

FARM MACHINERY AND TRAILERS SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION

Final Report

December 16, 1969

Members:

Senator Wayne D. Keith
Senator Tom J. Frey
Senator Bass Van Gilst
Representative Perry L. Christensen
Representative Laverne W. Schroeder
Representative Eldon L. Stroburg

This Subcommittee held two meetings. The first meeting was of the Subcommittee only. We discussed what the problems were, how we should approach them, and who from the farm safety industry should be invited to our next meeting. The first meeting was very helpful in keeping the discussion of the second meeting pinpointed in the areas where we were searching for answers.

At the second meeting, held October 13, 1969, twelve other interested people beside the Subcommittee were in attendance. These names are listed in the minutes and for this report I shall refer to them only as they made comments. Mr. Watly of Ag-tronics, and the manufacturer of slow-moving vehicle signs, said that twenty-five states have enacted legislation concerning slow-moving vehicle signs, and that in three states, including Iowa, it is only permissive.

Mr. Glen Taylor of the Iowa Farm Bureau presented a written report, explaining their position and stated that their organization would discuss the subject at their annual meeting in November.

Dr. Norval Wardle, farm safety specialist of Iowa State University, noted that 50% of all farm accidents occur on county roads, while the Legislative interest is usually centered on state and federal highways. Mr. Wardle stated that the slow-moving vehicle sign was only half the answer. He also stated that accidents can be greatly reduced by the use of the S.M.V. sign along with the use of amber flashing lights. Dr. Wardle also recommended that legislation be drafted to require mandatory use of at least S.M.V. signs.

Mr. Taha distributed copies of the report prepared by the Department of Public Safety to the Subcommittee. This report covered S.M.V. signs, amber flashing lights, farm trailers, trailer

brakes, tow chains, vehicle population and road environment. He stated that the Department is charged with the responsibility of enforcing regulations and laws now in effect, and also it has the responsibility of establishing standards for lighting equipment. However, there is no separate division or personnel in the Department that has this as a separate and distinct responsibility. Mr. Taha further stated the Department has taken no official position concerning legislation to require mandatory use of S.M.V. signs or amber flashing lights, but has no objection to such legislation.

Mr. John Munger, representing the John Deere Company, said from the manufacturers' standpoint, it would be desirable to have safety standards in the hands of a state agency, rather than to legislate each needed change.

Dr. Wardle stated that tests by I.S.U. indicate that S.M.V. emblems and warning flashing lights should be required. He expressed doubt however that full compliance could be obtained by January 1971.

Mr. Edward Adams, Safety Specialist for the Farm Bureau, expressed reservations as to the practicality of requiring amber flashing warning lights for all slow-moving vehicles by 1971.

Mr. Craiger stated, in addition to the \$5 penalty clause for noncompliance, a grave penalty would be incurred if a non-complying vehicle were involved in a serious accident.

The question of brakes on farm trailers was raised. Dr. Wardle stated that this problem was being considered by the National Farm Safety Council at this time. He suggested that the Subcommittee might better consider speed limits for farm trailers. The Subcommittee was in general agreement that there should be a relationship between the weight of the towing vehicle and the weight of the towed vehicle if speed limits were to be established.

The question of safety chains was brought up for discussion. Dr. Wardle said this was another matter being brought up for discussion by the Farm Safety Council. The Subcommittee asked Dr. Wardle to inform them on any action or changes made by the Farm Council in regard to tow chains.

A suggestion was made that the Subcommittee go on record as favoring the enactment of Senate File 220, relating to a repeal of a \$5 registration fee on farm wagons. It was moved and seconded that the Subcommittee support the enactment of Senate File 220. Mr. Taha said the Department of Public Safety had made no real attempt to enforce the trailer regulations fee and act.

The Subcommittee went on record as favoring a study of the possibility of requiring rearview mirrors on all slow-moving self-propelled equipment.

The Subcommittee suggested that the Legislative Service Bureau prepare a bill which will require all new self-propelled motor vehicles designed primarily for use off the highway, but occasionally operated on the highway, at speeds of 25 miles or less, to be equipped with two slow-moving vehicle warning devices consisting of flashing lights and a reflective emblem. It was requested that the Commissioner of Public Safety be authorized to prescribe the design, method of mounting, and other pertinent details relating to both devices, and that such requirements be fully complied with by January 1, 1971. The Subcommittee also requested that a second section be drafted which will require that all slow-moving self-propelled motor vehicles including used vehicles be equipped with such warning devices after a deadline to be specified at a later time.