



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

4x-16)

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 31, 1970

DOT -- 26270
Phone: (202) 426-4321

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE ON THE SIGNING OF THE FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY ACT OF 1970

The legislation which the President has signed is the most important federal highway legislation since that of 1956, which set in motion the building of the national system of Interstate and Defense Highways.

This new legislation extends the highway trust fund and assures completion of the 42,500 mile Interstate System in this decade. It does much more than that, however. It gives the Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration many of the tools we need to tackle the growing social challenges of our nation, especially in our urban centers. Also, this act, for the first time, extends the trust fund concept to the very important areas of highway safety and access roads to national forests and public lands.

Among other things, this legislation:

- Establishes a partnership between the Federal government and the cities to allow Federal participation in improving main city roads and thoroughfares.
- Encourages a quickening and extended use of the comparatively new idea of exclusive bus lanes, designed to make our main traffic arteries more productive.
- Sets up environmental protection guidelines to be followed in the building of highways which will supplement our current program of environmental enhancement and control.
- Puts new emphasis on that element of the environment associated with billboard and junkyard control and puts the highway beautification program back on the track.

- Places new emphasis on highway safety by assuring adequate financing to carry out special campaigns against such menaces as the alcoholic drivers.
- Authorizes me to set up and conduct a program to train the disadvantaged and bring them into the job market as skilled employees in highway construction.

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1970, in short, is designed to give America better and safer transportation in a manner that will not degrade our environment or threaten our health and welfare.

It indicates a strong awareness of the nation's transportation needs and demonstrates an ability to approach them in a sane and reasonable manner.

#####