

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE
51st LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN TVEIT, on MARCH 30, 1989, at
1:00 p.m. in Room 410 of the State Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: SENATORS: Larry Tveit, Hubert Abrams,
Bill Farrell, Jerry Noble, Larry Stimatz, Cecil
Weeding, Bob Williams, John Harp

Members Excused: Senator Darryl Meyer

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Greg Petesch, Legislative Council

Announcements/Discussion: CHAIRMAN TVEIT announced the
hearings on House Bill 56 and House Bill 709.

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 56

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE WHALEN, District 93 explained that his bill was a result of driving back to Montana from Iowa and not realizing they were back in this state until they reached Alzada. The bill requires that the signs which are presently in place be replaced by the ones on the diagram. SEE EXHIBIT 1. It will give the travelers a greater feeling for Montana. He stated that the cost would be \$35,000 for the first biennium. The Highway Department estimates that it will be approximately another 10 years until the others wear out.

List of Testifying Proponents and What Group they Represent:

Bonny Tippy, MT Inkeepers Association
Don Ingels, MT Chamber of Commerce

List of Testifying Opponents and What Group They Represent:

None

Testimony:

BONNIE TIPPY, MT Inkeepers Association stated that they support House Bill 56.

DON INGELS, MT Chamber of Commerce stated that the welcoming and farewell signs would be a nice exclamation point for the tourist and traveling industry.

Questions From Committee Members: SENATOR WEEDING asked Jesse Munro what the special revenue account.

JESSE MUNRO, Acting Director for the Department of Highways stated that the special revenue account is from their gas tax money and GVW money. This would just be giving the Department additional spending authority to spend in the biennium \$25,000 to put up sign in 4 locations on the interstate.

SENATOR FARRELL asked about Interstate 90 and whether there would be a sign put up there.

JESSE MUNRO stated that there will not be one there, because of the overpass at the border, you would have to be about 15 miles into the state before you could put it up. The signs for the primary road are much smaller than the ones for the interstate.

CHAIRMAN TVEIT asked about the \$35,000 for the first year and what it would be after that.

REPRESENTATIVE WHALEN explained that the way the \$35,000 was computed. On the interstate, 4 of the 5 entrances and exits will be done and also the one at Lolo, this will cost \$8,000 a piece which amounts to \$32,000 and the one at Alzada will cost \$3,000.

CHAIRMAN TVEIT asked Jesse Munro what the total cost will be.

JESSE MUNRO stated that it is around \$110,000. This amount would be spread out over a number of years. The reason why this bill has drug on for a long time is because originally the bill did require the Highway Department to erect these all next year and the Department did not feel that they could afford that.

Closing by Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE WHALEN stated that his purpose for offering this bill is to welcome people to this state. It is important to give people a good feeling about this state, and these signs will do that.

DISPOSITION OF HOUSE BILL 56

Discussion: None

Amendments and Votes: None

Recommendation and Vote: SENATOR WILLIAMS MOVED that HOUSE BILL 56 BE CONCURRED IN.

MOTION FAILED ON A 4-4 ROLL CALL VOTE.

HEARING ON HOUSE BILL 709

Presentation and Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REPRESENTATIVE M. HANSON, District 100 explained House Bill 709, stating it to take the money from the coal boards impact fund and use it along with \$2.6 million. Bighorn County has been prioritizing Highway 14 to be used along with other highway funds to oil this road. This road is in terrible shape. It is used for recreation as well as logging and coal mining.

List of Testifying Proponents and What Group they Represent:

Ernie Schmidt, Wyoming Sawmills Inc.
Rusty Rokita, Big Horn County
Bill Gosnell, Executive Assistant, Department of Highways
Tom Ebzery, Attorney representing NERCO
Jim Mockler, MT Coal Council

List of Testifying Opponents and What Group They Represent:

None

Testimony:

ERNIE SCHMIDT, Logging Manager for Wyoming Sawmills explained that he has travelled on good gravel roads, but has a hard time thinking of this road as a "gravel road". It is more a shale road which is very has many curves and blind corners. He stated they use this road very intensely and spend a lot of time and money repairing wrecks which have occurred just over the last six months. They haul around 3,000 loads of logs. The benefits to the state for improving this road would be the safety as well as the federal timber receipts.

