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ALABAMA ROAD BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED WITH
AMERICAN ROAD BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

May 1st, 1934

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Mr. R. H. Walker,
Athens, Ala.

Dear Mr. Walker:

We beg of you to wire or write your Congressman and Senators in Washington, to support the CARTWRIGHT BILL (H.R.8781) calling for \$400,000,000 for highway construction and to support any measure for additional federal funds for PWA work.

At this time, the only money received in Alabama, from the PWA funds has been for highway construction, and this money has not only contributed in helping those men who were unemployed, but has given dollar value in the form of roads.

Only in a few cases will our laws in Alabama permit local political subdivisions to borrow from the PWA for the so called self-liquidating projects and unless a substantial road program is passed, then Alabama will be without federal funds for construction work of any nature.

We believe Congress is going to pass some form of a bill for construction, this bill may be known under most any name or it may be in the form of a DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATION BILL, but regardless of it's name, we are asking you to write your Representatives in Congress to support any measure for road and PWA construction, and to see that an amount equal to \$400,000,000 is "ear-marked" for highways, as well as other amounts for PWA construction.

If you feel a road program in Alabama, has, in a measure, helped your community, won't you give this CARTWRIGHT BILL consideration in your paper, like the two editorials attached hereto, and will you write your Congressman to support this bill? Our time is short and we need your help.

We would like to have you send us a copy of your letter to your Congressman and Senators and also a clipping of any comments you may give this bill in your paper. Our delegation is going to Washington to support a road program and funds for PWA construction and your comments and copy of letter will be placed before those who have the power to act.

We are attaching some FACTS that will prove of interest and if we may supply further information, please write us in care of above Association, Box 469, Birmingham.

Yours very truly,

A. G. Underwood
Secretary & Treasurer

CARTWRIGHT BILL

Congress has before it the Cartwright bill appropriating \$400,000,000 for highway construction and \$50,000,000 for public parks. The measure does not include any matching obligation on the part of the states. It merely provides for the allocation of funds, upon the theory that it fits into the administration's recovery program for increasing employment and setting things going toward a normal economic status.

Opposition to this proposal has come from some of the President's advisers. Secretaries Ickes and Perkins and Administrator Hopkins have not thought well of it. One would have imagined that the first named, realizing that but for the people put to work on building roads, the PWA would have very little to show on the score of employment, would be strong for a new highway program. But he obviously feels that the Cartwright proposition is not so attractive a way of spending money as some other scheme nearer to his heart's desire. As for Miss Perkins and Mr. Hopkins, they are thought to be not so daft about public works in general.

Alabamians are permitted to differ with them on this score, at least so far as federal spending on roads is concerned. This State has received precious little of the PWA funds which Mr. Ickes has been distributing. And it is likely to be utterly out in the cold unless it can receive its share of highway expenditures such as Mr. Cartwright is urging.

Alabama is interested not merely on this account, but because its cement, steel, asphalt and tar industries would be crucially hard hit by a cessation of government highway building, which is the very thing to be feared if the Cartwright bill is not enacted. Very clearly, action on this measure may determine whether Alabama is to pull out of the slough of despond as other states will be doing.

Congressman Almon, of Alabama, is credited with having persuaded President Roosevelt last year to throw administration support behind a highway bill. He and Mr. Pou, of North Carolina, are said to have taken the decisive word to the White House. If the President, who seems to be hesitant for another time, is to be brought around to approval of the project, he will have to hear from Southern delegations in Congress.

One gathers that just here the representatives and senators from Alabama should go into action. Too much is involved for this commonwealth not to elicit from its spokesmen in Washington the most earnest and positive endorsement of the Cartwright bill. They should go down the line for it.

EDITORIAL IN ANNISTON STAR, THURSDAY, APRIL 26th, 1934

ALABAMIANS INTERESTED IN THE CARWRIGHT BILL

Since Alabama has received little in the way of Public Works Administration funds and most of the applications now pending are tied up by legal obstacles which perhaps cannot be removed except by a special session of the legislature, all citizens of the State should be vitally interested in the Cartwright bill now before Congress. This measure provides for an appropriation of \$400,000,000 for highway construction and \$50,000,000 for public parks and there are no strings attached to the money. In other words there would be no obligation on the part of the State to match any funds allocated to them and that disposes of one difficulty that Alabama has not been able to overcome in all instances in the past when Federal highway money was available, having lost large sums through failure of the State authorities to provide the means of putting up the State's part.

Alabama's highway system is far from complete and this would seem to be our only chance of getting Federal aid just now. And in addition to the importance of continuing the road construction program and the effects it would have in helping to provide employment, the industrial plants making materials for highway building stand to gain large volumes of business much of the profit from which would be passed on to their employees.

