

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:  
REPORT OF HEARINGS OF JUNE  
12 AND 18, 1902, ON S. 4825**

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U. S.  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

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# REPORT OF HEARINGS

OF

JUNE 12 AND 18, 1902,

ON

S. 4825: TO PROVIDE FOR A UNION RAILROAD STATION  
IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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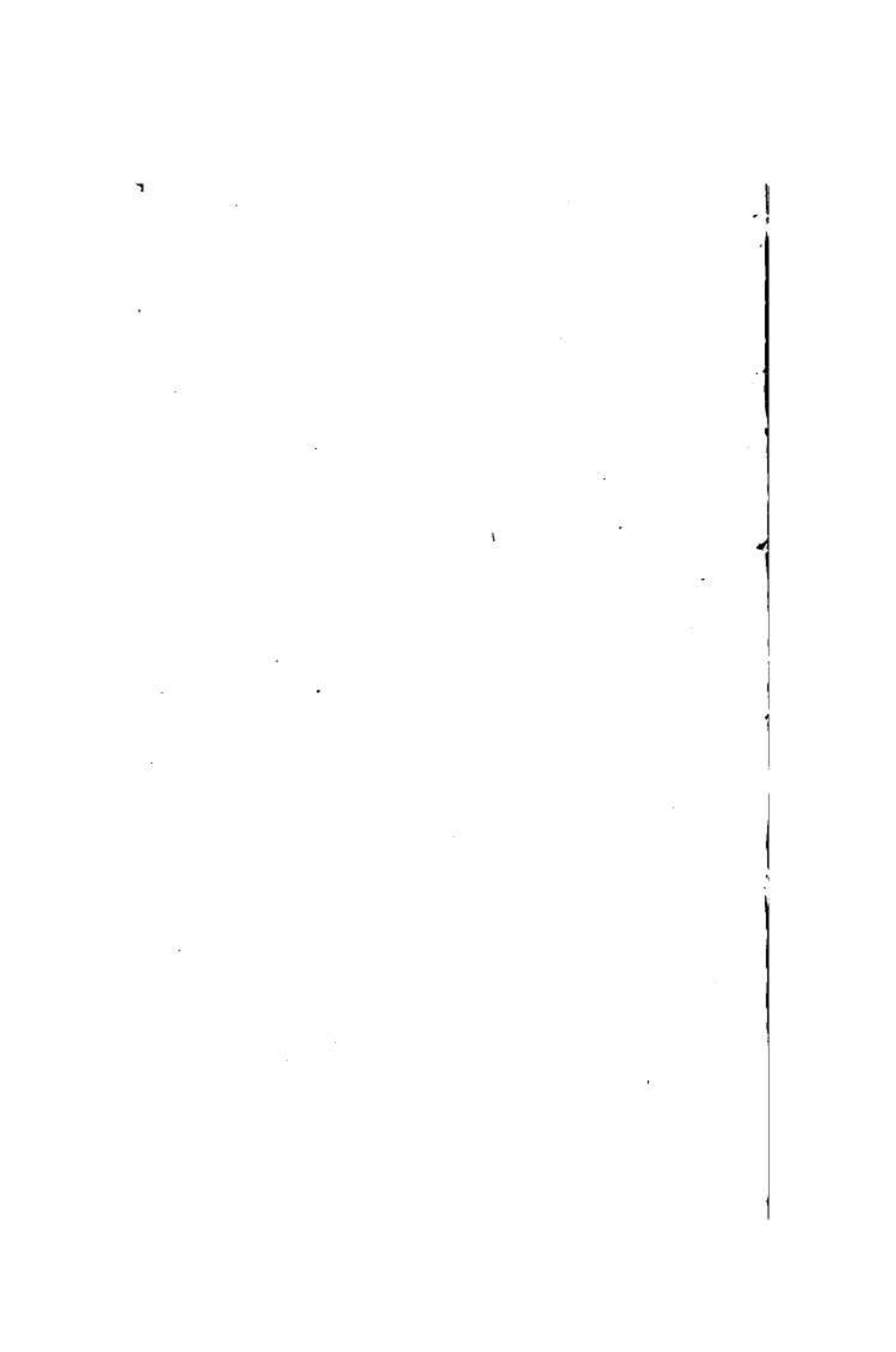
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CONTENTS.