ERNIE SCHMIDT stated that the timber being brought down was appraised by the mill in Sheridan, it is federal timber and the way that system works is they deduct costs off the value of the timber to come up with the net value. One of the biggest costs for reducing the value of the timber is the difference between paved and unpaved haul roads. That 14 miles of road doubles the cost they figure for hauling that timber and reduces the amount they get for the timber, which reduces the amount that comes back to the counties.

RUSTY ROKITA representing Bighorn County expressed support for House Bill 709. The County Commissioners asked that he clarify that while they do support this bill, they do have a preapplication in front of the coal board and did not want that to be misconstrued as lack of support. He turned summarized information regarding the result of not fixing Highway 14. SEE EXHIBIT 2.

BILL GOSNELL, Executive Assistant for the Department of Highways expressed support for House Bill 709 for several reasons. Big Horn County receives money from the Federal Aid Program to build a road. Presently there are two projects going on, Busby South, North Section which is a section of 6.5 miles and there is funding for that project. The second one is the one in this bill, the Busby South Section which is 7.9 miles. There is a coal board grant, where the Department has received money to match by Big Horn County to be completed by the same time as the North Section project. The Department would like to tie them together, which would be a better cost to the county.

TOM EBZERY, Attorney from Billings representing NERCO which operates at Spring Creek Mine and is serviced by this road. They support House Bill 709.

JIM MOCKLER, MT Coal Council stated they support House Bill 709. The money is now designated from the Coal Board to this project, it is not part of the general fund.

Questions From Committee Members: SENATOR HARP asked Bill Gosnell how much money is left in this biennium to repair this road.

BILL GOSNELL stated the Coal Board is saying \$6.3 million of which \$2.8 million would go to Big Horn, the Treasure County is looking at another secondary, and then Rosebud County is another \$200,000.

SENATOR WEEDING asked Hershel Robins where the coal board is with regard to this.

HERSHEL ROBINS stated that in 1983 these highway projects were denied by the legislature, the same year they cut back the federal funds. In 1985 a bill was put through mandating the coal board to fund highways in the impact area. He explained that they put \$200,000 into the Busby road and the county matched that. The project was then earmarked for \$2.8 million with a county match of \$2.6 million. The treasure county road which over \$100,000 was put into. They had no match money and are asking for \$4.375 million to do that road. What makes Big Horn number one, is because they met their criteria of having match money for the project.

Closing by Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE M. HANSON closed the hearing on House Bill 709 stating that the 400 miles identified as impact road in the late 70's when the coal was first started, less than 100 miles of that have been addressed.

DISPOSITION OF HOUSE BILL 709

Discussion: None

Amendments and Votes: Senator Yellowtail will carry House Bill 709.

Recommendation and Vote: SENATOR WEEDING MOVED that HOUSE BILL 709 BE CONCURRED IN.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment At: 2:00 p.m.



SENATOR LARRY TVEIT, Chairman

LT/pb

senmin.330

ROLL CALL VOTE

SENATE COMMITTEE HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Date 3/30/89 House Bill No. 56 Time 2:05

NAME	YES	NO
VICE CHAIRMAN MEYER		
SENATOR ABRAMS	✓	
SENATOR FARRELL		✓
SENATOR WEEDING	✓	
SENATOR NOBLE		✓
SENATOR STIMATZ	✓	
SENATOR HARP		✓
SENATOR WILLIAMS	✓	
CHAIRMAN TVEIT		✓

Secretary
Pat Bennett

Chairman
Larry Tveit

Motion: Be concurred in. Motion
failed on a vote 4-4.

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

March 30, 1989

MR. PRESIDENT:

We, your committee on Highways and Transportation, having had under consideration HB 709 (third reading copy -- blue), respectfully report that HB 709 be concurred in.