One thing most needed just now to help along the recovery movement is stimulus to capital good industries and an extensive highway building program will go a good way toward providing that stimulus. Anniston industries would share in the benefits just as they have been profiting from the highway work that has been done in the last few years. Moreover, in view of the fact that Alabama seems about to lose out on PWA funds, it appears that our main hope of obtaining any large amount of government money just now lies in the Cartwright bill. Therefore, we agree with The Birmingham Age-Herald in its

statement that the Congressional delegations of Alabama and other southern states should go down the line for this measure and help to bring this Federal money to our section.

Highway construction has been found to be one of the best ways to spend government funds set aside for the relief of unemployment, for out of the money used in this way, all except a small percentage, statistics gathered by experts show, goes for the payment of labor. Some figures compiled recently by T. H. MacDonald, chief of the United States Bureau of Public Roads, for instance, reveal that from every \$1,000 paid out for concrete highways, labor receives \$910.00 leaving only \$90.00 to be expended for other costs. This, of course, includes employes in plants manufacturing materials, railway men and others who share indirectly in the money used for the payment of wages.

The Washington Herald estimated recently that the Federal highway system of the country is only about half completed, despite impressions to the contrary, and stated that, therefore, we need to invest as much money in the next few years as we have spent thus far in beginning the road building program. Regarding the importance of keeping this work going at the present time, The Herald declares that in these days of "blithesome appropriations running into the thousands of millions for 'public works', some of which are of very dubious value, it is beyond comprehension that the highways of the nation should be so relatively disregarded." And this is only a small matter compared with the unpaved highways that should be hard-surfaced as soon as possible to save money for the state in maintenance costs and for motorists who wear out their cars driving over rough roads.

The appropriations in the Cartwright bill are in accord with the administration program for recovery and for increasing employment and it is to be hoped that Mr. Roosevelt can be persuaded to give it his support.

FACTS ON HIGHWAY & PWA LEGISLATION

1. Although the federal emergency highway funds amounted to only 12% of the total PWA allotment, it accounted for 47% of the direct employment in March.
2. Due to the speed all highway departments placed their program underway, this portion of the federal emergency program has accounted for a large percentage of the total PWA employment from the beginning. Federal highway construction furnished 100% of the total PWA employment in August; 100% in September; 80% in October; 60% in November; 57% in December; 54% in January; 53% in February and 47% in March.
3. Alabama has on file with the PWA engineer in Montgomery, 194 projects totaling \$38,896,620.00 but very few of these projects will be approved, due to inability of our laws to meet the requirements of the federal government, unless a special session of the legislature is called to enact new laws.
4. The Cartwright Bill (H.R.8781) which provides \$400,000,000 for highway construction generally, and \$50,000,000 for national forests, parks and etc., was favorably reported by the House Roads Committee on March 21st and it is now awaiting a special rule by the Rules Committee (William B. Bankhead, (Dem.) Alabama, Chairman) to allow it to come before the House for a vote.
5. On the basis of Administration suggestions there is a possibility of introduction of a "Deficiency Appropriation Bill" which would be referred to the House Appropriations Committee (William B. Oliver, (Dem.) Alabama, -ranking member). This Deficiency Bill would undoubtedly call for additional appropriations for public works, and if the legislation takes this turn, we hope our Congressmen and Senators will insist that the committee "ear-mark" the sum of \$400,000,000 and \$50,000,000 for highway construction.
6. Unless the Cartwright Bill is granted a special rule that will give it the "right-of-way" to come to a vote, the Deficiency Appropriation Bill will be the logical one to provide federal funds for highway construction.
7. There is also a movement in both Houses to place a rider on any highway bill to provide that all states adopting further practices to divert gasoline tax and motor license revenue from highways shall preclude themselves from the right to share in federal funds for highways - or that federal funds appropriated for highways may be denied to those states that divert their highway revenues to other purposes and allows their roads to go to wreck and ruin. Some members are asking, "why should states divert state road money to other uses and then expect to receive federal road funds?"
8. The present highway program in Alabama will be advertised and awarded by June 1st and after that time, unless the federal government appropriates funds for a road program, the 22,000 men now employed in Alabama directly and indirectly upon highways will be thrown out of work and back to where they were a year ago.
9. Alabama had \$11,524,133.00 to spend in this present program out of which \$7,644,471.82 has been placed to contract and there still remains \$3,879,661.18 to be spent and that will be accomplished by June 1st.
10. The above are only a few of the facts, why another road program will help Alabama at this time. --- Our laws will not allow us to borrow from the PWA for waterworks, sewers and etc. --- If we don't get another road program, then what will Alabama get? -- We have to pay taxes for others who share more than we do, so why not ask for something that will give us value for dollars spent?