

the time when your office is just a few miles away, than it is when it's many miles away to be with us at one of our regular conventions.

I am indeed proud and honored to introduce to you Frank Turner, the Director of the Bureau of Public Roads.

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**ADDRESS**

**"OUR SPECIAL GOALS IN THE  
FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM"**

By

**Francis Turner, Director  
U. S. Bureau of Public Roads**

It's always a pleasure to meet with this Association. A great many things have happened since your last annual meeting up in Portland, and I'll take a few minutes to review some of those that to me seem to be the most significant.

First, perhaps we should take a look at the calendar and it reminds us that we are now into the second 50 years of our Federal-aid highway program. Certainly it appears likely that the challenges ahead of us in the next few years will be greater and even more diverse than the many that we have faced as an organization, as groups, and as individuals, up to now. The development of most significance during the past year has been the creation of the new Department of Transportation, which, as you heard the other day from Mr. Bridwell, was officially activated on the 1st of April. I don't know whether April 1 has any particular significance for the creation of this particular department or not, but anyway, it was activated on that date.

The new Department brings together under one head a number of the transportation agencies and programs in the Federal Government, most of which have been more or less going on their individual tracks for a number of years. Now you have seen and read, I'm sure, that the new Act brings together some 35 or 32, or 30, or some other number of agencies or groups having to do with transportation in the Federal Government. Well I've been looking hard to find all of these but without success so far. The agencies that are in the new Department are those with which you are familiar. The others either have not yet been brought in, are to be created at some time in the future, or in some cases, may be imaginary.

Actually, the agencies that you are acquainted with and that you have seen on the charts of the new Department are about the only agencies that have actually been brought in at this time. The cabinet level grouping of these is a recognition of the urgency of taking a very careful and dispassionate look at the Nation's total transportation system and needs, rather than its several bits and pieces, and this is an effort to improve the coordination among all the elements of our transportation system.

The Department has about 92,000 employees, including some 5,000 who were transferred from the Bureau of Public Roads. About 45,000 of the total employees come from the Federal Aviation Agency, now redesignated the Federal Aviation Administration. About 35,000 employees come from the Coast Guard, including both uniformed and civilian personnel. Another 125 or so are from the St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation; and about 175 from the Interstate Commerce Commission. That at the present time is the major structural grouping of the new Department. So you can see that the agency that you are familiar with in carrying out the road program is rather small in terms of numbers of people who have been transferred to the new Department. We do have about \$4.5 billion of the roughly \$6 billion budget in the new Department, so that the highway program of which you and I are a part, represents about three-fourths of the Department's total dollar budget volume.

Now despite the reorganization involved in all of this, it's highly important in my opinion that there be no substantive change in the traditional proven partnership relationship that has existed between the Bureau and the State highway departments throughout the life of the Federal-aid program.

As to the Bureau's field organization, through which most of you have your contacts with the Bureau, the principal, immediate change in setting up the new Department will be that you will see a new title attached to our regional offices. They will now be referred to as "Regional Federal Highway Administration Offices," and the present Regional Engineers are designated on an interim basis as "Regional Federal Highway Administrators." This is to give recognition to the additional activities that have been assigned to them under the National Traffic Safety Agency which was created last year, and the transfer to them of certain functions from ICC.

Now, so much for that. Most of you are familiar with, and I'm sure very happy about, the release of the frozen Federal-aid highway funds as announced over last weekend. An additional \$350 million supplementing the \$750 million previously

scheduled for release for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1967, was made available on April 1. The actions have now brought the total amount available for the fiscal year to \$3.825 billion. This is \$175 million short of the \$4 billion figure which we had estimated on July 1 of last year would be the amount we would be able to release during the year. I recognize that \$4.4 billion was apportioned last October for the fiscal year 1968, and the Trust Fund would have supported something more than the \$4 billion we had planned to release during fiscal 1967, but, playing it conservatively, we had planned to release funds during fiscal 1967 at the rate of \$1 billion per quarter. As you know, those plans were changed, but with the restorations that have now been made, we are back up to within \$175 million of the amount that had been planned for the fiscal year 1967.

