

1884.
VICTORIA.

RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION BILL.

PETITION.

EXTENSION OF THE MORWELL AND MIRBOO RAILWAY.

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 21st October, 1884.

TO THE HONORABLE THE SPEAKER AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF VICTORIA IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

The Petition of Landholders and Residents of the District of Mirboo :

HUMBLY SHEWETH—

1. That your Petitioners are residents of the district of Mirboo, being holders of land, in the improvement of which they have expended a large amount of capital, and they include a large proportion of the earliest settlers in the district.

2. That when your Honorable House passed the Railway Act of 1880, which authorized (*inter alia*) the construction of twenty miles fifteen chains of railway "towards Mirboo," it was confidently and generally believed that, long ere now, this district would have been in full possession of the benefits accruing therefrom; and that subsequent legislation would have provided for an extension of the line to the south, through the centre of the settled country, in accordance with the original scheme.

3. That owing to a series of untoward circumstances the expectations of your Petitioners and the public have not been realized, inasmuch as that the contract entered into under the powers of the Railway Act of 1880 is now only approaching completion, and no provision has been made for any extension.

4. That during the past four years your Petitioners have on numerous occasions brought under the notice of the Honorable the Minister of Railways, by petitions and deputations, the urgency of their requirements for railway accommodation into and through the district which has been created by their instrumentality. And your Petitioners have ample grounds for asserting that the facts upon which they have based their applications have not at any time been called in question.

5. That the enterprise of your Petitioners, their persevering energy, and their large expenditure of capital, as well as the fertility of the soil and the geniality of the climate of the country they have occupied, have been fully and universally admitted.

6. That the advantages which present themselves to your Petitioners are practically quite unattainable without the aid of a railway running through the centre of the district.

7. That such a railway is of sufficient magnitude and public importance to justify its construction being undertaken by Government in connexion with the existing railway system, of which it would form an essential part as a "through line," connecting the main Gippsland railway and the whole country to the north with the seaboard.

8. That from the extent of such an undertaking and its national character it lies far beyond the resources and scope of the local municipal council.

9. That even assuming that such a railway is made by Government, the local resources will be taxed to their utmost limit to provide the necessary means of lateral access to it.

10. That your Petitioners, with the utmost deference but with fullest confidence, avouch that the central extension of the Morwell and Mirboo Railway is absolutely necessary to the welfare of the district and to the revenue of the Railway Department.

11. That your Petitioners have not the remotest intention to disparage the claims of other localities to a full measure of railway communication, but a sense of justice to themselves and those depending upon them compels them humbly to record their firm conviction that investigation into all the circumstances would thoroughly establish the fact that the Mirboo district is on national, not less than on local grounds entitled to ample recognition, at the earliest possible date, in the apportionment of the funds devoted by the Legislature to railway construction.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honorable House may be pleased to take this Petition and the whole premises into consideration, and that you will thereupon see fit to authorize an extension of the Morwell and Mirboo Railway from its present termination for a distance of _____ miles, or thereabouts, to the south, in such a manner as to bisect the settled country and to form a link in completing the connexion with the seaboard, or such portion of the said extension as in your wisdom may be deemed expedient, practicable, and conducive to the general prosperity of the country.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

(Here follow 82 signatures.)

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