

RIGHT OF WAY TO WICHITA AND ARKANSAS VALLEY  
RAILROAD.

APRIL 6, 1886.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HALE, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 7637.]

*The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 769) granting the right of way through the Indian Territory to the Wichita and Arkansas Valley Railroad Company, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report as follows :—*

The policy of granting the right of way to railroad corporations through the Indian Territory having been recognized by acts passed in prior Congresses, and the conditions having been thoroughly discussed and decided in certain acts which have become laws, it only remains for your committee, in reporting on the bill under consideration, to carefully investigate the objects and purposes as well as the character and standing of the corporation asking the right of way, and if satisfied that said corporation asking for the right of way desires in good faith to construct such a line of road, provided said right of way can be obtained, and has the financial ability to do so, then a favorable report should be made.

The railway company asking the right of way in the bill under consideration was duly chartered by the State of Kansas, and intends constructing a line from the city of Wichita, in that State, to a point on the State line, near the town of Lisbon, in Chautauqua County, and from thence in a southwesterly direction through the Territory to Fort Smith, in Arkansas. Wichita is a city of 18,000 people, and has three important lines of railroad, to wit: The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé, the Saint Louis and San Francisco, and the Saint Louis, Fort Scott and Wichita, the latter being a line of the Gould system of roads in the West. This city is situated in the great agricultural belt of the State, and the importance of giving to this section railroad connection with Arkansas, and the head of winter navigation on the Mississippi River, is of the utmost importance. It will give an outlet through the Southwest to the large amount of grain raised in Kansas, and will also give to that section connection with the lumber regions of Arkansas, which will be of mutual benefit to the States connected.

The provisions of this bill give every safeguard to the Indians, and their rights are fully protected, as the bill is similar in this respect to the bills which passed the scrutiny of the House and Senate in the Forty-eighth Congress. Your committee is satisfied that the application for the right of way is made in good faith, and that the company

has the financial backing to construct its road should the privilege to do so be granted to it. The road contemplated by the bill enters the Territory about 50 miles east of a point where the Arkansas River enters the Territory, and then continues in a southeasterly direction down the valley of the Caney River to or near to a point where it empties into the Verdigris, and from that point runs in a southeasterly direction to Fort Gibson, in the Territory, and from thence in a southeasterly direction to Fort Smith in the State of Arkansas, the length of the road in the Territory being about 230 miles.

Your committee having adopted a form of bill differing in verbiage from the bill introduced, report the same as a substitute and recommend its passage, and that House bill 769 do lie on the table.

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