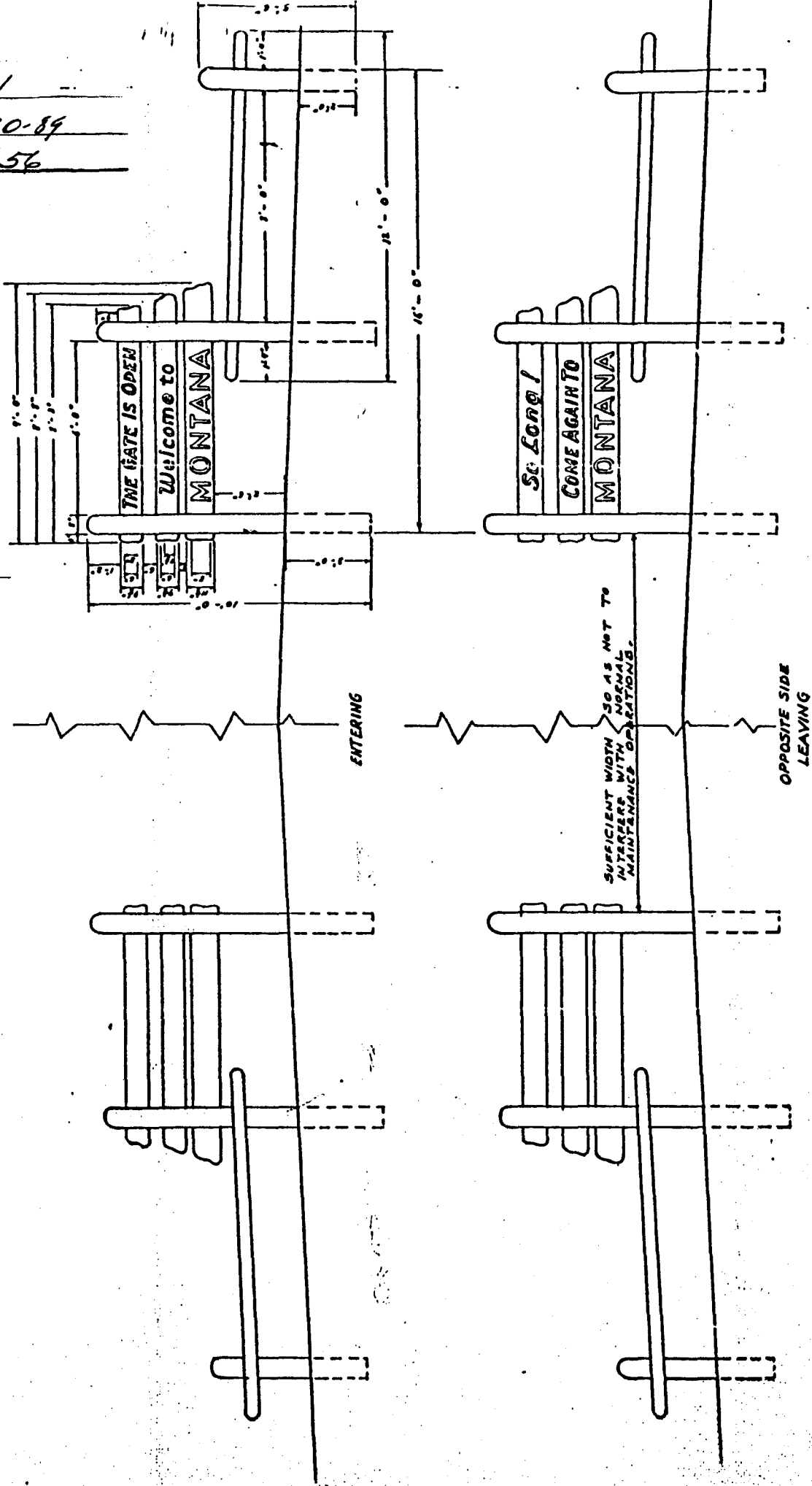
Sponsor: Hanson, M. (Weeding)

