

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

PETITION OF MAYOR OF KUMARA AND OTHERS.

Presented by Mr. Seddon, 10th October, and ordered to be printed, 13th November, 1879.

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

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED RESIDENTS IN KUMARA, GREYMOUTH, HOKITIKA, GOLDSBOROUGH, STAFFORD, AND THE ADJACENT GOLD FIELDS,

SHOWETH,—

THAT your honorable House has resolved to expend the sum of £220,000 in constructing a railway between Hokitika and Greymouth, for the purpose of connecting those two towns and promoting the settlement of the intervening district.

2. That the railway as laid out is divided into three sections, by the Rivers Arahura and Teremakau.

3. That the two end sections—namely, from Hokitika to the Arahura, and from Greymouth to the Teremakau—are in course of construction, and give general satisfaction.

4. That the middle section—namely, that between the two rivers, on which no work has been done, and for which no tenders have been called—is laid out along the barren sea-beach, where there is a very small population and nothing to encourage settlement.

5. That there is a cluster of hills and terraces between the two rivers, and that, whilst on the seaward side of the hills the country is unsettled, and devoid of minerals and good timber, on the landward side there is a large population—the largest gold field in the colony—splendid forest, and rich soil.

6. That, by making a detour round these hills, the railway can be carried through the heart of the gold field and through all the centres of population—namely, Kumara, Goldsborough, Stafford, &c.

7. That the population which would be benefited by the proposed detour is upwards of 5,000, and that a reference to the returns of the late general election will show the difference of population on the two lines; the votes polled at the booths on the beach line being 37, against 1,726 polled at the booths on the inland route.

8. That the inland route will not have to cross a hill or a river, and will save the cost of two very large and expensive bridges over the mouths of the Waimea and Kapitea Creeks, which would be necessary on the beach line.

9. That the line along the beach will only serve to connect two towns, each being a seaport.

10. That the inland route will secure an immense and rapidly-increasing traffic in passengers, goods, timber, and coal.

11. That your petitioners believe that the coast line will never pay working expenses.

12. That they believe the inland route would secure traffic which would make it one of the best paying lines in the colony.

13. That it has been shown by contracts already let that the work can be done for less than was originally estimated, and that the probabilities are that the cost of the line, with the detour, will not exceed the sum appropriated.

14. That, owing to the cluster of hills before mentioned, it is impracticable to make branch lines into the country from the beach, except by following the proposed detour, in which case there would practically be two lines of railway required instead of one.

Your petitioners pray that your honorable House will take the foregoing representations into consideration, and order that the inland route may be adopted, or otherwise deal with the question as you may think fit.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

EDWIN BLAKE, Mayor of Kumara,
(And about 2,000 others.)

