PUBLIC HEARING

on

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 234
(GARDEN STATE PARKWAY - relocation of toll gates)

Before:

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC UTILITIES

Held:
Assembly Chamber
State House
Trenton, New Jersey
August 7, 1958

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman J. Edward Crabiel (Chairman)

Assemblyman Daniel F. Flynn

Assemblyman John J. Wilson

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I N D E X

ASSEMBLYMAN J. EDWARD CRABIEL, (CHAIRMAN): Ladies and Gentlemen: We will call this public hearing to order.

I am Assemblyman Crabiel, Chairman of the Highways, Transportation and Public Utilities Committee of the Assembly.

This public hearing is in reference to Assembly Bill No. 234, introduced by Assemblyman Lynch of Essex County.

Before we commence, I would like to ask if everyone here, who intends to speak either for or against the proposed bill, has registered in these yellow papers here. If you haven't, I would like you to come up at this time and do that.

Mr. Wilson, Assemblyman from Union County, has just come in and is sitting beside me. He is a member of the Highways Committee.

As I call on you to speak, I would like you to come down front and sit in this chair and talk into this microphone so that our Secretary can get the proper records for this hearing. I might say that we will hear from those who favor the bill, first, and then we will hear those who oppose the bill. I will then give each and everyone who has spoken a chance to speak again, later, if you care to refute or rebut anything that anyone else has said.

Mr. Flynn, will you please come down here. This is Assemblyman Flynn of Essex County, who is also a member of the Highways Committee.

I might also say that I delayed the hearing, and you have been very nice to wait, because of the fact that Mr. Tonti, Executive Director of the Highway Authority had not arrived. I just received a call from him to proceed, that he would be here.

I would like to call as the first speaker, Assemblyman Richard A. Lynch of Essex County, who is sponsor of the bill. Mr. Lynch.

ASSEMBLYMAN RICHARD A. LYNCH: First, I would like to thank the Committee Chairman, Ed Crabiel, and Assemblymen Wilson and Flynn for being here. They are members of the Highways Committee. This is a vital bill. It is vital to the safety and convenience of the motorists of a large part of one of the largest counties in the State, Essex County. Directly concerned are the communities of Belleville, Bloomfield and Nutley, but this too has an effect on motorists living in the northern end of Glen Ridge, as well as Upper Montclair, and even Cedar Grove.

Now, here today to testify in behalf of this bill are members of the Chamber of Commerce and Labor, some of the town officials of towns I mentioned previously, - Mayor Scott of Bloomfield will not be here today, he's tied up in another very important meeting but we have two of the Councilmen from that town - we have Chief of Police Hess, we have Supervisor Sheets of Essex County, Bill Litvany from the Parkway Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, we have Joel Jacobson and Joe Puzo from 447, and other officials who can go into detail to present the viewpoint of those favoring the bill.

I would like to outline the purpose of the bill. This bill is designed to alleviate, by dispersal, a serious traffic situation menacing the safety of those traveling on the Garden State Parkway and on Bloomfield Avenue, and other streets in this section of Essex County.

Although Chief Hess will go into details on the traffic county, I would like to mention that 25,000 vehicles leave and

enter the Parkway every single day at the Bloomfield Avenue Ramp. These ramps were opened on March 17th, 1955, and we just have the latest list of accidents and injuries which total 75 accidents and 50 injuries that have occurred at this Bloomfield Avenue Ramp.

Now, with this bill, what the Assembly wants to do is to use the present ramps which exist at Hoover Avenue and Watchung Avenue, north and south bound, to permit the motorists who desire to leave the Parkway at Hoover Avenue and Watchung Avenue to do so. And this will have the effect of spreading the 25,000 cars, which presently use the Bloomfield Avenue Ramp, over two other arteries, spread it over three arteries in total.

Now, the question may be asked as to why we are so persistent in this bill. Naturally, it is because of the accidents and the injuries but further, more than this, it's a breach of faith, in our opinion, on the part of those responsible for the Garden State Parkway, because when this idea was first projected, in 1951 and 1952, spokesmen from the administration here in Trenton came to Essex County and in order to secure a favorable "yes" vote in support of the Garden State Parkway referendum, which was on the ballot in November, they promised different civic groups and different organizations in Bloomfield that the Parkway would be toll-free from the Passaic to the Union County border. As a result of these commitments made to the citizens of Essex, they went to the polls in November and voted 149,979 in favor of the Garden State Parkway, while 56,567 opposed. One of the main reasons was because these four towns - Bloomfield, Nutley, East Orange and Irvington - lost approximately $5 million in personal and real ratables because it was necessary - it went right through

a populous section of the county - not through a lot of cornfields but right through the heart of these communities. I don't know the exact count but hundreds of houses were knocked down or moved to other locations, with this loss of ratables. And also for the use of the Oraton Parkway for which the County was paid.

But we feel, on the basis of these commitments, which were made by responsible persons from the State House here in Trenton, that these commitments should be kept.

After this favorable vote, however, the law was enacted here at the State House providing, not the Union border or the Passaic County border but Springfield Avenue and Belleville Avenue, Bloomfield, as the toll limits. But then again, instead of providing an exit for northbound motorists to get off at Belleville Avenue, and an entrance for southbound motorists to get on at Belleville Avenue, no such ramps were provided; instead the Parkway set up what we term a "trap" a fifth of a mile north of Belleville Avenue to trap these motorists into paying this extra toll.

Now, here's a sketch which I have. I will not go into this at this time but it will explain that here (indicating) is Belleville Avenue - no exit ramp has been provided and no entrance ramp, southbound, - but a fifth of a mile, a short distance beyond, this 25¢ toll trap has been erected. Now, what we simply are asking here is a half mile beyond that - a little less than a half mile beyond that, that the motorists be permitted to leave the Parkway there; and a mile and a half further north, at Watchung Avenue, the same way. I will submit this as a sketch of what we propose.

(Sketch received and marked Exhibit 1)

Now, to add insult to injury, when it came to fixing the amount of the tolls, in Essex County we're paying approximately 3¢ a mile - it's 25¢ perhaps for 9 miles - 8 and some tenths miles - in Essex County, which adds up to about 3¢ a mile that we're paying in Essex County. But if you go south - I just went to Wildwood on my vacation and I traveled 17 miles or 24 miles along the Parkway for the same 25¢ - so in a southerly direction for perhaps 150 miles of that Parkway they're collecting a penny a mile. This is a further injustice to the motorists of Essex County.

Now, they say they have provided marginal roads. Now, Chief Hess will go into detail, I feel, on just how bad these marginal roads are, but they are real narrow, winding roads in our part of the County up here and if someone throws a beer can or a rock or something gets on these marginal roads it is necessary for a car to veer out. It's a very dangerous situation.

Furthermore, when Bloomfield High School plays games, for the safety of those attending the games, it is necessary to shut these marginal roads just prior to and after the games, while the crowds are leaving the stadium.

The people in Essex County, as the Parkway Authority must surely know, are pretty angry at them and they are angry for justifiable reasons, in my opinion, because they feel that they have not been treated fairly, in fact, very unjustly.

Now, what this bill proposes is, that the extreme right-hand lane of the Parkway, going north and south, be toll-free for those desiring to leave the Parkway at Hoover Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue. A bill was introduced here, last year, and

it proposed that the Parkway - that the toll trap or the toll plaza be moved to the Passaic border. The Parkway Authorities objected at that time on the basis that it would cost a half million dollars to move that plaza and the building. Incidentally, I think that's a ridiculously high figure. But, nevertheless, they said it would be a half million dollars to do that. Now, this bill will circumvent that objection by providing these extreme right-hand lanes.

In order to stop the motorists who desire to go further north from swinging back on the highway after they've used the toll-free lane, it has been suggested by Nutley and Bloomfield officials that a fence or stanchions with a cable or some kind of wickets or cones erected there so that the people do not come back on the Parkway.

Now, as to the revenue, a spokesman for the Parkway may stand up and say they are unable to do this because it would jeopardize the financial setup, that they do not have the revenue. I think testimony will be submitted here today which will show that, on account of the hookup of the New York Throughway and the popularity because more people are learning about the Garden State Parkway, there will be additional riders and I think the figures will show that even as of today the toll collections and the money realized from concessionaires along the Parkway have exceeded the original estimates. Furthermore, with the automatic collection machine replacing the manual collectors, the men who formerly collected, this should be a saving. I have some figures which show that on each dollar collected - 1955 it took 8.2¢ to collect a dollar, in 1956 it was 5.7, October, 1957 it was 4.8. And I figure that even some more economies, with prudent judgment, may be effected in that direction.

Now, one more thing. This is a picture from yesterday's Ledger and it will give the Committee an idea of just how badly things are congested at that point. It's a real bottleneck. I would like to submit this as an exhibit, too. It's a picture from one of the newspapers in North Jersey showing how bad the traffic congestion is at that point.

(Received and marked Exhibit 2)

Now, as we stated before, there have been 75 accidents and 50 injuries at this point. And I hope the Parkway Authority is not waiting until there is a fatal accident at that spot and then have us come in here and plead, God forbid, that some people have been killed because of what I believe is a lack of sympathy and the realistic approach in understanding this problem by the Director and the staff and the Authority on the Garden State Parkway. It's a real death-trap, in my opinion. I think they know how Bloomfield and Nutley and these other communities feel about this situation. I feel this is a feasible plan, a realistic one. It will eliminate a bottleneck at Bloomfield Avenue. It will provide safe and convenient riding on there without this death-trap. In fact, I think what is happening now, on account of the situation at Bloomfield, the Parkway Authority itself will actually strangle the Parkway if this thing gets any worse than it is today.

One more thing. We hear so much about the obligations to the bondholders. I, too, realize that we have an obligation to those who invested money in this but I think we have a higher priority to provide a safe parkway for these people so that the motorists using that parkway will know that they do not run the possibility of becoming injured or involved in a serious

accident.

That is all I care to say at this time but I do appeal to the Committee to give us full consideration on this and I believe we have a good case. And in the interest of safety to the motorists who use this Parkway, I think A-234 should be passed.

Since I've gotten up on my feet, I notice that Mayor Isadore Padula from Belleville has come here to attend this hearing, indicating the interest of that community, too, in this bill.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Thank you, Mr. Lynch. Do any of the members of this Committee have any questions to ask Mr. Lynch?

If not, I will call on Mr. William M. Litvany, representing the Chamber of Commerce of Bloomfield. I also understand that he is a former member of the House of Assembly from Essex County.

WILLIAM M. LITVANY: Thank you. I believe that our Assemblyman has done an excellent job in his presentation seeking support of the bill. The Chamber of Commerce Parkway Committee continues to support his efforts and also feels that a resolution that was presented and passed at the last meeting should be read into this record.

It goes a little further. About a year ago there was some talk about relocation of the toll booth to eliminate this congestion but I believe Assemblyman Lynch's bill gives a much quicker solution and surely tears away a lot of the roadblocks which were presented at that time with a survey which cost many thousands of dollars to complete and which the Authority felt proved their point that they couldn't possibly move toll booths. But I think Assemblyman Lynch's solution on this is a quick way to reduce traffic hazards and

possible fatalities in Bloomfield. The Chamber's Committee also would like to give support to a commuter rate as an alternative in this matter. We feel, and we have checked back in the records and feel that a commuter rate could be established practically overnight. In fact, I believe that the Authority probably has such a plan in moth balls, as the Port Authority did some years ago, and could place it in operation almost within 24 hours if they so desired. And we urge it. The Chamber of Commerce Committee feels that it is a quick solution and if the bondholders have any criticism, they couldn't go too far because it wasn't reducing income too greatly.

There are many toll highways today all over the country that have commuter rates and they even go one step further - when traffic during non-rush periods drops to a certain level they even have extended commuter rates. And I think the Authority certainly should look into this immediately and solve this problem for Bloomfield. Bloomfield, after all, was the first to give the green light to the Garden State Parkway. They lost over $3 million in ratables in order to do it. We feel that Bloomfield should have the consideration that it deserves.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Just one moment, Mr. Litvany, to clarify my thinking on this bill, I think Mr. Lynch inferred and you seemed to second his motion that this does not mean moving toll booths. Now, as I read this bill it says to take out the toll booths and change them from Belleville Avenue to Watchung Avenue. Now, certainly they either have to be relocated or the Authority is going to lose the complete revenue from the tolls

that are now coming in at the existing toll booths. Now, am I right in reading this or --

MR. LITVANY: I'm sorry. I might have confused you on that. I did say that about a year ago there was some talk and, in fact, surveys were made to move those toll booths further up to the Passaic line. But since that time, with the introduction of this bill, it's either the bill as an operation or a commuter rate.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, just to clarify my thinking again there is no mention in this bill of a commuter rate.

MR. LITVANY: That's right.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: So, if this bill were passed there would be no commuter rate. Number two, the bill changes one word which changes the location of the distance whereby tolls are collected and they change the word from Belleville to Watchung. So I'm almost certain that the intent, -- perhaps not the intent but if this bill were passed in its present form it would mean putting a toll booth north of Watchung instead of north of Belleville.

MR. LITVANY: Well, the only reason I injected the commuter rate is the fact that we do support this bill but, as an alternative which can be done very quickly, a commuter rate could be established and it doesn't need legislation. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey established a commuter rate without any legislation whatever. It isn't necessary. They have enough leeway to accomplish such a thing.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, do I understand that the Bloomfield objection is to the tolls on the Parkway or is it my understanding that your objection is that it supposedly is creating accidents?

MR. LITVANY: Well, I don't know how familiar you are with the area in Bloomfield that we are referring to and which this bill is attempting to relieve, but the idea is to make it more desirable to not use the Bloomfield Avenue ramp which is where all our congestion is and accidents occur, and create a free lane of two exits, further up, and one happened to be the Belleville Toll area.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Do any other members of the Committee have any questions to ask?

Very well, Mr. Litvany. Thank you.

(Resolution submitted by Mr. Litvany, of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce Parkway Committee, follows.)

To the Director,Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and Treasurer of the Garden State Parkway of the New Jersey Highway Authority:

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

By the Parkway Committee, under authorization of the Officers and Board of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce, this 9th day of April,1957, to urge immediate action to relieve congestion in Bloomfield at the exits of the Garden State Parkway.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That this committee urges continued consideration of the relocation of the Belleville Avenue Toll Area, in the view of reducing the hazardous congestion at the Bloomfield Avenue exit and entrance ramp. Your estimates on the relocation of the Toll Area, have been carefully considered and in view of the findings, the committee still feels that this would be a solution to a very serious problem.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That, if the relocation of these Toll Booths is still found not feasible, that establishment of Commuter Toll Rates be established. Such Commuter rates should make it more reasonable to use the facilities through Bloomfield and thereby reduce the flow of 25,000 cars through the local exits. Books of tickets for such use could be devised, or tokens can be issued for use in the automatic coin collector machines.

Taking into consideration the Authority's engineering reports, based on a seven (7) day week period, the loss of revenue would not reach the estimated figure because of increased traffic flow, even at the reduced toll rate.The rate for commuters would be for the usual Monday to Friday work travel week.

It is also believed that the Authority has enough latitude to make changes for safety reasons that would come within the conditions required by its bonding act.

Parkway Committee
Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce

HAROLD L. KAPLAN, President

WILLIAM M. LITVANY, Chairman

Parking Committee

Henry Sant'Ambrogio
Harold Freilich
Ralph Jones
Bernard Werbel
Diran A. Kurk, Executive Secretary

William Gero
Robert L.Marcotte
George Sterris
Martin Kohlkopf

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Weldon R. Sheets, Supervisor of Essex County.

WELDON R. SHEETS: Chairman Crabiel, Assemblyman Wilson, my own Dan Lynch from Essex, Ladies and Gentlemen: What I have to say here will probably be repetitous of what you have heard not only today but through the years. But I am here to place whatever strength that I can add to Mr. Lynch's bill to relieve the conditions at Bloomfield, not only Bloomfield Avenue which is one of our heaviest traveled arteries - it's a county road there, and I might say it's a reflection against the operation of the Authority to allow such a thing to exist without having done something about it in these years.

I have prepared a few words that I would like time to read this morning. It will probably be repititious of some of the talk that Bill just gave you and Dick, but I will try to get it into the record.

(Prepared statement follows)

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 234

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM HERE TODAY, THE ESSEX COUNTY SUPERVISOR, REPRESENTING MANY OF OUR CITIZENS OF ESSEX COUNTY WHO TRAVEL THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY DAILY.

AT THE OUTSET I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT MANY THOUSANDS OF ESSEX COUNTY CITIZENS AND MYSELF ARE VERY ANXIOUS FOR THE PASSAGE OF ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 234, WHICH WAS INTRODUCED BY ASSEMBLYMAN LYNCH OF ESSEX. THIS BILL, IF ENACTED, WE ARE HOPEFUL WILL HELP CURE THE INEQUITIES THAT HAD BEEN PERPETUATED UPON OUR CITIZENS THESE MANY YEARS. THE TOLL COST IN ESSEX COUNTY IS NOT ONLY THE HIGHEST COST PER MILE IN THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY BUT IT IS EQUAL TO ANY TOLL CHARGE ON ANY ROAD IN THE UNITED STATES. TO TRAVEL OUR GARDEN STATE PARKWAY THROUGH ESSEX COUNTY, THE COST IS 3¢ PER MILE WHICH IS, IN MY ESTIMATION, TOO COSTLY FOR THE CONVENIENCE ENJOYED.

AT THE BLOOMFIELD AVENUE ENTRANCE AND EXIT TO THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY, THE TRAFFIC COUNT HAS SHOWN 25,000 VEHICLES EITHER ENTER OR LEAVE THIS EXIT DAILY. SINCE MARCH 17, 1955 UNTIL JULY 30, 1958 THERE HAS BEEN 75 ACCIDENTS AT THIS POINT WITH 48 OF OUR CITIZENS SUFFERING INJURIES. WITH THE TIE-UPS AND JAMS AT THIS EXIT AND ENTRANCE, IT HAS INCONVENIENCED THE

TRAVELING PUBLIC ON THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY BECAUSE BLOOMFIELD AVENUE, WHICH IS ONE OF OUR COUNTY ROADS, IS TOO HEAVY AN ARTERY TO TAKE THE SEVERE IMPACT OF TRAFFIC DURING THE RUSH HOURS FROM AND ON TO THE PARKWAY.

I AM PLEADING WITH YOU "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN" TODAY, TO RECTIFY THIS AND THE MISTAKE THAT WAS MADE BY THE AUTHORITIES AT THE TIME OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY WHEN THE CITIZENS OF ESSEX COUNTY BELIEVED THAT THE HIGHWAY IN ESSEX COUNTY WOULD BE TOLL-FREE FROM SOUTH OF SPRINGFIELD AVENUE TO NORTH OF BELLEVILE AVENUE. WE DID NOT BELIEVE, AT THAT TIME, THAT THERE WOULD BE A TOLL-GATE PLACED IN BLOOMFIELD AT THE POINT WHERE IT NOW IS ESTABLISHED AND I DO RECOMMEND TO THE ENGINEERS OF THE GARDEN STATE PARKWAY THAT ARRANGEMENTS BE MADE THAT IT WILL BE TOLL-FREE ENTERING AND LEAVING WATCHUNG AVENUE, BLOOMFIELD.

