

U. S. Department of Transportation news:



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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT, RIDESHARING AWARDS PROGRAM, CALIFORNIA, MARCH 20, 1980.

Our two most difficult domestic problems -- inflation and energy -- are closely related.

America's dependence on foreign oil is responsible for about a third of our inflation rate. In reducing one we help control the other.

The key to our success in conserving energy without reducing transportation services is to improve productivity -- to get greater use out of our vehicles and to do more with each unit of energy used.

Ridesharing does that. It makes better use of vehicle capacity, and delivers more passenger miles per gallon.

Ridesharing is something we can do immediately, at low cost, and in virtually every community.

We estimate that 50 million Americans still drive alone to work every day. If each driver would take just one passenger, we could save 22-1/2 million gallons of gasoline a day. As a reasonable goal we would like to see the number of ridesharing participants double by 1990 -- to 30 million commuters.

I know we can't abandon the car entirely for commuting purposes. Public transit couldn't absorb the load. And everybody can't carpool.

But with today's rapidly rising gasoline prices and uncertain supply situation, ridesharing makes good economic sense. It is also a very practical way to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion, while reducing out-of-pocket expenses for fuel, parking and vehicle upkeep.

That's why the President is not curtailing any of the energy conservation measures in his revision of the 1981 budget. It is also why ridesharing and carpool matching programs, such as these you are demonstrating so successfully here in the Bay area, must become -- and are becoming -- more prevalent throughout the country.

In recognition of your efforts I want to present these awards -- our ridesharing "License Plates" -- to the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District for your vanpool "seed" program; and to Rides, Inc., for your computerized carpool matching program.

Mr. John Molinari is president of the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Bridge district.

John: You were "out in front" of most of the country when you began a vanpool demonstration project in 1977. This program, I might add, is somewhat unusual in that you use the 35 vans purchased with the help of an UMTA grant as "loaners" for up to two months, until the pool members can purchase their own vans. Thirty new vanpools have been started this way. So I am pleased to present you this plate in recognition of your District's excellent support of ridesharing.

Sara Conner is president of the Board of Directors of Rides for Bay Area Commuters, Inc.

Sara: Your organization is celebrating its second anniversary and I understand that new vanpools are being formed at the rate of one a day, and your computerized carpool matching service is growing at a rate of 3,000 new applications per month. You now have -- I am told -- 85 vanpools and 18,000 participants in your carpool match program. Those are outstanding achievements and I am pleased to present you with this ridesharing-1 plate.

I also have license plate awards for two other very important individuals who help make these programs work.

One is Tobias Kaye, executive director of Rides for Bay Area Commuters, Inc.

And finally, to a member of the President's National Task Force on Ridesharing, Golden Gate's General Manager, Dale Luehring.

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