

# U. S. Department of Transportation news:



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## STATEMENT BY U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS ON PROPOSED HIGHWAY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION. JANUARY 26, 1978.

The legislative proposal President Carter is sending to Congress today continues the tradition of strong Federal support for the surface transportation needs of our nation. The legislation provides more than \$50 billion over the next five years for highway and transit construction and development.

But the legislation also invokes a new theme, one of greater concern for the effects our transportation decisions have on our cities, environment and energy consumption.

The proposal the President is transmitting today places new priorities on the conservation of scarce resources, completion of the Interstate highway system and the compatible development of urban transportation. It is legislation that, in my judgment, assures the sufficiency and integrity of our transportation system, and at the same time serves broader national objectives.

In the past we spent Federal tax funds to expand transportation capacity, and the Interstate system - more than 90 percent of which is now open to traffic - testifies to the success of that effort. Now we must redirect highway and public transportation programs appropriate to the formative years of our highway network, to those better geared to an era of scarce, costly energy, changing rural requirements and growing urban needs. The Administration's proposal underlines the necessity for wise energy usage as a controlling factor in all aspects of national transportation policy. It also demonstrates a greater sensitivity to the effects of transportation on the social, environmental and economic conditions of our large cities.

The particulars of the legislation are outlined in the fact sheets and the other hand-outs available here and at the Department. I want to touch on just a few of the highlights. I also want to add that this legislation is the product of many months of study and analysis, consultation with state and local officials as well as transportation users, and careful consideration of the ways the President's energy program could best be served through surface transportation initiatives.

Here, in brief, is what the legislation does:

1. It continues the Highway Trust Fund, extending it for four years.
2. It consolidates highway and transit planning funds and calls for a state-wide planning process by FY 1981.
3. It establishes procedures for accelerating the completion of the Interstate system.
4. It establishes regular and predictable funding sources to meet the Nation's public transportation needs.
5. It establishes resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation programs for Interstates, in use for more than five years, with 80 percent Federal funding.
6. It establishes a uniform Federal share for all programs except construction of the Interstate system and Interstate transfer projects. The share ratio will be 80 percent Federal; 20 percent local.
7. It establishes an expanded bridge replacement and restoration program.
8. It creates a unified safety program.
9. And, perhaps most important, it provides the flexibility state and local governments have long needed to determine and pursue their own transportation priorities.

The legislation, I believe, reflects a carefully balanced, well-advised approach to transportation needs, and concerns, of the future. It is a much needed step. I believe that the Congress will act favorably on this.

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