BE CONCURRED IN

Signed: *L. J. Tveit*
Larry J. Tveit, Chairman

*J.C.
3/30/89
3:30 p.m.*

EXHIBIT NO. #1
DATE 3-30-89
BILL NO. 71856



STATE ENTRANCE MARKERS

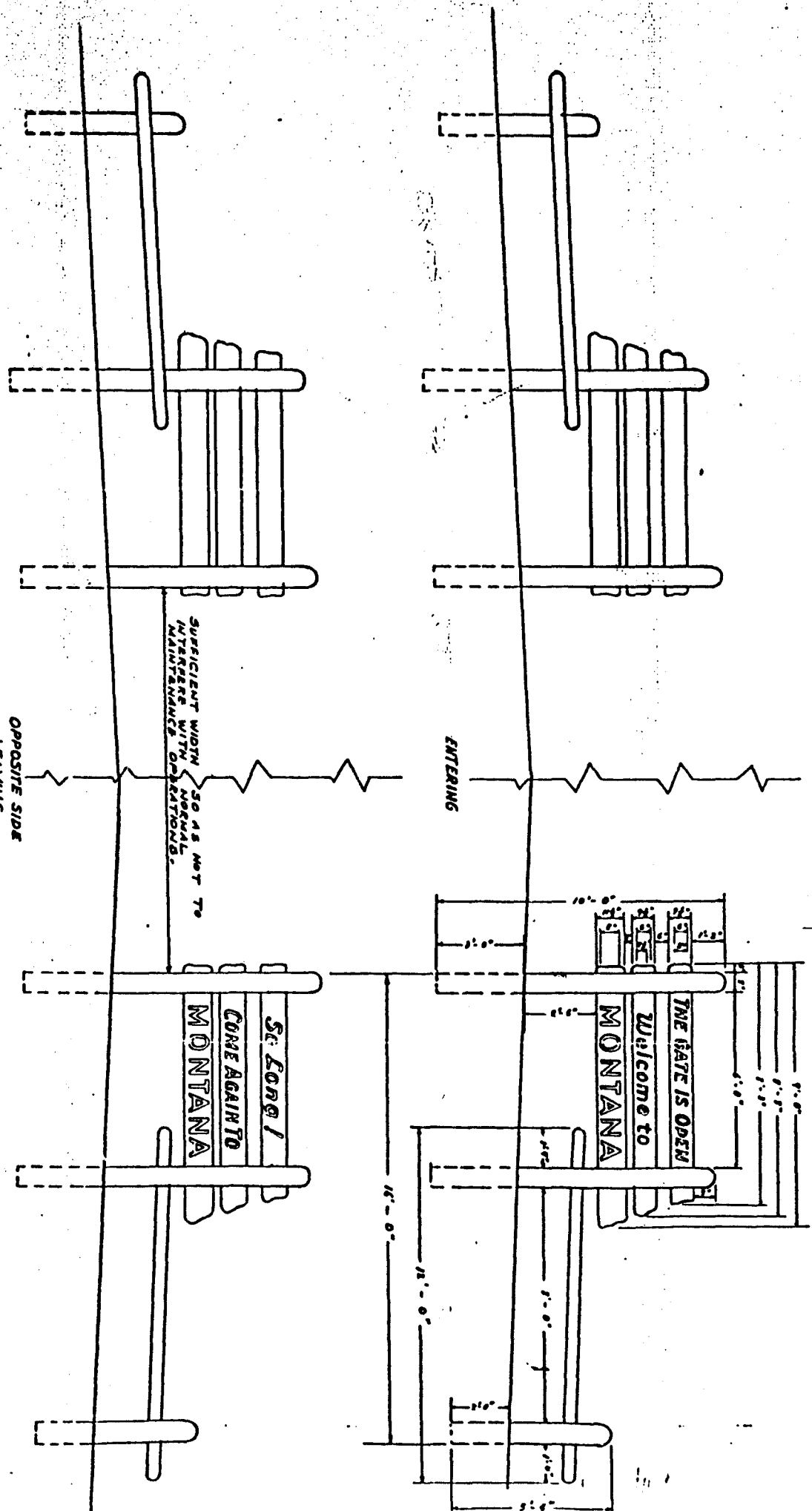
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LETTERING ROUTED AND PAINTED WHITE



