

## NUMBER 9.

[H. F. No. 25.]

A JOINT RESOLUTION URGING UPON CONGRESS THE PASSAGE OF  
THE PENDING BILL FOR THE REGULATION OF INTER-STATE  
COMMERCE.

WHEREAS, There is now pending in the congress of the United States a bill to establish a system of national regulation and supervision of the inter-state commerce of the country, and for the control of railroad corporations doing business in two or more states on continuous lines, therefore,

*Be it Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota.*

That we respectfully urge upon congress the passage of said bill, and we instruct our senators and request our representatives to vote for the same.

The people of Minnesota cannot understand why there should not be the same competition between railway corporations as exists between all other forms of business enterprise. The people having created the railroads by grants of corporate privileges and largesses of lands or money, are entitled to all the benefits justly derivable from the same. And all combinations by pooling of business or earnings, to prevent competition, simply mean high rates of profit to the holders of railroad stock at the expense of low rates of earnings to the people. It is the duty of congress to so act as to insure the general prosperity of the many, for therein will be found the best guaranty for the success of the few. The prosperity of the people is a national necessity, the continued existence of railway companies based largely on fictitious or fraudulent capital, is not. Even should some of these companies be driven to the wall, under the pressure of unlimited competition, the railroads themselves will still remain, and they would, in all probability, earn a reasonable interest on the money actually invested in their construction. But if they did not, they would have no more to complain of than thousands of manufacturing, commercial, agricultural and mining enterprises, which have utterly failed under the fierce ordeal of competition. Railroad companies have no more right to ask that the government shall make them profitable at the expense of the people, than the owner of a mill, a shop, a farm or a mine would have to make the same demand. Unrestricted competition is the great force to which all men and interests in the world have to submit, and we see no reason why the common carriers of this country should, by the action or non-action of government, be permitted to make themselves an exception to the universal law.

The people of Minnesota do not ask that on long lines of railway the rate of charge for transportation of property shall be the same per mile for every mile hauled, but we do ask that the aggregate charge for a short distance shall not be greater than the aggregate charge for

a longer distance in the same direction. In other words, while we do not demand that the charge for ten miles shall be one-tenth of the charge for one hundred miles, we do object to making the charge for ten miles greater than the charge for one hundred miles. Neither do we ask that congress, or the commission to be appointed under the act of congress, shall fix minimum rates below which charges shall not fall, but maximum rates above which they shall not rise. We respectfully urge that nothing shall be done by congress that will lessen or limit the commercial facilities of the inter-continental portions of the nation. It is their right to reach the sea-coast and the external world, by the cheapest and best instrumentalities that civilization can give them.

*Resolved*, That the secretary of state telegraph the substance of these resolutions to our senators, and forward a copy of the resolutions themselves to the president of the United States senate and to the speaker of the house of representatives, and to each of our senators and representatives in congress;

And that our senators and representatives in congress be further specially urged and instructed to favor an amendment to said bill as in their judgment to endeavor to procure an enactment *provided, further*, That it shall be unlawful for any common carrier, subject to the provisions of this act, to charge or receive any greater compensation per ton, per mile, for the transportation of like kind or class of property, under substantially similar circumstances and conditions, for a longer than for a shorter distance, over the same line in the same general direction, or from the same original point of departure, or to the same point of arrival; but this shall not be construed as authorizing any common carrier, within the terms of this act, to charge and receive as great a rate of compensation per ton per mile for the longer as for the shorter distance.

Approved January 18, 1887.