



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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# NEWS

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REMARKS DELIVERED BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION CLAUDE S. BRINEGAR  
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I'm pleased I could be here for the concluding session of this seminar. I look forward to seeing the task force reports, which I am sure will give us more insight into some of the subjects to be covered in the single-issue seminars now being developed.

As I told audiences across the country during National Transportation Week, I have been greatly impressed by the Department's resources -- especially the dedicated and hard-working executives and career staff people in OST and throughout the Department's agencies.

One mark of a good executive is his ability, and his willingness, to keep the learning process alive and functioning. I'm delighted to find an active career development program in effect at the Department of Transportation. Such efforts, I am convinced, reward the sponsor as well as the participants.

This Seminar has been successful if it has (1) sharpened leadership abilities already possessed by those chosen to participate -- given you each a chance to think; and (2) increased the awareness of all concerned of the necessity to work jointly and intensively on a cooperative basis.

When I first met with President Nixon, he expressed his concern over the need for a more fully integrated response to our overall transportation requirements. If we look back over the years, we see that we have built successive layers of transportation

systems, but we have not succeeded very well in blending the systems together. Our pre-occupation with highways over the past quarter of a century, for example, has done wonders for our personal mobility, but at some extreme cost to our rail and public transportation services. Simply stated, the efficiencies inherent in a multi-modal transportation structure have been largely neglected. I think it's clear today that we can no longer afford to squander our transportation resources or to expend them wastefully.

The triple threat of urban congestion, air pollution, and an energy shortage now demands a shift away from our long-term concentration on highways and automobiles. What we must search out is the right prescription for every transportation situation -- and, like most prescriptions these days, that calls for a "combination of ingredients"... the proper choice, placement and merging of transportation modes.

So whether you work for FHWA or UMTA, FRA or FAA, I hope you think today in intermodal, not special interest terms. This may be difficult to do -- we all have our personal opinions and our own assessment of what works best; but our transportation goals can no longer be pursued apart from social and environmental objectives or admired for their technical proficiency alone.

Our success, or lack of it, will be measured, in large part, in the halls of Congress. Since coming to Washington I have spent, and properly so, a good portion of my time with the legislative responsibilities of this office. I am told that in President Nixon's first four years in office, more than 21,000 pieces of legislation were introduced in Congress. Of those, some 1,800 -- or 1 in 11 -- related to transportation. Only 28 transportation bills made it through Congress and to the President's signature. But, several of those represented landmark legislation in the transportation field, setting new fiscal precedents and launching a number of highly significant new programs.

It is perhaps too early to tell how we will fare in Congress this session. I am hopeful we have won some concessions in the Highway Bill being worked out by the Conference committee. While I cannot claim at this point to be optimistic about our chances for completely allowing Highway Trust Fund money to be used for public transit purposes, I do believe there is now at least tacit acceptance in Congress, and a growing awareness throughout America, of the problem of putting a disproportionate share of our transportation resources into highways. Just last week a number of construction firms in the Midwest and Southwest expressed great concern over the availability of fuel to operate their highway building equipment. The irony in that situation should tell us something about

the merits of flexibility -- and the risks of over-dependence on any one mode -- in meeting our multiple transportation needs.

We also face a tough Congressional test in seeking approval for the rail recovery legislation we favor, primarily to resolve the Northeast rail crisis, but also to assist the industry in general. I have said many times that there is no valid reason why the tax-payers of Seattle or Phoenix or Houston or wherever should pay for railroad bankruptcies in the Northeast. I think the logic of that argument supports our proposal to keep the railroads in the private sector. As long as we continue to do our homework well and present a solid case to Congress, I believe we can prevail in this and other legislative matters.

Now, while I have spent some little time on Capitol Hill, I have also had the opportunity, these past four months, to see the transportation superstructure of our country: what's good about it, and what's wrong with it.

The Northeast Railroad situation, as I've already mentioned, has become a real priority. While not directly related to that problem, the grain car shortage is an indication of the difficulties the rail industry is having in trying to generate the profits needed for capital improvements under the constraints of out-dated regulatory policies.

There is also the rather awesome matter of transportation safety, especially the problem of 57,000 highway deaths a year, which must be given more attention.

There is a tendency -- certainly an understandable one -- to view these problems as too large, too cumbersome, or too well-rooted to ever be overcome. I would agree only to the extent that I do not believe we can change the transportation tools and the travel habits of Americans overnight.

The problems, however, are manageable -- if we break them into manageable pieces and keep our eyes on the objectives. It's up to us at the Federal level to evolve transportation policies our states and cities and rural communities, industry and the public, can live and grow with.

I hope you feel this Seminar has been helpful to you, both personally and professionally. I trust it's been stimulating and intellectually refreshing. I'm sure the time you have spent here this week will produce dividends, in self-satisfaction and in your executive effectiveness.

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