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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Statement by Alan S. Boyd, Secretary of Transportation, prepared for a Press Conference, 2:30 P.M., April 22, 1968, Room 8A, Department of Transportation Building, D. C. 20590

We are sending the Federal-aid Highway Act to the Congress this afternoon and because it departs from traditional highway legislation in several important ways, I thought it would be useful to go over it with you.

We believe this bill lays out the first comprehensive program for solving urban highway problems that has ever been written.

It is not ours, alone, much as we would like to claim all the credit for it. It reflects months and years of study and thought by the Congress, by Highway Engineers, by Architects and City Planners, by just about everyone concerned with relationship between transportation and the city.

Basically, it asks the Congress to authorize the expenditure of several billions of dollars for Federal aid for highway construction. But the most significant thing about the bill is not necessarily the money but the ways in which we propose to spend it.

The largest share of the money will be used to finance the completion of the Interstate Highway System. About 6,000 miles of the system are in metropolitan areas and about half of that mileage remains unbuilt. We are asking the Congress to extend the completion date for the Interstate System from 1972 to 1974 and to add \$8.340 billion to the present interstate authorization. That will give us a final cost figure for the Interstate System of approximately \$50.640 billion.

The rest of the bill represents the results of a second look that has been taken at the way we build highways in our cities -- a second look that was asked for by the people in and near the cities who have to live with those highways.

One result of that second look is an increase in money for a program called TOPICS -- an acronym for traffic operations program to increase capacity and safety.

We are asking for \$250 million a year for that program, which consists of increasing the traffic capacity of streets and boulevards that already are in place as an alternative to building new expressways.

This is done by improving the coordination of traffic signals; adding left-turn lanes to avoid having one car waiting to turn jam up traffic for a block or more; building pedestrian overpasses; creating special turn-out areas where trucks can load or unload; setting up reserve lanes for buses.

We have been working with cities on programs like this on a small scale for several months now. We have found that the capacity of streets can be increased by 15 to 25 per cent by making such adjustments. We now believe the program merits larger-scale investments. The \$250 million would be made available on a 50-50 matching basis. This would double the amount of Federal money now available for urban highways other than interstate highways.

We propose -- again for the first time -- to provide Federal funds for parking spaces.

The bill would make it possible for us to pay 75 per cent of the cost of fringe parking spaces if they were tied in with mass transit systems that would distribute people to the downtown area.

Another "First" in the bill would make it possible for states to spend up to 2 per cent of their allocation for advance acquisition of property for highways. The law forbids this now. As a result, highway planners often are forced to sit and watch whole communities or industrial parks built on land they know full well will be needed for a highway one day. This will would make it possible for them to buy land as many as seven years in advance of actual need. It will cut eventual costs in many cases. It will make it easier for cities to plan land use.

The details of the next subject are not in the bill, but we have advised Congress we would like to change the ground rules under which homeowners, farmers, businessmen and others are compensated for property that is purchased for highways.

Fair market value does not always cover the cost of changing houses; setting up a new business in another location; or starting a new farm. We will propose a new formula within the next month.

On highway beautification -- you are probably aware that we have not yet received authorization for fiscal 1968. Since it is so late in the fiscal year, the bill proposes to pick up the program in fiscal 1969 with authorizations of \$85 million in each year for three years. This would provide \$5 million for outdoor advertising control programs; \$10 million for screening junkyards; and \$70 million for landscaping, the purchases of scenic easements and other measures.

Finally, on automobile safety, we are asking for an increase in the budget for safety research and for a continuation of the automobile and highway safety programs.

These programs are beginning to save lives. But in order to maintain their effectiveness, we must continue to invest in research. For that reason, we are proposing a gradual increase in research funds to a level of \$40 million by 1971.

We are asking the Congress to continue the Highway Safety Program.

The figures included for this program -- the figures in section 6 -- do not really speak for themselves.

This is a program under which we have published standards covering driver education, vehicle inspection, alcohol, highway design and other areas. If you just read the figures in section 6, you might get the impression that the program tapers off in 1971. What the figures actually mean is this: Congress has already authorized us to obligate a total of \$267 million -- \$67 million of that authorized for fiscal 1967; and \$100 million each for fiscal 1968 and fiscal 1969. These authorizations extend for two years each, so we now have authorization to obligate funds through the end of fiscal 1971. We have obligated, so far, only \$27 million of that money -- partly because of a limit of \$25 million that was placed on this year's budget. So we still have \$240 million.

So we are asking the Congress to add \$50 million in 1970 and another \$75 million in 1971. I emphasize this because the fact that the amounts requested in 1970 and 1971 -- if taken by themselves -- would seem to indicate a tapering off of the program. Actually, because of the carry-over of the authorization we expect to have the authority to obligate a total of \$225 million in 1970.

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HIGHLIGHTS - PROPOSED FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY ACT OF 1968

To meet the growing costs of the Interstate System, particularly in and around urban areas, section 2 of the Highway Bill revises the schedule of authorization of appropriations for the Interstate by increasing the amounts for fiscal years 1970, 1971, and 1972 to \$4 billion annually, and by adding new authorizations of \$4 billion for fiscal year 1973 and \$2.225 billion for fiscal year 1974.

