

OPPOSITION TO BILL #533
DESIGNATION OF NEVADA HIGHWAY 375
AS THE "EXTRATERRESTRIAL ALIEN HIGHWAY"

Presented to the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
May 19, 1995

Dear Honorable Members of the Legislature:

I am a Rachel resident writing to voice my opposition to the proposed bill which would designate the highway through my town, State Route 375, the "Extraterrestrial Alien Highway."

I regret not being able to attend the hearing on this matter held on May 19, but Rachel is 150 miles from Las Vegas and twice that distance from Carson City, and prior commitments prevent me from making this journey. In lieu of my presence, I hope that this letter can be read into the record.

I am the principal activist seeking greater government accountability at "Area 51," the secret military base 25 miles south of Rachel. I have been living in Rachel for two and a half years, and I wrote the book, the "Area 51 Viewer's Guide," which helped bring this story to national prominence. As far as I know, I was the first to refer to 375 as the "Alien Highway," mentioning it on the cover of my book. As a self-appointed "public relations officer" for issues surrounding the secret base, I have hosted reporters from the New York Times, every major TV network, many worldwide magazines as well as our local Nevada press.

Before my arrival in Rachel, Area 51 was a "fringe" story dominated by conspiracy-oriented UFO buffs who made a lot of ridiculous claims. I made the story palatable to the mainstream media by sticking to the facts and concentrating on government accountability and not UFOs themselves.

There are some UFO stories emanating from Area 51 and nearby areas that I do not dismiss. I think some of the reports that the government has been working with alien hardware deserve serious attention. However, I do dismiss most of the UFO sightings made by tourists along 375. A circus of fantastic claims has emerged here, and this is distracting both for serious UFO research and to democratic accountability at the Groom Lake base.

In summary, these are my objections to the bill....

1) Only a single business in Lincoln County is in a position to benefit from this bill--the Little A'Le'Inn in Rachel. This establishment endorses all UFO claims as real and promotes the same extreme anti-Federal philosophy that led to the Oklahoma City bombing. The U.N., they say, has joined forces with a secret New World Order to first take away our guns and then enslave us,

but the Inn has plenty of guns and is prepared to fight off the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms when it comes. It is not the role of the legislature to promote a single business like this, especially when its views are so inflammatory. There are many people in Rachel who feel that the A'Le'Inn has already become too powerful and that their recent success has disrupted the balance of power in this tiny community. This bill will give them still more economic power.

2) Since most tourists drive here from Las Vegas, they will find gas and lodging there and are unlikely to spend much money in the rest of Lincoln County. These tourists show little interest in stopping before they get to Rachel and the "Black Mailbox."

3) Any "Alien Highway" signs erected on this remote highway would be irresistible to tourists and would be promptly stolen.

4) Highway 375 is adjacent to a highly sensitive and poorly marked military border. Both the anonymous federal guards who patrol it and the local sheriff's department who handles the prisoners have shown no leniency toward tourists who accidentally wander across the unfenced line. Trespassers are routinely made to lay face down in the dirt or to stand with their hands over their heads for up to two hours. They are given the maximum fine and get no breaks from the local Justice of the Peace. This bill and the publicity it creates would encourage just the sort of naive and ill-equipped tourist who would get lost and suffer such a fate.

5) Although this bill is sponsored by Assembly members, there is another citizen who feels that this is "his" bill. The Ambassador Merlyn Merlin II of the Saucerian Embassy of Christ probably sits before you at this hearing. Ambassador Merlin believes he is an extraterrestrial who has been sent to this planet to prepare us for the coming alien arrival. While I cannot pass judgment on Merlin's claims, I can attest to the fact that he makes a very poor ambassador. Merlin has no understanding of the privacy or private property of others. He latches onto people who he believes are "chosen" and he won't leave them alone. A number of people in Lincoln County and elsewhere in Nevada have felt that Merlin was stalking them. Some people believe that Merlin is not an alien at all but that he is in fact a human with some profound personal problems. If this true, than passage of this bill encourages him in this delusion. He will forever be claiming that he pushed this bill through the legislature, and he will take it as proof of his legitimacy.

A couple of years ago, Merlin invited Secretary of State Cheryl Lau to a meeting in California. Ms. Lau wrote Merlin a letter politely declining, but she made the mistake of addressing him by his chosen title of "Ambassador." Since then, Merlin has been showing the letter to people as "proof" that the State of Nevada officially recognizes his ambassadorial status. Passage of this bill, which he had been promoting, can only provide further affirmation and encourage his continued intrusive behavior.

6) Many serious environmental, fiscal and worker rights issues remain unresolved at the Groom Lake base, the existence of which the military still does not fully acknowledge. The secret base has for years dumped toxins onto the land and into the air, and it has avoided payment of millions of dollars in county property taxes. Institutionalizing a "lighthearted" approach to the area distracts from these issues and makes it much more difficult to have them taken seriously.

7) Serious UFO researchers also cringe at the lighthearted approach to their work. They have been dogged for years by the "little green men" jokes, and this bill doesn't help things any.

8) The proposal cannot help but send the message to the public that they can see UFOs here, which I believe is false. Most of the objects people are seeing in the sky now are flares and other manifestations of the frequent war games on the Nellis Range. If there were UFOs here once, they certainly won't perform in this current well-publicized atmosphere.

9) The popular UFO viewing site that this bill will indirectly promote is the "Black Mailbox," a rancher's mailbox on 375. Because this is the only landmark on this lonely stretch of highway, this is where the "true believers" come to see whatever it is they expect. Unfortunately, this is a private mailbox that has already been vandalized. This single ranch family in the Tikaboo Valley, often harassed by watchers, will bear most of the burden of the increased tourist traffic, with no benefit to them.

10) This is a remote and potentially dangerous desert area that is not "visitor friendly." It is a mistake to make it too easy for people to come here. The visitors who come to this area now are fairly sophisticated: They have to do some research at least to find out where this place is. Giving the highway a friendly-sounding name will inevitably attract the very naive kind of tourist, coming up for the day from Las Vegas, who has done no research and taken no precautions and is bound to get in trouble as a result.

In short, most of Lincoln County appears to be indifferent to this bill. Only a single isolated business would significantly benefit, while serious research and activism will be hindered. Someday in the future, when the story here has "matured" and problems at the Groom Lake base have been resolved, this bill might be appropriate. For now, though, I ask that you let it drop.

Sincerely,

Glenn Campbell