

SESS. II.—1879.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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PETITION OF RESIDENTS AND OTHERS INTERESTED  
IN THE HURUNUI, CENTRAL AMURI, AND UPPER  
AWATERE DISTRICTS.

*Presented by Mr. Saunders, 21st October, and ordered to be printed, 29th October, 1879.*

To the Honorable the Speaker and the Honorable the Members of the House of Representatives of the Colony of New Zealand, in Parliament assembled.

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED RESIDENTS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN THE HURUNUI, CENTRAL AMURI, AND UPPER AWATERE DISTRICTS.

HUMBLY SHOWETH,—

THAT, in "The Railways Construction Act, 1878," provision was made for the construction of a railway from Amberley to Brunnerton, to connect the East and West Coasts of the Middle Island, the computed distance between these two stations being 110 miles.

That, in "The Immigration and Public Works Appropriation Act, 1878," a sum of £30,000 was appropriated for the commencement of the line from Amberley, and, in terms with such appropriations contracts have been let and are now being proceeded with from Amberley to the Waikari Valley, over a distance of fifteen miles, and this section of the line, or the greater part of it, may reasonably be expected to be opened for traffic in the course of a few months.

That, in carrying forward the railway further to the west from Waikari, there are differences of opinion as to what would be the best route to adopt through the central chain of Alps, but the two routes most in favour is one by the Hurunui and Hope Saddle, called the "Hope route," and another by the Waiau and Hope, or Doubtful Saddle, known as the "Hammer Plains route."

That both these routes have been thoroughly examined and reported upon by Mr. Foy, an engineer of high standing in the employment of the Government, during the years 1876 and 1877, whose reports upon the same have been laid before your honorable House in 1876 and 1878.

That, on the second reading of the Railways Construction Bill in last session, the Hon. the Minister for Public Works proposed that the question of route should be left open until the Engineer in Charge, Middle Island, could make a personal examination of the country and the various lines proposed. At the same time he submitted to the House a statement showing the sums proposed to be spent upon the line from year to year till the railway was completed.

That, from a report of the Engineer in Charge, Middle Island, of date 21st June last, your petitioners observe with much surprise that he has not confined himself to an examination of the various proposed routes between Amberley and Brunnerton, but he has gone into the whole general question of railway connection between the East and West Coasts, and has recommended lines from Otago and Canterbury to other parts of Westland which are in no wise related to the Amberley-Brunnerton line sanctioned by the Legislature.

That your petitioners have no wish to enter into the engineering and economic reasons given by the Engineer in Charge for his recommending that the trunk lines from south to north and west should be suspended for a time, but they beg humbly to submit, for the favourable consideration of your honorable House, a few particulars in connection with the extent and capabilities of these districts—of Hurunui, Amuri, and Upper Awatere—in which the Crown and your petitioners are interested, which will speak for themselves, and which are, in your petitioners' opinion, of sufficient importance to justify the immediate continuation of the railway from the Waikari Valley to meet the railway now making from Brunnerton into the Grey Valley at Ahaura. By the table of statistics and map accompanying this petition it will be observed that the Districts of Hurunui, Central Amuri, and Upper Awatere form a portion of the intermediate country between Amberley and the Grey Valley.