THE GATE IS OPEN

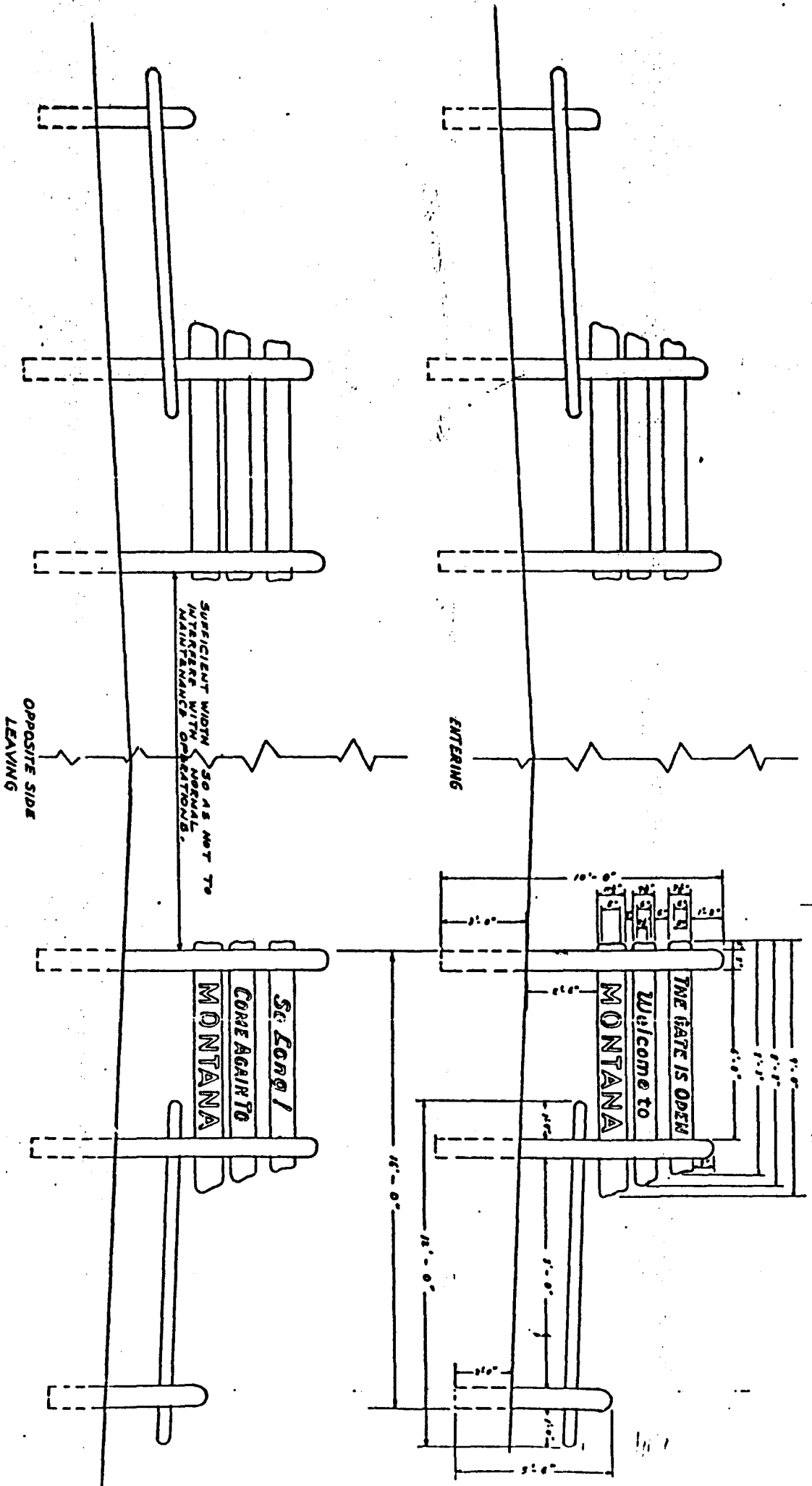
Welcome to

MONTANA



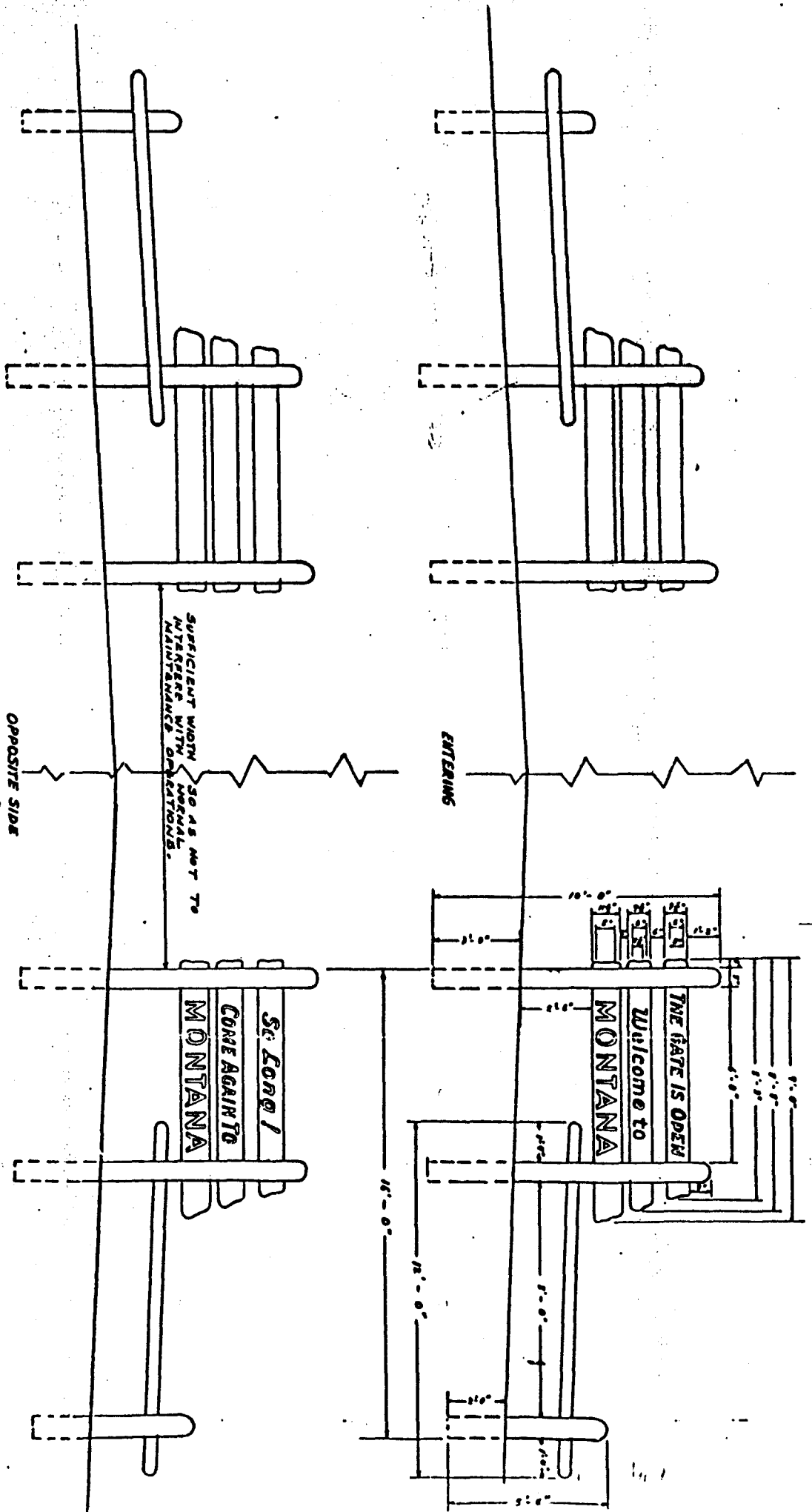
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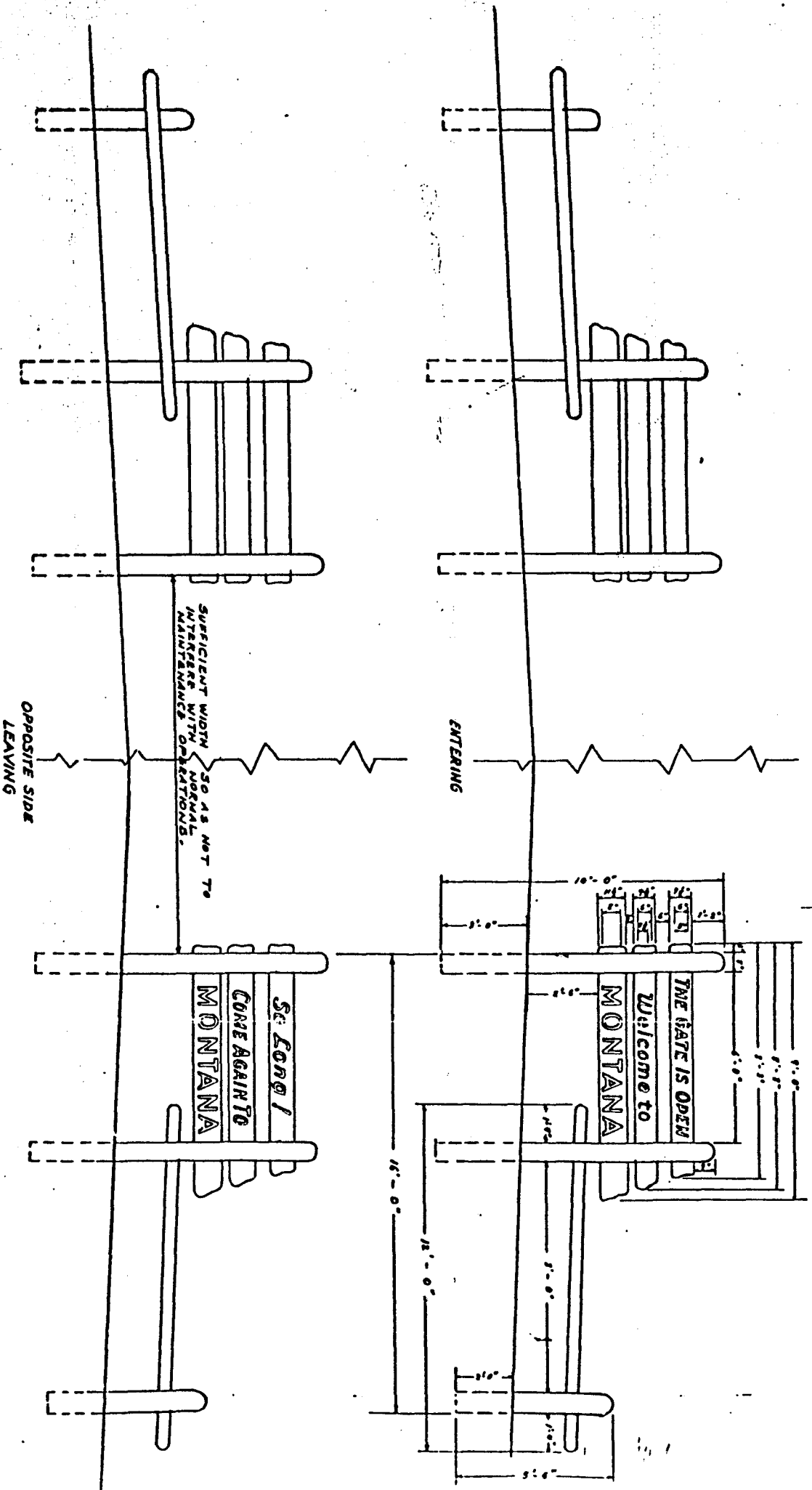