	Page.
Statement of Mr. John P. Green, vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company .....	5
Statement of Mr. George E. Hamilton, local counsel for Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company .....	15
Statement by Mr. B. H. Warner .....	23
Statement of Mr. R. H. Johnson, chairman of the special railroad committee of the South Washington Citizens' Association .....	25
Letter from South Washington Citizens' Association .....	28
Memorial of South Washington Citizens' Association .....	32
Letter from Mr. S. L. Phillips .....	38
Letters from Mr. Albert Herman and Mr. I. Herman .....	38
Protest from citizens of South Washington, opposing amendments suggested by the South Washington Citizens' Association .....	40
Statement of Mr. William G. Henderson, president of the North Capitol and Eckington Citizens' Association .....	40
Letter from Mr. Vernon H. Whitman .....	43
Statement of Mr. M. I. Weller, representing the East Washington Citizens' Association .....	43
Statement of Mr. Evan H. Tucker, president of the Northeast Citizens' Association .....	45
Report adopted by Northeast Citizens' Association .....	47
Statement of Mr. William J. Frizzell, representing the Northeast Citizens' Association .....	49
Statement of Mr. Josiah Millard, representing the East End Citizens' Association .....	51
Resolutions adopted by East End Suburban Citizens' Association .....	54
Statement of Mr. Thomas W. Smith, president of the Washington Board of Trade .....	55
Statement of Mr. Irwin B. Linton .....	58
Statement of Dr. Morgan .....	60
Statement of Mr. M. D. Rosenberg .....	60
Statement of Mr. Herbert Giecy .....	62

APPENDIX.

Comparative statements showing public space now occupied, to be occupied under act of February 12, 1901, and to be occupied under proposed legislation by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company .....	66
Comparative statements showing public space now occupied, to be occupied under act of February 12, 1901, and to be occupied under proposed legislation by the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company .....	67
Report of Secretary of War on S. 4825 .....	68
Additional report of Col. Theodore A. Bingham .....	70
Senate report on union-station bill .....	71
House and Senate reports on Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, Fifty-sixth Congress, second session .....	94
House and Senate reports on Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Fifty-sixth Congress, second session .....	128
Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company act, approved February 12, 1901 .....	151
Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company act, approved February 12, 1901 .....	161
Letter from Mr. Thomas W. Smith, president Washington Board of Trade .....	169
Report of East Washington Citizens' Association .....	170
Letter from Mr. A. J. Buehler .....	171
Letter from Mr. W. Mosby Williams .....	171
Letter from Capt. J. P. Walker .....	172
Letter from S. S. Daish & Sons .....	174
Letter from President of Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb .....	174
Letter from the President of the Brightwood Citizens' Association .....	174
Newspaper articles submitted by Mr. Joseph Bradfield .....	175





## UNION RAILROAD STATION.

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COMMITTEE ON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Thursday, June 12, 1902.*

Present: Messrs. Babcock, Mudd, Jenkins, Mercer, Smith, Pearre, Wadsworth, Morrell, Blackburn, Stewart, Cowherd, Norton, Sims, and McAndrews.

The committee met at 10.55 o'clock a. m., Hon. Joseph W. Babcock in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen, of course it is understood that this meeting is called to take up the so-called union station bill, and Mr. Green, the vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, is present, and as he wants to leave the city as soon as possible, we will hear him first.

### STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN P. GREEN.

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I presume that the committee certainly must be at least generally familiar with the question presented by the bill. It is not a new one, except so far as the question of a union station is concerned. The question of location of the railroad stations in the District of Columbia has been before different committees of the House and Senate for thirty years past. It was thirty years ago when I first came here to talk about it, and it has been talked about pretty much ever since; so that the committee have the advantage of a general understanding as to what the merits of the question are.

As far as the special bill No. 4825 which now comes before you is concerned, I do not think I can define the position of the railroads on this matter any better than by quoting the language of the chairman of the Senate committee. He says that this proposition does not come from the railroads. They are satisfied with their present condition. But when the question of taking up the tracks on the Mall is considered, it is appreciated that the Mall was laid out for the purpose of forming a great approach to the Capitol, and that it is impossible to conceive any adequate treatment of the capital park system without freeing the Mall from the tracks.

When this situation was placed before the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which is the road I have the honor to represent, he replied after careful consideration that while he did not desire any change, yet he realized that if Washington is to have the proper development of a capital city in the true sense of that word and as originally projected the railways must leave the Mall, and that he was willing to concur in any adjustment of the matter which would be fair to the

stockholders of the company. From an economical standpoint, it is but right to say that the terminal charges at the proposed union station will be increased from 40 cents to \$1.20 a passenger car without any corresponding increase of passengers.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you not please make that clear to the committee, the increase of your expenditures?