Over the weekend, announcement was made that half of the unobligated balances carried forward on June 30 of last year, and which we froze, would be released to you effective last Monday. Those totaled \$515 million, made available as of last Monday, and the other half totaling another \$514 million, will be made available effective July 1. So the net result of these actions is to bring the program back almost to the level which had been contemplated before the cutback action of last November 23. Additionally, we are removing the restrictions which had been placed on the program with respect to the use of the so-called ACI type of financing, so that now ACI projects are not to be charged to the fiscal 1967 limitation. This will be of special interest to several of you in this North Atlantic region. We also have removed the requirement for the special 10 percent holdback accounting, whereby you had to keep a record of obligations for the purpose of voluntarily reducing by 10 percent whatever allocations we had given you. We have removed that requirement.

So all in all, we have gotten the program back to about where it was prior to the November 23, 1966 announcement.

Now, with all of the funding and other problems, we still have been making progress in the Federal-aid program, very fine progress. Our last report showed a total of 23,724 miles of the Interstate System actually open and in use. This is about 58 percent of the mileage. Construction was under way on another 5,650 miles; and all of the remainder, except about 1,500 miles, is in the pipeline in some form or other. At the present time less than 4 percent of the 41,000 miles of this System remains in preliminary status. Most of this remaining mileage is non-controversial. We know what the problems are, if any, and in most cases the projects will move right ahead without difficulty. Included however, are some very difficult

problems, principally in the urban areas. While these are tough indeed and have caused us problems up to this time, I feel confident that we'll hurdle them, as we have others in the past.

Now, with 58 percent of the Interstate System open to traffic, both passenger and commercial users are reaping the enormous benefits of greatly increased safety, savings in time and money, and more rapid and efficient movement of people and goods. On the regular ABC Federal-aid programs progress continues at a very high level. Since the accelerated program began in 1956, we have completed or have under way more than 225,000 miles of construction contracts on the primary and secondary systems and their urban extensions. This is a very, very substantial program providing enormous benefits to the public that we're serving.

As highway engineers and administrators, we can take justifiable pride in this visible progress, but we must never forget for a minute that there are other challenges ahead of us that are not measured by mileages and dollars. Probably the most serious of these is that we do everything possible to reduce the continuing toll of deaths and injuries from accidents on our highways. Last year, 52,000 fatalities occurred in motor vehicle associated accidents. Auto accidents are the biggest cause of death and injury among Americans under 35 years of age. If the present rate continues, one out of every two of our people may expect to be injured in a motor vehicle accident at some time during his life. This is a rather startling statistic, that half of us in this room can expect to be involved in an accident that produces personal injury. Obviously then, we who are responsible for highways have a very grave responsibility to build safety into our new highways and to remove the accident hazards on the older ones. When I speak of highways, I'm talking not only about the riding surface, but also the shoulders and the rights-of-way, and whatever parts of the adjacent land that we may have some control over.

True enough, traffic accidents are due to any one of many factors, usually to a combination of several of these. More often than not, it is some factor other than the highway that is the contributing or major cause. But still, it is clearly the responsibility of the Bureau and the State highway departments and our people to provide the safest and the most foolproof roadway and roadside that is possible within the limits of available funds; and if our funding is not adequate to do what in our opinion is the right job, then it is our responsibility to provide the leadership to make the recommendations for the necessary additional financing that in our judg-

ment is required to do the job. Aside from building safety into the new Interstate and other highways, we need a far stronger effort to remove the boobytraps that exist on the older highways. Many of these boobytraps you and I have actually built into the highway system. It's our responsibility to remove them. Our 50 years of Federal-aid highway experience can be put to no better use than in trying to minimize the senseless killing and maiming that occurs on our highway systems.

