

Mr. SCHWENGEL. I would like to make a general statement first, Mr. Chairman, and point out I, with many of you, served on the committee when we brought into being what will become, if it is not already, the greatest highway system that any country has in this world.

Mr. KEE. You are absolutely right.

Mr. SCHWENGEL. When we get this Interstate System completed, we will find that this will be one of the greatest assets we have.

Mr. KEE. It will, sir.

Mr. SCHWENGEL. Because it will add to the system distribution we call free enterprise of America, strengthen, upgrade it. The final result is benefits to the people.

Mr. KEE. That is correct.

Mr. SCHWENGEL. We will get more distribution, higher quality of products. We are improving it every year. It is helping the trucking industry immensely.

I want to pay a special tribute to them, because they are an example of what free enterprise will do, as any aspect of our business community; they have found ways and means to meet the challenge.

Their testimony shows they have increased from 10,000 to 300,000—maybe it is now even more than that—miles per tire. They have reduced cost of transporting by developing motor systems that are much more efficient than we have in our automobiles that we drive normally on the highway. I am glad they benefit, profits come to them. This is all to the good.

Now I am glad you come before this committee with the statement made this way showing evidence that you used to show why you are concerned about safety. I think this is a very valid point; this committee should never lose sight of that.

There is another point—you touched on this, but you did not necessarily stress it—that is, the question of care of the highway. With the system we have, we load the maintenance of all the highways on the States and when we do this, we want to be sure we have the right kind of rules that will aid and abet them, not increase their costs and their responsibility, which we might do if we are not very careful in the way we legislate, authorities we give.

I have a special interest because I can testify to a bridge that caved in in Muscatine, Iowa. No one lost their lives, but the weight was certainly a factor in that bridge caving in.

We know heavy weights on these crossings of these bridges can make a difference; that is eloquent testimony.

Now we are going to have to spend \$5 or \$6 million to build a new bridge. That is authorized and underway. A bill has to clear this committee before this bridge can become a finality in this area.

Now, because this weight-width-length question is so important, I think we ought to take plenty of time. We must have all the facts.

Mr. KEE. True.

Mr. SCHWENGEL. We will know the answers to the problems this will present.

As other witnesses come along, I have some questions I will present that will be designed to bring out the facts that we need to know, the basis on which we pass very, very important judgment.