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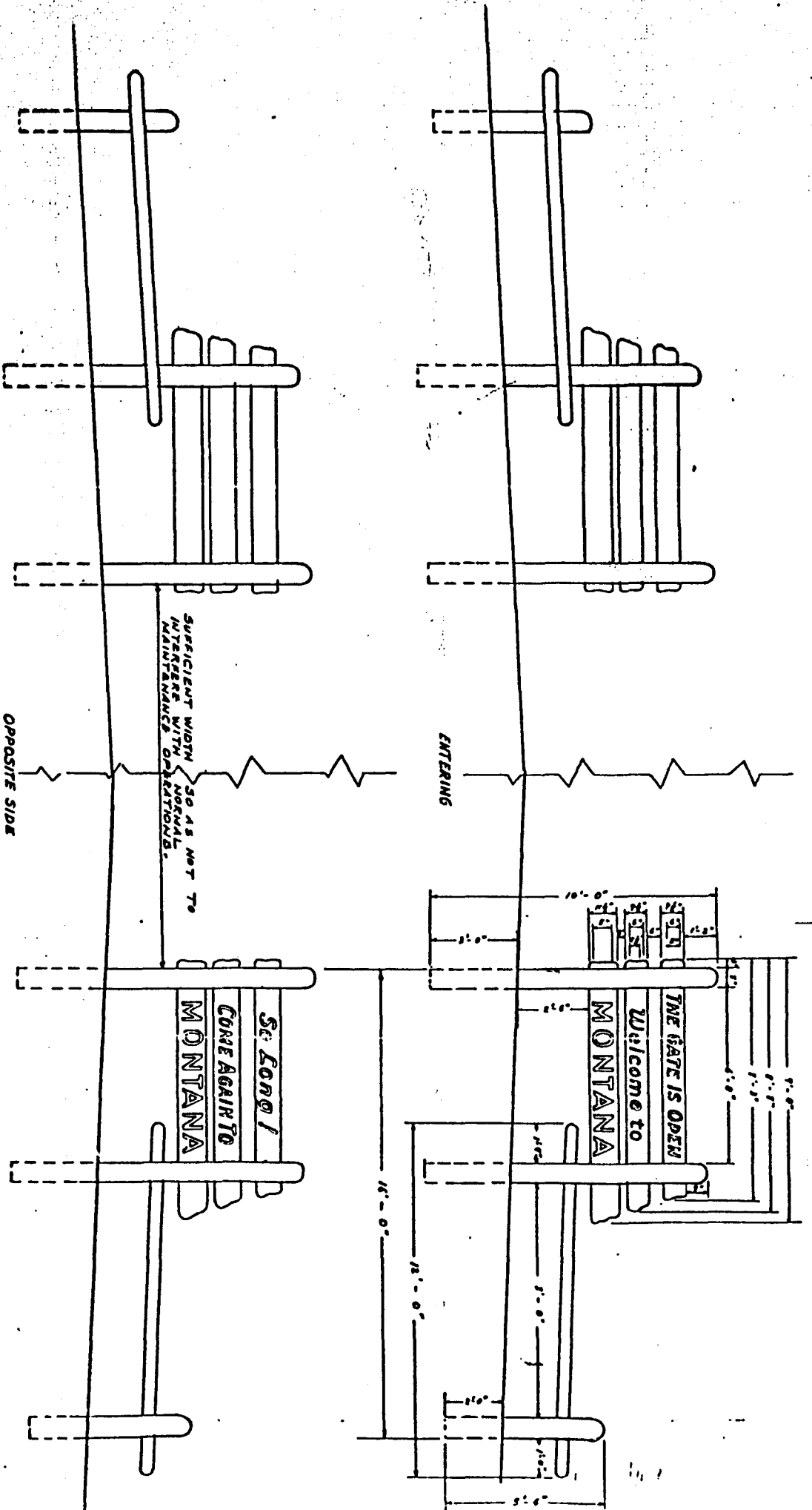
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LETTERING ROUTED AND PAINTED WHITE**



STATE ENTRANCE MARKERS

POSTS AND RAILS STAINED DARK BROWN
LETTERS ROOFTED AND PAINTED WHITE

SENATE HIGHWAYS

EXHIBIT NO. 2

DATE 3/30/89

BILL NO. HB 709

X/ Draft w/mod

Preliminary Draft

*3/30/89
Changes need to be entered*

HIGHWAY #314
SPECIAL REPORT
March 29, 1989

Prepared for:

BIG HORN COUNTY

Courthouse Building
Hardin, Montana 59034
(406)665-3520

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Mr. Alvin Torske, Chairman
Ms. Shelly Boeckel, Member
Mr. John Doyle, Member

Prepared By:

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Hardin, Montana 59034
(406)665-3355