IN CLOSING, I WOULD BE PUTTING IT MILDLY TO SAY THAT OUR CITIZENS IN THE NORTHERN SECTION OF OUR COUNTY HAVE BEEN LET DOWN AND IT HAS PRACTICALLY DESTROYED THE USEFULNESS OF OUR MOST IMPORTANT COUNTY ROAD FACILITIES DURING THE BUSY PARTS OF THE DAY. I HOPE THAT THIS CONFERENCE WILL BRING THE NEEDED RELIEF.

I THANK YOU "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN" FOR THE TIME ALLOCATED TO ME.

Freeholder of Essex County

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Sheets, could you tell me, in your capacity as Supervisor of Essex County, whether there is more congestion at Bloomfield Avenue than at Central Avenue or at Irvington Center, or it is comparable. What is the situation there?

MR. SHEETS: From my experience, - I live right in that neighborhood - Bloomfield Avenue is the worst. I have encountered the Irvington exittand I use Central Avenue everytime I use the Parkway to get on to it, and Bloomfield Avenue I am afraid to use. It is terrifically dangerous. We are very fortunate in our records or our reports that there haven't been deaths over there. I am sure that Chief Hess, who is here today, has placed men over there and we have placed our own county employees over there. It is a terrible situation and Bloomfield is the worst, Mr. Crabiel.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Very well. Mr. Wilson.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Mr. Sheets, you said the county road system in Essex County has been destroyed by this exit not being placed further down and by Bloomfield Avenue getting this deluge of cars. What county roads are you referring to, Bloomfield Avenue itself?

MR. SHEETS: Mr. Wilson, I am referring to the feedway adjacent, running parallel with the Garden State Parkway, that goes over to Nutley and Belleville and, of course, they use that to get up to Glen Ridge, Montclair, the Caldwells, Cedar Grove - that was mentioned by Mr. Lynch previously.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: You mean the road parallel to the highway? right adjacent to it that the Parkway put in?

MR. SHEETS: Yes, the old road bed of the canal was used and it is not adequate to take the impact of this traffic that is

trying to beat the tollgate at Bloomfield. They do beat the toll-gate and it is endangering the lives of our citizens by leaving at Bloomfield, and entering at Bloomfield.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: All right, that will be all Mr. Sheets. Thank you.

Mr. Joseph D. Lintott, Councilman-at-Large from the Town of Bloomfield.

JOSEPH D. LINTOTT: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee: At the outset I would like to extend on behalf of Mayor Scott his apologies for not having been able to attend this conference this morning. Unfortunately, the Mayor was pressed with another very important meeting in connection with the G. E. Plant in Bloomfield, concerning which there has been some talk of transferring it to another part of the Country.

Councilman Steinman and myself appear here this morning, therefore, on behalf of the governing body of the Town of Bloomfield.

With respect to this bill, the officials in the Town of Bloomfield feel that it is of utmost importance that it be passed. Since the advent of the opening of the Garden State Parkway the traffic condition at Bloomfield Avenue, which is a highly congested county thoroughfare, and the exits and entrance to the Parkway at that point have produced a very serious traffic condition resulting in numerous accidents. We feel that the passage of this bill will alleviate those conditions.

Since the opening of the Garden State Parkway, the governing body of the Town of Bloomfield has, from time to time, passed some resolutions on this very subject. I believe that copies of these

resolutions have been forwarded to the Chairman of this Committee. However, I would at this time, if I may, like to read into the record the last two resolutions that were adopted by the Council in Bloomfield relating to this matter.

I have first, a resolution which was adopted by the governing body on December 17, 1956:

"Whereas, in the public interest and in cooperation with efforts of the Bloomfield Safety Council, the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield did, at its regular meeting held on April 2, 1956, adopt a resolution requesting the New Jersey Highway Authority to relieve traffic congestion on the marginal roads between the Bloomfield Avenue exit and Montgomery Street in Bloomfield by the erection and construction of an additional exit ramp from the Garden State Parkway north of Bloomfield Avenue, to promote safety and to guard against death, personal injury and property damage; and

"Whereas, Bloomfield Safety Council has submitted several suggested alternate plans to the New Jersey Highway Authority to reduce the great number of accidents at the intersection of Bloomfield Avenue and the exits from and entrance to the Garden State Parkway, at which point upwards of 12,000 vehicles enter the Garden State Parkway southbound, and upwards of 12,000 vehicles exit from the Garden State Parkway northbound, every 24 hours; and

"Whereas, the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield has been informed that the appeals and requests of the Town Council and the Bloomfield Safety Council in the interest of safety and to guard against death, personal injuries and property damage at said intersection, have been rejected for the reason, in the language of the Executive Director of the New Jersey Highway

Authority, that 'the engineering and construction costs for a new exit cannot be justified because the results are extremely doubtful in terms of creating a permanent solution to the traffic problem at Bloomfield Avenue.'; and

"Whereas, it is the opinion of the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield that consideration for personal safety transcends the consideration of engineering and construction costs for a new exit, and the fiscal policies of the New Jersey Highway Authority; and

"Whereas, there have been 27 accidents at the intersection of the Garden State Parkway ramps and Bloomfield Avenue since January 1, 1956, involving serious personal injuries and extensive property damage; and

"Whereas, said intersection is unquestionably and without doubt the most hazardous intersection in the Town of Bloomfield, demanding immediate action to relieve the presently existing dangerous condition; and

"Whereas, it is the opinion of the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield that a substantial measure of relief can be given to rectify this dangerous and hazardous condition at a minimum risk of financial loss to the New Jersey Highway Authority by the readjustment and relocation of present facilities upon the Garden State Parkway, and the New Jersey Highway Authority should be so advised;

"Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield that the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield request the New Jersey Highway Authority to remove its existing toll booths, north of Belleville Avenue, and to

relocate the same at a point north of the Watchung Avenue interchange in the Town of Bloomfield, all of which may be done within the spirit, meaning and intent of the statute of New Jersey creating the New Jersey Highway Authority, and authorizing the construction of the Garden State Parkway, thereby enabling the northbound traffic to use alternate existing exits - exit number 148 leading to Bloomfield Avenue, exit number 149-A leading to Hoover Avenue, and exit number 151 leading to Watchung Avenue - as a result of which the Garden State Parkway traffic may be dispersed more evenly upon the roads and highways of the Town of Bloomfield, thereby reducing the congestion and concentration of traffic at the intersection of the Garden State Parkway ramps and Bloomfield Avenue; and

"Be it further resolved that certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Highway Authority, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, the State Senator from Essex County, and to the members of the General Assembly from Essex County, requesting that immediate action be taken to correct the dangerous and hazardous condition presently existing at the intersection of the Garden State Parkway ramps and Bloomfield Avenue in the Town of Bloomfield."

That is the resolution, gentlemen, which was adopted in December of 1956. The volume of traffic at the intersection of the Parkway and the Bloomfield entrance and exit ramps has considerably increased since the adoption of that resolution. So, also, has the number of accidents resulting in injuries to persons and property damage increased materially since that date. Reference will be made to those statistics by the Chief of Police, Fred Hess, of the Town of Bloomfield, who is here this morning.

Following the adoption of this resolution, which I have just read, and its submission, there were conferences held between the Authorities of the Town of Bloomfield, the Safety Council, Police Department, Chamber of Commerce officials, and other interested citizens, all of which resulted in nothing being done in any fashion to alleviate the condition. Great stress was laid at the meeting held in April, I believe, of 1957, following the adoption of this resolution, with respect to the tremendous cost involved if the present toll booths, at the so-called Essex Plaza, were removed to a point north of Watchung Avenue and the Parkway.

In the first place, we do not think that we should be measuring the danger to life, the safety of citizens, the damage to property, in dollars and cents. Neither do we feel that any expenditure of money, regardless of who has to make it, and in this case the Garden State Parkway or the New Jersey Highway Authority, should be a deterrent for the change of these toll booths. It was suggested at one of the meetings that if the expense would be as great as indicated by the Highway Authority engineers and representatives, that at least let us experiment with the idea. This could be done very simply without necessarily tearing down the toll booths that are presently in use north of Belleville Avenue. They could be left there, temporarily; they could be left open and temporary toll booths could be easily established north of Watchung Avenue and the Parkway. Let us see whether our thinking on this matter is right. If expense is so important, which I disagree with, there are facilities north of Watchung Avenue presently used as the State Police Barracks, the area at that point is extremely wide, there is a gasoline station on the northbound lane, there is a large Howard

Johnson installation on the southbound lane, there would be absolutely no problem at all to at least experiment. Let us see whether the removal of these toll booths will eliminate or alleviate the horrible condition of traffic at Bloomfield Avenue and the Parkway.

As I say, gentlemen, our appeals, up to and including the appeal made in this resolution, fell upon deaf ears. Consequently again, after the introduction of this bill on which this hearing is being conducted this morning, Assembly No. 234, the officials of the Town of Bloomfield adopted a further resolution which was adopted unanimously at a regular meeting held on July 7, 1958. I should like to read into the record this most recent resolution.

"Whereas, an extremely dangerous traffic condition exists at the entrance and exit ramps of the Garden State Parkway near Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, and at the intersection of the feeder roads of the Parkway with Bloomfield Avenue and with Franklin Street, county roads and public highways in the Town of Bloomfield, and the Town Council of the Town of Bloomfield since early in 1956 has tried by petition, negotiation, resolution, and otherwise, to persuade the New Jersey Highway Authority to undertake adjustments and alterations of the feeder roads and the entrance and exit ramps of Parkway interchange 148-B, and Parkway interchange 148-A, so that the incidents of personal injury and death and property damage would be minimized and legislation for such purpose was sponsored during 1957 by the Town of Bloomfield in the New Jersey Legislature, but to no avail, and there is presently pending in the New Jersey House of Assembly a bill that will accomplish a remedy for the hazardous and dangerous conditions that exist at the aforesaid places, and

such legislation was introduced by the Honorable Richard A. Lynch of Bloomfield, New Jersey, a member of the House of Assembly, and such bill should receive the unanimous support of the people of the Town of Bloomfield, and the residents of surrounding communities, and the municipal officials thereof, and to support argument for the adoption thereof, documentary evidence should be presented by the Town of Bloomfield and other municipalities at the hearing to be held thereon before a Committee of the House of Assembly on August 7, 1958, in Trenton, New Jersey;

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Town of Bloomfield record its unanimous and unequivocal approval of the provisions of Assembly No. 234, presently pending in the House of Assembly of the State of New Jersey, and urges the adoption of said bill at the earliest possible convenient date;

"And be it further resolved, that all previous correspondence records of meetings with the New Jersey Highway Authority, resolutions of the Town Council of Bloomfield, and all other pertinent data recording the continued request for the elimination of the hazardous and dangerous traffic conditions along the feeder roads near Parkway interchange No. 148 and 148-A, and along the feeder roads at the intersection of Bloomfield Avenue and at Franklin Street, Bloomfield, shall be assembled by the Town Clerk and attached to and made a part of this resolution which shall be transmitted to Assemblyman Richard A. Lynch and the Chairman of the Committee in charge of the hearing upon such bill, as evidence of the continued interest and argument of the Town Council for immediate action at the aforesaid points;

"And be it further resolved, that the Town Council urges the residents and governing bodies of other communities to join with the Town of Bloomfield in the sponsorship of Assembly No. 234 before the House of Assembly in New Jersey."

That's the resolution of July 7, 1958, gentlemen. I assume that the Clerk has forwarded the documentary evidence referred to in the resolution. If he has not, we shall certainly see to it that it will be forwarded to you immediately.

It is our feeling, after all of the attempts that we have made with the Highway Authority to get some measure of relief in our Town, that this relief is never going to be granted voluntarily by the Highway Authority. It, therefore, seems that the only alternative is to force the Highway Authority to furnish the relief that we seek by legislation, and we feel that this can be accomplished by Assembly Bill No. 234.

We might say that the advent of the Garden State Parkway through the Town of Bloomfield has been of no particular benefit to the Town, as such. I do not mean to argue that the Garden State Parkway is not a good thing. It is. It's a fine highway. It affords rapid transportation from the northern parts of the State and New York to the other end of the State. However, there has been no particular benefit to the residents of the Town of Bloomfield. As a matter of fact, the construction of this highway has fostered upon us a loss of ratables in excess of some $2 million and, in addition thereto, we have had any number of deadend streets produced in the Town.

It may be argued that the Highway Authority has constructed parallel or feeder roads that should eliminate the necessity of changing these toll booths. This argument is untenable. One

reason being that the feeder road on the south side of the Parkway, north of Montgomery Street, comes to an end and causes you to make a right-angle turn if you were going further north. However, the gist of the whole problem is that a large volume of traffic enters and leaves the Parkway at Bloomfield Avenue, one of the busiest, if not the busiest, county road in Essex County in order to duck the payment of another toll just north of Belleville Avenue.

We feel that, by reason of the hardship that has been visited upon the residents and people of the Town of Bloomfield, and in the interest of attaining some measure of relief from this traffic congestion, and in order to afford some proper remedy to this matter, in lieu of the hardship visited upon us it would not be an undue hardship for this legislation to be adopted and the Highway Authority obliged to act in accordance therewith.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, we earnestly urge the adoption of Assembly Bill No. 234.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Thank you, Mr. Lintott. Will you enter those two resolutions in the record here.

MR. LINTOTT: These are file copies, Mr. Chairman. I think the Clerk has sent copies down to you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, I have a copy received yesterday, and in his letter he says that he will forward the material that you referred to in the resolution at a later date. We don't have it at this moment. But I don't believe we have on record the original resolution of 1956, so if you would have him send that to me. I doubt that I received that, as it said that it went to the Governor and the members of the Essex delegation. I don't think the Highway Committee has that.

MR. LINTOTT: All right. I will have the Clerk send copies of all this material.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Very well. Any questions?

Mr. Joel Jacobson, Executive Vice President of the State CIO Council.

JOEL R. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is Joel R. Jacobson. I am Executive Vice President of the New Jersey State CIO Council, an organization of some 250,000 members in the State of New Jersey. I may state, in the complaints that we receive, it appears to me that for some reason or another every one of these 250,000 CIO members have been complaining about the toll at Watchung Avenue.

I would like to say, as a prefatory statement, that it appears from the evidence already presented at this hearing that this is going to be a history making measure. Not only do we find Republicans speaking in support of a measure introduced by a Democrat but this is one of the rare occasions where the CIO and the Chamber of Commerce are agreeing on a piece of legislation. It's obviously a good bill.

While the bill under consideration deals specifically with the Bloomfield Avenue situation and the Watchung toll, the testimony that I would like to present to the Committee cannot possibly be isolated from the broader picture of the total problem. And I think that problem was stated, very eloquently, by the original framers of the Highway, in their official statement dated July 8, 1953, in which they had this classic statement that I would like to read to you. In expounding the virtues of the Parkway, and obviously in an attempt to sell their bonds, they said this:

"The Parkway will offer mileage savings for certain trips but it also will make possible time savings and driving ease so great that many motorists will gladly pay Parkway tolls even where slight mileage penalties arise from the use of the Parkway."

Then they cite some typical time savings. They go on to add:

"The above table" - indicating the time savings - "is based on average traffic conditions and shows savings of one to nearly three hours for typical round trips. On summer weekends, particularly Sunday afternoons and evenings, the Parkway will offer greater time savings."

It is this original estimate of the original planners and engineers of the Parkway that the Parkway, consisting of four lanes in the shore areas, for instance, would be sufficient to carry anticipated traffic, is the monumental blunder that is plaguing us now. And certainly these original planners and engineers were phenomenal in their miscalculations of both traffic and revenue because, as I recall, the very first week-end the Parkway was opened to its full length use there was bumper-to-bumper traffic, and we have had bumper-to-bumper traffic every summer week-end since. And I speak as Exhibit A, after having sustained a frustrating crawling ride down to the shore this past Saturday morning. And certainly the feverish activity of the Authority in planning it and building third lanes and the immediate obsolescence of these additional lanes is eloquent testimony that the original planners and engineers of the Parkway elevated their miscalculations and their misjudgments to the level of a science.

I think it's a very sad thought for New Jerseyans to contemplate, that the professional planners, upon whom we depend for intelligence and efficiency, were responsible for the construction of an express highway in our State that was obsolete before it was even completed.

Now, the argument has been made that if we ease the collection of tolls at the Watchung toll, either by a free lane to the Hoover and Watchung Avenue exits, or the removal of the toll and relocating it north, would adversely affect revenues, I think cannot be sustained. As a matter of fact, the incapacity of the Parkway Authority to handle the traffic that wants to ride it is probably one of the major reasons why the revenues may, if they are to be affected, possibly be affected. As a matter of fact, I speak from personal experience. I'm a culprit. I can tell the authorities of the Parkway Authority right now that if they want to get down to the shore quicker, don't use your Parkway, take Route 35. You'll stop for a red light occasionally but you can get down much quicker. Or if you want an alternate route, take the Turnpike to Freehold and cut across from Freehold. You will find that you will make much better time than riding the Parkway. And certainly, if more people do this, the revenues of the Parkway are not going to be increased.

Now, I am making these preliminary statements because the same miscalculations in judgment, that led to the creation of a four-lane roadway in the shore areas, for instance, are now responsible for the problem which we have in Bloomfield.

Now, I would like to state very plainly that we are perfectly aware that the original evil here is not the responsibility of the current administrators of the Parkway. We know that perfectly well. But we would like to assert that the operation of the Parkway in an efficient and safe manner, and intelligent manner, today is the responsibility of the Parkway officials.

Now, it is true that the revenues from the Parkway are doing fairly well. In last year, and certainly in this year, the

revenues paid in are exceeding the original estimates of the framers of the Parkway.

Now, this is an economic argument. We don't seem to think that either the relocation or the easing of the toll collections at the Watchung toll is going to adversely affect the total revenue picture. That's an economic argument.

I would like also to introduce a moral argument. I am appalled at what appeared to be the exclusive concern for the Parkway's bondholders. And it appears to me that in a democracy which we all herald as a very wonderful way of life, and of course it is, we should maintain and give evidence to the fact that human values should not be subordinate to property values. And we mince no words in making the flat statement that, in our opinion, the responsibility to serve the health, the serenity and, yes, even the sanity of the Parkway's harassed motorists should transcend any responsibility to a bonded indebtedness.

Now, we urge this Committee, and in turn the Legislature, not to compound the blunders and stupidities of the original framers of the Parkway, of our bumper-to-bumper express highway. While this is not particularly in the measure before you, there are other alternate methods that should be explored, we believe, in your capacity as members of the Highways Committee. Certainly, the system that is in effect in Massachusetts, where if a man buys gasoline within the State and pays a state tax - and we pay a nickel on a gallon here - he should be permitted to use that money to ride free on the state's highways, and they have some sort of a rebate system in Massachusetts where, if you buy the gas in the state and pay your state tax, you get a rebate when

you ride their toll highways.

