

# TOWNSHIP OF JEFFERSON

\*\*\*\*\* Nicest People == Nicest Place \*\*\*\*\*

*Board of Supervisors  
Planning & Zoning Commission  
Zoning Hearing Board  
Parks & Recreation*

MERCER COUNTY  
PENNSYLVANIA

May 7, 1981

Honorable Rudolph Dininni, Chairman  
House Transportation Committee  
P. O. Box 106  
House of Representatives  
Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Mr. Dininni:

As Supervisor of Jefferson Township in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, I would like to offer a number of comments relative to House Bill 527 for your consideration.

I wish to emphasize that our Township is not opposed to the turn back of Class 6 State roads for local responsibility and maintenance. However, there are a number of matters of concern which we feel should be taken into consideration before this is accomplished.

A number of points that I would like to stress pertain particularly to Jefferson Township, other points relate generally to the County Association's position relative to the turning back of Class 6 State roads to local governments.

The first item I would like to call your attention to is the Highway System Task Subcommittee survey report for Jefferson Township received in December of 1976, (Copy attached) listing approximately 12-1/2 miles of Class 6 roads in Jefferson Township with possibly another 2-1/2 miles that has not been included. You will also note on the attachment, that the cartway widths vary from 8 feet wide to 20 feet. More than 6 miles of these roads are gravel roads. In these 12-1/2 miles of road are also included 7 bridges.

At the present time, Jefferson Township pays over 50% of the cost of road maintenance out of their local budget; that is, real estate and other local taxes. The rest comes from State liquid fuels reimbursements. I would also stress that the Township is presently at its legal limit in real estate property taxes. Adding another 1/3 to our present road mileage, under the present conditions, would create a very difficult financial burden.

This leads me to my comments to the proposed \$2,500 per mile for future maintenance on an annual basis as included in the present House Bill 527. This is totally inadequate. For example, based upon PennDOT's past Winter Maintenance Contracts of \$1,200 per mile for anti-skid application and snow removal, leaves only \$1,300 for ditching, drainage, cutting shoulders and pothole patching, not taking into consideration periodic resurfacing.

Because of increase in cost of labor, materials and administration, many municipalities are unable to make capital expenditures for equipment. To update equipment to take care of present maintenance, plus immediate turnback of all Class 6 roads through binding arbitration could, in some cases, prove financially disastrous to local governments.

In respect to bridges, Mercer County ranks 3rd in the State of Pennsylvania. The County bridge program is presently in a critical state. I would suggest, bridges on Class 6 roads, remain under State maintenance responsibility and be considered and funded under a separate program.

Act 527 does not have any provision regarding restoration of roads prior to turn back. I would suggest that this Bill provide some alternative method of either the State rebuilding the roads to acceptable standards, or providing funds based on estimated costs to the local governments to have contracted privately to complete necessary improvements, agreeable to both the State and local government. I further suggest that these roads be considered on an individual basis over a ten-year period, in order not to create a financial burden to local government.

These roads which we are referring to are roads that were taken over many years ago by action of legislature with a promise of maintenance and improvement; promises which never materialized. Most of these roads that we are referring to, in my particular Township, have had very little major repair and minimal maintenance over the many years they have been under State responsibility. They are characteristically very narrow, some rights-of-way are under 33 feet, no ditches, inadequate drainage and poor road base with no protecting surface course.

In conclusion, I again wish to emphasize that we are not opposed to taking over the maintenance and responsibility of the roads in principal. But, we are very concerned, however, that the Bill establish a proper mechanism for handling the restoration of these roads and adequate financial reimbursement on an annual basis to the Township for future maintenance and responsibility. It is very important that your committee make these changes before passage of the final legislation.

Sincerely yours,



Daniel R. Babnis,  
Supervisor  
Jefferson Township  
R. D. #7  
Mercer, PA 16137

DISTRICT 1  
MERCER COUNTY 43

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP

LEGISLATIVE ROUTE	LENGTH (MILES)	WIDTH FEET	BRIDGES & UNDER PASSES
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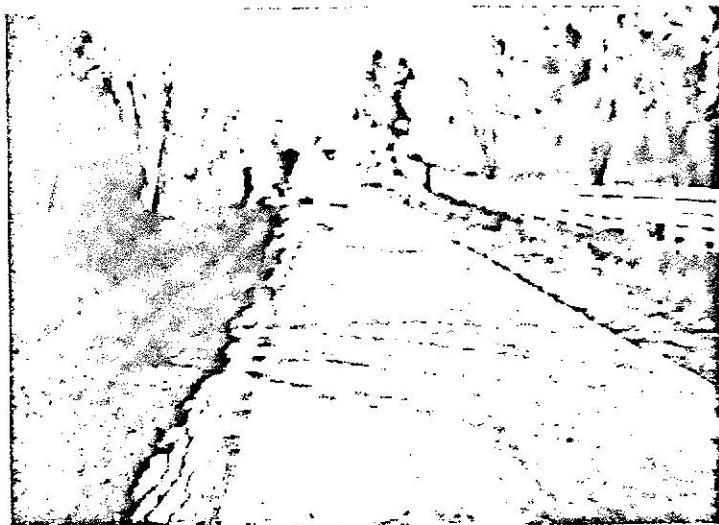
40	0.28	20	0
40	0.25	20	0
40	1.27	20	0
40	0.50	20	2
40	2.07	16	0
40	0.16	16	0
82	0.22	8	0
82	0.92	18	1
82	0.03	18	0
82	0.46	8	2
99	1.30	17	1
99	1.39	14	0
99	1.77	8	0
99	1.93	12	1

TOTAL MILES=12.610



LR 43082

Picture indicates width of bridge - plank floorway and narrow gravel road.



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LR 43006

Indicates narrow roadway - drop off on side of road - also narrow bridge.



LR 43082

Indicates plank floorway on bridge and side rails.



LR 43099

Indicates washed out roadway and ditch washed out 5 ft. deep.