Progress is being made and we are working at an encouraging rate on the so-called spot improvement program, which was inaugurated about three years ago with the announced goal of eliminating or removing all of these hazards by September of 1969. Now, nearly all States have completed their inventories of hazardous locations and have developed work plans to correct them. We have reviewed more than 2,200 spot improvement projects around the country and additional ones are coming in all the time. Just as one example, which I choose from a State outside of this region, Iowa, for example, four bridges were widened and improved under this program. In the three years prior to the widening the bridges had been the scene of 17 accidents in which seven persons were injured and there were five fatalities. In the first full year following the reconstruction no accidents of any kind have been reported. These are tangible benefits and this is the kind of thing that I'm talking about.

This program has great potential, but I'm not convinced that the potential is being fully exploited at the rate that is necessary to meet the 1969 deadline and the goal that we've set for ourselves in this field. We must step up our efforts beyond the mere making of inventories and plans. We must do something about the plans that we have developed. There is a tremendous amount of beneficial work to be done on this program, not only in widening bridges, as I've just mentioned, but in widening shoulders, traffic lanes, realignment of curves, improving sight distances, reconstruction of intersections, provision of protected left-turn slots, protection of railroad grade crossings, installation of proper guardrailing, lighting, uniformity in signs, signals and markings, and many other things.

Likewise, we need to move faster and more intelligently in removing some of the worst accident hazards—those lethal objects which now exist too close to our road surfaces. Accidents involving cars running off the road and striking such things as trees, light poles, sign supports, bridge abutments and other appurtenances which you and I have put there, are all too frequent and all too often have tragic results.

Even a guardrail, which we put up supposedly to save lives, is all too often destroying lives when an automobile leaves the pavement and crashes into it, the unprotected ends of it. Now these are all things which we can and must do in the area of responsibility which you and I have and which is ours and ours alone. We must not fail to perform to the very utmost of our ability. We have the ability, let's perform.

In regard to roadside obstructions, the Bureau has issued several memoranda on the subject, the latest and most comprehensive of which was an IM of last August; but of greater importance is the report of a Special AASHO Safety Committee covering a study of the problem in depth and presenting enlightened recommendations to cope with the problem. This Report is the product of some of the best minds in the highway and traffic safety field and it is an AASHO operation. It is off the press today and is being sent to you immediately. We're going to consider it as the authoritative guide for us to follow in this area of assuring safer roadsides. With this guide in hand, now let's get together and push real hard on this program and assign to it the very top priority which in my opinion it must have.

Before leaving the subject of highway safety, I should mention the new TOPICS program. We've devised an acronym here for easy reference. TOPICS—those letters stand for Traffic Operations Program to Increase Capacity and Safety. It has the twin purpose of relieving traffic congestion and enhancing traffic safety in our cities. It is to some extent a spot improvement program in the urban areas. The relatively new policy involves expansion of the Federal-aid primary system, a very radical step which we have taken in interpreting our own law, which will permit us to select the principal streets and downtown grids in cities of 5,000 or more population and permit these routes to receive Federal aid for certain specified kinds of improvements related to activities which will increase traffic capacity and safety as well. This program, I believe, has great potential for the years ahead. I think you're going to hear much more about it and I hope that we will be able to get additional funds for this particular program. It is especially important in view of the constantly increasing urbanization of our country and the pressing need for some kind of relief of the urgent traffic congestion problem in our cities. You and I know we are not going to be able to make much headway in this particular field for many, many years, at the rate at which we have funds available to us and at the conventional way in which we are attempting to resolve the problems. We must do a spot improvement type of activity in which we take the critical spots, do them

first, and then hopefully come back at some future date and do the other things that are desirable but do not produce as large results in terms of increased safety and capacity.

