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HIGHWAY USERS FEDERATION
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Thank you Robert Lutz (HUF Chairman and Chrysler President), Les Lamm (HUF President), and all members of the Highway Users Federation for the support you give us all year long. Les is involved in so many pioneering highway activities we sometimes forget that he retired from the Federal Highway Administration a few years ago.

At any rate, it certainly is good to be back home in Washington, D.C., with friends in the Highway Users Federation.

Bob Lutz asked me to share some hurricane relief experiences, which I'm happy to do because my job as the President's representative in charge of federal response to the hurricane has occupied much of my

time and energy for almost a month. But after I do that I want to say a few words about the storm brewing here in Washington over full funding of ISTEA and the route of the National Highway System.

As you saw on the nightly news, the devastation from Hurricane Andrew was horrible. I'd never seen anything like it. I went down there with President Bush and he was deeply moved by the tragedy of thousands of people left homeless.

Amazingly enough, the highway and bridge infrastructure held up very well. The problem was clearing the roads and streets of debris so that even emergency vehicles could get through. The saying you never know how to appreciate something until it is taken away is really true. Few people realize how much we take our highways for granted.

Our regional directors of the Office of Motor Carriers put emergency exemption procedures into effect on August 31. This allowed all motor carriers and commercial drivers to provide direct emergency assistance without having to comply with all federal regulations. The DOT regional offices received cooperation from their state counterparts. And we had liberal enforcement of weight and permitting requirements for a while in the early stages.

The degree of cooperation from transportation people was fantastic. We couldn't have asked for better cooperation from members of the American Trucking Associations, for example.

The job is a long way from completed, but I feel some satisfaction with the progress.

One of the first things that happened when I returned to DOT was Tom Larson showed me a letter from Les Lamm. The letter advised us of the founding of the Coalition for Safe and Efficient Transportation.

The coalition's goals, outlined in Les' letter, seem sound and sensible. First, total funding for ISTEA; second, support for the National Highway System -- for full funding and a voice in designating routes; third, consumer participation in the Surface Transportation Program; and fourth, support of the new flexibility provisions of ISTEA.

These are only a few of the areas where a unified user-customer-taxpayer voice may help DOT implement this complex new legislation. And I welcome the Coalition's support.

We are living in pivotal times, requiring enormous

change at all levels of government, even a change of attitude of every American toward the transportation

system we take for granted. ISTEAs look beyond the *concepts and implementation of the Interstate Highway System* *(the Eisenhower era)*. That requires some major adjustment.

Change takes time. Change seems to be working.

✓✓ The states are going to ~~be able to~~ obligate all ~~\$17~~ *\$16.1* billion of the record federal funding by the end of the fiscal year. But we still have a long road ahead. DOT will need its working partnership with the Highway Users Federation as never before.

And let me assure you of this: the Department's first priority is to insure that ISTEAs are funded at its authorized level. Absent such authorized funding, the

✓ foundation established in ISTEAs to strengthen public investment in our infrastructure *and to foster needed private investment* will be seriously weakened. Lower funding will reduce jobs, slow

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✓ programs and warp the "level playing field" for project selection. ^{and implementation} It will also increase the Trust Fund balance.

But there's a bigger problem -- a structural problem -- with lower funding. Under ISTEA, we have set in motion a total restructuring of the way we advance transportation projects. Full funding at the President's budget levels is vital to accomplishing change and fostering economic vitality.

which will jeopardize the ~~citizens~~ faith that the citizens have in us for managing the gasoline taxes they have been paying into the Highway Trust Fund.

^{Coalition goal is also important to us:}
The second ~~area of contention~~ where we cannot ~~yield involves~~ the National Highway System. It is the keystone of our surface transportation network, now and for the foreseeable future. Identification, ^{strategic programs to improve} designation, and ~~completion~~ of this system is essential to national unity, ^{and international competitiveness,} and economic vitality. ^{merely} This is not a continuation of the Interstate era. The NHS builds on that system and provides greater economic and social

unification of our society as it has developed since the Interstate System was defined half a century ago.

Let there be no mistake, the NHS will be stillborn, unless the concept is widely endorsed. We welcome highway users in the process. The voice of our constituents -- ^{you,} the users of the highways -- should be brought into the process of designating the routes on this vital new system. ISTEA provides a mechanism for this voice -- the state ^{transportation} ~~planning~~ ^{program} ~~system~~, involving MPOs and local governments. ~~If that mechanism is not working, we should talk about it.~~ ^{The mechanism is working. ~~If~~ you have ideas. We would welcome any ideas that you might have to make it work even better.}

The states support the NHS, and we continue to ^{it work even better.} urge them to fully use funds that are available for NHS purposes. ^{and they certainly are doing so.}

I'm not going through the whole laundry list. You know what's important to us. The same things that


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(A) Transportation safety is the Department's highest priority. As you may know, in 1991, approximately 41,500 people were killed in traffic related accidents, an intolerable loss of human life. We are working hard to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage caused by vehicle related accidents. I am pleased to report that the fatal accident rates (per 100 million miles of travel) for combination vehicles, medium and heavy trucks, and all other vehicles have been declining since 1980. We hope to continue enhancing safety through a number of broad based initiatives, such as improved safety management systems mandated in the ISTEA, the commercial drivers' license program, an enhanced Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program, designation of high speed rail corridors to eliminate the hazards of rail crossings, and deployment of intelligent vehicle-highway system (IVHS) technology.

On that last initiative, our implementation of the IVHS program addresses the primary goals of Congress and yours - in addition to safety, they are congestion reduction, productivity and new business opportunities. The initial steps have included the obligation of funds for over 20 operational test projects in FY 1992. I am pleased that IVHS research and development has been expanded to include transportation systems analysis, modeling and simulation, communications, software, safety and human factors, institutional and legal issues, and socioeconomic & privacy concerns. As we move forward on this initiative, I want to acknowledge that we will be using the strategic plan prepared by IVHS-America as the basis for our IVHS strategic plan which will be submitted to Congress this Fall. I applaud your Federation's foresight in co-founding IVHS-America. IVHS-America has been a great help to the Department.

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are important to you -- improving urban mobility, flexibility, and saving lives on our highways.

 But there is one final consideration that must be taken seriously. Improvements to the quality of our transportation systems are critical to building a sound foundation in the post-Interstate era. Quality requires a continuing commitment to research. We need to move to an environmentally sensitive, safe and seamless transportation system. It's the only acceptable legacy to leave to the next generation.

The challenges are many. The road is rocky. We are mapping the destiny for the next generation. As has happened so often in the past, we look to our friends in the Highway Users Federation to provide the leadership and inspiration to complete the journey. I have no doubt that together we will succeed.