

Mr. DENNEY. It is actually 665 of title 31 of the United States Code.

Mr. BLACKBURN. That is right.

I have received numerous correspondence, both telegrams, telephone calls, letters, and others, from State Highway officials, particularly from my own State, to the effect that the unreliability of the forthcoming of these funds has created tremendous economic hardship upon contractors, particularly smaller contractors.

This, of course, is a long-range program. It was established initially to go on for a 13-year period. We have extended it now for 15 years total.

Contractors have put their economic life on the block, so to speak, in reliance upon this act being carried out as intended. They have signed obligations to make payments on machinery; they have signed contracts to hire skilled engineers and employees to carry out the contracts that they are bidding on. And to suddenly find themselves cut back for a period, for an indefinite time, many of them, it will mean the loss of equipment, the loss of skilled employees, and perhaps financial disaster to them personally.

Mr. DENNEY. Each delay, with these rising spirals of cost, if we delay further the completion of the Interstate and Defense Highway Systems, it is just going to cost us much more in the end.

Mr. BLACKBURN. That will be the inevitable result and I am sure you have had witnesses testify as to the safety factor that results from construction of this system.

Mr. DENNEY. Mr. Blackburn, as one member of this committee, I certainly appreciate your comments. They will, I am sure, be read by the entire committee in executive session.

Mr. BLACKBURN. I hope I have not been redundant or repeated what others have said, but these are matters I wanted to bring to the attention of the committee.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your time and the time you have allotted me.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. Thank you, Congressman.

Our next witness will be Mr. Paul L. Spooner, of the Roadside Business Association.

Mr. Spooner, do you have a statement here you would like to have put in the record?

STATEMENT OF PAUL L. SPOONER, ROADSIDE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION; ACCOMPANIED BY DONALD S. BARBOUR, MEMBER, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. SPOONER. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DENNEY. Mr. Chairman, for the purposes of the record, I have had the pleasure of speaking to the Roadside Business Association in Miami, Fla., just about 2 weeks ago in Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. Spooner is the executive director; is that right?

Mr. SPOONER. Well, actually, Congressman, I carry the title of counsel; but I am afraid that I perform the duties of the executive secretary.

Mr. DENNEY. But they have an outstanding organization. These thousands of members all over the United States are very concerned with what we do here on this bill.