Section 5 authorizes appropriation of the following sums annually in fiscal years 1970 and 1971 from the Highway Trust Fund for the ABC program:

Federal-aid Primary Highway System -----	\$ 450,000,000
Federal-aid Secondary Highway System -----	300,000,000
Primary and Secondary Urban Extensions -----	250,000,000
	<u>\$1,000,000,000</u>

This section would also change the method of financing forest highways and public land highways from the general fund of the Treasury to the Highway Trust Fund.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Section 6 provides for continued support of state and community highway safety programs begun under the Highway Safety Act of 1966 by authorizing appropriations of \$50 million for fiscal year 1970 and \$75 million for fiscal year 1971.

Section 7 extends the highway safety research and development programs with authorizations of \$30 million for fiscal year 1970 and \$40 million for fiscal year 1971.

HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION

Section 8 of the bill would authorize \$85 million from the general fund of the Treasury for the highway beautification program for fiscal years 1969, 1970, and 1971, thus putting these authorizations on the same fiscal year basis as the biennial ABC highway program authorizations.

ADVANCE RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION

The Secretary may advance funds to the states for advance acquisition of rights-of-way on the Federal-aid systems under provisions of section 9. This implements the objectives of the "Study of Advance Acquisition of Highway Rights-of-Way" sent to Congress June 30, 1967, by facilitating the orderly and beneficial relocation of persons, businesses, farms, and other users of property while at the same time minimizing rights-of-way costs.

This program known as TOPICS (Traffic Operations Program to Increase Capacity and Safety) involves Federal, state and local cooperation to improve traffic operations on certain heavily traveled city streets and highways. Section 12 of the bill authorizes \$250 million from the Highway Trust Fund for each of the fiscal years 1970 through 1974 to implement this program. Projects contemplated include but are not limited to those which directly facilitate and control traffic flow in and through urban areas, such as pedestrian overpasses, traffic channelizations, traffic control and surveillance systems, special-purpose lanes, and removal of safety hazards.

FRINGE AREA PARKING

Under this proposed amendment Federal funds could be used in the construction of fringe-area public parking facilities adjacent to Federal-aid highways serving urban areas of more than 50,000 population. The primary purpose of this program is to encourage increased use of mass transit by providing conveniently located, economical parking facilities. Where authorized, the parking facilities can be built on, over, or below the highway right-of-way. No increase in appropriations is provided but states have the option to designate land acquisition and facility construction for fringe parking as a highway project, eligible for 75 percent Federal aid.

The legislation would not authorize any expenditures in excess of those now contemplated from the Highway Trust Fund for Federal-aid highway construction.

The section further empowers the Secretary to obtain the assurance of the state highway department that an appropriate public body, on the state or local level, has not only the power but also the ability to construct, maintain and operate a parking facility. Before approving a project, the Secretary must concur in design standards, cooperatively developed with the highway department to insure sound and uniform facilities. For facility and standardization of administration, the applicable provisions of chapter 1, title 23 would apply as to parking facility projects. Also the section provides a definition, not intended to be exhaustive, of "parking facilities" to include such things as access roads, buildings, structures, devices, equipment, improvements, and interests in lands.

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Advances of funds for this purpose would be made pursuant to agreements between the state highway departments and the Secretary which shall provide for the actual construction of a highway within 7 years following the fiscal year in which a request by a state for such funds is made or by the terminal date of the Highway Trust Fund, whichever occurs first.

The advance acquisition proposal would make available an amount equal to 2 percent of a state's apportionment for advance acquisition of rights-of-way. The state must satisfy the Secretary within 6 months of the date of allocation that it will properly obligate such amount for advance acquisition of rights-of-way. Where a state fails so to demonstrate, the availability of such funds will revert to the Secretary who may in his discretion make them available to the other states at their request and on the basis of need. To implement this program, there would be authorized to be appropriated an amount not to exceed \$100,000,000 from the Highway Trust Fund for the establishment of a fund and for its replenishment on an annual basis. Pending such appropriation, the Secretary would be authorized to advance from any cash heretofore or hereafter appropriated from the Highway Trust Fund such sums as are necessary for payments to the states for rights-of-way acquired in advance of construction. Provisions of the Highway Revenue Act of 1956 relating to additional appropriations to and expenditures from the Highway Trust Fund and to adjustments of appropriations would be applicable to the advance acquisition of rights-of-way program.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Appropriate regulations will be promulgated to insure that in the administration of the program no advance right-of-way shall be acquired prior to public hearing and firm establishment of location, and none shall be acquired for a project in an urban area unless the project is deemed to be consistent with the comprehensive transportation plan developed for the metropolitan area as a whole under the provisions of section 134 of title 23, and section 204 of the Demonstration Cities Act (42 U.S.C. 3334).

Section 10 redefines "forest road or trail" and "forest development roads and trails" to keep references consistent with those of the Department of Agriculture and to prevent misinterpretations.

TOPICS PROGRAM

Section 12 of the bill would add a new section 135 to title 23, United States Code, to authorize a program to improve traffic operations on streets and highways within the designated boundaries of urban areas.