I have devoted a lot of time to highway safety because, as I've indicated, to me it is the biggest problem and the greatest challenge in our entire area of responsibility; and I believe it will continue to be for as long as you and I can see into the future. In the next 50 years, if this 52,000 per year traffic toll is maintained, we'll be killing 2.5 million people, to say nothing of the injuries and economic waste that's involved. In recent years we have devoted increasing attention to the human and social values of highways. Certainly the preservation of life and the elimination of accident hazards transcend all of the other social values.

Another social value certain to increase in importance in the years ahead is highway beautification. The traveling public has indicated quite strongly that it is interested in esthetics, as well as safety and a smooth ride, on the highways that it is paying for. Congressional hearings began last week and will continue for about another 10 days, concerning legislation to finance both the beautification and the safety programs out of a new special highway safety and beauty trust fund, with revenues earmarked for these specific purposes. The proposed legislation which is identified as House Bill H.R. 7797, introduced by Congressman Fallon, would authorize an appropriation of \$160 million for the fiscal year 1968, and \$220 million for fiscal year 1969. By far the bulk of both years' appropriations would be for landscaping and scenic enhancement. This is the heart of the beautification program, although the control of billboards, and to a lesser extent junkyards, is obviously receiving a great deal more publicity when we talk about the highway beautification program. It is unfortunate that it does—it's only a minor part of the effort, but it is the part that is receiving most of the notoriety, publicity or whatever you want to call it.

Since passage of the Highway Beautification Act of 1965, States have made commendable progress, despite the difficulties of the program. This includes the landscaping of 644 highway projects, acquisition of 3,162 scenic strips, and construction of 285 safety rest areas. Of particular importance is the provision of rest areas which serve both esthetics and safety. Progress toward the effective control of outdoor advertising and junkyards is more preliminary in nature and is not making as good progress, but still a great deal has been accomplished. We don't know the outcome of the hearings and it may be that from the legislation now being considered there will be some new ground rules to govern this program.

Now I want to refer briefly to another important area of social and human values. Both the 1966 Highway Act and the Transportation Act contain requirements for special consideration for parklands, conservation areas, historical sites and similar facilities. The Bureau shortly will be issuing more detailed instructions for cooperation in this matter with appropriate agencies. In floor debate on this provision, it was brought out that the legislative intent was much broader than would appear to be indicated by the appropriate section of the Transportation Act. Chairman Kluczynski of the House Public Roads Subcommittee in particular interpreted the provision to apply to preserving the integrity of neighborhoods, businesses, schools and churches, among the other social and human values which are to be given full consideration. You'll hear a great deal of argument pressed on you and me that this is the all important part that is to be considered in highway design and location. But in the floor debate Chairman Kluczynski and other members also cautioned that this requirement was to be very sanely administered; that highways in and of themselves were also an important value objective; and that the value objective of highways might in many cases even have a higher claim on land use than would parks and historic sites. So while we are going to be hearing a great deal more about other values, we must keep these in perspective. We do have a responsibility to provide adequate transportation which of itself is also a community and public value, at least equal to, and in my opinion frequently exceeding in the individual case, the value of some historic sites, parks and other values. But we're obviously going to hear more about this whole problem, and I caution you that it is a subject that commands more of your attention.

Urban areas, urban problems, will get increasing attention. In 1940, 57 percent of our population lived in urban areas. By 1990 we estimate that 73 percent of our Nation's population or about 220 million people will be living in the metropolitan areas. This is more people than live in the United States in total at the present time. The problem is brought into sharper focus by the fact that even now nearly half of all of our motor vehicular travel occurs on the city streets, although those city streets account for about only one-eighth of our total public street and road mileage. This is part of the reason for the TOPICS program that I mentioned earlier and for the other plans that we've talked about.

