

THE OPEN FORUM

Gilkey Man Replies to Recent Article in Rutherford Sun.

(By C. F. Cline)

Gilkey, Dec. 21.—We notice in your last issue of The Sun that the "immense population now living between the Southern depot at Rutherfordton, and Dysartsville," is very much wrought up over a resolution "introduced by one, C. F. Cline, of Gilkey" and which was unanimously adopted by the Rutherfordton Kiwanis club, on Dec. 3, 1925.

The resolution in question, as the readers of The Sun know, was a protest against the proposed change of

State Highway No. 19 between Rutherfordton and Marion, and notwithstanding the insinuations to the contrary, reflected the sentiment of the Rutherfordton Kiwanis Club, and the sentiment of the communities represented in the Kiwanis club.

We have no objection to our good friends in the Westminster-Cane Creek section having a State Highway if Mr. Kistler wants to build them one, but we do object to their effort to take No. 19 away from the communities which it now serves. The proposition is not ethical to say the least.

The writer or writers of the communication seem to have handled the facts in the case rather carelessly, and in order that the people interested in the matter may have the facts as they really are, we submit the following facts for their consideration.

Rutherfordton to Marion, via Thermal City, 28.6 miles; Rutherfordton to Marion via Logan and Dysartsville, 35.2 miles; Rutherfordton to Snow Hill church on No. 10 via Logan, 30 miles; Rutherfordton to Snow Hill church on No. 10 via Thermal City to C. C. & O. culvert near Vein Mtn., and thence via Dysartsville, 31.1 miles. Proposed route to Marion .6 miles longer than present route.

Most practical Morganton connection can be made by leaving No. 19 as it runs between Rutherfordton and Marion, and forming the Morganton connection by bearing to the right at the C. C. & O. culvert near Vein Mtn. and going via Dysartsville to Snow Hill church on No. 10. This will give connection with both Morganton and Marion with 5.5 less mileage than the proposed change. Distance from culvert to Dysartsville 7.4 miles. No difficulties as to grade on this route and an abundance of gravel all along the route.

Additional Facts

The proposed change would cost the traveling public at least \$125.00 per day, based on excess mileage of 2500 miles per day at 5c per mile, which is a low estimate as regards mileage as well as regards the cost of operating a car. Ford claims that it costs 6c per mile to operate a car when gas, oil, up-keep and depreciation are taken into consideration.

The proposed change will cost the State, in maintenance alone, for the excess mileage at least \$5.00 per day. It is doubtful whether this will take care of depreciation on equipment. This will amount to more than \$1500 per year.

Aside from the excess cost in maintenance, it will cost the State at least \$20,000.00 to put the proposed route in as good condition as the present route No. 19 is now in, this cost to

include widening sanding, water ways, road markers, etc.

The proposed change will only serve about 10 per cent of the area and less than 10 per cent of the population of Rutherford county, as well or better than they are now being served by No. 19 as it now runs between Rutherfordton and Marion. This will also be true as regards McDowell county.

No. 19 as now located was placed on the original map that accompanied the State Highway bill when it was passed by the Legislature of 1921 and said road was taken over by the State Highway Commission for maintenance about July 1st, 1921 and was maintained as a State highway for more than three years before any question as to change was raised. To move it now would be unfair and unjust if not in fact contrary to the letter and spirit of the law.

Property owners along the present route of No. 19, many of whom have purchased their property since it was placed on the highway map would sustain a heavy loss by reason of the depreciation in value of their property should the highway be taken away from them.

No. 19 as now located is in good condition and gives good all time service and can be much more easily maintained than the proposed route. Further more the route is marked with all necessary signs or markers and the most dangerous places are fenced.

No. 19 as now located not only serves 90 per cent of the people of Rutherford and McDowell counties better than they can be served by the proposed route, but it serves all tourist travel better and besides many more people live along the present route, and it serves much larger business, educational and religious interests.

