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SENATE

{ REPORT
No. 89

BRIDGE ACROSS RED RIVER NEAR FULTON, ARK.

JANUARY 16 (calendar day, JANUARY 23), 1926.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BINGHAM, from the Committee on Commerce, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 7484]

The Committee on Commerce, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 7484) granting the consent of Congress to the State Highway Commission of Arkansas to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across Red River near Fulton, Ark., having considered the same, report favorably thereon and recommend that the bill do pass without amendment.

The bill has the approval of the Departments of War and Agriculture, as will appear by the annexed communications.

WAR DEPARTMENT, *December 19, 1925.*

Respectfully returned to the chairman Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, House of Representatives.

So far as the interests committed to this department are concerned, I know of no objection to the favorable consideration of the accompanying bill, H. R. 3933, Sixty-ninth Congress, first session, granting the consent of Congress to the State highway commission of Arkansas to construct a bridge across Red River.

As the navigable portions of the Red River do not lie within the limits of a single State the consent of Congress is required under section 9 of the river and harbor act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151), for the construction of a bridge thereover.

DWIGHT F. DAVIS,
Secretary of War.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
Washington, December 23, 1925.

HON. JAMES S. PARKER,
*Chairman Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce,
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. PARKER: Careful consideration has been given to the bill, H. R. 3933, transmitted with your letter of December 12 with request for a report thereon and such views relative thereto as the department might desire to communicate.

This bill would authorize the State highway commission of Arkansas, its successors and assigns, to construct, maintain and operate a bridge and approaches thereto across the Red River, in Hempstead County, at or near Fulton, within 5 miles of the bridge of the Missouri Pacific Railway Co. The Arkansas Legislature, by act approved March 6, 1925 (Act 136, Acts of Arkansas, 1925), authorized, empowered and directed the State highway commission to construct and maintain a public highway bridge across the Red River at some point within 5 miles of the bridge of the Missouri Pacific Railway Co. across said river at Fulton, said bridge to be located in Hempstead and Miller Counties, Ark. This act provides that the contract for the construction of said bridge shall be let to the lowest responsible bidder for a price not to exceed \$500,000, and authorizes the State highway commission to allot such State aid and receive such Federal aid as may be available by law for use in paying for the construction of the bridge and to borrow money to pay the remainder of such cost or to borrow money to pay for the entire cost thereof. No Federal aid will be available for use on the project, since the act of the State legislature above referred to provides that the bridge shall be a toll bridge and fixes the rates of toll which shall be charged for the first 10 years succeeding the completion of the bridge and authorizes such rates thereafter to be established and fixed by the State highway commission. There appears in the act also the following provision:

"After moneys borrowed to construct said bridge with the interest on same shall have been fully paid, the rate of tolls for the use of said bridge shall be reduced, so the amount collected will be only the sum necessary for the maintenance, protection, operation and repair of the bridge."

The proposed bridge will be on a road included in the Federal-aid system approved for the State of Arkansas. It is the view of this department that the authorization should contain a provision requiring that the rates of toll to be charged for the use of said bridge shall be such as within a definite period, not to exceed in any event 30 years, will produce sufficient revenue to maintain, operate and repair the bridge during such period and pay the original cost of constructing the same, including any interest paid on money borrowed to finance such original construction costs, and that thereafter the bridge shall become a free bridge. The department, therefore, would recommend that the bill be appropriately amended to embody the foregoing suggestions and that it then be passed.

Sincerely,

R. W. DUNLAP, *Acting Secretary.*

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