

those built for less than H-15 would be overstressed to where failure might be expected.

Mr. Chairman, we do not want to see through this country another tragedy like we saw in my own State of West Virginia and across the line into Ohio on the Point Pleasant Bridge.

Testimony in the Senate hearings on S. 2658 shows that "518,226 bridges now in use on State highway systems were built prior to 1936 and practically none of them were built for over H-15 loading."

Chairman Jennings Randolph of the Senate committee related that "there are over 1,100 bridges on major river crossings that are over 40 years of age." He expressed concern on this matter in relating to the Silver Bridge failure near Gallipolis, Ohio, "where 46 or 47 people were killed" as the failure of an old and overstressed bridge structure.

Now, on your highway costs and expected service life, AASHO officials have testified that pavements already built on the Interstate System will suffer an expected loss of 25 to 40 percent of their service life if single tandem axle loadings are increased from 18,000 pounds to 32,000 pounds; 20,000 pounds to 34,000 pounds. This would mean that concrete pavements built with a life expectancy of 25 years before any major reconstruction would be necessary will last only 15 to 18 years and with increased maintenance to be borne solely by the States. AASHO estimates, so I am informed, that the cost of resurfacing, in a 10-year period under the proposed increased axle weights at an additional \$1 million. No estimate was made for the additional amounts necessary in future construction but it has to be substantial.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I do present this recommendation for your wise consideration for the reasons just mentioned.

I might add that I have just been advised this morning, as a matter of fact, that the permissive legislation providing for greater width for the trailers, including double bottom, would, I understand, for a tractor and two trailers, fail in the legislatures in the States of North Carolina and Virginia this year. This measure was defeated in the legislature of my own State of West Virginia in 1967.

Just before concluding, Mr. Chairman, I should like to compliment—although I did not have the privilege of being a member of the subcommittee, I should like to highly compliment this committee for writing the original Interstate Highway System Act of 1956. In my judgment it was one of the most complicated domestic pieces of legislation and most beneficial that has ever been enacted by the U.S. Congress and I do highly commend the committee for working together on both sides of the aisle to bring this Interstate System into being.

In conclusion, it is my suggestion that the sizes and weights of trucks not be increased until after our highways are adequately designed and under contract for construction in order to reduce hazardous driving conditions.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I am grateful to be here. I would be happy to attempt to answer any questions that may be proposed.