Mr. Litvany mentioned the question of the commutation ticket. Certainly, this is something we think your Committee should begin to consider, primarily with the impact that the Parkway has upon people who use it to go to work every day. And Mr. Joseph Puzo, who is President of one of our largest CIO unions in the State of New Jersey, will give you some evidence about that in a few moments.

We turn to the Legislature for relief. We must do this for a reason that, frankly, we don't like. And again, let me emphasize, I speak not of personalities, I speak of a principle. Under the Authority that is in effect in the State of New Jersey now, they have complete autonomy to do precisely as they desire with no responsibility to anything other than their consciences. Now, I do not intimate that there is anything wrong. I do make the point, on the basis of principle, it appears to me that an administrative agency should be responsible to some other agency, certainly not exclusively to the conscience of the individual members of the Authority. And we make this same charge, by the way, about the Port of New York Authority and about the Turnpike Authority. It seems to me to be wrong in a democracy for an agency to be created with autonomy that could be labeled more appropriately "wild autonomy." They are responsible to no constituents. There is no one who can force them to do what they want. It is only to the Legislature that we must turn for relief on an issue such as this.

We ask favorable consideration of this measure, either through relocating the toll station north of the Hoover and Watchung Avenue exits, or as an alternate method, to provide a

free lane of traffic to exit and enter both these areas so that the congestion at Bloomfield Avenue may be spread over three exits. We do this as an organization in the State of New Jersey specifically concerned with the health, welfare - and again I emphasize, the sanity of the motorists who use the Parkway.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Any questions?

Mr. Joseph Puzo, President of Local 447, AFL-CIO.

JOSEPH PUZO: Chairman Crabiel, Assemblyman Wilson, Assemblyman Flynn, ladies and gentlemen: I would like to show you the impact that these toll traps have on the individual worker, the individual who goes to and from work in his daily behavior.

In Essex County, and it has been brought to my attention many times by many of the people in our Local which at the present time represents some 2700 people on the active rolls and some 1200 on the unemployed rolls - they have pointed out to us on many occasions that they are forced to use the congested city streets when they were promised in a referendum to build a Garden State Parkway, that it would be toll free and that they would be able to use it without the use of tolls.

And, of course, you've heard much testimony in reference to the toll traps and maybe they didn't bring out that there are a couple of others in Essex County, but that's the subject of another matter at another time. However, on the basis of getting a "yes" vote on the referendum, our people who come from Vailsburg section of Newark, from parts of Irvington, the Oranges, parts of Bloomfield and Nutley, and Belleville, of course, are

the ones mostly affected by this trap. I want to show you, for example, a worker who has a feeling that when he is paying his 25¢ toll in an effort to get off at Watchung Avenue, he feels there is now being placed another form of taxation upon him. For instance, a worker spending 50¢ a day coming to and from work for 5 days a week, it would amount to $2.50 a week. You take this $2.50 a week and break it down into hours and days - the normal work day is 8 hours a day - and the amount of money that he is spending per hour for wages that he is earning is exactly .0625, and in the electrical industry the average wage across the country has been 6¢ an hour. So actually when he is coming to work, to and from, and paying this 25¢, he actually going back a year in wages, he's giving up a little bit more than a year in wages. That's the impact that it has on an individual worker and, believe me, we have people in the Locals who can figure this out and I am sure you gentlemen have received letters from me explaining the feelings and the sentiments of the people in my Local and also the people in the community, in the areas where we have functioned in the community itself.

Now, if you check all negotiations, you will find that it's pretty hard to get this 6¢ an hour. And with these people being set back one year in wages, I know from personal experience, in talking to some of the people, that some of them try to avoid the trap at Belleville Avenue and get off at Bloomfield Avenue and, therefore, come through these congested streets.

Now, we have been asked, not only by our Local but by the other Unions in the area, Federal Tel. & Communications, from the UAW at Walter Kidde, and some of the other plants in the area, which we associate with and have joined Councils with, have

urged - and I know that I can speak with authority here - on behalf of all their people in Essex County who are using the Parkway, who use it in their daily behavior of going to and from work, that we would like everyone, and we feel that it should get unanimous support, that Bill A-234 be supported to its utmost and to its fullest and to avoid these traps in Bloomfield.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIAL: Thank you. Any questions? Very well, Mr. Puzo, thank you.

Mr. Walter Steinmann, Councilman-at-Large from the Town of Bloomfield.

WALTER STEINMANN: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee: I will probably be the briefest speaker you have heard so far. I would like to associate myself with the remarks made by my colleague on the Bloomfield Council, Mr. Lintott, and some of the more technical statements that will be made a little later by our Chief of Police.

I would like to say this, we in Bloomfield, in speaking for the 50,000-plus people who abide in our town, we have lost almost $3 million of ratables by virtue of the Parkway coming into existence; we find our town cut in half by virtue of the Parkway coming into existence; they've attempted to strangle us, trafficwise, and are doing a very good job of it at this point; and we ask for your consideration of the bill, as introduced by Mr. Lynch, and I would like at this point to ask if I may be privileged, after the Parkway people have been heard, to have the opportunity of rebuttal at that time.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: You most certainly can. As I announced

at the beginning of the hearing, after the proponents and opponents have finished I will give both sides a chance to speak and rebut anything that has been said.

MR. STEINMANN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Are there any questions?

I will call on Mayor Isadore Padula, of the Town of Belleville.

ISADORE J. PADULA: Mr. Chairman and other participants in this hearing: My name is Isadore J. Padula. I am the Mayor of the Town of Belleville, and here to urge the Parkway Authorities to provide an exit off the Garden State Parkway which will permit Belleville commuters and other citizens who live in the Belleville-Bloomfield-Nutley area of New Jersey to leave the Parkway at a point convenient to their homes, without having to pay a toll or submit to the nuisance of doubling back to reach their destination.

You will recall that such an exit was to have been a parkway travel convenience when plans were made for the construction of the Garden State Parkway.

Belleville is considered one of the State's most typical "bedroom" municipalities, because most of its residents work elsewhere. Thus the skills of our workers and the resources of our community enrich the general economy of the State, and it is no more than sound business on the part of State Highway officials to provide such travel facilities as will enable Belleville residents to get to and from work as quickly as possible.

The people of Belleville have gone along with the State in all of its highway projects, believing that such construction as took place in Belleville had to be, for the ultimate good of the State.

We have never bedeviled the State authorities in its highway development for any special concessions for Belleville, even though right now the extension of Route 21 through our town has cut off portions of our main thoroughfare and destroyed the scenic beauty of the Passaic River at its most historic point for Belleville. Certainly it has added a destructive traffic load on streets that were not originally designed for massive interstate trailer-trucks, or oil tankers.

The Garden State Parkway, now under discussion, has also added to our traffic problems, since no commercial vehicle of any kind may travel over the Parkway. Belleville has become the parallel route for light and heavy commercial trucking, thereby creating traffic hazards where none existed before.

All of these problems may well be considered the unavoidable bittersweet of progress. I won't argue the point, except to say that Belleville deserves and expects a little of the sweet, by way of a toll-free exit, from the Garden State Parkway, at a point convenient to Belleville commuters.

This is a request recognized as valid by our State Senator, the Honorable Donal C. Fox, and by the officials of Bloomfield, Nutley and Belleville, and by the taxpayers of these municipalities.

Therefore, I most seriously urge the members of the Parkway Authority to also concur with this consensus and give us this exit, as requested, without further delay.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABILE. Thank you, Mayor. Are there any questions?

Mr. Harold L. Kaplan, President of the Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce.

HAROLD L. KAPLAN: Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee: As President of the Chamber of Commerce, I must observe that I am not quite as shocked as Mr. Jacobson was at the Chamber of Commerce associating itself with the CIO. Of course, we never deal in politics and it is certainly nothing unusual for a Chamber of Commerce to associate itself with any organization, where there is salutary legislation involved. And we are not even concerned with the fact that the rights of bondholders are involved because we too, like Mr. Jacobson, feel that the private property of individuals and the lives of individuals are far more important.

But dealing with this legislation, gentlemen, from what I've heard the concern of the State Authority has been solely that of the economic of the problem. I am willing to assume that they too are concerned with the lives and the properties of individuals who are using the highways, as well as those of bondholders. But they seem to be awfully scared of the question of bondholders.

At first we had heard that they had pledged to the bondholders the revenues of this toll plaza, as well as any others. I've searched the legislation and I've searched the brochure put out by the State Highway Authority on several of the bond issues, and I must confess that I just don't find a thing in any of these brochures or in any of the legislation that obligates the Authority to collect revenues at Watchung Avenue.

Now, it's perfectly true that both the legislation and these brochures indicate that all revenues are pledged for the payment of bonds. And, incidentally, I think it's important to observe, in passing, the fact that at least $285 million of these bonds are guaranteed not only by the revenues of the Highway Authority but also by the State of New Jersey, by you and by me.

So that I think we too have a concern in the use of this highway, even though you and I may not be bondholders.

When the legislation and the brochures point out that the revenues are pledged for the payment of the bond that is not to say that there is any pledge made to bondholders that any particular revenue be collected at any particular point. And, as a matter of fact, the law that was enacted to authorize the building of the Garden State Authority expressly provides, in Section 27:12-b-5, that the Highway Authority has the right to fix and revise from time to time and charge and collect tolls or other charges for transit over or use of any project acquired or constructed by it.

Now, it just doesn't add up to me, gentlemen, as a matter of logic that the legislation would give the right to the Authority to revise rates and then to have the Authority come along and say that we can't revise rates because we have pledged tolls at the Essex Plaza, which is the one at Watchung Avenue, to the bondholders. I say again, the revenues that are collected are pledged, but there is no pledge made at any point that I have been able to find, pledging revenues at any point on the Garden State or for any particular toll.

Now, I think there are some other statistics here that are very significant. There are some figures that have been released by the Highway Authority for the first 6 months of 1958, the first six months' operation, and they show total revenues for the first six months of $6,903,000. Now, incidentally, that compares with the first six months of $5,960,675 for the first six months of 1957. The 1957 report - I have a copy here - of

the Garden State Authority shows that 41.38% of the entire year's revenue was collected during the first six months. In other words, roughly 59% of the revenue comes in during the second six months when you have the height of the vacation season. Now, applying that 41.38% of 1957, first six months, to the 1958 financial picture, we find that there should be revenues of approximately $16,683,000 for 1958 as contrasted with $14,338,000 for 1957, and $12,279,000 for 1956.

Gentlemen, that indicates an increase in revenue from 1956 to 1957 of 17%; from 1957 to 1958 of 16%; and the engineers of the Garden State Authority in 1953, in giving its projection of anticipated revenues, the consulting engineering firm of Coverdale & Colpitts estimated increased revenues for the year 1958 at 5% over the preceding year, and from 1959 to 1977 they anticipate a constant annual increment at 5% of 1957. We are now, gentlemen, running 16 to 17% of increased revenues.

I think there's another fallacy that has been pointed up by the argument of the Authority. They are very fearful that by moving this toll gate north of Watchung Avenue that they are going to suffer very appreciably in the loss of revenue. I am almost convinced that they are painting the picture that with the moving of the toll gate it will be tantamount to the removal of the toll gate. Gentlemen, this bill is not intended to eliminate a toll gate someplace north of Bloomfield Avenue. All that is being suggested is that it be moved north of Watchung Avenue so that the traffic that would ordinarily go off at Bloomfield Avenue may be withdrawn at Hoover Avenue or at Watchung Avenue. There is still a very substantial amount of traffic that uses that Garden State Parkway north of Bloomfield Avenue, going on into

Passaic and Bergen Counties and up to the New York Throughway. That traffic will still continue. There is some $600,000 reflected in the reports of the Garden State Authority for revenue collected at the Watchung Avenue toll - at the Essex Plaza toll gate at Watchung Avenue. It can hardly be suggested that this $600,000 is going to be lost, because some of the people would be using the Hoover Avenue and the Watchung Avenue exits.

I am told by the Chief of Police in Bloomfield, who is in the Assembly Chamber this morning, that a survey has been made - and I am sure if he speaks he will confirm these figures - that a survey has been made of the people leaving at Bloomfield Avenue, and their survey of people, mind you, who are not going to Watchung Avenue now, indicates that 67% of them would go on beyond Bloomfield Avenue to get off at either Hoover or Watchung, if it weren't for the toll.

Now, certainly, that is not a loss of revenue, because you are not getting it today. That is not part of that $600,000. They are getting off at Bloomfield Avenue in order to avoid the toll. But, by the same token, we are getting that 67% as part of the traffic load at Bloomfield Avenue, that is causing this horrible accident situation that even the Chamber of Commerce is concerned about.

I say, gentlemen, that an analysis of the economics of this picture does not reflect the problem that the Garden State Authority has painted for us. It is totally consistent with a sound economic policy of the Authority to either move this toll gate or open up a lane, the extreme right lane, for people to use toll-free, where they get off at Hoover Avenue or Watchung Avenue exit.

I think this should be kept in mind in your deliberations. I think it's awfully important to analyze these figures, that the Authority is not the losing proposition. And, incidentally, I might say to you, I just haven't had the opportunity of delving into these figures as to exactly what they mean when they show the profit or the net operating revenues that the statement reflects. There are, you know, all sorts of means that can be - I don't want to use the word "employed" - that are employed accountingwise in determining net profit. There are such matters as depreciation, that you gentlemen are familiar with. I haven't had an opportunity to analyze the figures on that score. But even accepting the figures presented by the Garden State Authority, there is not the economic problem with a 16 and 17% increase in revenues, when their entire picture to their bondholders, if you please, is painted on the basis of a 5 or 6% increase in revenue from year to year.

Gentlemen, I think this bill deserves your very serious consideration. It's important for the health, safety and the welfare of the people of a particular area of this State. There is nothing in the legislation that says that northern New Jersey must support the entire Garden State; and certainly when Bloomfield was approached to consent to this new project for a State highway system, Bloomfield was commended on the fact that it was the first one to go along, and I am even informed that we were assured at the time that there would be no tolls in the town of Bloomfield.

I say it's important, gentlemen, for the State to keep its faith with Bloomfield. It's important for the State to recognize that throughout this entire project Bloomfield has gone along, even to the extent of suffering loss of ratables and destruction in the geography of the Town.

I would like, moreover, as Mr. Steinmann did, to reserve my right, gentlemen, to speak in rebuttal to that which the Garden State Authority may have to say.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Thank you, Mr. Kaplan. One moment before you leave. You talked about the 16% increase in revenue per year in '56-'57 and '58. Would you tell me, is that based on the same length of Parkway?

MR. KAPLAN: Well, now, in 1957, Mr. Chairman, my recollection is that the only thing that wasn't open at the time was the New York Throughway extension. I don't think that was open for the full portion of the year. I am not as completely familiar with the actual traffic and the length of the Garden State as the gentlemen of the Authority are. But certainly in 1958 it is open. I don't think there is any question about that. My recollection of the report, as I read it, indicated that the Throughway was opened sometime during the second half of 1957.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: That's the point I wanted to bring out, that I'm not so certain that it was a 16% increase on the same length of highway.

MR. KAPLAN: No, but the fact of the matter is that there is a 17% increase from '57 over '56 without the Throughway being involved.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, at that time was the northern part of the Parkway open?

MR. KAPLAN: Now, when you say the northern part of the Parkway, are you talking about the part connecting the Throughway?

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Through East Paterson.

MR. KAPLAN: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I'm pretty sure it was.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Any other questions? Very well, thank you, Mr. Kaplan.

Mr. Fred Hess, Chief of Police of the Town of Bloomfield.

FRED HESS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I want to give you some statistics on the accident picture in Bloomfield as a result, of course, of the construction of the Parkway.

Of course, the Bloomfield Avenue intersection is just one of the points of interest to the Town of Bloomfield. But there are others that have been created as a result of the Parkway. And I would like to give you the accident statistics of those various intersections.

We'll take Bloomfield Avenue, for instance, - the total number of accidents at Bloomfield Avenue since the Parkway opened has now reached the total of 75 with 50 people injured.

At Franklin Street and the marginal road, which has been created as the result of the Parkway, since the opening of the Parkway we have had 33 accidents and 10 persons injured.

At Montgomery Street and marginal road, which is another intersection caused by the Parkway, we have had 25 accidents and 15 persons injured.

At Liberty Street and marginal road, we have had 20 accidents and 15 persons injured.

At Belleville Avenue and Canal Highway, which is the beginning of the County road from Belleville Avenue north - the Highway Authority built the access road to Belleville Avenue and the County extended it, which created another intersection at that particular point, - there were 34 accidents and 29 persons injured.

At Hoover Avenue and Canal Highway, which is also another created intersection which was not there before, there were 17 accidents and 12 persons injured.

As a result of this amazing thing, we have had 187 accidents and 119 persons injured as a result of the highway.

Of course, I'm not here to discuss the cost. I'm interested in the welfare and the life and limb and the property of the people that use the Highway, whether they be Bloomfield residents or residents from elsewhere. And I think, if it's a question of money, I think you men in the Legislature and we in law enforcement agencies can appreciate the importance of our job a whole lot more than to realize money when injury, personal injury and property damage is involved.

I have seen some of the results of some of the accidents at those particular intersections, some of the injuries sustained as a result of those accidents.

As Mr. Kaplan has stated to you, 67% of the traffic that leaves the highway at Bloomfield Avenue at the present time would continue across the highway - that is, people who get off the highway at Bloomfield Avenue would continue across the highway with it toll free. And that's an important factor, because 67% of that traffic are potential accidents at one of those intersections going north in Bloomfield.

I think it's awfully important. I know that the Parkway Authority has suggested that we close the exits and the entrances during the rush hours of the Parkway. Well, that would be ridiculous because, after all, we need that. I timed myself from Bloomfield to Irvington on the marginal road. It took me 15 mintues. On the Parkway it took 10 minutes. Now that means

a whole lot to a working man, ten minutes of time, because it actually adds up to approximately 91 hours in the period of a year, which is over two weeks, and that's an awful lot of time for a man to spend home with his folks. And I think those things are very important and they should be considered. And I hope the Legislature will help the Police Department, the Law Enforcement Agencies of the Town of Bloomfield, to cope with this situation and give us some relief because we have learned that by dispersing traffic we eliminate potential accidents. And if we can disperse this traffic to Hoover Avenue and Watchung Avenue, there will be absolutely no question as to the relief and the cutting down of accidents. And I think we have a duty to perform in that sense.

Thank you very, very much, gentlemen.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Chief, just one moment, please, sir.

You stated here that there are accidents at various crossings that perhaps vary from 10 to 15 to 20 a year, or something like that, at these locations, depending on which one you picked out. Could you tell me, - I realize you don't have your records here, but what would you say would be your normal accident rate at any major crossing in Bloomfield, Bloomfield Center or where Grove Street comes through or elsewhere?

MR. HESS: Well, incidentally, the Parkway is much higher, at this particular area, it's much higher than the other statistics. I can produce them for you, if you want them, but I know from my own experience that at the Parkway they are much higher, definitely.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: In relation to that same thing, Chief, Bloomfield Center, I know, is a very confusing area when I go through there and, in fact, there are quite a few accidents there.

I don't want to put you on the spot, but aren't some of these accidents that occur at the Parkway exit at Bloomfield Avenue - they don't all occur at the rush hour. Wouldn't it be possible for some of them to occur very late in the evening and very early in the morning?

