

APPENDIX.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE.—COUNTIES BILL.

COPY OF CIRCULAR TELEGRAM AS SENT TO ALL CHAIRMEN OF ROAD BOARDS IN THE COLONY.

The Chairman, Road Board.

THE Counties Bill is being considered by the Local Government Committee of the House. Under this Bill the Governor in Council is authorised to retain in existence any road district, with power to amalgamate any existing road district, but all road districts, either retained or amalgamated, are, under the Bill, to absolutely merge in the county.

Section 4, subsections (20) to (27), and section 8: In retained and amalgamated road districts the Bill provides as follows: Franchise to extend to freeholders and residential occupants, as proposed for counties. Section 15: Board elected for three years. Sections 55 and 75: Retained road districts will levy a general rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ d. Section 83: And other rates as at present. Section 101: Will be subject to the present law as to special loans. Section 157: Will have control of district, roads, bridges, and ferries. New district roads to be 66 ft. wide. Section 250: Will continue to have control over existing district works. Section 319: And will have many of the improved and wider powers of the Bill.

You are invited to wire any objections or recommendations your Board wishes to make on the proposal to abolish road districts, or on any other provisions of the Bill, to Chairman, Local Government Committee, House of Representatives, Wellington, by 21st August. Telegrams up to one hundred words can be franked by you.

R. McNAB, Chairman of Committee.

REPLIES.

Ahuroa Road Board.—*Re Counties Bill:* This Board objects to Road Boards being abolished; should amalgamate only on petition from ratepayers. Poll of ratepayers determine whether counties or road districts be abolished.—W. L. SANDERSON, Chairman.

Akaroa and Waimui Road Board.—Our Board objects to Road Boards being abolished without sanction of ratepayers interested. We think fairest way would be for each road district to ballot for or against retention, and the majority of votes cast to decide. *Re franchise:* We think the present system far before that proposed in the Bill. We also think rating on unimproved value should be decided by ballot.—JOHN R. NEWTON, Chairman.

Albertland North Road Board.—Albertland North Road Board strongly object to general abolition of Road Boards, also to extension of franchise to non-ratepayers. They approve of triennial election.—W. B. FARRAND, Chairman.

Albertland South Road Board.—Albertland South Road Board resolved desirable franchise confined to ratepayer, as now. Many road districts too small. This Board thinks that no road district should be less than fifty ratepayers, and income of £60 from rates. Power of returning (retaining?) and amalgamating road districts be vested in County Council. Road Board election triennially. Local Board should have extended power for rating maximum amount for Road Board and County Councils, each six farthings, levied as now.—MARTIN GUBB, Clerk.

Anama Road District.—Anama Road District recently enlarged, and has now a rateable value of £255,000. The Board desires that the district be retained, and strongly objects to be merged in the county, as they can manage their own affairs more economically. The existing franchise is fair and equitable both for large and small holders, and the Board thinks that the proposed alteration eminently unjust, and desires to record its protest against the change.—EDWARD G. WRIGHT, Chairman.

Arai Road Board.—The Arai Road Board wish to be a retained Road Board. The district is large. Valuation £245,000, with yearly increase as the county becomes settled. The Board is, by the aid of Government loans, putting roads through the Crown lands, and prefer to look after their own work and expend their own money. Have no faith in the way county expenditure is conducted. If Board were merged are sure the district would suffer. Have no suggestions to make.—T. W. BILHAM, Clerk.

Ashley County, Conference in.—At a meeting held in Rangiora to-day of representatives of the several Road Boards in the Ashley County the following resolution was unanimously carried: That, in the opinion of this meeting, it is extremely undesirable that the present Road Board system should be discontinued in the Ashley County where the conformation and situation of the road districts render Road Boards the most effectual method of administration.—J. MARSHALL, Secretary Conference.

Avon Road Board.—Have posted to the Premier and to members of Parliament in County of Selwyn resolutions passed at a conference of Road Boards, and delegates are coming to Wellington to support same. Can you appoint a day for them to attend before your Committee?—A. B. MORGAN, Chairman.

Awatere Road Board.—My Board considers question of retention or otherwise of existing road districts should be decided by poll of ratepayers; that eastern portion of Omaka Road District should be amalgamated with Awatere; that instead of a freehold qualification the existing qualification under Counties and Roads Acts should be adopted, giving ratepayers votes in each riding in which their property is situated.—S. M. NEVILLE, Chairman.

Awhitu Road Board.—Awhitu Road Board objects to be included in the Counties Bill. Being extreme end of Peninsula, it would be most unreasonable to put this district in the category with