

PRESS AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
JULY 16, 1985
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE TODAY A MAJOR NEW PROGRAM TO HELP STATES IMPROVE MOTORISTS' SAFETY AT THOUSANDS OF LOW-VOLUME, RAILROAD-HIGHWAY GRADE-CROSSINGS THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

THE PROGRAM, TO BE LAUNCHED IN SEPTEMBER UNDER A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT CALLED "RAILROAD CROSSING CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS," WILL EMPHASIZE THE USE OF RELATIVELY SIMPLE, INEXPENSIVE -- BUT POTENTIALLY EFFECTIVE -- SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AT LOW-VOLUME CROSSING SITES WHERE THE INSTALLATION OF ACTIVE WARNING DEVICES IS NOT PRACTICABLE. THESE LOW-COST IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE PUTTING UP ADEQUATE SIGNS AND MARKINGS ALONG THE HIGHWAY, CLEARING OBSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE WARNING DEVICES AND APPROACHING TRAINS MORE VISIBLE TO MOTORISTS, AND UPGRADING THE TRACK CROSSING SURFACE TO PREVENT CARS

FROM STALLING ON THE TRACKS. THE IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE PAID FOR BY EXISTING RAIL-HIGHWAY SAFETY FUNDS.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY 150,000 GRADE-CROSSINGS NOT EQUIPPED WITH AUTOMATED WARNING DEVICES. ABOUT HALF THE GRADE-CROSSING FATALITIES EACH YEAR OCCUR AT THESE CROSSINGS. THE PROGRAM IS AIMED AT IMPROVING SAFETY AT THESE LOCATIONS. I AM HOPEFUL THAT THIS PROGRAM CAN DO MORE TO SAVE LIVES AT GRADE-CROSSINGS.

I WOULD BE PLEASED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.

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