MR. HESS: That's true.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: And perhaps they are not due to the Parkway situation at all, but due to recklessness, drunken driving, etc. I mean, everyone has these things along the highway.

MR. HESS: I would say that it is an over-all picture. I would say definitely it is an over-all picture, that they don't happen all during the rush hour, no, absolutely not. They happen at all hours and, therefore, I feel if we could eliminate 67% of that traffic coming down on Bloomfield Avenue we would eliminate that potential, even off-hours. The accidents during the rush hours are not too great because traffic is so terribly heavy that they don't move so terribly fast.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: But the point I'm making is, if we eliminated or moved the 60% of traffic on - you say there's a very small percentage of accidents there anyhow now, we would still have perhaps a higher accident toll at that Parkway area than you would have elsewhere in town, not particularly due to the Highway design but due to the fact that those accidents occur because of many other factors.

MR. HESS: Well, I doubt it very sincerely. I feel that the accident rate will be reduced considerably.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Reduced at that section but at the other exits they'll increase.

MR. HESS: But I don't think it will increase in volume due

to the fact that you do not have the volume of traffic. You see, when you disperse traffic, when you free it up, a person doesn't become frustrated, they may want to beat a light, or what-have-you, and they become frustrated and they want to beat that light and then they go across against the red light and there you have your impact. That's the result of accidents in most cases. But if you disperse traffic and you don't hold a person up too long, he's willing to wait for a traffic light; whereas, if he's held up continuously over a period of time, he figures "Well, I'm going to beat this one," and he goes through the yellow light and that's when you have the other fellow who jumps the light and you have an impact.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: They both get a ticket.

MR. HESS: Definitely. Yes, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Very well, Chief. Thank you, sir. Are there any others who care to speak in favor of this bill at this time?

ASSEMBLYMAN LYNCH: Ed, the Mayor of Nutley, Commissioners Anderson and Lucci could not make it here today but we have another gentleman here to speak.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Would you give your full name, please?

HARRY C. PAXTON: Chairman Crabiel and members of the Committee, I am Harry C. Paxton, I am Superintendent of Public Works of the Town of Nutley. I am appearing here this morning on behalf of the Mayor and the other members of the Council.

At this particular time, for the record, I would like to say that the members of the Council and the people of Nutley are in full accord with Bill No. 234. They hope that it will receive the support of the Assembly and that the bill will be passed.

As you all know, and has been said before, the Town is quite concerned about this added fee of 25¢ riding from the Hoover Avenue booths to Watchung Avenue, and anything that will alleviate this condition, the townspeople of Nutley are in full accord of.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Any questions? Very well, Mr. Paxton.

Mr. Lynch.

ASSEMBLYMAN LYNCH: Attending the session here this morning from Montclair - he's just here as an observer - is Robert F. Edwards, Town Planner of the Town of Montclair.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: If there are no further speakers in favor of the bill, we will recess until 1:15 sharp and at that time we will hear from the opponents of the bill.

We stand recessed.

(Recess for lunch)

AFTERNOON SESSION

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: The afternoon session will come to order. Speaking against the bill will be D. Louis Tonti, Executive Director of the Garden State Parkway Authority. Mr. Tonti.

D. LOUIS TONTI: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the Commissioners of the New Jersey Highway Authority join the staff in thanking you, Mr. Chairman, and your Committee, for giving us an opportunity to express before your body the views and the expressions of our Consulting Engineers with respect to the issue at hand.

Perhaps by way of introduction, we should review briefly the background to the creation of this Authority. During the 1930s and 1940s the increasing traffic congestion had pointed up the need for a modern north-south express highway, the entire length of New Jersey.

With the post-war resurgence of automobile production and additional millions of vehicles on the road, by 1945 it became clear that the traffic situation had reached the proportion of a crisis. In that year, the New Jersey Legislature enacted a bill providing for the construction of such a highway by the State Highway Department. Vast and forward-looking in its conception, that project, known as the Route 4 Parkway Project, was foredoomed, as far as its speedy realization was concerned, by the difficulties of acquiring sufficient fund through tax purposes to build this express highway.

Because of its dependence upon ordinary tax rate appropriations of the Highway Department, the construction of the Route 4 Parkway limped along at the average rate of about three

and a third miles per year, for about six years, between 1946 and 1952.

It was estimated that it would require 40 years for the completion of the Garden State Parkway in accordance with that rate of progress, which means, gentlemen, that as far as the Garden State Parkway, as we enjoy it today, under that method would not have been available to the people of this State and this Nation until 1992. Moreover, the expenditure of $8 million per year of Highway funds on the Route 4 Project at the same time depleted the amount of money available for much needed projects throughout the 21 counties of this State.

Former Governor Driscoll, realizing and recognizing the desperate need for this Parkway, pinpointed the problem and its solution in his Fifth Annual Message to the Legislature on January 8, 1952. He said, in part, "There is an urgent need for additional parkways, freeways and turnpikes to carry the commerce of our State and Nation, to permit our citizens more easily to travel back and forth between their homes and businesses, for recreation, and equally important, to achieve greater highway safety. I recommend that there be created within the State Highway Department an Authority to finish the Garden State Parkway promptly as a revenue financed facility." On April 14, therefore, the then Governor Driscoll signed into existence the Act setting up the New Jersey Highway Authority which created the autonomous body within the Highway Department, empowered to construct, operate and maintain the Garden State Parkway as a self-supporting venture. This, of course, removed the tremendous cost of this undertaking from New Jersey taxpayers. It provided that its financing would be accomplished by bonds to be liquidated

out of the revenues derived from tolls charged to the users of the Highway.

This is not dissimilar from the method we used since World War II for buying our homes and our automobiles, for a long time. I know I did, after the War. I bought a home with nothing down and 25 years to pay. Well that, of course, incurs an obligation to a lending institution to pay that mortgage. The people of New Jersey did a similar thing. They bought a great highway project, called the Garden State Parkway, with nothing down, so far as the taxpayer was concerned, and 35 years to pay as far as the user of this facility was concerned. In November of 1952 the voters of New Jersey approved the referendum by pledging the State guarantee to the issue of $285 million of our bonds. At this date, we have $330 million of outstanding bonds.

Putting the credit of the State of New Jersey behind the Garden State Parkway bond issue did not involve the outlay of a single tax dollar. The guarantee remains inoperable except in the event of a default by the Authority to its bondholders. In other words, no part of the cost of the Parkway will be borne by the taxpayer unless revenue from tolls should become insufficient to meet the liquidation obligation of the bonds.

We believe that the municipal officials and the people concerned in supporting the Lynch bill are undoubtedly very sincere in seeking for their citizens in their localities certain benefits with respect to the free use of the Garden State Parkway. We have no argument with that. We would like to be in the position of giving more free samples of a ride on the Garden State Parkway, than we do now. We really have no bitter argument with anyone in

the municipalities of Essex County concerning this problem. As we see it, we have a very deep and binding obligation to the people of New Jersey in discharging our responsibilities with respect to a state-wide project which goes way beyond the boundaries of Bloomfield or Nutley or Belleville, - yes, beyond the boundaries of Essex County. And the implications with respect to this bill and with respect to the other counties of this State are an important part of the issue we wish to present today.

We have been seriously concerned about the problem of free travel in Essex County for several years, because it goes to the very heart of operating this hugh project in a manner to keep our promise - when I say "our promise", I mean the promise of our predecessors and people in public office in 1952 - to keep the promise to all taxpayers in New Jersey that never will they have to reach into their pockets to support this facility which is going to be operated strictly from revenues received on the facility by the users of the facility. We promised, at a recent conference in Essex County, that we would have our Consultant Engineers go into a study of the Parkway in Essex County in greater detail and, while the study is not completed, a preliminary report, which is dated August 1, and I will gladly supply the Committee a copy of this report today, - each member of your Committee, Mr. Chairman, - this report does give enough of the data assembled so far which I am sure will be of interest to the Committee.

The basic purpose of this survey was to provide the origins and destination of Parkway traffic, together with related information on intersecting highways, to permit a sound evaluation

of the various proposals for alleviation of this traffic congestion.

The field surveys that were undertaken, many people in Essex County are aware of because we had thousands of motorists stopped during certain days earlier this year, in order to ask and pose 12 questions, the answers to which were tabulated on punch cards and completely analyzed on IBM machines before the Consultant-Engineering firm of Parson, Brinckerhoff, Hall & Macdonald prepared this report.

In addition to the surveys actually made in the field, on the Parkway, a telephone survey was conducted in order to double-check the figures. And the Engineers, as you will see in this report, that will be placed in evidence - the telephone survey confirmed the findings of the broader survey conducted in the field.

I am not going to read the entire report but, for the purposes of today's hearing, extract therefrom the interesting data which is relevant to the discussion before your Committee.

The findings indicate that in this Essex County free section - which is marked on this diagram on this board in back of the Committee - the green painted roadways, based on a scale of one inch for 4,000 cars, indicates those cars going through Essex County which pay a toll. The red marking, using the same scale, indicates the cars going through Essex County which do not pay a toll. The broader the line, the greater the number of cars. And this diagram merely reflects what happens during the peak hour of operation of the Parkway in Essex County. In numbers, it is indicated that the highest density of traffic during a peak hour in Essex County appears just below,

just south of Central Avenue, northbound, - just south of Central Avenue, northbound; where the percentage of free traffic, out of the total volume of traffic, is 36%. And at that moment, 3,843 cars are moving on three lanes, three express lanes. As the engineers stated it:

"Between Interchange 144A and Interchange 145" - which is the point I mentioned, just south of Central Avenue, northbound - "the highest traffic volume on the Parkway is found. As indicated in the preceding tabulation, peak-hour traffic was 3,843 vehicles and 24 hour traffic was 38,366 vehicles on the northbound roadway."

"The Parkway in Essex County has a speed limit" - and I'm reading further from the report, - "of 60 miles per hour, which is less that the design speed. This speed is safe and comfortable for 1,200 vehicles per lane per hour with consideration to the many closely spaced entrances and exits. At present, the number of vehicles at peak hours exceeds 3,900 per hour for one roadway, or 1,300 vehicles per lane per hour." We have already exceeded the comfortable margin of 1,200 vehicles per lane, per hour, by 100 per lane, per hour. "Speed, therefore, drops to 45 to 50 miles per hour with slower speeds made frequently necessary in the vicinity of the major exits. At these locations, traffic backs up on the Parkway, leaving two lanes or less for through traffic. The Parkway in Essex County is therefore operating at or over its practical capacity at peak traffic periods every work day in the year.

"With the anticipated increases that must occur in the volumes of toll-paying traffic, it is estimated that in about two years traffic volumes will reach 1,500 per lane during peak periods. This volume represents the maximum possible capacity, but driving

speed will be reduced to 30 to 35 miles per hour, with increased congestion at the exits depending on the proportion of total traffic using them. Driving under such conditions will not be pleasant and the necessary growth at the Union and Essex Toll Plazas will be restricted."

Something here should be said about the origin of the free section in Essex County. We heard it mentioned this morning that the free section in Essex was in exchange for the Oraton Parkway. We are not here to argue the equity of the arrangement that was made in 1953 with respect to this free section but, I think, in order to understand the problem in its complete context, you should know what we have learned from our files, because all of our present Commissioners and most of our staff were not here when that design and decision was made.

The Oraton Parkway was a four-lane highway. In some areas there were dual roadways with park development in the median strip. Each traffic lane was approximately ten feet or less in width and, because Oraton Parkway was a surface street, it was constructed with intersections at grade, with traffic at many intersections controlled by traffic lights. The resulting congestion at peak hours slowed the movement of traffic and reduced the capacity of the Oraton Parkway. As a matter of fact, according to figures gained from Essex County and the State Highway Department, approximately 14,000 vehicles daily were carried by the Oraton Parkway in its highest volume section in 1953. Oraton Parkway is not included in these exhibits but I believe we have a map - one of the old maps where we superimpose the Oraton Parkway on the existing Garden State Parkway in Essex County. And if Mr. Walker will just stretch that out so we can all see it - maybe up

the aisle - then we can see it very clearly, we just have to see the color.

Now, the red line (referring to map) on that map indicates the old Oraton Parkway which was given in exchange for the free section on the Garden State Parkway. Note the free section on the Garden State Parkway - that's marked in green, and is approximately 5.7 miles in length, and in design embraces 10 lanes of roadway, six lanes are express lanes and four lanes are the so-called "service roads" that were mentioned repeatedly this morning - 5.7 miles long, the free section of the Garden State Parkway, - to replace the red line, which is the old Oraton Parkway, a 4 lane highway, only 2.7 miles in length, and carried only 14,000 vehicles at its peak on its best day in 1953.

The Essex County section of the Garden State Parkway, however, which is 5.7 miles long and cost the New Jersey Highway Authority $50,268,736 to construct, has six express lanes and four local lanes on the service roads. The main roadways are carrying almost 80,000 vehicles per day, of which more than a third, or 30,000 vehicles, are toll free. The Authority is, therefore, providing a highway facility that is now carrying 35,000 daily local trips, while Oraton Parkway carried less than half this amount for half the distance.

There is also a great deal of additional capacity on the service roads which are now there operating along the express lanes of the Parkway.

It should be noted that a significant amount of toll-paying traffic formerly used the Oraton Parkway. The important inference to be drawn from these statistics is that the Oraton Parkway was an obsolete traffic artery long before it was purchased by the

Highway Authority, and if the Parkway and the service roads had not been constructed, utter stagnation of traffic on the east-west, as well as the north-south arteries in Essex County would have resulted. The service roads of the Garden State Parkway alone will carry more traffic longer distances and more effectively than the Oraton Parkway ever did.

However, this is not the entire story, because in the year 1956 the motorists using this free section of the Garden State Parkway received 70,530,000 vehicle miles of free travel; in 1957 this figure jumped to 86,026,000 vehicle miles of free travel in Essex County.

I was somewhat amazed to hear this morning on several occasions this question of 3¢ per mile in Essex County. We're not talking about 3¢ a mile for anyone in Essex County, because the issue before us is with respect to the free traveler who pays zero cents per mile, and the Lynch bill merely wants more people to pay zero cents per mile.

Now remember, that operating 5.7 miles of a $50 million section of an express highway, and giving out as many samples as 86,000,000 vehicle miles, somebody has to pay for maintenance.

What about maintenance, by the way? And, incidentally, Essex County no longer has to pay for maintaining the Oraton Parkway, but the Parkway has to maintain it - 10 lanes of 5.7 miles of highway, super-highway. And what does that mean in terms of cost? In the free section of Essex County, last year, it cost the New Jersey Highway Authority $286,256.54 to cut the grass, to melt the ice, to carry away the snow, to police it, and all the other administrative costs attendant to maintaining a super-highway in a manner that people have become

accustomed to. As a matter of fact, during some of the severe storms they come to the Parkway and use it in greater numbers because it usually is cleared off before some of the other highways.

I also want to place on the record that in this exchange for Oraton Parkway, the Garden State Parkway gave to the Essex County Park Commission, as part of its contractural obligation, $3,005,000.- I never knew why the $5,000 was added on, but it's $3,005,000 for the roadbed of the Oraton Parkway that you saw in red. And I think it's also interesting to place in the record how this money was used - not to provide additional highway facilities in Essex County but, as I understand it, of this $3,005,000, $575,000 was used to pay off some outstanding bonds - a concern for the bondholder; $2,662,000 spent or earmarked, as of this date, for two roller skating rinks and for the recent purchase of 1255 acres of land in the western park of Essex County - I think Caldwell Township and Livingston and Roseland - to be used for park purposes.

This is not in the nature of any criticism. But if anyone is attempting to evaluate whether this was a good bargain for Essex County, I think these facts are indispensable to the evaluation.

Let's go further with the engineering report:

"It has been determined," say the Engineers, "as referred to earlier in this report, that, if the Authority is to successfully meet its obligations, restrictions to the free flow of toll-paying traffic must be anticipated and removed before they cause congestion which would adversely affect revenues."

At this point, I should like to make use of a chart that we placed up to the right, there. If everyone can see this chart, which is marked "Estimates of Toll Revenue and Outstanding Obligations" they will notice four colored lines. This green line, which is the highest one, represents the current estimate of total revenue - ideal estimates, if you will, because the estimates are predicated on no restrictions to the free flow of toll-paying traffic - and the line goes from 1955 all the way to 1987, when the last bonds of the Parkway should be paid off. It takes into account the additional revenues that will accrue to the Garden State Parkway as soon as the present plans of the State Highway Department materialize with respect to some major arteries of transportation which will be constructed east-west in the State of New Jersey; for example, the beneficial effects on the Parkway that will flow from the construction of the Bergen-Passaic Expressway, from the East-West Freeway, from the new Route 22, - they are all reflected in this green line and, therefore, I repeat, represents the estimate of total revenue with no restrictions to the free flow of toll paying traffic which the Parkway will receive through the year 1987.

The yellow line, which is just below it, represents in dollars the minimum obligations of the New Jersey Highway Authority. The dollars and cents of that line will be available to this Committee and anyone else who asks for it. I noticed that some people were looking at some copies of our prospectus on our bond sales and I think, if they will look on page 13, they will find the figures which provide the data for this yellow line. The minimum obligations of the Highway Authority - these obligations, briefly, to maintain and operate the road.

This year, roughly $4 million and increases slightly each year. The interest costs are in there, which this year are about $9,648,000. And also included are the amortization costs to pay off bonds, which begin next year. Next year, the first time, we set aside money to pay off on principal to the tune of $1,051,000 for the year 1959, which will be payable January 1, 1960. And each year thereafter, that $1,051,000 figure increases by almost a half million dollars each year. That's the yellow line - obligations. And, conceivably, when we are all paid off, there are no obligations, it drops down, except to maintain - somebody is going to maintain it.

The blue line represents the estimate of revenues, made in 1956 by Coverdale & Colpitts, which does not have the benefit of the beneficial effects of all the new highways that I spoke about previously.

But now, gentlemen, the red line. The red line is the total estimate based on the report that I am reading from, and which will be available to the Committee, - the total estimates of income to the Authority with consideration of the effect of restrictions to the free flow of toll-paying traffic. I want to point out that such restrictions or congestions to the free flow of toll-paying traffic occurs, according to the engineers, most severely in Essex County but also in other parts of the State. And I will quote that section of the report later. But the interesting thing here is that the red line, which is estimates, and the yellow line, which is obligations, cross at a point about 1964.

We'll have occasion to refer to this chart more frequently as we go on with our presentation.

The analysis made in this report, and as indicated by that chart, indicates that the revenues have been and will be progressively affected by the lack of roadway capacity on the Garden State Parkway.

Remember that continuous records of the hourly volumes of traffic in each direction, at each toll plaza, were maintained by the Authority. We have statistical recorders which measure the volume of traffic each hour of every day through every toll plaza, in each direction, and those tapes have been studied in great detail and made available to this Consulting Engineering firm.

"The curve representative of the obligations of the Authority is crossed by the revenue curve during 1964. This indicates that at about that time the Authority will be unable to meet its obligations unless the restrictions are removed."

