

May 28, 1981

LR 189

commercial, or whatever. So uses for the land are possible even under the federal law that created this project in the first place. The Department of Transportation letter will talk to you about devastating, destructive, negative impact on the community to be affected. And so that I can give you a picture, if I can, of what this thing would look like...for a distance of about twenty blocks you will have a road flanked on either side by earth berms roughly ten feet high with no way for the people in that community to get on or off that road. It would be like a Berlin Wall passing through this community, splitting it. It would reduce the value of the property that the people have who are left, it would reduce the value of their property for residential purposes. We have trouble obtaining loans in that area already for "rehabbing" houses or getting second mortgages. When you artificially depress the value in this way, then the lending agencies which have resorted to red-lining can then say there is a legitimate economic reason for not giving loans because the housing has no value. There is not enough value in the house to cover the amount of the loan that is being requested, so I will agree before anybody else says it that there has been tremendous devastation in my community, in my district, as a result of this project. I doubt that there is another Senator on this floor who could come before you faced with a project like what Senator Newell is offering, and you accept something devastating being done in that Senator's district by somebody who doesn't live in that district. I haven't left the poverty stricken area. That's where I live. That's where the people are that I am to represent, so I should be there suffering the same things that they suffer, in the same way I wouldn't go in the City Council meeting because the people couldn't be there. The place belongs with the people. And if Senator Newell's resolution is adopted, it simply means that despite the fact that the Legislature lacks information on this project, it will vote to tell the Department of Roads to do something that the Legislature doesn't completely understand to destroy a Senator's legislative district. Now if what I am saying is not what the people in my district want, they should vote me out of office, but this was one of the issues that I raised when I was running and I have raised it continuously. There is a new Council and a new Mayor who have to approve plans and various steps along the way in this project. Let them go ahead and argue it out. Let them be approached, and if they make the wrong decision, then I will fight them on the basis of that wrong decision. But for the

6033