Mr. GREEN. Owing to the increased cost and capacity of the building and the increased force to run it, the cost of the actual administration of that building will be \$1.20 for every passenger car that comes into it; and I beg to say that while that might seem a high price, yet in St. Louis, which has even a larger station than is proposed here, the cost is nearly \$3 a car; so that you can see that the chairman of the Senate committee is well within limits when he states that \$1.20 will be the actual cost of administering this union station.

The CHAIRMAN. Under the present situation, with several stations, can you state the cost of administering them?

Mr. GREEN. No, sir; but I can say that the cost is far less than it would be with one large station. In other words, it is easier to run two comparatively small stations than it is to run an enormous union station, just as it is easier to run two houses for two separate families than it is to put them in one great house and attempt to run that. As a matter of house economy I think that most of the members of the committee will recognize that as true.

The CHAIRMAN. Does the charge include the bridge?

Mr. GREEN. No, sir; that is the charge in the station.

Mr. COWHERD. The bridge belongs to the same persons.

Mr. GREEN. No, sir; I am speaking of the station charge. You know the St. Louis station, and you know that you have to walk about half a mile if you want to have your baggage checked. I mean that everything of that kind seems to increase in almost geometrical proportion. It is enormously expensive, one of the most expensive things in the world, to run a large passenger station.

The CHAIRMAN. You consider it undesirable on account of the additional expense?

Mr. GREEN. This is not a question of what the railroads may desire. The public have an interest in that question that is as important as that of the railroads, and so far as our Pennsylvania Railroad Company is concerned, we have never stopped at increased cost if it secured increased accommodation to the public. We believe that is the way to run railroads, especially when the work connected with it is what you might call a semipublic duty. Therefore, without reading further from the report, I would say that our feeling toward the question is not a mere financial one.

When the Pennsylvania Railroad came here, the first question that was discussed was, away back in 1872, whether the company would furnish to the city of Washington and to the people of the country a proper passenger station, and I remember very well that Colonel Scott said, "Yes, we will do that;" and the station that was put up at that date was on a par with the best stations we had on our line.

The station at Lancaster, Pa., was taken as the model for this station, which has long since become utterly inadequate to do the business. It is not disgraceful to us, because it is not our fault, but it is almost disgraceful to have a station like that in the city of Washington, crowded and jammed so that no one, either man or woman, can sit

there comfortably or go in or out comfortably; and we realize that. But while we have been anxious, and would have been glad to make that station one that would be a credit to us and to the city, yet, for the reasons known to the gentlemen of the committee, we could not. We have used every foot of the Mall that we had the right to occupy, but the enormous development of the South since our road came into Washington and the enormous passenger travel between Florida and the North have simply made that station a flea-bite compared to what it ought to be.

Then, when the question came up of getting suitable ground in the Mall, another matter came up in which you gentlemen here in Washington are more closely interested than anybody else can be—that is, the absolute necessity of removing the grade crossings in the city. It is too late to discuss that as a policy. It is the policy of the world, and it is the policy which has controlled in England ever since railroads began to be built; but it is only in the last fifteen or twenty years that the railroads in this country have realized that it is to the interest of themselves as well as of the public that the grade crossings should be abolished.

That is a difficult question here, and it is only a short time ago that the engineer commissioner of the District set himself to work, after we had thrashed over one scheme and another, and a plan was found for doing away with the grade crossings. That was provided in the bill of 1899, which requires an expenditure of \$3,000,000 on account of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad, to carry it into effect, counting the Long Bridge which is a part of the scheme. Therefore, when that became a law, and the Baltimore and Ohio bill became a law, we thought that the question was settled, and we went to work to rebuild the railroad.

It was after that had been done that we understood that the people interested in Washington and its prosperity thought that the original plan under which this Mall had been laid out ought not to be departed from, and that if a very extensive passenger station was put upon that Mall, and the business of the country north and south was brought into that station, practically the question of removing the railways from the Mall was settled, because it would hardly be right for anybody, for even the Government of the United States and the city, to waste the amount of money that it would require in the future to get rid of that station.

Therefore when that knowledge came to us, first, I think, through a commission that has that matter in charge, and afterwards through the Senate committee, when they came to us with the question, "Will you be willing to have the present legislation abandoned and to have a union station together with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad?" it was only then that we felt that after all the question was not settled, and that, like Banquo's ghost, it was up again.

But the policy of the Pennsylvania Railroad is as far as possible to meet the wishes of the people of the cities through which it runs, and I am only saying what is sound business sense when I say that, for it can not prosper unless it has the cordial support of the cities which give it traffic. Therefore in Newark and New Brunswick, and every large city between Philadelphia and New York, we are spending millions of dollars to do the very thing that is to be done here—remove the grade crossings; and so far as terminal stations are concerned, we