"The worst restricted area now and in the future is the free section in Essex County between the Union and Essex Toll Plazas; the next in order of magnitude is from the Raritan Toll Plaza to the Union Toll Plaze, including the state-owned section in Union and Middlesex Counties."

Let me go back to that statement once more, so that I can elaborate on it. The Engineers say: "This indicates that at about that time, 1964, the Authority will be unable to meet its obligations unless the restrictions are removed."

The existing statute, which will be found in Chapter 12, concerning the New Jersey Highway Authority, has many parts which, unfortunately, the average citizen of New Jersey is not acquainted with, and I respectfully submit that some of the speakers this morning were not familiar with it either.

I listened, with some concern, to the statement that this Authority is overly concerned with bondholders. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It seems to me that the greatest concern in the discharge of our responsibility, in administrating this Authority, is the concern for every taxpayer in the State of New Jersey. And the reasons for this concern are eloquently stated in the statute, which is now on the books - Chapter 17, page 95, approved April 14, 1952, which reads as follows:

> "Guaranty made under this act," the New Jersey Highway Authority Act, "of any bond of the Authority shall make the State unconditionally liable for the payment, when due, of the principal of and interest on the bond so guaranteed."

Then this goes on and tells you how the money will be collected in order to make up these deficits which, according to this, will start developing in 1964. It says, under paragraph 5(a):

> "There is hereby appropriated from the receipts of the tax upon sale of motor fuels collected under and by virtue of chapter thirty-nine of Title 54,* * * so much as may be required for such purposes."

So, in other words, through means of additional motor fuels taxes we will have to make up - the people of New Jersey will have to make up the deficits of this Authority.

But, let's look at paragraph b, where it says, and I quote:

> "There shall be assessed, levied and collected in each year in each of the municipalities of the counties of this State a tax on real and personal property upon which municipal taxes are or shall be assessed, levied and collected,"

In other words, gentlemen, this and/or provision is very simple. When these deficits begin to accrue in the New Jersey Highway Authority, by virtue of restrictions, as the Engineers call it, congestion, as I call it, then through motor fuels taxes, through additional property taxes, the people of New Jersey,

many of whom never use the Parkway, will make up our deficit.

Our concern is for the bondholder? Why, of course not. Nobody has to worry about the bondholder. He's fully protected. Nobody should be concerned about him. He's not worried with something like this in the Statute which says that if we don't pay the bondholder each month, his interest, the bondholder just goes to the State of New Jersey. And what does the State of New Jersey do? According to what I just read, he makes every tax collector in every municipality in the State of New Jersey a toll collector, if you will, for the Garden State Parkway, to collect the difference between what we get through our turnstiles and what the bondholder needs in order to pay the obligation that this State has with respect to the borrowing it did in order to enjoy the benefits of this project.

Yes, and I can't escape from saying that I am very much surprised that the eloquent and erudite, scholarly Mr. Jacobson, who told us this morning that he represents 225,000 or 250,000 workers in the State of New Jersey, didn't see that, in order to protect that great body of workers represented by his Union, he should be arguing on our side of the table with respect to this bill before you which will merely serve to accelerate the day when this will happen.

Gentlemen, this will happen irrespective of the Lynch bill. The Lynch bill is not acceptable from our point of view, and from the point of view of the people of New Jersey, because it will merely accelerate earlier the day when those lines will cross, when the red line crosses the yellow line on that chart.

And one more word about the 3¢ per mile. In context, we are not talking about anybody paying anything per mile, but since they brought up the question of 3¢ per mile, that is not, as someone stated this morning, the most expensive part of the Parkway. In Bergen County there are two toll plazas, just 5.7 miles apart and, therefore, the cost there is closer to 8 or 9¢ a mile. And I respectfully submit that probably all those expenses that we have with respect to the maintaining of free sections on the Parkway, with respect to paying off these obligations, must come from somewhere. Perhaps, they come from that so-called 3¢ a mile which someone said was too high. And certainly must come from some of these 9¢ or 8¢ per mile costs in Bergen County and elsewhere, - Passaic County, too, which someone says is too high and, perhaps, may be right.

According to the permanent traffic-counting program of the State Highway Department, the average northbound week-day traffic on the State-owned section, north of the Westfield overpass, was 24,491 vehicles in 1957. That's a peak hour volume of 2,580. Compared to the Essex County free section figures which, as previously stated, were 38,366 in a 24 hour period and 3,843 in a one-hour peak period - you can see that the problem is one-third greater in Essex County at the present time.

The Engineers go on, on page 11, and state further: "This loss of needed growth in toll-paying traffic in Essex County can be attributed directly to the non-toll payers crowding the potential toll payers from the Parkway."

Let me put this in terms of every-day language. Gentlemen,

no one will pay for the privilege of riding on an express highway to end up in a traffic jam in Essex County or anywhere else. As soon as the rider finds that that inconvenience is too expensive with respect to the tolls that he pays, he will leave us. The Parkway, like any other toll road, has no monopoly between two points of travel.

"This condition can and will get progressively worse" say the Engineers, "and, as discussed previously under Capacity, only a 15 per cent increase in traffic during peak hours at South Orange Avenue will make congestion at this location intolerable and will make practically impossible any additional growth in toll-paying traffic."

The Engineers summarize this report as follows:

"This toll-free traffic amounts to considerably more than one-third of the total traffic on the Essex County section of the Parkway. From the many field studies in this critical area of the Parkway during peak hours, it is evident that the volume and the behavior of this toll-free traffic reduces for the toll-paying motorist the available express lanes by approximately 50%.

"It should be noted there are projects nearing the construction stage which are very important to the future traffic and earnings of the Authority."

Those are the ones I mentioned before, the Expressway in Bergen, the Freeway in Essex, and FAI-102 which is relocation of U.S. 22.

"These are major highways which will generate traffic indispensable to the realization of projected growth and, therefore, must interchange with the Garden State Parkway.

"If the restrictions to toll-paying traffic caused by the free traffic in the Essex County section of the Parkway are not removed, the anticipated necessary growth of revenue will not be realized."

Those of us in the Authority who pride ourselves in being associated with an agency of Government which has been applauded nationally for its concern for safety, and the record of the Garden State Parkway speaks eloquently with respect to our concern and our contribution to the question of highway safety, we take the dim view in the suggestions that, perhaps in regard to the problem of Bloomfield Avenue we are not concerned with safety.

We respectfully suggest that when the Chamber of Commerce President indicated that statisticians don't lie - no, that statistics don't lie but statisticians do - I think that's the essence of his reference to the use of figures, - I think we should take a second look at the safety problem at Bloomfield Avenue.

The report submitted to Chief Hess, dated December 12, 1956, was made available to us at a previous conference. And with respect to the accidents that took place at Bloomfield Avenue, it is interesting to note on that report that there were a total of 29 accidents in the year 1956 and 20 injuries, and the thesis embraced by various officials, including the Chamber of Commerce President, is that the condition of congestion at Bloomfield Avenue caused by the Parkway, - and I'm quoting them - creates the hazard which gives these figures. Of course, none of them answered clearly, for me, anyway, how many of these accidents would have taken place at that point or in that

area anyway, if the Parkway didn't exist. But, aside from that, on the report which was submitted with that argument that these accidents are related to congestion, they left the hours and the time out that these accidents took place; and it is interesting to note that almost 50% of the accidents that took place at Bloomfield Avenue took place when there was no congestion. There's no congestion at 2:10 A.M., 6 A.M., 1:55 A.M., 5 minutes after midnight, 2:31 A.M. there's no congestion; as a matter of fact, anyone acquainted with traffic and highway safety knows full well that accidents and injuries do not have necessarily a direct relationship to congestion. If anything, there is evidence that indicates, - although I haven't seen or I'm not satisfied that it proves it - but evidence that indicates that congestion makes a particular segment of highway safer, less vehicles are moving or less vehicles are moving swiftly. But I don't want to engage in that kind of an argument, I merely want to put in perspective that the argument of safety has a tinge of hypocracy. All we're looking for here is more free miles on the Parkway. And let's put this in its proper context. And all we're saying, in trying to discharge our job, in administrating a road which owes $330 million, is to quit fooling people into thinking they can have more and more services from government for nothing. Whether it's a free ride on a super-highway or other services of government let's not tell people they can have more and more of it and not pay for it. Someone has to pay for it.

The logical thing would be, in order to remove a lot of these problem, I suppose, - and I haven't heard anybody suggest this, I wish they had, - about the dispersion of traffic, we know about

dispersion of traffic, - move the Essex Toll Plaza south below Bloomfield Avenue, and you will have perfect distribution of traffic. But no one suggested that. No, because for safety, you see, at Bloomfield Avenue, they wanted to move the free section further north. Well, for safety at Bloomfield Avenue, move the toll plaza south and you will accomplish the same thing. We're not suggesting it, don't mistunderstand me. I'm just arguing it now in order to place some of these issues in context, to place them in the proper perspective.

We're not sitting doing our jobs and planning how to be mean to people. Sometimes you hear some of the arguments and you think we enjoy saying no, when a municipality and a municipal official discharging his duty to the best of his ability makes a request of us. We respect them for it. We want them to argue for their communities. But when we have to say no, we don't do it because we like to be mean; we say no with reasons. And these requests, which are now incorporated in this bill, were made of us, administratively, and we said no, not because we dislike anybody in Essex County, we said no because we said, "Gentlemen, here are the facts and figures. We can't do it. As a matter of fact, gentlemen, we can't do what we are doing now, giving out 82,000,000 miles of free samples on the Garden State Parkway in Essex County." And they said, "Oh, you people don't listen. We'll get the whip on you. We'll go to the Legislature and get a bill."

Well, the bill is here. And all we say is, bury the bill but praise it, praise it for bringing out to the people of New Jersey what is really involved here, that every taxpayer, whether he lives in Salem or Sussex County or the tip of Cape

May, or whether he owns no vehicle at all in the family, is liable for our bonds. If there is nothing else the Lynch bill did, it helped us bring out this all-important fact to, not the bondholder, the taxpayer of New Jersey who is involved here. And I never thought I would be in a position to have to work for the New Jersey Highway Authority and come here and defend the taxpayer. I thought other people could do it more eloquently and more effectively. But I have to, because someone has to fill the gap.

Economics? I like the way people read our financial statement. The Chamber of Commerce President is welcome to come down to our office and read all our financial statements. As a matter of fact, any time he wishes to make the appointment, the Comptroller and members of the staff, and I will personally stay there and help him read financial statements of the Garden State Parkway.

Let's take the first six months of 1958. I wrote a note to Mr. Lynch and I will use a copy of that to give me the summary of the figures I gave him. The first six months of this year? Yes, we took in $6,903,000. Everybody seems to forget what it costs us to operate. I'll have to tell you because they didn't tell you this morning.

To maintain, to collect tolls, policing and other costs on the Parkway, cost us $1,999,357 for the same period. So now, we have net operating expenses boiled down to $4,904,000. Now, during this period of the first six months of 1958 we earned $218,611 on interim investments. As we hold the money - before we pay our bills, - instead of keeping it sitting idly in our treasury, we invest it. So, we earned $218,611. That gives us a total net revenue for the first six months of this

so hot. The Chamber of Commerce President told you that the first six months of this year were something like 12% over the first six months of the previous year. Well, they were about 11.6. But someone asked the interesting question as to whether the Parkway was the same size, the same length last year. Well, of course, it wasn't. So, if you take out the two-way feeder road, which was not included in the first six months of 1957, but was this year, the net gain for the first six months of this year over last year comes down to about five and a quarter per cent over last year, - just what the engineers said, Mr. Jacobson, as Mr. Jacobson quoted.

But with all these figures that I gave you with respect to interest, in 1959 a very interesting thing happens. In addition to interest we have to start paying principal. And I mentioned before that in 1959, in addition to everything else we made this year, we have to make an additional $1,051,000, just to pay off on principal. So that means that our income must increase by that amount. But our maintenance costs are going up. The roadway next year - parts of it will be 6 years old. New maintenance costs will come in there. Increased costs for maintaining this highway will come into the picture.

This, gentlemen, is a marginal operation. I am very active with the American Bridge, Tunnel & Turnpike Association and in our Association we have every turnpike and toll road and toll facility in the Country. In the profession, the Garden State Parkway is recognized as the toughest operation in the world, if you will, because it has this strange anomaly, from an engineering point of view, of operating a toll facility which has three sections.

Every time someone reads in the New Jersey papers that the Turnpike of New Jersey has made hugh sums of money in its recent month or current year, for some reason or other they confuse that with the Garden State Parkway. We're two different Authorities, completely. We envy them. I look at the Turnpike traffic and I envy them because I know that every car I see on the Turnpike is paying the toll. When I go along our Parkway, I pick out every third car and I know that he's riding free. And I welcome him and I'm glad to have him, but it's costing us a great deal and it's costing the people of New Jersey - and we want them to know it and to know what it's going to cost them in 1964. That's our only reason for testifying to these facts before you. We're not mad at that free rider. He's doing what comes naturally. He's perfectly legal in using the Parkway for nothing, and we enjoy having him, just as long as the people in New Jersey know what the consequences are. And if we fail in giving those to your Committee we fail in discharging our duties in presenting the facts to the people of New Jersey and, more important, to the Committee of this House which is concerned with the problem.

It seems to me that I can repeat and say that this Committee should bury the Lynch bill, and should insist that the Highway Authority come back, when all its studies are completed this Fall, - and yes, with Essex County officials, - and appear before you and show you, - you should demand from us solutions of this problem. That's what we should be talking about - solutions of this problem without the Lynch bill, which is only going to be aggravated by the Lynch bill. You should make us come back and tell you how to solve it. Because, as elected representatives of the people of New Jersey and every corner of our State, we owe you

an obligation, being familiar with the operations of this Authority, to try to explain and give you the benefit of all our findings in looking toward a solution, along with Essex County. And Essex County is involved too, to a greater extent than it realizes. There are 30,000 vehicles a day using the Parkway free. There are 400,000 vehicles registered in Essex County. So we're talking about making toll-free traffic for one-tenth of the motorists in Essex County.

How do the other nine-tenths feel about it? Are they willing to pay the additional motor fuels taxes and the additional property taxes to make up these deficits for even a minority of people in Essex County? The answer is obvious. I don't think they are.

Well, let's see what other people say about this.

The Newark News, in an editorial of November 11, 1957, almost predicted some of the words that are expressed in this engineering report we received today. The Newark News said:

> "There is a real possibility that the State will be called on to make good, if the gap between net revenue and debt service is not greatly widened by the time the Authority must begin retiring its bonds in 1960.
>
> "Before the general taxpayer has this new burden thrust upon him, the Authority and the Legislature should determine whether the Parkway is not servicing more toll-free traffic than it can afford."

Now, gentlemen, you have a report which says that by 1964, and even earlier, we are servicing more toll-free traffic than we can afford.

The editorial also says:

> "They have also become congested at rush hours, creating serious traffic problems for such municipalities as Irvington and Bloomfield and discouraging use of the Parkway by through traffic."

That's where the tolls are lost. I'll submit this.

(Received in evidence and marked Exhibit No. 3)

The Elizabeth Daily Journal had an expression on this subject when it started to write about the Westchester County Parkways, which also have a problem of toll dodging. The last paragraph of this editorial is interesting:

> "Like our own Garden State Parkway, the Westchester toll roads were designed and established as parkways, ***** on which the toll barriers are roadblocks. * * * * The volume of use has compounded the cost of construction and maintenance * * *."

But the last sentence is the telling one:

"No highway, half toll and half free," said the Elizabeth Daily Journal, "is likely to be solvent at the toll house."

It couldn't be stated more eloquently.

The Passaic Herald News says about the Lynch bill:

> "Fairness demands that either all who use the Parkway should pay tolls or else the road should be made toll free. The State could take over the Parkway by paying out annual sums that would range from $10,000,000 now to $22,600,000 in 1987. In addition there would be costs of maintaining, policing and supervising that would cost about $3,000,000 additional each year. However, such a move isn't likely in a state where revenue is as scarce as it is in New Jersey. And it is doubtful if the voters would approve shifting the cost of the Parkway from the drivers who use it to the general taxpayer.
>
> "Let Essex County be content with its over-generous bargain. It should realize that all other drivers resent seeing Essex residents use without charge a facility for which they must pay toll."

This is somewhat strong. If I had remembered that that was in there, I wouldn't have used it. It's very strong. But it's an expression from outside of Essex County.

Here's a letter to the Editor - I'm going to submit this in evidence - from a resident in Bloomfield, which says:

"I am opposed to the current proposal to * * * divert traffic to Belleville Avenue. It's impractical. It would require the acquisition of additional land. Belleville Avenue is narrow and traffic congestion is presently being encountered in the area of the Parkway. Most of the traffic that would leave the Parkway at Hoover Avenue would be westbound. Both Hoover Avenue and Bay Avenue are presently carrying quite heavy traffic for the nature of these streets. The westerly portion of Hoover Avenue is narrow and winding."

This is very interesting. I am going to submit this and come back to one point about traffic safety.

Sure, they want to take some of the vehicles away from Bloomfield Avenue and divert them to some of these other streets. Accidents are a by-product of vehicles moving. Just by taking some vehicles from Bloomfield Avenue and moving them to another exit or another free exit, the possibility of accidents will just be pushed forward to another place and, therefore, the sum total of accidents might be the same.

I also want to point out that the question that the Chief answered, and said that the Bloomfield Avenue section of the Parkway had more accidents than any other intersection in Bloomfield, may be true, but it's not accurate because he forgot to measure that the number of accidents must be related to the number of vehicles using the intersection. There is no other intersection in Bloomfield that has the vehicle count that Bloomfield Avenue has. In 1956 there was over 960,000 vehicles that used that intersection, and only 29 accidents in that year.

I respectfully submit that that's one of the finest accident records of any intersection I know of, when you relate it to the number of vehicles going through the intersection. And I respectfully submit that we enjoyed with Bloomfield that last year, after the third year of operation of the Parkway

through their City, was the first time that Bloomfield was accorded the prize of the safest city of its size, in its history, and joined the Parkway among award winners for safety. We welcome them as a neighbor in this fight for highway safety.

Gentlemen, in summary, a great deal has been said about promises that were made to Essex County. I wasn't here, many of my staff members weren't, and perhaps you gentlemen don't recall the promises. But, if we can accept that those promises were made and someone failed to incorporate them in the statute, we must also place alongside of it the fact that many other promises were made, not just to the people of Bloomfield and Essex County but to everyone in New Jersey - the promise being that no taxpayer in New Jersey would have to worry about paying for the Garden State Parkway. Yes, that promise was made too.

Therefore, your Committee, Mr. Chairman, must make a choice between these inconsistent promises - the promise to make all of Essex County toll-free or the promise to the people of New Jersey that they would not have to reach into their pockets to pay for our bonds.

It seems to me, with regard to Assembly Bill 234, the choice the Committee and the House must make is very simple. If it means letting down the citizens of a community as against letting down five and a half million citizens of a State, the answer is obvious.

We are pleading the cause here today not so much of the Authority, we're just doing our job in providing you with the facts and figures.- none of us are afraid of being criticized, none of us should be timid in doing our job - but we are here

pleading the case for all those people in New Jersey who co-signed the obligations of this Parkway. And we respectfully ask, Mr. Chairman, that the Committee give us an opportunity, in 30 days or less, to file a brief with respect to all the arguments, with supporting data, that have been presented today.