There are much larger possibilities of development along the present route of No. 19 because it parallels the railroad, as does 75 per cent of our State highways, and as a matter of fact all developments of any importance follow the railroads. Why would it be good policy from a State standpoint to locate a highway where there is no possibility of any industrial development?

Much has been said about the proposed change being straighter than the present route but an experienced road man recently said after having traveled over both routes that the curvature per mile on the proposed change was as great or greater than on No. 19 as now located.

No. 19 as now located has nearly twice as many public roads or feeders leading into it as has the proposed change and these serve much larger territories than do the feeders on the proposed change.

Between Rutherfordton and Gilkey on the present route, three grade crossings and one overhead crossing can be eliminated by the construction of less than three quarters of a mile of road and of the two remaining grade crossings on the route one of them can be eliminated by taking the road off the mountain, leaving only one grade crossing in the valley near Thermal City, while on the proposed change there is a bad double grade crossing at Ruth or Hamptonville, an overhead crossing at Logan with bad curves on either side and again a double grade crossing near Marion, none of which can be eliminated. Furthermore there would be no crossings between No. 19 and Dysartsville on the Morganton connection as the road passes under the C. C. & O. through a culvert 16 feet wide.

The suggested Morganton connection can be reduced with a new survey between the C. C. & O. culvert near Vein Mountain and Dysartsville, at least one mile (Mr. Kistler admits this) and this will make the mileage via Thermal City and Dysartsville to No. 10 at Snow Hill church, the same as it is via Logan, while the distance between Rutherfordton and Marion as No. 19 now runs can be shortened at least one mile by taking the road off the mountain, thus effecting a saving of 7.5 miles by leaving No. 19 where it is now located, and at the same time serve both Marion and Morganton.

There is practically no business intercourse or social intercourse between Rutherford county and Burke county, and to increase the distance to Marion by 7.5 miles as the proposed change would do, to favor a small minority, would be a great imposition on the people of Rutherford county and the traveling public generally.

Many of the signers of the communication referred to, can find their way into No. 19 as it now runs and reach Marion with much less distance than they could to travel over the proposed route to Marion, although the proposed route might run by their front door.

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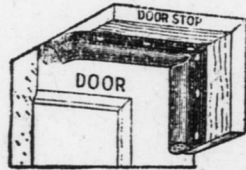


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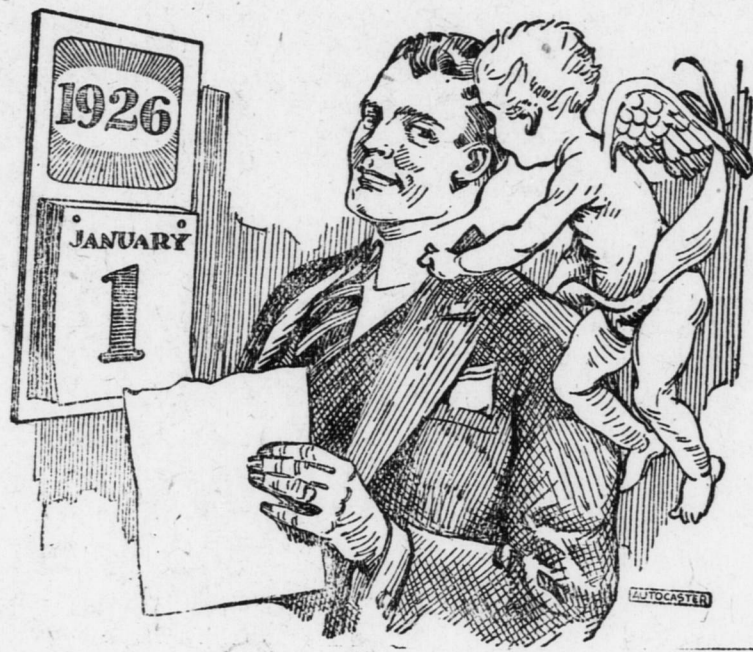


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