

'Yes' vote urged to save rails

ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Voters in at least nine Maryland counties have their vital interests on the ballot in the form of Question 16 which would allow the state to step in and save nine rural rail lines.

The Maryland Agricultural Commission has unanimously gone on record urging all Marylanders to vote "Yes" on Question 16 which appears on the November 2nd ballot. The proposal would

amend the Maryland Constitution to allow the state to spend funds on railroad improvements.

But, as Commission Chairman William Kleinwachter of Preston says, "The question, as worded on the ballot, does not make it clear what is at stake. The legal wording refers to "internal improvements" and does not mention railroads.

"What is involved," Kleinwachter said, "is authority for the Maryland Department of Transportation to spend funds for desperately needed repair work on the nine rail lines involved. At present, the Maryland Constitution forbids the state or its agencies from spending money for such purposes.

"The lines, eight on the Eastern Shore and one that comes from the Pennsylvania State Line through Carroll County to Frederick, are presently so badly deteriorated that it is impossible to provide adequate service over them, much less think about providing more service.

"If they can not be quickly repaired they will die from not being able to do the amount of business needed to keep them viable. The state has contracted with the new Federal rail operation, Con-Rail, to operate them and to

help subsidize the operation on a day to day basis, but no provision has yet been made to do vitally needed repair work. Con-Rail doesn't have the funds to do it and unless Question 16 is approved by Maryland voters, the state won't be able to do the repairs.

"The state money involved would not come from bonds but would come from the regular transportation trust fund which is administered by the Maryland Department of Transportation. The long range goal is to get the lines upgraded so that they can be operated at a profit and then turned over to solvent, private rail firms.

"Loss of these lines would pose a great threat to agriculture and many related agri-businesses in Frederick, Carroll, Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, Dorchester, Wicomico and Worcester Counties which now depend on these lines for heavy movement of bulk goods such as fertilizer, feedstuffs, chemicals, equipment and packaging materials. There are other, non-agricultural businesses which now use these lines and would prefer to use them more if they can provide adequate service at reasonable speed. Condition of much of the trackage of these lines now is so poor that a bare minimum speed

Chester County Extension staffers attend PSU seminar

WEST CHESTER, Pa. - Virginia Bush, chairman of Home Economics Advisory Committee, and Katherine Smiley, member, Executive Board of Directors and Home Economics Advisory Committee, were among nearly 300 volunteer and professional leaders all across Pennsylvania who were invited guests of the Cooperative Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University at "Seminar on The Family - 1976".

Cooperative Extension Service staff, civic groups and governmental agencies interested in improving the welfare of Pennsylvania families.

Katherine Smiley participated in a panel discussion on her function as an advisory committee member in "Designing Programs for the Future."

Trudy Dougherty, Chester County Extension home economist, presented a slide presentation on "Learning to Live With Inflation, It's Here to Stay." The slides described the many workshops, newsletters, and multi-county efforts to help families evaluate their financial security.

The conference, held at the University Park Campus of Penn State October 13 and 14, included leaders from the

and service can be provided.

"It is a question of spending a reasonable amount of money now on the part of the state in a gamble to save a vital service that would cost much more through higher transportation costs, in the future to replace.

"Consumers have a stake also. Loss of agricultural production in the areas served by these lines, or high unit costs for food produced in these key Maryland agricultural counties brought on by higher transportation costs, will hurt everyone," Kleinwachter concluded.

Featured speakers at the seminar included James M. Beattie, Dean of the College of Agriculture and director of the Cooperative Extension Service at Penn State; Thomas B. King, associate Extension director; Helen E. Bell, coordinator of Extension family living programs; Emory J. Brown, assistant director for Extension programming; Mary Allen Jolley, director of public affairs, American Home Economics Association; and Richard C. Hyde, senior vice president of Hill and Knowlton, Inc.



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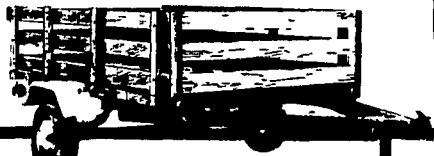
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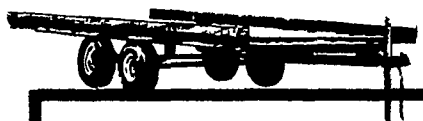
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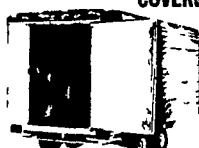
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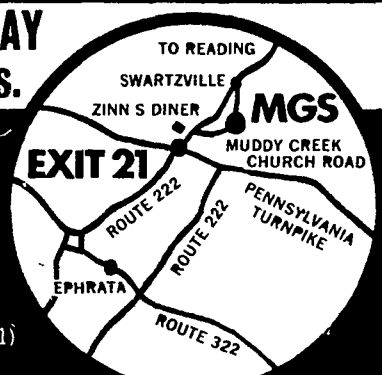
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