Just one other point with respect to the bill itself - and the brief can develop it further. We sincerely believe that the bill 234 quotes from the statute that section which carries the very instrumentality of its own destruction. On line 36, page 2, I quote: "In the design, construction and operation of such project, it shall be the duty of the Authority, so far as may be deemed practicable by it and may be permitted by the terms of any agreement by it with the holders of its bonds or notes, to permit the largest possible toll-free use of the project by intracounty or short-haul traffic and provide the largest possible number of points of connection between public highways" etc.,etc., until, it says, to provide the "safe and economical construction and operation of the project on a self-supporting basis."

From all the evidence contained in this report and submitted respectfully to this Committee today, it is indicated that that very part of the statute destroys the validity of the Lynch bill.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Tonti, in your remarks and the use of this chart over here, you indicate that if you have no obstructions on the Parkway it would look like you have sufficient revenue to operate your Parkway, to pay your bonds and probably show some surplus. It also indicates, by your latest report, that if this congestion continues you say that on or about 1964 you are going to be in trouble. With that as a preface, what plan do

you have or does the Highway Authority have to eliminate this congestion, not only in Essex County but wherever it is developing?

MR. TONTI: Mr. Chairman, I made reference to that point and I'm glad you asked about it so I can clarify it further.

A solution to this problem is not easy. It doesn't lend itself to easy solution. Once having provided a free facility any restriction naturally will not be easily accepted by the persons enjoying it most. But, in order to make an intelligent improvement with respect to this congestion problem, our engineers still haven't completed the analyses of all the origins and destinations of the traffic using that section in Essex County. They tell me that most of their data will be completed early this fall. And I remember urging this Committee, and I repeat that now, that this Committee should demand that we come in and present those solutions. Once developed, later on this fall, we will be happy to let the Committee know when all the engineering reports are submitted and completed, and we will be happy to present them for the consideration of this Committee.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, you indicated in your remarks and in your answer to my question here that you were concerned with perhaps restricting the free use of the Parkway, the so-called toll-free riders that are riding now. What's in the back of my mind, and the purpose of my question is that it seems to me that the Parkway, if it can run unobstructed, will have a surplus. Isn't there some method whereby this congestion could be eliminated in these places, in Essex County and others, by the expenditure of money which would be the difference between what you would get under the one plan as against the other. In other words, my question to you is, is there any thought being given to improving

the facility so that those who are now riding free certainly can continue to ride free, but to not say that the only solution is to maybe tighten up and have less free riders?

MR. TONTI: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Someone this morning quoted from my letter to Mayor Scott of Bloomfield, in which I stated that it was inadvisable for the Authority to make an expenditure for a solution which was only short-termed, short lanes. In direct answer to your question, Mr. Chairman, any expenditure of surplus funds of this Authority would be eminently advisable and possible and practical if it was designed to solve this problem. And it seems to me that that would be the intelligent expenditure of funds of the Authority toward the solution of this problem, with improvements and what-not that might be included in these engineering recommendations that will be available this fall.

Yes, the answer is yes, supluses could be dedicated to solving this problem and use it for the improvement of the physical facilities in accordance with the engineers' recommendation.

My denial in that letter, which was quoted this morning, was merely predicated on the fact that the expenditure of money in accordance with the proposal made by Bloomfield only provided a temporary short-term solution. And on those grounds we could not justify the expenditure of capital funds of this Authority.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Wilson, have you any questions?

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Just one. Mr. Tonti, I would like to ask you, what was the cost of this survey, if you know, the engineers' fees for this survey.

MR. TONTI: The engineers' fee on this was $5,125.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: That's the complete charge.

MR. TONTI: Yes, for this survey. I can't be far off, maybe a couple hundred dollars.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Mr. Tonti, after hearing you, I want to congratulate you. You sound like a wonderful administrator and director of the Parkway.

MR. TONTI: Thank you, sir.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: In hearing you talk, most of your talk was of the revenue that's needed to run the Parkway. But I'm here from Essex County and my interest is for the people of Essex County. And if just one of those 29 accidents could be avoided, I'm interested in that.

Now, the statistics that were given this morning and this afternoon differ as to the estimated income of the Parkway over the years that it has been built. I have seen sections of the Parkway added, widening it, and as Mr. Jacobson said, they are immediately filled. I have not noticed two of the worst intersections on the Parkway altered at all, that is the Bloomfield Avenue and the Central Avenue exit in Newark. I believe they've been obsolete since the day they were built.

Now, I can understand that there's a question here about whether people are trying to save a quarter or whether it's safety for the people of their communities. I'm interested in the safety of the people of Essex County. I believe that something should be done about Central Avenue. I believe that something should be done about Bloomfield Avenue. I use this Parkway almost constantly myself. I've seen traffic backed up from Central Avenue to Irvington Center. As I say, I've seen the Parkway widened to get more paying passengers on but I have seen nothing done about widening the exits to get them off. I think that in your report that you are going to come in with

there should be something very definite about these exits and others that are as bad.

But on the whole, I want to congratulate you, Mr. Tonti. I think you are doing a wonderful job for the people of New Jersey.

MR. TONTI: Thank you, Mr. Flynn, but I would like to comment on your remarks.

The problem that you point to, and I'm glad you have, with respect to the obvious frictional movement and congestions that develop at various interchanges when a super-highway meets local roads, is not a problem peculiar to Essex County. As a matter of fact, the embarrassing thing, from a traffic engineering point of view, is that all over the Nation we have these new super-highways being built and you know, Mr. Flynn and members of the Committee, a super-highway never in itself solved a traffic problem, because a motorist has an origin and a destination, neither of which are on the super-highway. It's from somebody's door to somebody else's door. It's from a factory to somebody's door. It's from a commercial house to some other point. So, the great anomaly that exists in the physical facilities of highway transportion in this Nation, as we try to improve them, is that new super-highways come through and intersect with roads which were inadequate as city streets 25 years ago, and never improved.

The problem of highway transportation cannot be solved by one super-highway, one Authority. It can be solved only in concert of all agencies getting together. And I know the Authority is very pleased that in Essex County there is a committee headed, I believe, by Senator Fox, including Mr. Caldwell - no, I think

the Chairman is Mr. Caldwell, the Engineer of Essex County - and including the engineers from all municipalities, who are now tackling this question from the point of view of what improvements are needed all along the line in order to provide that door-to-door delivery.

These unfortunate periods of congestion are the result of the year 1958 super-highway intersecting with a 1915 local street. And as long as you have that, sir, the difficulties will be there. But I understand that under the new highway program, with additional funds not only to inter-state highways but also for secondary roads and municipal roads, these conditions will be progressively improved under the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: I agree with you, Mr. Tonti, that there is a terrific problem there.

We have all heard about the straight line from one spot to another. Now, this doesn't seem like much of an engineering feat and let's see about getting these engineers busy and getting them off this straight line. I think that's our big problem right at this time. If a circle is needed at Central Avenue - you mentioned earlier in the day about having a mortgage, nothing down and 25 years to pay, - on a good payer, a good prospect, the mortgage can sometimes be recast, - perhaps our mortgage could be recast. If it's needed for safety sake, more money needed to be poured into it, for heaven sake let's put more money in. As you say, people realize today you get nothing for nothing. If we want safer facilities, we must pay for them. I'm willing to pay for them but I would like to have them to protect the people of Essex County and every other county in the State of New Jersey.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: That will be all, Mr. Tonti.

In line with my announcement this morning, if those who favor the bill care to have one or two speakers - I don't want to limit the situation but I would like to keep on the facts and I am willing to hear from any who would care to speak in rebuttal or to get a chance to comment on any of the remarks that Mr. Tonti made.

Will you come forward, Mr. Steinmann. Mr. Steinmann is Councilman from Bloomfield.

MR. STEINMANN: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I would be most presumptuous if I thought that without the benefit of a $5,000 report or a cast, - as Mr. deMille has said at times, staring so-and-so and a cast of thousands - doing the research that I could attempt to rebut everything that the Executive Secretary of the Authority has said here.

I do, however, recall in Mr. Tonti's speaking before you today, a number of quotes from various newspapers around the State and I have one here - I have been picking them up in my awkward way from time to time and we have been progressing or rather regressing or standing still, so far as a solution to our problem in Essex is concerned. The one I have is dated June 8, 1958.

Now, we have heard the statement from the Executive Secretary that - well, I guess you can characterize it by saying there just isn't the money to do this, there just isn't the money to let the toll gate be advanced north of Hoover at the Watchung Plaza, and there just isn't the money to do this and do that. We've heard it many times in conferences we've had with the people from the Authority - that is, those of us in Bloomfield who

have been with this problem for a number of years.

Getting back to this newspaper clipping, I would like to read this:

> "The construction of a centralized Garden State Parkway Administration Building, long shelved because of lack of funds, is expected to get under way by the end of this year."

Then skipping down a little bit:

> "Recent savings effected in the construction of the Throughway-Feeder Road Project and increased toll collections have made the necessary funds available."

Going down a little further it states:

> "It is reported that the Parkway Commissioners have allotted $750,000 for the construction of Headquarters."

I might point out that that clipping is dated June 8, 1958. It's from the Newark Sunday News. I just, so far as this is concerned, know what's in the newspaper.

I just wonder about this money. We keep going on and on and on and we've heard it for three or four years now that the Parkway cannot afford it. Well, I think the point has been reached, so far as the Town of Bloomfield is concerned, and adjacent municipalities, where the towns and the people of Essex can't afford the present setup much longer.

You've heard the accident rate. I'm not going into that. That's for technical people more to talk of but one thing that was spoken of here this morning and I did not hear Mr. Tonti refute, or anyone else refute the fact that a survey conducted by the Town of Bloomfield showed that 67% of the people who exit presently at Bloomfield Avenue in Bloomfield, the spot of the most congestion, would, if Hoover Avenue - north of Hoover Avenue an exit were made available - would utilize that area. And that's the intent of this 234, setting up an exit

ramp at the toll plaza at Watchung Avenue.

So far as this maintenance is concerned. I alluded to it very briefly this morning. We in Bloomfield, and a number of other municipalities in the Garden State path when it was projected, went along with it with the impression that generally from the Union County line to the Essex County line it would be toll-free. As I stated, we lost almost $3 million worth of ratables.

Also in a news clipping that came to my attention over the past several months, was a point, - and this is not particularly directed at the Authority but perhaps deserves legislative consideration - is the fact that a highway, a State highway, over in the Palisades area, and the total sum of the bill passed by this Legislature of this year, $47,000 for making payments to municipalitie in the road of that State highway in lieu of taxes. And it's an annual payment to be paid each year.

As I said, that sets some precedent for trying to compensate the municipalities for the loss of ratables they may have had.

So far as this maintenance is concerned, Mr. Tonti alluded to maintenance figures and costs and I have no way of questioning them. I just saw the preliminary report and I'm not sure I could - even if we had some time to study this preliminary report of the consulting engineers. But I do point out, sir, this, - we not only have lost ratables, we not only have this traffic congestion in the towns in Essex, we have a situation where we're doing maintenance too, maintenance that we didn't have to do and weren't doing because this road did not exist prior to the Garden State Parkway coming into operation. I allude to snow plowing, the cutting of grass adjacent to it, the bridges that are presently over the Parkway, and traffic regulations lines

that we have had to go into and put in that we would never have had to put in before if the Parkway did not exist.

Frankly, coming down here before you, I trust and hope and I know the Committee will give the whole program due consideration. I hope the Committee will take into consideration the fact that we do not have the staff that, fortunately, those people on the Highway Authority do have, nor the consulting engineers, nor the money to pay for them, that can come in and justify a particular position. I think this, and I think you gentlemen might agree, that anyone with a particular position, so far as something is concerned, can justify it by those figures. And I think justification has been tossed in by this preliminary report, or at least so far as we have had the opportunity to look at it.

I just think this, the best solution - and we've tried a number, we talked about additional ramps south of Belleville Avenue, within the framework of the present law on the books, and we were told that they were too costly or they were temporary or they wouldn't work - so the next best solution or the only recourse we have open to us is coming here before you as a Committee and asking for your relief. We think the best relief, so far as the Town of Bloomfield is concerned, and the people of Essex are concerned, is in this bill which says, rather than north of Belleville Avenue, the Watchung Avenue interchange.

As to the intent, - I wasn't in the Legislature at the time, I wasn't on the Council in Bloomfield at the time, but the understanding, in having been a citizen of Bloomfield for some 30 years and living some four or five blocks from this when it was being built, we all had interest in it. And the understanding we

had was that there would be exits north of Bloomfield Avenue and south of Belleville Avenue, within the intent of this legislation. Rather what we have as a practical matter is toll-free road now to Bloomfield Avenue and we pay tolls north of Bloomfield Avenue. And how do they get around the wordage in the legislation? By saying "Well, we provide the marginal road, the marginal road is free, therefore we have complied with the letter of the law." I point out this, they're utilizing some of our local streets to make that possible.

I would like to have the opportunity at a later date, on behalf of the Town, if we can get such figures together and I think we probably can, to refute a number of things that have occurred and are presently in this preliminary report, after we have had the opportunity to study it, to come back and at least present them to you and making it a part of the record, so far as the Committee is concerned.

I have something else here. I have been making scattered notes as we went along for the last hour or so that Mr. Tonti was speaking - I'm just wondering this and I would ask the Committee - I wouldn't be so presumptuous as to ask it directly of Mr. Tonti, but I would ask the Committee if they might ask: Is it not so that busses presently traveling in the toll areas south of the Raritan River are receiving a beneficial rate, so far as that travel is concerned, as against passenger vehicles?

I am of the understanding that that is the case south of the Raritan River. And if that is the case, I certainly think that the same type, in theory, operation can be done so far as this Watchung Plaza is concerned because that's in a sense what we are dealing with here.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: We will ask Mr. Tonti to answer your question.

MR. TONTI: I will be very happy to, Mr. Chairman.

The answer is no, there is no beneficial rate. Quite the contrary. There is a discriminatory rate for buses on the Garden State Parkway for two reasons; one, it tends to discourage that type of vehicle from using the Parkway and those that are not discouraged contribute considerably more per vehicle than a passenger car does.

The gentleman also brought up something about the Administration Building, which I failed to mention, and I wasn't prepared to answer it. But I don't need any expert advice on that. The gentleman is not acquainted with our present physical facilities. I merely want to help give him an idea why the decision was made to build an administration building.

We are now using for executive offices the old Roberts Estate which is a dilapidated building which we condemned in buying the right-of-way for the Parkway. In addition to that we are using the offices of the field engineers, which were obsolete five years ago, for some of our engineering staff. That's three miles from the executive offices when it should be right next door. Our traffic engineering section is using a dilapidated cottage in back of this Roberts Estate which is also in bad shape. On a bad rainy day, I wish the gentleman would come in and visit our Parkway offices. We would like to show him why we are building a new administration building. You will find that the water is so bad in the office of the staff Attorney that he has to suspend work, come up and borrow part of my office. But then my office isn't so bad because only

the closets leak.

And then if he sees the budget with respect to this administration building he will find it is about the most frugal, modest administration building that any Authority ever contemplated in the United States.

And the savings which were dedicated to the construction of this building were realized from construction of the Throughway-Feeder Road to the New York State line, and in no way will avoid this Authority spending money for an intelligent solution of the problem we are discussing today.

And, therefore, I believe, for purposes of this bill and this discussion, the question of the administration building is quite irrelevant.

Just one more point. The question of 67% of the traffic leaving at Bloomfield Avenue - I thought it was unnecessary to comment on that because, yes, it's true, 67% of the traffic getting off at Bloomfield Avenue would go further on the Parkway if it was made free further. That's the problem we're complaining about. These people are ducking the toll and it's perfectly legal for them to do it. And they don't prefer to use the marginal roads, which we proved were better than the Oraton Parkway which they replaced. They prefer to use the express lane. They want deluxe service for zero cents a mile. One-tenth of one percent of the motorists in Essex County want zero cents a mile, not what they have now, they're not satisfied with that because they get in a little congestion, you see, at Bloomfield Avenue and they want to extend it further on the deluxe lane, not on the marginal roads because that's a little more inconvenient. As the Chief pointed out, the marginal roads take 15 minutes to

get to Irvington and on the express lanes it takes them ten. He didn't drive very fast because the express lanes take less than that if there's no congestion. It takes 6 minutes without congestion. But obviously he went on the express lanes during the days when free traffic was congesting the lanes a little bit and it took him ten minutes. Next year it will take him 11. By 1964 he can hardly move. And those are the danger signs that affect not just the people of Bloomfield, not just the people in that immediate area of Bloomfield, but affect the people of New Jersey.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Do you care to comment further, Mr. Steinmann?

MR. STEINMANN: Yes, sir, may I very briefly on this three-quarters of a million dollars that was tossed aside so easily by Mr. Tonti.

I think the safety factor, congestion factor, the general inconvenience of the whole situation in Essex County, three-quarters of a million dollars might be very well put toward the end of solving this problem rather than into a general administration building this year, as has been stated in the newspaper and which Mr. Tonti did not deny.

So far as this bus toll is concerned, I would like to have the privilege, at a later date, of submitting a letter in writing to you as to the differentiation between bus tolls at given plazas and other plazas in Essex.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, Mr. Tonti has asked for a 30 day period to file his brief and we certainly will grant the Town of Bloomfield and any others who would care to file a

written statement, to be appended to this hearing, if it's in within 30 days. The Legislature is in recess, so we are prepared to allow you that time if you would so desire it. In the meantime we will have a transcript made of this hearing and append to the hearing any information that you might want to file.

MR. STEINMANN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Wilson has a question.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Mr. Steinmann, you have mentioned many times about the congestion and the safety on this Bloomfield Avenue exit, I wonder if you would, or your Town of Bloomfield would have any objection to moving the toll booth south and thereby allowing this passage but keeping the toll --

MR. STEINMANN: Mr. Wilson, we'd have the same objection that you people down in Union County would have if they put toll booths in the middle of Union County.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Well, we have one in Union County.

MR. STEINMANN: I know you do. You have it at the line but you don't have it the rest of the area.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Well, I have to use it. I have to use the one in Bloomfield too, because most of my relatives live in Glen Ridge.

But, would you have a serious objection, other than the fact that it's a toll booth?

MR. STEINMANN: Well, I think that's one of the serious objections.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: That's your only objection. The safety factor, you feel, would be alleviated if --

MR. STEINMANN: Where would you go off? That's the

problem. You're not solving anything.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: If they wanted to go off at Hoover or Watchung, they could go off. They've already paid their toll.

MR. STEINMANN: Well, where are you moving it? You're just aggravating your problem by moving it back. That's what your suggestion is, isn't it?

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Yes. But where are you moving it when you move it forward? When you're moving it north.

MR. STEINMANN: You're letting 67% of the people, who go off at this exit at Bloomfield Avenue, go off at an exit north of Bloomfield Avenue. Those people are presently riding free. They're going off to the marginal road at that exit. And if you take them up to Hoover Avenue, you have at least taken the remainder 33% - the remainder from the 67% --

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: But if your argument is only safety, then the safety factor should be eliminated.

