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STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION JOHN A. VOLPE
ON GRANTS FOR IMPROVING NEW HAVEN RAIL SERVICE,
OCTOBER 28, 1970

Today I am announcing additional grants of 11.8 million dollars to improve commuter service on the New Haven division of the Penn Central Railroad. These additional funds for the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Connecticut Transportation Authority will enable these agencies to place firm orders for 144 new high-performance railroad commuter cars. These funds will also provide for the rehabilitation of some 100 old cars, the construction of high level station platforms and other important signaling and electrification work. It brings the total Federal participation in this project to slightly more than 40 million dollars.

On October 15 President Nixon signed into law his Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1970. This legislation provides 3.1 billion dollars to finance projects similar to this one. Now, for the very first time, we have the long term funding necessary for long-lead-time/high-capital cost transit and commuter improvements.

Rebuilding the New Haven line is long overdue. This project could easily be the most important improvement on the New Haven since it was electrified just prior to World War I. The present condition of that line is a priority project for us. We can't expect to be successful with tracked air cushion vehicles (TACV) and other new systems unless we first use available technology and equipment to give today's rider a better ride today.

I am certainly grateful for the cooperation of Governors Rockefeller and Dempsey and Congressmen Weicker and Meskill of Connecticut and Congressman Reid of New York who have dedicated themselves to bringing this project about.

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