

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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STATEMENT BY ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ROADS, SENATE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE, ON THE FEDERAL-
AID HIGHWAY ACT OF 1968, JUNE 5, 1968, 10:00 A.M., 4200 NEW SENATE
OFFICE BUILDING

I am pleased to appear before your Committee this morning to testify on the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968. I have with me Mr. Lowell K. Bridwell, Federal Highway Administrator, Mr. Francis C. Turner, Director of the Bureau of Public Roads, Dr. William Haddon, Jr., Director of the National Highway Safety Bureau, and Dr. Haddon's Deputy, Dr. Robert Brenner.

We have prepared for the record a detailed analysis of S.3418, which comprises the Administration program. I shall confine my remarks to a summary of the significant provisions, and the reasons behind some of the new proposals.

The ABC program continues unchanged from the 1966 level, with \$1 billion annually requested for fiscal years 1970 and 1971 for the Federal-aid primary and secondary systems and their urban extension.

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 Administration bill would revise the schedule of authorization of appropriations to make possible the completion of the 41,000-mile Interstate Highway System. It would increase the amounts for fiscal years 1970, 1971 and 1972 to \$4 billion annually. It also would add new authorizations of \$4 billion for fiscal year 1973 and \$2.225 billion for fiscal 1974.

About 6,000 miles of the Interstate System are in metropolitan areas and about half of that mileage remains unbuilt, partly because of its high cost and partly because people who live in the cities have asked us to take another look at the functions of an urban highway from their standpoint. This we have done and some of the results are evident in this proposed legislation.

On a more comprehensive basis than ever before, this omnibus bill recognizes that population trends have made city problems national problems, and therefore provides Federal funds for various solutions to urban highway problems.

So what we are proposing are new programs - programs to improve the traffic capacity of existing roadways, to provide Federal funds for fringe parking spaces, to permit States to buy land for highways as long as seven years in advance of need, and to expand the new highway safety programs and supportive research.

Not part of the Administration bill, but basic to it is a necessity for devising a new formula for compensation of homeowners dislocated by federal-aid highway construction.

When we sent the authorization bill to Congress, we stated that the Administration would present a position on this important question. This has been done by both testimony and letter by Philip Hughes, Deputy Director of the Bureau of the Budget, and by Lowell Bridwell. We fully subscribe to the principles expressed by Mr. Hughes and Mr. Bridwell and urge their incorporation in the Federal-Aid Highway legislation.

We believe that the Federal Government should require a uniform system by which decent, safe and sanitary housing is provided to those who must be relocated as a result of Federally assisted highway construction.

TOPICS Program

Federal aid has previously emphasized the improvement of principal urban arterials through construction. Our preliminary experimentation with a program known as TOPICS (Traffic Operations Program to Increase Capacity and Safety) convinces us that we can increase the traffic-carrying capability of existing heavily traveled city streets and highways by 20 to 25 percent through traffic engineering and operational improvements. They would include projects that directly facilitate and control traffic flow in and through urban areas, such as left-turn lanes and reserve lanes for buses; special turnout areas where trucks can load or unload; pedestrian overpasses; traffic channelizations; and installation or modernization of traffic control and surveillance systems.

We are asking for \$250 million a year for this program beginning in fiscal year 1970 through 1974.

The program will be administered on a 50-50 matching basis, in much the same manner as the regular Federal-Aid ABC programs, following generally the guidelines previously issued by the Bureau of Public Roads, but also taking into account new approaches to traffic engineering as they evolve from research and experience.

Fringe Parking

To coordinate the urban highway program with the urban mass transit program being transferred to our Department July 1, we are proposing for the first time to provide Federal assistance for fringe parking in large urban areas.

The Administration bill, however, would make it possible for us to pay 75 percent of the cost of fringe parking spaces if they were tied in with mass transit systems that would distribute people to the downtown area. Such parking facilities would have to be adjacent to Federal-Aid Highways serving urban areas of more than 50,000 population.

This program will 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 by encouraging the use of mass transit facilities.