MR. STEINMANN: I'm not divorcing one factor from the other. I think they all must be lumped together.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: That's my point - the two are tied together, the safety and the money.

MR. STEINMANN: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: All right.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Thank you.

Does anyone else care to speak?

MR. LINTOTT: Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, we've heard a great deal about the financial situation of the Parkway and what we may expect in the future.

I was quite happy this afternoon to hear for the first time remarks by Mr. Tonti that he was not primarily interested in

the bondholders but that he was interested in the taxpayers of the State of New Jersey.

I should like to read into the record a paragraph from a report dated November 13, 1957, made by Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Hall & Macdonald, addressed to Mr. D. Louis Tonti, Executive Director. This related to the situation that we are discussing here today. It relates specifically to congestion on the Parkway. The last paragraph on page 2 of that report reads as follows:

> "At Interchange 148 entering and leaving vehicles greatly restrict the use of the Parkway. South of the exit ramp of Interchange 148 traffic during peak hours backs up on the ramp and Parkway, thus being unable to enter or cross Bloomfield Avenue at a rate sufficient to clear the Parkway. This condition has the effect of reducing the Parkway to two lanes northbound, at this location, and results in decreasing the capacity, speed and safety on the Parkway." This

This Interchange 148 is the interchange at Bloomfield Avenue and the Parkway. The evidence submitted by the engineers indicates that this situation not only causes congestion on Bloomfield Avenue but likewise causes congestion on the Parkway itself. It involves a safety factor, therefore, not only on the streets of the Town of Bloomfield but in the area of the Parkway passing through Bloomfield at that intersection.

Much has been said about the free use of the Parkway, the need for increasing revenues, the danger if revenues are decreased. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, if the toll booths at the Essex Plaza were moved to a point north of Watchung Avenue, the Highway Authority, in my opinion, would suffer no loss of revenues. The fact of the matter is, that the large volume of traffic that enters and leaves the Parkway at Bloomfield Avenue is not paying any tolls at the Essex Plaza at the present time. Therefore, there would be no loss to the Parkway or to the Highway

Authority if this same traffic, going north and south, was permitted to use the Parkway from Watchung Avenue, south.

Further than that, the Chief of Police has reported to you that his survey or origin and destination shows that 67% of those entering and leaving the Parkway at Bloomfield Avenue would continue on if there was not the toll booth where it presently is north of Belleville Avenue. This ties in, I think, with the point that he made on dispersal of traffic. If the figures are correct and if the toll booths were moved to a point north of Watchung Avenue, we could reasonably expect that about 33% of the traffic that leaves at that point now would continue to leave there. The other 67% would leave at Hoover Avenue and, very likely, Watchung Avenue.

I agree with the remarks made by Mr. Flynn here, and as I said earlier today, the element of safety, the prevention of one accident would warrant the relatively small expenditure of money that would be involved in this matter.

We, therefore, again respectfully urge that you recommend the passage of Assembly Bill 234.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Are there any questions?

Mr. Lynch.

ASSEMBLYMAN LYNCH: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I think the Executive Director of the Parkway must have had his tongue in his cheek when he stood before this microphone earlier and made such statements as, in effect, if A-234 were passed it would cause a deficit and turn every tax collector in every community in this State into a toll collector. I'm certain he wasn't sincere or he was just joking when he said that because he knows, with the revenue from the Parkway increased

by 16 or 17% and every indication that it will still go higher, that this will never happen.

How in the world can he make such a ridiculous suggestion - and this is nothing personal, incidentally, - to move the toll plaza south. The only thing that would do - the present pile-up and congestion and bottleneck now at Bloomfield Avenue will wind up in East Orange or Irvington. So that too would be no solution to this thing.

I hope that Mr. Tonti wasn't trying to drive a wedge between the Essex delegation and the residents of Essex County and the other 20 counties because he labored at that for a while, in my opinion, while he stood at this microphone.

I don't think that's contributing anything at all towards solving the problem.

Incidentally, Mr. Tonti did not read all the editorials, and he selected one letter to the Editor, out of hundreds that have been in the papers in North Jersey asking for some relief on this bottleneck. He just selected one letter to the Editor. If it's necessary, we can submit 50 to 100 pointing out that this problem should be solved.

There was mention, too, about this administration building. I, too, spoke to Mr. Tonti over the phone and queried, why is this necessary, why is he concerned about some engineer- there may be some rain and he can't work, but still he's not giving any concern to the possible injuries or possible deaths at the Bloomfield Avenue bottleneck.

Also, I read where some company put in a low bid of $1,112,465 for the new interchange at Route 46 and the Parkway. Now, that

may be a very necessary thing to hook up with these other arteries going east-west, but perhaps the new highway project, which is supposed to go through the Oranges and over the Orange Mountain in through Livingston will take care of some of that problem. But it seems to me that money is available, consulting engineers will be hired for a new administration building, for further interchanges and everything else, but the real problem of the Parkway, as far as we're concerned, is relieving the congestion at Bloomfield and not one thing is done to cure that. In fact, in my opinion, there is an entire lack of sympathy on the part of Mr. Tonti and his associates in this direction.

Now, I read here where the Highway Director has been applauded nationally because of the record for safety as far as the Garden State Parkway is concerned. I think you would be lauded nationally and in Essex County too, to a greater extent and you really would earn this applause if you would really work at it and give some concern to the situation in Bloomfield.

I attended a Town Council meeting in Bloomfield Town Hall. Mr. Tonti was there with Mrs. White, and the same lack of concern that prevailed at that meeting, in my opinion, also is prevalent here today.

I think the attitude of the Director must be changed and more emphasis put on the safety angle, saving lives and property damage, than is presently evidenced.

Now, I would like to ask a question, I'll read from the bill - "and shall not collect tolls on such project at Springfield Avenue, Irvington, or Belleville Avenue, Bloomfield, or at any point between said avenues." Now, I would like to ask the Director, and he can answer it when I'm finished, isn't it a

fact that no exit has been provided at Belleville Avenue, and the fact that no exit has been provided is contrary to the law, or no entrance has been provided there either. And to say that the marginal road is superior, or you can use the marginal road and it is superior to the old Oraton Parkway and the other streets through Bloomfield, is not correct because I timed myself a couple of times from Springfield Avenue to Watchung Avenue and the speed limit on those streets is about 35-40 miles an hour, I believe it's 35, and you encounter 21 traffic lights and it takes 22 minutes. So the old way, through Oraton Parkway and through those streets, was far faster than it is presently.

But I want to say, if the bill provides that no toll be collected between Springfield Avenue and Belleville Avenue, you must admit that the Parkway is wrong in not providing any exit or any entrance at Belleville Avenue. And to say that the marginal road will suffice and do the job is not correct, in my opinion. I feel that this is just a dodge to circumvent the real purpose of this act.

The act also says this: "To permit the largest possible toll-free use of the project by intracounty or short-haul traffic". I would like to repeat that again, for your benefit, Mr. Tonti, it says: "The purpose of this act is to permit the largest possible toll-free use of the project by intracounty - i-n-t-r-a county - or short-haul traffic." This is another purpose of the bill.

Now, the attitude of the Garden State Parkway is that these people who are using the Garden State Parkway are evading the law, evading their responsibility in not paying a toll. It was the purpose of this act, in the first place, to let the

maximum number of people use the Parkway for these short-haul rides within the county. But the question is, does not the act provide that no toll collections be made between Springfield Avenue - I should do this through the Chairman - and Belleville Avenue? And isn't it a fact that even though the act does call for that - when it was enacted in this very Chamber here - that no exit has been provided at Belleville Avenue. And, furthermore, you don't intend to provide one.

Also the second point and the second question is this, Doesn't the act also state that the maximum number of people or the largest possible toll-free use intracounty, was one of the purposes of this bill, and the people who are now using the Parkway without paying a toll, they are entitled to do so because that was one of the original provisions.

And one point which the Director did not touch upon is this, nothing has been said in rebuttal about - isn't it true that representatives of the Parkway did come into Essex County, into Montclair, Glen Ridge and Bloomfield and Nutley and say that the Garden State Parkway would be toll free within our county?

And how do you expect the people in Essex County to have any confidence in the Garden State administration or in the Highway Authority if the pledge, commitment or promise, whatever you want to call it, has not been kept and it appears that you have no intention of keeping this promise?

But the two questions I ask specifically once again - Why has no exit been provided at Bloomfield Avenue? And also, isn't it true that maximum use of the Parkway was one of the intentions? And the third question - and I'll wind up with this - What are you afraid of? You will not collect from this 67%, which

has been mentioned here that now get off at Bloomfield Avenue. And why don't you go along, instead of taking a stiff adamant position and refusing to budge or give any consideration to this problem at all - what is wrong with putting a temporary toll gate - let the present one remain where it is and also the administration building, or that house, whatever it is there, and put some toll collectors just beyond Watchung Avenue and experiment for three months or so and see what the results will be.

I am certain it will surprise the Administrator, the Director and his Associates.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Tonti, would you care to answer Mr. Lynch?

MR. TONTI: First of all, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I resent - and I hope Mr. Lynch didn't mean it - that we are any less sincere in the development of the issue with respect to the Lynch bill than he is. We're discharging our responsibility as we see it, without trying to be heros for anyone, with a clear and unmistakable effort on our part to make it evident to the people of New Jersey that what Mr. Lynch asks for can be done but it costs money to every taxpayer in New Jersey.

From some of the questions he framed rhetorically, he obviously didn't listen carefully to some of the facts and figures with respect to the implication of this free traffic merging with this toll-paying traffic to the detriment of toll-paying traffic, and what that means to everybody in the State of New Jersey who has to pitch in and pay for these bonds.

I want to assure him as clearly as I can that I was not joking, Mr. Lynch, when I said, in the best English at my command, that the inevitable grave result would be, without your

bill, that every taxpayer and every tax collector in every municipality in New Jersey would become a member of our "toll collection staff", because what they would do in essence, under the bill which is now a statute, which you are familiar with, they would have to collect on municipal taxes, under that bill, an increment of taxes to make up the deficit which you saw on that chart will begin to accrue seriously in 1964.

We're not talking about anything mysterious. And I'm getting a little bit tired, Mr. Chairman, about this constant reference to safety. I thought the argument was exploded. We're just as concerned about safety, Mr. Lynch, as you or anyone else concerned about that problem. But the figures provided by the Police Department of Bloomfield belie the fact that this is safety. And the response made by the speaker previous to you, about moving the toll plaza, theoretically, south of Bloomfield Avenue, indicates that what we are talking about here is something pure and simple. Let's put it on the table - you want more free rides for people - lovely. Well, that's nice, if you can do it, but do it only if you can pay the bill. That's all I'm telling the Chairman and his committee today, that this costs money to do these things, to give away free rides on the Parkway. We're giving away many free rides today. I told you how many. We're glad to do it, as long as the people of New Jersey realize the consequence.

What Mr. Lynch intends to do with his bill is to extend the free section so that there are more free rides. A greater volume of free traffic is going to push off more toll-paying traffic, with another consequence that I didn't mention before

and I want to mention it now.

Mr. Chairman, the biggest industry in New Jersey, which Mr. Lynch is familiar with, is the resort industry. It's a billion dollar industry. Read the figures. They're fantastic. They effect the entire economy of this State. Visualize a map of the State of New Jersey. The highly congested urban areas in northern New Jersey now use their purchasing power, come down the Parkway, and spend their moneys in that industry. The effect of this grave problem in Essex County will be felt continuously and in greater proportions as the congestion increases. The effect will be felt by that industry. Why? All these people with the purchasing power, in Bergen and Essex, the northern part of Essex, Passaic County, Rockland County, coming down to New Jersey on the Parkway are going to find that the privilege of using the Parkway and paying for it only to be congested in Essex County by toll-free traffic isn't worth it, and they're going to turn around and spend their purchasing power northward, up the Throughway, the lakes and the other resort industries outside of the State of New Jersey.

What I tried to impress this Committee with, Mr. Lynch, was that the problem which you say is purely circumscribed by the area of Bloomfield Avenue has an economic effect that goes across the State of New Jersey and 21 counties, and I dare say goes to many people in Essex County who never use the Parkway.

And the statement that moving the toll plaza up to the Passaic County line wouldn't cost anything, is a little bit silly. I rather take the opinion of my engineers and the opinion that was expressed here today, because their opinion says that just moving the plaza physically, the cost of construction, water and sewerage facilities, electrical conduits, the considerable

amount of paving necessary, and additional right-of-way, would come to $503,000. That isn't nothing. But more important, moving the toll plazas would cost this Authority, the first year after moving them, $403,000 in loss of tolls, and that would get - according to the engineers and the reports that you quoted from but didn't quote from completely - progressively greater, the loss to the Authority in revenue.

There's nothing magical or mystical about this. These figures are eloquent, but when Mr. Lynch quotes from the bill, I wish he'd finish the sentence because the sentence that Mr. Lynch quoted in the statute ends up as follows: It says that it is the duty of this Authority to do the things that Mr. Lynch quoted, "consistent with safe and efficient use of such project and public highways and safe and economical construction and operation of the project on a self-supporting basis." "Self-supporting basis." That means just one thing. We've got to pay the bills.

I'd love to be able to be in a position to promise things to people for nothing and tell them they don't have to pay the bill. The only difference between Mr. Lynch and the opposition is that he's willing to give things away for nothing and not show how they're to be paid for. And all we're doing to upset him is to show that this is going to cost money. Even without the bill, we're in grave danger; with the bill, we merely make the danger worse. And the bill must be paid by the taxpayers of the State of New Jersey, according to the statute now on the books, either through motor fuels taxes or through property taxes. It's and/or, meaning either one or both, and you cannot escape from that, Mr. Lynch.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Wilson has a question.

ASSEMBLYMAN WILSON: Mr. Tonti, one question please. I realize that there are many economic factors involved, other than the initial cost of moving the plaza, and I don't expect Bloomfield to feel they have to move it because of this question, but if the municipalities involved would underwrite the expense of a half million dollars to move this plaza northward, how would the Parkway Authority feel about a thing like that?

MR. TONTI: It's a very good question, Mr. Wilson, because it helps me put the frame around this picture.

If the municipality gave us the $500,000 to move the plaza and also gave us the difference in what we would lose in tolls, this would not be feasible, because the report that you have before you shows that the problem is not just with this plaza. We can't talk about this particular thing out of context. We've got to talk about the growing problem, developing as a result of increased free-traffic coming in greater volumes on the Parkway and elbowing out, if you will, the toll-paying traffic which is the traffic that pays the bonds. It's as simple as that. And, therefore, if Bloomfield were willing to make that gift, which judging from the smiles on the other side of the aisle is hardly likely, it would not be feasible for this Authority to entertain that proposal. The problem is as grave as that. And this report on close reading, Mr. Chairman, will bear out what I'm saying now.

ASSEMBLYMAN LYNCH: I would just like to say one thing more on this. Now, Mr. Tonti, you still didn't answer the question as to why no exit was provided at Springfield Avenue. But before you answer it, I would like to say that I wish to dispute your contention that motorists from Rockland County and Bergen County

will be discouraged from using the Parkway by this congestion. That will be, if you keep this bottleneck at Bloomfield Avenue. But if you disperse this traffic, these 25,000 cars a day, and let them leave the Parkway orderly at Hoover Avenue and Watchung Avenue, as well as Bloomfield Avenue, you will not have this situation.

Now, one of the gentlemen from Bloomfield - I don't know whether it was Mr. Steinmann or Mr. Lintott - made the suggestion that the $501,000 - which I still say is a ridiculously high figure -- let the present toll trap stay where it is but put some kind of temporary collection booths just north of Watchung Avenue and see what your experience would be. Run a trial period for three months and see what your experience will be.

But the question I want to ask again is this, - why was no exit provided at Belleville Avenue as the act specified?

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Before you answer that question, Mr. Tonti, I want to say that I think we have had a good hearing and if there is anyone else to speak I would like to have them speak first and then give Mr. Tonti a couple of minutes to summarize so that we can conclude this hearing.

All right, Mr. Kaplan.

MR. KAPLAN: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, in any hearing of this sort there is always the danger of developing antagonisms in the zeal of debate, and I'm afraid that is happening right now.

I don't think it's our intention, or anybody's intention on this side of the aisle to, what we might say, put the Authority on the spot. I think we'll all admit that by and large and on the

over-all picture they've done an excellent job. We have a fine Garden State Parkway. I enjoyed it this morning coming down. I was able to make excellent time, even though I was late. But you know sometimes, in the course of our zealousness, we don't see the forest for the trees. And I can only admire Mr. Tonti and the members of his staff in the enthusiasm that they have generated for this cause but I am wondering if, perhaps, in the fact that they have been so close to it, they don't see - and maybe it's strange for me to say this, not being expert in the field that they are - but perhaps they don't see the broad picture that those of us who are not as close to the situation might see.

Now, we've heard a great deal from Mr. Tonti, well presented, of the financial picture. We have heard a great deal of expensive engineering reports. But I'm afraid that I must confess to a great deal of skepticism about engineering reports based on projections. It's awfully easy to project. And the proof of the fact is that their own engineers have projected incorrectly.

I refer again to the engineering report back in 1953 that gave expression to anticipated increases in revenue of 5% that now results in 16%. And whatever the causes may be, certainly they don't include the Bergen Expressway and they don't include the East-West Freeway, and I would suspect that they may have included the Throughway, the results of which we won't know, incidentally, until the end of the year and which I didn't take into consideration in suggesting the figures that I did this morning.

But what are we talking about here? The Garden State Parkway is not on trial. The Chamber of Commerce is not on trial. The Town of Bloomfield is not on trial. And, if you please, Mr. Chairman, the residents and motorists of Essex County are not on trial either. The motorists of Essex County were given assurance - it's in the legislation, if you please - that there would be no toll collections between Springfield Avenue and Belleville Avenue. And, interestingly enough, there is no exit at Belleville Avenue, no matter how you may look at the map. So to that extent at least, by legislation, by the express word of the statute, there has been a breach of faith.

Now, Mr. Tonti I believe it was, made the suggestion - if we are so concerned about safety, that he seems to feel is a smokescreen - why wouldn't we be willing to move the toll gate to south of Bloomfield Avenue.

May I, through you, Mr. Chairman, give Mr. Tonti the answer?

Number one, Mr. Tonti says that he was not present when promises were made to Bloomfield in 1953, that there would be no toll in Bloomfield. But there is word in the statute that says there shall be no tolls. That's a legislative promise, not the promise of a Highway Commissioner, that there would be no tolls between Springfield Avenue and Belleville Avenue.

But let me give a better reason why the answer is hardly found in moving the Toll Gate south of Bloomfield Avenue. What are you accomplishing? You are merely taking your traffic off Garden State Parkway a half mile, three-quarters of a mile, south of Bloomfield Avenue and bringing them up to Bloomfield Avenue where you are going to have exactly the same volume of traffic

because if the people are going north, the 67% that Chief Hess spoke of, they're going to have to come along the marginal road and cross Bloomfield Avenue in any event. So, what are we accomplishing?

