



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar today announced a \$1.4 million grant to the Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) to assist in its efforts to aid private mass transportation carriers in the flood-damaged Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, area. In announcing the grant, the Secretary observed that this was an ideal example of what President Nixon meant in his State of the Union Message when he said: "The answer to many of the domestic problems . . . is for States and localities to address their own needs in their own ways, in the light of their own priorities."

The \$1,426,068 grant was made by the Department of Transportation's Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA), and represents the Federal two-thirds share to aid LCTA in the purchase of 43 new air-conditioned buses, 45 lock metered fare boxes, two spare power plants, two air-conditioning compressors, one utility truck, 300 route signs, a new garage and shop equipment. In addition, a base station and 49 two-way radios will be purchased and installed along with 37 bus shelters and a bus washing and cleaning facility.

According to UMTA Administrator Frank C. Herringer, the grant will help considerably towards ensuring the availability of improved transportation to thousands of displaced and disrupted residents in the flood-damaged Wilkes-Barre urban area. Herringer also noted that the

capital equipment provided by this grant to the Luzerne County Transportation Authority will be leased to and operated by two private carriers, the Wilkes-Barre Transit Corporation (WBTC) and the White Transit Company (WTC).

In spite of old equipment and extensive flood damage to the facilities of both WBTC and WTC, they operated as a "free" public transportation service from July 1972 to October 1972 under a grant from the U.S. Office of Emergency Preparedness. During this period, ridership on WBTC increased 112% while WTC showed an increase of 28%. The new equipment and improved service is expected to help maintain these gains in passenger traffic.

Administrator Herringer pointed out that this was an outstanding example of Federal agencies, local officials and the private sector joining together to build better, more livable communities.

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For further information contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043 or Robert Leonardi, Chairman, Luzerne County Transportation Authority, 52 Public Square Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18703. (UMTA Project No. PA-03-0039)

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