

speed up the rate of reconstruction of U.S. Highway 81 in this state which is the Pan American Highway. Now the Pan American Highway as this road has been named, runs through the heart of the America continent from Canada to the lower tip of South America. This road carries a considerable amount, the north/south traffic, through our state and as you read in the news the other day, Columbia where we have a last stretch of this highway to be built between the southernmost tip of Argentina to Alaska is waiting for money from the United States Government to build this road through that area and once this is done it will be completed. The total route length of this highway in this state is 206.7 miles with a total annual vehicle miles of travel of approximately 200.5 million miles in one year. For sake of comparison the total vehicle miles estimated for Highway 77 is 199.9 million miles. While U.S. Highway 281 are estimated at 130 million miles. Also Highway 81 has almost twice the amount of truck traffic, the other two north/south corridors that I have mentioned. The truck traffic miles on this road are estimated at 40.4 million miles annually which in reality means that trucks constitute two out of every ten vehicles you meet on this road. Now this just came about within the last few years. As we all know, Norfolk has developed a considerable amount of industry. Columbus has developed a lot of industry. Now York is developing it which shows the need of the truck traffic within this given area and I have heard comments that the truckers are real fearful of this road, yet that is the closest route. For the amount of traffic on this road U.S. Highway 81 is in very poor condition. The Transportation Advisory Committee was able to hear these problems from concerned people over the interim while studying LR 78. These people are actually scared or fearful to death of driving on this road. There is virtually no shoulder on sections of this road which gives you no place to go in case of car trouble. The committee heard various testimonies of close calls due to a car being parked on the edge of the road. Also the width of this road in many sections makes it frightful to meet a truck on this road. The "hog troughs", that's a new term, in this road also creates many problems when driving this road in the rain and I can assure you after the hearing I myself drove the road. Mr. Coolidge of the Highway Department drove the road. A few days later they was out there planning the road to eliminate the hog troughs and what's happened when they do this? They make the pavement even thinner and it won't take too long and they will be right back again. Bonding, of course, is an unpopular idea at this time of high interest rates but what kind of price tag can we put on the lives of people in this state? I do say this with conviction because this road is extremely