

Resolved, That a copy of the above preamble and resolution be sent by the governor of this state, to our senators and representatives in congress, and to our state agent.

Approved February 26, 1885.

NUMBER 6.

A MEMORIAL AND RESOLUTION IN REFERENCE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR WATERWAYS.

To the Congress of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We represent that the state of Minnesota, occupying as it does the heart of the continent and more remote from the sea boards and markets of the world than any other state, would respectfully represent.

First—That the bulky products of the state (principally cereals) are needed only in remote states and countries and the question of cheap transportation becomes one of paramount importance to the producers of the state.

Second—That all of the exports and imports of the state are now subject to exorbitant charges growing out of long transit lines, frequent transshipment in order to reach the only markets open to us by the three lines of railway, one waterway and one water and rail road as follows:

Railways, Chicago & Northwestern, Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, and Minneapolis & St. Louis.

Water routes, Mississippi river.

Lake Superior via Duluth. (Which is reached only by long [rail] routes with arbitrary rates.)

That the rail routes are now and have been since their construction pooled.

That these water routes are the only competitions with the rail in all of the enormous carrying trade of the northwest.

This competition has resulted in moderate charges during the season of navigation.

The all rail lines regularly advancing freight rates at the close of navigation.

The Red River of the North is now a factor in the problem, only as a feeder to the Northwestern system of railroads, but may ultimately be brought into the water system by bringing it into contact with the Mississippi and Lake Superior by canals. Such in the opinion of eminent engineers is entirely practicable.

These two natural water outlets have until within the last few years remained as nature left them, and have given but little aid in getting products to market cheaply.

Since A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight (1878) only was any comprehensive plan of improvement adopted to insure safe, secure and cheap navigation between the falls of St. Anthony and St. Louis.

Meagre as the appropriations by congress have been, by the exercise of great skill and excellent management the United States engineers have given us for the past year water enough in the channel of the Mississippi to allow the largest steamers with full loads to reach St. Paul from below for the first time. Since the commencement of this work the river channel depth has been increased from two and a half (2½) to four and a half (4½) feet.

These results already attained justify the belief that under the well digested plans the engineers in charge can, with the money now asked for by them, secure such a depth of water as will allow wheat to be transported from the falls of St. Anthony to the Belize and put on board of ships, to be conveyed to Europe, and flour to our South American and Mexican neighbors at freight charges not to exceed one-third (⅓) those now paid to reach the markets.

Wheat at eight (8) cents per bushel (freight) on board ship at the Belize means six million four hundred thousand dollars (\$6,400,000) per year saved to Minnesota on her present production.

Other states and territories adjacent are in like manner interested in this problem of cheap transportation.

The improvement of the Mississippi river between St. Anthony Falls and Cairo, and the consequent train of benefits, depends upon the carrying out of the plans which have been formulated by the engineers of the army after many years of study and examination, without aid or advice from anyone, and all the good results attained are due to their efforts and limited only by the humble means placed by congress at their command.

We have observed with great concern during the last few years that the work so well planned and successfully inaugurated by the engineers has been placed under the supervision of a newly created commission by interpolations in the appropriation bills.

This supervision we regard as not only unnecessary but hazardous to the best interests of our state, involved as they are in the completed improvement of the Upper Mississippi river. We believe that the parties who devised these plans will best execute them and the credit should rest in their hands.

In view of the facts stated in the foregoing preamble we would respectfully memorialize and petition the congress of the United States, in senate and house of representatives assembled, to make such liberal appropriations as will enable the engineers in charge to complete the work so successfully begun by them in as short a time as possible; therefore,

Be it resolved, That our senators be instructed, and our representatives in congress be requested, to present the foregoing preamble and this resolution to congress and urge upon that body liberal appropriations for the relief of the people of the northwest, by giving them improved water routes to the sea board both by the Lake Superior route and the Mississippi river.

STATE OF MINNESOTA,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, }
SAINT PAUL, May 6, 1885.

I hereby certify that the foregoing joint resolutions have been carefully compared with the originals on file in this office, and that the same are true and correct copies thereof.

FRED VON BAUMBACH,
Secretary of State.