The primary purpose in government financing of inexpensive fringe parking is to reduce the number of vehicles using over-loaded highways to the downtown area. This could in turn reduce the need for extensive improvements on these facilities. Available studies indicate that about 10 percent of total downtown work trip demand may be transferred to fringe parking in cities between 500,000 and 1,000,000 population. This would have an added benefit of reducing the overload on downtown parking and freeing street lanes for vehicle movement.

The estimated need is for 367,000 fringe spaces by 1975 at a cost of \$387 million.

Advance Acquisition of Right-of-Way

Another "first" in the bill would make it possible for states to spend up to 2 percent of their allocation for advance acquisition of property for highways. The law now forbids this. As a result, highway planners often are forced to watch industrial or commercial construction proceed on land they know is part of a long-range highway program. This bill 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 and will make it easier for cities to practice effective land use planning.

Highway Beautification

As I am sure you know, we have not yet received authorization for fiscal 1968 for the Highway Beautification Program. 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 thus put these authorizations on the same fiscal year basis as the biennial ABC highway program authorizations.

The bill 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.

Last year your Committee held very comprehensive hearings concerning the Highway Beautification Act, with particular emphasis on outdoor advertising control. These hearings clarified the issues and removed the uncertainties which had inhibited the implementation of the program up to that time. Since then we have been making steady progress.

In the past year some 17 outdoor advertising control agreements have been signed, and we are close to agreement with a number of other States. Thirty-one State Legislatures have enacted laws providing for control of outdoor advertising and the Legislatures of other States are presently considering such legislation or will do so during their next regular session - many in early 1969.

This progress has been brought about, I am pleased to say, without invoking the penalty provision in Section 131(b) of the Act. The Department stated last year that we had no expectation of imposing any penalties during the year 1968, or even in early 1969 if a State Legislature would not have an opportunity to act during 1968.

Section 8(c) would authorize the sum of \$70 million for each of the fiscal years 1969, 1970, and 1971 for landscaping and scenic enhancements of Federal-Aid Highways.

Of the three titles in the Highway Beautification Act, the landscaping and scenic enhancement provision has had the most immediate and favorable impact upon the public. All States are participating in the program, and obligations to date total \$120 million in Federal funds, as follows: \$31 million for landscaping; \$29 million for 5,400 scenic easements; and \$60 million for 510 roadside rest areas.

Forest and Public Lands Highways

We are requesting an authorization of \$33 million for forest highways and \$16 million for public lands highways in each fiscal year 1970 and 1971. We are again recommending, however, that these programs be financed from the Highway Trust Fund rather than the general fund since the highways are similar in character and use to Federal-Aid Highways and logically should be financed in the same manner.

Highway Safety Programs

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

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.

Under the Highway Safety Program 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 will have obligated through June 1968 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.

We are asking the Congress to add \$50 million in fiscal year 1970 and another \$75 million in 1971. I emphasize this because 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.

To qualify for assistance under this program, each state is required to improve safety programs in conformance with national standards promulgated by the Department.

The Department has been pleased with the way the states have responded to the Highway Safety Program. For example, 34 states have enacted enabling legislation implementing the Act. Ten states have passed legislation requiring periodic motor vehicle inspection; nine states adopted legislation for emergency medical services; 10 states have enacted implied consent laws; 13 states have enacted special motorcycle licensing laws; 26 states and the District of Columbia have enacted laws to strengthen general driver

licensing statutes; 13 states have enacted laws for licensing of commercial driver training schools and instructors; and 33 additional states have adopted motorcycle helmet laws.

Mr. Chairman, this completes my discussion of the provisions of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968.

We believe the bill lays out a comprehensive program for attacking urban highway problems. It is not ours alone. 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 the relationship between transportation and the city.

The shape of the future highway program will depend in large degree on the decisions of the Congress on this legislation. May I respectfully urge this Committee to make these decisions in accord with the provisions of S 3418.

Thank you for permitting me to appear before you. Now my colleagues and I are ready for questions.

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