

## BRIDGE ACROSS WHITE RIVER, ARK.

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FEBRUARY 21, 1925.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed

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Mr. PARKS of Arkansas, from the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12297]

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, to whom was referred the bill H. R. 12297, a bill granting the consent of Congress to the county of Jackson, Ark., to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across the White River at or near the city of Newport, in the county of Jackson, in the State of Arkansas, having considered the same, report thereon and recommend that it pass.

The bill has the approval of the War and Agriculture Departments, as will appear by the letters attached and which are made a part of this report.

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WAR DEPARTMENT, *February 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. 12297, Sixty-eighth Congress, second session, granting the consent of Congress to the county of Jackson, Ark., to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge across the White River at or near the city of Newport, in the county of Jackson, in the State of Arkansas.

As the navigable portions of the White 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.

JOHN W. WEEKS, *Secretary of War.*

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
*Washington, February 20, 1925.*

HON. SAMUEL E. WINSLOW,  
*Chairman Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce,  
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. WINSLOW: Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of February 16 inclosing a copy of H. R. 12297, for report thereon and for such views relative thereto as the department might desire to communicate.

This bill would grant the consent of Congress to the county of Jackson, Ark., and its successors and assigns, to construct, maintain, and operate a bridge and approaches thereto across the White River at or near the city of Newport in said county. Section 2 of the bill provides that the State or any political subdivision or division thereof, within or adjoining which said bridge may be located may at any time, by agreement or by condemnation, acquire all right, title, and interest in said bridge and approaches thereto, constructed under the authority of the act, for the purpose of maintaining and operating same as a free bridge, by paying to the owners the reasonable value thereof, not to exceed in any event the construction cost. This section also provides that the State or any political subdivision or division thereof which may so acquire said bridge may operate the same as a toll bridge for not to exceed five years from the date of its acquisition.

The site indicated for the construction of the proposed bridge is on an important route included in the Federal-aid system approved for Arkansas. Information has come to this department that the county judge of Jackson County contemplates granting, and in fact has requested and received petitions from interested private parties for, a franchise for the construction of a toll bridge across the White River at Newport. This department would regret very much to see a toll bridge constructed at this point. It therefore is suggested that, in order to provide against such a contingency, the words "and assigns" appearing in line 5, page 1, of the bill be eliminated. If the bill should be amended so as to grant the right to construct the bridge to the county of Jackson without the right to make any assignment of such authorization, then it may be unnecessary to retain section 2 in the bill. If the bill should be amended in line with the above suggestions, the department can see no objection to its passage.

Sincerely,

HOWARD M. GORE, *Secretary.*

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