Problems are so pressing and so huge that we must use imagination, innovation and radically new, but still workable solutions, in solving some of these problems in the urban areas. It's the reason that we've been trying to develop the



multiple-use concept for using air space over, under and alongside of freeways in the urban areas, for replacement housing for businesses and for any other appropriate needs in the city. This is what we refer to as the joint development concept. It is designed to make maximum use of both space and funds. We have a lot of evidence that the low cost improvement to existing streets of the TOPICS type and the use of the latest traffic engineering techniques and traffic control devices, can double the traffic capacity of an existing street and increase average travel speeds by 25 percent, at least. There is also some hope in legislation that is being proposed by the Administration which would make Federal-aid funds available for parking, for terminal facilities, fringe parking lots on the outskirts of a number of our large cities. The study leading to the President's proposal was a part of the Bureau's TOPICS program. We must also give increasing attention to measures which will increase our existing street capacity in terms of moving persons rather than vehicles. In this, I'm obviously referring to more utilization of buses. I believe that it's time for us to give a great deal of serious consideration to the increased capacity that is available on the facilities that we're now designing and building and those that we already have, by encouraging the utilization of more buses to move some of the "people-load" that we have to accommodate. We are rapidly reaching the point where this is going to be the only practical way to increase capacity where we cannot continue to add lanes alongside of lanes and increase the size of our freeway facilities. We're going to have to find ways to carry the persons movement load on much of the facility as we now find it.

Of the several other studies under way, either entirely at the Federal level or in cooperation with the State highway departments, I mention only the revised estimate of the cost of completing the Interstate System. Work is progressing at a good rate on this, but I would remind you that January of 1968 isn't very far off and we will have to have these estimates and reports early in the summer so that we can consolidate them, get the report ready and submit it to Congress early in January, as is required.

Just recently, we set up the machinery for reporting costs for additional work on previously constructed parts of the Interstate System, parts which did not comply with the recommendations in the AASHO Safety Committee report which you will have in a few days. We are asking you to make a line-item inclusion in the cost estimate for the work that would be needed to bring the Interstate System as it is already completed, to an acceptable safety level—an acceptable safety level

being that which is recommended in this AASHO report. These additional costs we intend to add to the new estimate of cost of completing the Interstate System, so that we will be including in our cost estimate to Congress those costs involved in going back and doing some additional work on previously completed sections, in the name of safety. I believe this is an important contribution we can make and I urge you to pay particular attention to it.

Even though most of us won't be around long enough to see the result we have an important part in the kind of transportation system which this country will be using for at least 50 years into the future. This is an even greater challenge for highway engineers and highway administrators than we have heretofore faced. We're intimately and consciously involved, and properly so, in a much broader role than just the highway program alone. There is no doubt that the highway role is the dominant part of our whole transportation system now, and that it will continue in its dominant position for just as long as you and I have any concern with it. But, on the other hand, because of that dominant role, you and I, who are responsible for the highway program, carry in our hands a corresponding dominant position of responsibility to insure that our efforts be sufficient in both amount and quality. I urge you to accept and step up to this leadership with promptness and firmness. The largest measure of proven experience that is available is within our own profession—and so we have a responsibility to see to it that it is used wisely and well, for the benefit of our employers—whom we sometimes refer to as Mr. and Mrs. America. Thank you.

**Mr. Holden:** Thank you Frank, for a very fine look into the future through the eyes of the Bureau.

For a look into the future through the eyes of AASHO, we have with us a gentleman well qualified to present to us this picture. Alf Johnson was born in Arkansas; his experience has been with the Arkansas State Highway Department after graduating from the University of Arkansas with a B.S. in Engineering, served through various positions in the Department to Chief Engineer, and at various times, interim terms as Director of Highways; served as Vice-President and President of the Southeastern Association of the State Highway Officials, and Vice-President, first Vice-President and President of the American Association of State Highway Officials; serving as Executive Secretary, now as Executive Director, from 1955 to the present time. As I'm sure you're aware, Alf has received many honors and has been active and is active in many committee and other engineering activities.

It is my pleasure to present to you our Executive Director of the American Association of State Highway Officials, Alf Johnson.