



UPPER PAXTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

BERRYSBURG ROAD • MILLERSBURG, PA. 17061

MERVIN W. ADAMS, Chairman
EARL E. ETZWEILER, Vice Chairman
LEROY LANDIS, Secretary-Treasurer
BUCHART HORN, Engineer
ROBERT A. ENDERS, Solicitor
STUART E. TREVITZ, Clerk

Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Committee.

I would first like to thank you for granting me the opportunity to testify before you on the matter of House Bill 527, of which I have great concern.

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Mervin W. Adams, and for the past 15½ years I have served as an elected Township Supervisor for Upper Paxton Township in Dauphin County. During all that period I have served as its chairman and for the past 13½ years I have also served as Roadmaster for that Township.

Upper Paxton Township presently has approximately 79 miles of Highways and Streets within its boundaries, 46 of which are under Township jurisdiction with the balance of 33 miles being under the care and maintenance of PenDot. My only reason for mentioning this is an attempt to qualify my testimony in that I speak not as an outside observer, but one who has been very immanently involved in the on going construction, maintenance, and care of the Township Streets and Highways.

Since H.B. 527 involves the turn back of Class 6 Highways and Roads to the local Municipalities for the purpose of relieving PenDot of the financial burden of their maintenance and care. I would like to say that I agree to the concept that there are certain roads in certain areas that can be maintained and cared for by the local Municipalities in a better manner than is presently being done by PenDot. The success of this type of program, however, hinges entirely on a voluntary case by case method with proper funding. For while there are some Municipalities who now have large mileage and are geared up with manpower and equipment who stand to receive small amounts of turn back mileage, and therefore could handle the increased mileage without it causing a burden to it. There are other Municipalities who presently have small mileage and do not



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have, and can not afford the manpower and equipment needed to maintain and care for additional mileage, and would find it impossible to operate if the Board of Arbitration (as proposed in H.B. 527) would decide in favor of the Department.

It is because of this, that I strongly oppose H. B. 527.

Again, I want to say that I do subscribe to the concept of turn back of roads, so long as it is done in a fair and equitable voluntary method. I would also be quick to say that I do not view the turn back of roads as the only solution to PenDot problems. It is true that in most cases local Municipalities can construct and maintain highways at a lower cost than PenDot has been doing, not because equipment and materials cost less to Municipalities, but because of better management of the lesser dollars available to them. During the past 3 years Municipalities have not only had to face the inflationary cost spiral, but have had to face also, a more than 3% decrease of the total Liquid Motor fuel Funds available (18.82% in 1978— 15.52 in 1980) while the motoring public is paying increasingly more.

It has been my experience that when a maintenance problem occurs, be it a pot hole, or whatever, the objective of maintenance is to correct the problem by going right to the problem and making the necessary repairs. Yet, I have seen the department spend more money in shuffling papers in an attempt to determine who, when, how, why, how much, and at what time, and then doing it all over again, that by the time the repairs is approved there is no money left to do the job. Although this is not the time or place to discuss the merits or faults of the Department, I do believe that if we are to find a way out of PenDot's present dilemma, it will not be simply to return highways back to local Municipalities, but will be a combination of turn back on a voluntary basis,



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along with a host of inter-Department changes that will tend to improve the image of the Department and gain the support of the general and Motoring public.

I, therefore, strongly oppose H.B. 527 in its present form.

I trust that this testimony has not been too short or too long, but will serve to guide the committee in the proper presentation of this bill.

Again, I want to thank this committee and its Chairman for allowing me this opportunity to testify before you.

Now I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

MERVIN W. ADAMS