If Mr. Tonti and the Authority want to do something, and they think we are fooling when we talk about safety, let me give a suggestion - and I don't know how our Town fathers or police department feels about it - I would say, if they don't want to carry to Watchung Avenue and Hoover Avenue, let them divert the traffic at Liberty Street, Montgomery Street, Belleville Avenue, and in that way we take it off Bloomfield Avenue and get rid of the traffic that's causing our problem.

Now, I was just handed a copy of this report of August 1, 1958, that Mr. Tonti presented to this Committee. Obviously I haven't had an opportunity to study or analyze it but on page 6 of the report I do find this paragraph:

> "With the anticipated increases that must occur in the volumes of toll-paying traffic, it is estimated that in about two years traffic volumes will reach 1,500 per lane during peak periods. This volume represents the maximum possible capacity, but driving speeds will be reduced to 30 to 35 miles per hour, with increased congestion at the exits depending on the proportion of total traffic using them. Driving under such conditions will not be pleasant and the necessary growth at the Union and Essex Toll Plazas will be restricted."

What then happens, Mr. Tonti, to our Bloomfield Avenue exit with, in the words of this report, "increased congestion at the exits." Does that mean that we are not going to have a safety problem? Is this purely something that we are tossing out as a fiction of our imagination? Something that has no reality in fact?

This, gentlemen, is a real problem. I am offering the

solution, if the Essex Plaza presents a problem. But I say to you gentlemen, the Essex Plaza presents no problem. That, indeed, is a smokescreen of the first order.

Let me show you something. Mr. Tonti, just a moment ago, gave you the figure - now, listen to this, - that if the Essex Toll Plaza is moved, they will lose in revenues $403,000 a year. That's the figure he gave.

Let me turn to the prospectus issued on July 1, 1956, for a $25 million bond issue. On page 10, the tolls received for July to September, for 1955 and 1956, in 1955 it was $614,000 at Essex, and in '56 it was $781,000. Allowing for $825,000 for 1957, Mr. Tonti is telling us that we will lose 50% of the revenue at the Essex Toll Plaza by moving it to the Passaic line.

Gentlemen, I ask you, are 50% of the tourists going to the Essex Toll Plaza getting off at Watchung and Hoover Avenues? I think the mere statement of it makes it ridiculous. There is all of Bergen County - and I am going to forget the New York Throughway because that was not there in 1957, I'm going to forget that, but are we to believe that 50% of the revenues come only from those leaving the Parkway at Hoover Avenue and Watchung Avenue.

Now, Mr. Tonti quoted me as saying that statistics don't lie but statisticians do. I think that was a little unfair. I don't think I ever said that. I don't think statistics lie but I think interpretations of statistics play a great part and I think there is a tremendous amount of room for misinterpretation and differences of opinion, if you please, when you are projecting statistics. In academic debate it's an old axiom that you can quote the bible to prove most anything you want. And the same

thing is true of statistics. And particularly is that true when you are dealing with projections, statistically.

I don't think our statistics prove one thing, statistics either cited by them or cited by me, insofar as Essex Plaza is concerned. We are not at the moment getting revenue in any appreciable amount and no statistics have been proved to substantiate it, there are no revenues in any substantial amount at the moment of people that would be going free if the toll plaza at Watchung Avenue were eliminated. Because we have heard that there are 67% of the people - and this is a statistic based on a survey of the Police Department - there are 67% of the people that would be going past Bloomfield Avenue and eliminating that bottleneck, if they didn't pay the tolls.

Now I think it's also important to note, gentlemen, that Essex County, not being on trial, we are not going to accomplish anything by developing any phobias about free passage on Garden State Parkway. I think it's a very common experience that everybody would like to get something for nothing. I think the motorists would like to travel free. I think there are many people who would use Watchung Avenue if it were toll-free. But what does that prove? Does it prove that we are to continue the one case of which Mr. Flynn spoke, of a serious accident, just because philosophically or theoretically or humanistically people want to get something free? If this is worthwhile to save lives, injuries and property, it's worthwhile whether somebody is getting something free or not.

But, if Mr. Tonti wants to call my bluff on the fact that I'm not interested in the question of free traffic, and I am not arguing here - I didn't come to Trenton to argue - for free

traffic as free traffic, all I say to him is, give us exits at Liberty, Montgomery, Belleville Avenues where we can divert the traffic from the bottleneck at Bloomfield Avenue.

Now Mr. Tonti also refers to the fact that the figures of the Police Department belie the fact. Why? They are figures of accidents and because Mr. Tonti may have picked out four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven or twelve cases that happened in the early hours of the morning, what does that prove? There is still Mr. Flynn's one case that happened as a result of a bottleneck at Bloomfield Avenue. And if it's just the one case, it's well worth it.

Now, as far as $503,000 is concerned, frankly, I'm not concerned. The Garden State Authority and every other Authority can find money when it needs it - and I'm not criticizing them for it, if things are really needed. I say, gentlemen, it is needed if that is the solution for your safety problem.

Gentlemen, I think this problem revolves around one thing, exactly, and perhaps that one thing is a little philosophical. I don't mean to over-simplify this matter but I think it revolves around one philosophical concept. We find in general life, if we want to do a thing and that thing is reasonable, we will find the means for doing it. The Garden State Authority found that it needed an administration building for three-quarters of a million dollars, and, notwithstanding all these projections of losses in 1964, they still found the means of doing it.

This Essex Plaza isn't going to make one iota of difference in the 1964 projected deficit. And may I say, I have sufficient confidence in the Garden State Authority that there will be no deficit. Their own statistics of increases in revenues indicate

that there will be the means of satisfying it. But if there is the will to correct the problem and if there is not merely a blind spot on this thing, having taken a position and being unwilling to reverse oneself, if that is not the situation, the means, gentlemen, can be found.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Kaplan, before you leave, just one question. Is there any merit to the suggestion to spend money at the Bloomfield Avenue intersection to build a cloverleaf of some sort which would provide for and take care of this traffic situation and make that intersection safer?

MR. KAPLAN: Mr. Chairman, let me answer that very directly. Number one, I'm not an engineer and I don't know whether that's a solution, whether it's possible, feasible, realistic, or what-not. I will say to you directly, if it can be done to eliminate the problem, I'm for it.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: All right, Mr. Tonti, we will give you reasonable time to sum up.

MR. TONTI: The gentleman has great agility with figures. Unfortunately, you picked out some of the wrong ones.

First of all, the income of the Essex Plaza is not $800,00 but closer to $3,000,000. And we were wrong in that $403,000 loss because that figure, which was given to Mayor Scott a couple of years ago or a year and a half ago, has now increased. The loss is not at the Plaza, gentlemen, the loss would be that by extending this free section up further there would be a loss daily of 800 paying vehicles at Hoover; 1500 paying vehicles at Watchung; which is a total of 2300 vehicles daily or $800, which on an annual basis is a loss of $292,000, one-way, which both ways means

a loss of around $600,000 - a $600,000 loss in revenues by just moving this up further and providing additional free-travel.

There is a strong will to solve this problem. It must be solved. And we are just as anxious for the solution as anyone, because I think we're charged with the responsibility, more than anyone else, to see that this Authority pays off on $330,000,000 worth of bonds which is an obligation of everyone in New Jersey. And anything that will aggravate our growing inability to pay off these bonds is something that we must point to. And that's why we speak against the Lynch bill.

Why no exit at Belleville Avenue from the express lanes? The exit from the marginal road is satisfactory. And I think we pointed out earlier that a marginal road, four lanes, much longer and superior in design to the Oraton Parkway that it replaced, is a pretty good bargain.

The issue here is clean-cut. If you move these vehicles away from Bloomfield Avenue and set them up so they can go out another exit, the possibility and probability of accidents will exist at the new exit. No one has explained, on that side of the aisle, what happens to congestion at Watchung, Belleville and Hoover Avenues, when all that other traffic is diverted to those avenues. Does it mean that at some future date they'll come in and say, "We've got congestion at these avenues. We're sorry. You've got to solve it now and move the plaza up to the New York State line.", I suppose. Of course, the solution is - let's take all the plazas away, make it toll-free. And we showed how that could be done, - the State takes over the payment of the bonds and the interest. It only takes about $10 million a year, plus about $3 million of maintenance for the first year. It just

gets higher every year. By 1977, I think I said, it goes up to about twenty-two and a half million. Well, that's one possibility. Then it's equitable. Then everybody goes where they want to get off. Everybody doesn't pay a toll. Nobody in Passaic or Bergen County is going to be irked, or other counties along the Parkway. But more important, nobody in the rest of the State is going to be worried about facing a liability and making up deficits which are not mythical.

And these increases in revenues. I wish that I was as optomistic about the financial structure as the previous speaker. But I invite him again to come down and learn about our financial structure and then speak about it. Right now it would take too long to try to present this Committee and him with the basic financial data which would destroy the quick references he made to these greatly increasing revenues.

There was one year that he compared against the next and he forgot to take into account that the following year, like '57, there was a 10% increase in our bond debt service which increased our requirements 12%, and 12 from 17 leaves 5, which is about the 5% increase that he formerly alluded to that the engineers said would happen.

So, I really believe, Mr. Chairman, that with the ability to give this Committee a brief, spelling out in great detail, that the facts will be before this Committee and any municipal official or interested group that wants to study it.

We're not trying to fool anybody. We're not going to kid anybody either, that he can get a lot of free rides on the Parkway and not cost anything to the State of New Jersey. We're just being perfectly honest about this thing. We have to be. If we

were anything less we would not be discharging our responsibility. And if being honest irritates a group with a provincial issue, - then we're sorry, but we have to state the facts for the benefit of this Committee and this Legislature.

Someone made reference to the Route 46 Interchange. Yes, the contract was for $1,136,000. What the person doesn't know is that the whole project will cost $2,100,000. Feasible? Why, of course. The first year that that interchange is in operation the Authority will realize $410,000. And that will increase the second year. And in four years that investment will be paid off. Give me a proposal like that any time, gentlemen, and I'll buy it.

But what we're talking about here is something for free. Something for free that's destroying the operational and financial integrity of this Authority. And we're talking about making it more free, more free miles, and for that reason we have to, in all honesty, ask the Committee to bury this bill and take it upon itself to ask us to come back this fall with final engineering reports which are being prepared not to embarrass anybody here today - these reports are being prepared,and paid for, by objective engineering consultants who don't listen to those of us in the Authority who might be too close to the picture. They have an international reputation to maintain and an obligation as engineers for the trustee of the bondholder to maintain. They're not going to listen to what Tonti says.

I'll listen to what these engineers have, we'll bring it in before this Committee, and present it to the Committee as possible solutions, engineering solutions, objective solutions, if you will, to solve a problem much more grave than any issue I've heard here today, and a problem which the Lynch bill points

up as being one of those sleepers that every taxpayer in New Jersey should be acquainted with.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity of presenting the facts on Assembly Bill 234.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Mr. Tonti, one question. I think we both realize the fact that Bloomfield Avenue is one of the main thoroughfares through Essex County, east and west. And I think we both realize the fact that Bloomfield Avenue is inadequate today for its own traffic without throwing the Parkway discharge to it. Now, after we cross Bloomfield Avenue, heading north, what is the next busiest intersection that traffic could discharge into, the existing crossroad?

MR. TONTI: Watchung.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Watchung? And how would you say that compares with Bloomfield Avenue.

MR. TONTI: Much less. But it's also much less roadway.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Now, when you said before that putting in the exits at Hoover and Watchung Avenues would not alleviate the problem at all, we now have - I believe 67% was the figure given - of people leaving at Bloomfield Avenue. Now, these people, a certain amount, are dodging the next traffic booth. So, if there were two more exits previous to that traffic toll booth, that would cut down at Bloomfield Avenue, it would cut down at Watchung and it would cut down at Hoover. It would be dispersed among three exits instead of one. Is that correct?

MR. TONTI: It would disperse them at three exits instead of one, right.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Now, when we disperse the traffic, as we talked of earlier, and loosen it up, it runs more freely.

Would not this be an asset to the Parkway itself?

MR. TONTI: Just temporarily, Mr. Flynn, because when you read that report carefully, and other people have overlooked this, for every car diverted from Bloomfield Avenue the great potential of traffic just lying outside of the Garden State Parkway and the great amount of traffic which is increasing in greater numbers each year in the urbanized area of Essex County, - for every car you take away from Bloomfield Avenue under the proposal in the Lynch bill, will be replaced by another car which will want to get off at Bloomfield Avenue. And what I'm saying is - and the engineers say it in that report, if you'll read it, - that the Bloomfield alleviation is temporary. It will be replaced by traffic where they'll have volumes similar to what they have today in just two or three years. And then I say, respectfully, that as you divert to three other points, those streets being narrower than Bloomfield Avenue will become congested very quickly and create a similar problem to what the people are complaining about at Bloomfield Avenue.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Well, Mr. Tonti, we're going to have to assume that each year the traffic load is going to grow. Now there are two things here that don't seem consistent to me.

I mentioned earlier that I have seen the roads widened. Now it seems to me that that just seems to get more people into the store. The exits - and I've seen this problem exist, I happen to work right there at the East Orange Section - since the day it was completed were not adequate. The drag right there at Central Avenue is terrific. The problem - it seems to me there has never been anything done to help it, but we have widened the roads to get more paying people on. But as far as

the problem of getting them off, and helping them there, is concerned, that doesn't seem to bother the Parkway Authority.

Now, that's the way it seems.

MR. TONTI: I'm glad you said "that's the way it seems", Mr. Flynn, because I want to tell you about Central Avenue.

You heard several times today about stealing ratables or losing ratables. The interchange at Central Avenue should have been far superior in design than what's there now. Why isn't it? Because back five or six or seven years ago, before my time, the hue and cry about taking ratables was so severe that the result was the engineers had to retrench and make the design that you are suffering from now at Central Avenue.

I concede that that design at Central Avenue Interchange is inadequate for the needs at that point, but inadequate because public passion, if you will, the pressures of public opinion, changed engineering objective opinion to do not what they intended to do but to take less ratables and give you the monstrosity you have there now. Of course, it's unpalatable to a traffic engineer to see what happens at Central Avenue. And, of course, we add lanes where toll-paying traffic comes right in and fills them up right away. If we extend a free section, watch and see how quick the traffic grows to fill that up. Because if toll-paying traffic fills up an expanded toll facility, an expanded free facility will get increasing numbers of traffic and aggravate this problem even further.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: Mr. Tonti, I'll agree with you that you would have the same problem go a little further if you extend the toll-free area, but it seems to me - now, I use

Bloomfield Avenue exit and I can't save a quarter no matter how I look at it, I can't get off any earlier and I certainly don't want to go by there - but it seems to me if those cars could be divided into three exits it would certainly save -- Now, there have been a few times when I have overshot the landing field there at 148, I believe it is, -

MR. TONTI: And then you paid us a quarter?

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: I paid you a quarter.

MR. TONTI: Good.

ASSEMBLYMAN FLYNN: But it seems to me that if that were divided up it would have to be a saving in congestion, it would be a boost for the Parkway, because when you come into that area, right as you get to General Electric, I believe it is, you have the problem of getting over in that right-hand lane and then you start watching the mirror so no one hits you in the back. You have a problem there.

I believe that Bloomfield Avenue, along with Central, is the most serious problem in Essex County. And I honestly believe that if it were divided into the three exits mentioned, or the two further on, it would alleviate the problem, in just speeding up the Parkway traffic.

Now, so far, I've heard nothing to change my opinion of that.

MR. TONTI: The question is well put, Mr. Flynn. There is no question that diversion will temporarily relieve the problem, specifically at Bloomfield Avenue. But now, you're an interesting motorist, because you're getting off at Bloomfield Avenue because you should get off at Bloomfield Avenue. Giving you a little bit of congestion, of course, and making it inconvenient for you,

are those people who are getting off there who have a destination much further north and, therefore, right at that point everybody comes together because the other fellow, two cars to your one, is getting off there so he can go around that turnpike and go all the way up to Belleville and Nutley along the Parkway and not pay a toll. They are getting off at a point on the Parkway where they don't belong, from a traffic engineering point of view.

Now, I conceded before that they are doing it to avoid a toll and they are perfectly justified in doing it. But what you are asking us to do now is to temporarily relieve this problem by making three exits further north to disperse this traffic. And I want to emphasize that this is a temporary solution which will, at best, make it more comfortable for you for about a year and a half to two years. After that, what, Mr. Flynn? And what I'm saying to you is that this Committee should insist that we come back this fall with engineering solutions which have a more long-range effect with respect to these problems, and that we come in here and propose the various ways that this can be solved, making it both more convenient for you getting off at Bloomfield Avenue and still doing something about this serious financial question which must not be separated from the congestion problem at Bloomfield Avenue.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Mr. Kaplan, if you will come forward, I'll give you just a short minute.

MR. KAPLAN: Mr. Chairman, this last matter that Mr. Tonti mentioned, about an engineering survey and come back in the fall, I remember attending a meeting in the Council Chamber of the Bloomfield Town Council about a year and a half ago, at which the Commissioners were present, and my recollection of the upshot of

that conference was - well, now leave it with us, let's study this and get an engineering report on how this safety item can be dealt with. Apparently, there has still been no solution brought up.

But the thing that I wanted to rise to mention is that Mr. Tonti, in response to Mr. Flynn's question as to the next main artery of traffic after Bloomfield Avenue, I think was incorrect in his facts. I think he pointed out that the next main artery of traffic was Watchung Avenue, going north from Bloomfield Avenue. I don't believe that's so. When you leave Bloomfield Avenue, the next main artery of traffic, perhaps, is Montgomery Street, then Liberty Street, then Belleville Avenue, then Hoover Avenue, and then Watchung Avenue. Now, of all those streets that I have mentioned, Belleville Avenue is by far the most heavily traveled because of the Turnpike which takes you right into the Holland Tunnel. Watchung Avenue, as a matter of fact, is an east-west thoroughfare, has very light traffic, so that and Hoover Avenue, among all the other streets, are the most ideal for the diversion of traffic.

That's all I wanted to add.

CHAIRMAN CRABIEL: Well, I think the time has come to conclude this hearing. As Chairman, I've been very impressed with the sincerity of those advocating this bill, and certainly the people from Bloomfield are sincere in their thinking and have placed their arguments on the record.

I cannot quite agree with my colleague, Mr. Lynch, in his analysis of Mr. Tonti because I also was impressed very greatly with his presentation. I believe that he made a very

able presentation and is certainly an executive of the Authority that we, as citizens of New Jersey and Legislators, can be proud that we have.

The Committee will have a transcript of this hearing prepared and we will allow both the Garden State Parkway to present a brief, and preferably a unified brief from the Town of Bloomfield. If you want to present some individual ones it would be all right, but I would suggest that it be in a summary form of some sort, with some coordination from your group.

At some later date it will be compiled and printed and our Committee will meet and consider this problem.

And certainly, no matter what our decision or action on this particular bill, we do want to accept the offer of Mr. Tonti to come back and talk to us if you have anything specific.

The Legislature is in recess and it is doubtful that any action will be taken on this for several months. But that does not mean that the Committee will not give it consideration as soon as the record is filed.

I will declare the hearing adjourned.

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