terms of geography, it is a real hardship in the Great Plains that there is no north-south interstate through Nebraska. The only other States are Delaware and Maine that have an equivalency of one interstate problem, and these States basically are oriented and mostly in one direction.