



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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NEWS

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STATEMENT BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE UPON SENATE PASSAGE OF THE FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY ACT OF 1972, SEPTEMBER 19, 1972

The U.S. Senate is to be commended for the significant and historic action it took today in approving a Federal-Aid Highway Act that for the first time allows both rail and bus mass transit -- as well as highways -- to be financed by the Highway Trust Fund. The funds provided for public transportation will be available from an urban fund on an optional basis. This truly is legislation for the 1970s and beyond. It is legislation that provides funds for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Transportation, no matter what its mode, is not an either/or proposition, and such thinking can only lead us into an ever deepening urban morass. We need all modes of transportation in some of our cities and we need meaningful alternatives in all of our cities. This bill provides for these alternatives by giving local, state and regional leaders the flexibility they need to attack the problems which are making our urbanized areas uninhabitable.

As adopted by the Senate, the bill allows these urbanized areas to use their share of an \$800 million authorization for urban transportation projects best suited to their needs. In other words, they have the option to apply these funds toward either public transportation or highway purposes. This is the proper way to combat the perils of traffic congestion and air pollution.

I have just talked to President Nixon. He is very pleased with the Senate passage of the Cooper-Muskie amendment. The President joins me in urging the House of Representatives to incorporate the Cooper-Muskie amendment into the House version of the Federal-Aid Highway Act as well as to change some features which the Administration opposes in the Senate bill.

Our transportation system must be as dynamic as our society. Members of the House of Representatives realize this and I believe they will respond in an affirmative manner.

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