



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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STATEMENT BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION CLAUDE S. BRINEGAR ON THE
NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY IN USE OF URBAN HIGHWAY TRUST FUNDS, APRIL 17, 1973

Congressman Anderson of California is offering a much-needed amendment to the Federal-Aid Highway legislation reported out by the House Public Works Committee. The Administration supports this amendment. We believe that if it is fully understood it will receive the needed support for passage.

Let me explain what is involved. Under the Federal-Aid Highway program, the Federal funds are first divided among three principal programs: the Interstate system, rural highways and urban highways. Each of the three is then apportioned to the States by an appropriate formula. But today in many urban areas additional highways may be low on the transportation priority list.

What the Administration has proposed, and what the Anderson Amendment provides, is that officials in those areas be allowed to use their apportionment of urban highway funds for a variety of public transportation capital expenditures. The proposal offers an option, an option that must come if we are to achieve a balanced transportation system.

The Anderson Amendment does not affect the Interstate system. It does not affect the rural highway system. It does not reduce the urban highway appropriation that would normally be made to any State. It does not require anyone to spend one cent on public transportation. It simply offers a choice.

In some States, urban highways will continue to have first claim on these funds. But in others, where local conditions make the use of another transportation alternative more attractive, this legislation will make possible these local "trade-offs."

The Federal Government requires States and metropolitan regions to engage in comprehensive transportation planning in line with local needs. We must now loosen the strings somewhat to allow them flexibility in carrying out those plans. We must get away from trying to decide in Washington just how each State should apply the capital funds it receives.

The Anderson Amendment improves the reported bill in two significant ways: It provides real flexibility in the use of urban trust funds for highways and/or public transportation. And it helps us to achieve a balanced transportation system without any increase in President Nixon's budget proposals.

We hope the House of Representatives will act favorably on the Anderson Amendment to bring the House bill into general accord with legislation already approved this year by the Senate and generally supported by the Administration.

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