



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
May 3, 1976

DOT 30-76
Tel. 202-426-9550 (RC)

Federal programs to combat drinking drivers have produced unexpected benefits and should be continued, according to an interim study submitted by the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee.

A 35-member group that advises the U. S. Secretary of Transportation on highway safety matters, the organization has endorsed a report by its Adjudication Task Force on the effectiveness of Alcohol Safety Action Projects (ASAPs) conducted by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Judges participating in these ASAPs are beginning to recognize, for the first time, the courts' potential for increasing public safety through a coordinated program that combines police enforcement with court referral to rehabilitation programs, the task force said. This "health/legal" approach to sentencing represents a new philosophy of misdemeanor justice that has allowed these courts to handle increased caseloads more efficiently than before.

ASAPs utilizing the systems management concepts should be continued and expanded, the report stated, along with additional alcohol educational programs for traffic court judges.

The task force is chaired by Judge Rupert Doan of Cincinnati, a member of the board of directors of the American Judges Association. Copies of its final report, "Task Force Report on the Adjudication of Drinking Driving Offenses," will be available in July from the NHTSA.

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
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A study which estimates that the curtailment of service on uneconomic light density rail lines outside the Northeast would have relatively minor effects in most sectors of the economy has been sent to Congress by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The study -- Railroad Abandonments: A Report on Effects Outside the Northeast Region -- responds to Section 904 of the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act (RRRRA) of 1976, wherein Congress acknowledged that a private railroad industry should no longer be required to provide services for which the revenues are less than the cost of providing the service.

The study, which discusses alternate ways of meeting freight transportation needs, found that much less than 1 percent of the nation's output in the manufacturing, retailing and mining industries would be affected by the reduction of noneconomic light density rail branch lines.

The potential effect on agriculture of reduced service on branch lines could be higher. However, the study indicated that there would still be improved prospects for future service on more efficient, higher-density lines that would result from a consolidation of shipments.

In addition, the study found that freedom from the burden of maintaining service on the uneconomic light density lines in 31 states outside the Northeast region could reduce by an estimated \$150 million the annual operating losses of the rail carriers involved.

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The report identifies possible alternative courses of action when there is a potential loss of uneconomic rail service, including:

- o Reductions in rail costs to make the service economically viable;
- o Continuation of the services using the federal aid provisions of the RRRRA or other subsidies, and
- o Substitution of alternate freight service, such as motor carrier transportation and combinations of service provided by motor, barge and rail carriers.

The report also noted that the department is engaged in an ongoing study to be completed in early 1977 that will discuss more definitively the alternate ways of adjusting to a potential loss of uneconomic rail service.

The current study utilized a computerized network analysis that estimated that some 18 percent of the mileage in the 31 states consists of potentially uneconomic light density rail lines that account for only 2.4 percent of total carloads in the area.

In addition to reduced operating losses, the study showed that abandonment of the light density lines would relieve the rail carriers of a \$640 million capital commitment to track facilities, exclusive of rights-of-way. And, the study notes that there are equipment and labor devoted to the lines that could be used more effectively on profitable parts of the rail system.

Of the industries analyzed, the study found that with the exception of agriculture less than 5 percent of total shipments originate or terminate on light density lines. For agriculture, 14.4 percent of total shipments originate or terminate on light density branch lines.

The report noted several studies indicate that grain shipments could be consolidated onto fewer lines with no adverse effect on farmers or grain elevators, since grain producing areas have a closely spaced network of light density lines.

The report also found that a considerable portion of traffic diverted from light density lines could be expected to move over higher density lines in conjunction with short truck movements. Such diversion, the report noted, would cause an increase of less than 1 percent in highway traffic, an increase in air pollution of an estimated .01 percent and negligible effects on water pollution, noise and safety.

Copies of Railroad Abandonments and Alternatives: A Report on Effects Outside the Northeast Region are being printed for public distribution and are expected to become available at the Government Printing Office in about three weeks.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
May 28, 1976

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Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr. today announced the appointment of a chairman and seven new members to three-year terms on the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Transportation Quality. The twenty-one member committee evaluates Department of Transportation programs, recommends transportation initiatives, and acts as a citizens' sounding board for the department.

Appointed chairman of the committee is James R. Martin of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He replaces George M. Jones of San Rafael, California, whose term expired in December.

Newly appointed members are Bea Devlin of Portland, Ore.; Beverly Harper of Philadelphia, Pa.; Frank P. Middleton of Phoenix, Ariz.; William R. Mitchell of Aurora, Col.; Randall T. Shepard of Evansville, Indiana; Harrison Tyler, Jr., of Kansas City, Mo.; and Jennifer L. Wilson of Evanston, Ill.

The committee's membership includes a young mother who is dependent on public transportation to get to work, a member of Citizens Organized to Protect the Environment, an architect, the handicapped director of public relations of a public service organization, a city council member, a commercial pilot, a labor attorney, the president of a life insurance company, a member of a state human relations commission, a helicopter designer, a professor of public administration and a chairperson of a mass transit district.

The committee which makes its recommendations to the Secretary, is sponsored by the Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Consumer Affairs. The department's Office of Consumer Affairs acts as liaison between DOT and the committee.

Recent committee recommendations to the department have concerned the reduction of airport noise, transportation energy conservation, the reuse of historic railroad terminals, reducing the number of abandoned automobiles on the nation's highways, reducing the adverse impacts of transportation facilities on their surroundings, citizen participation in public transportation and highway planning and citizen involvement in DOT rulemaking.

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The first national conference on rural public transportation will be held in Greensboro, N.C., June 7-9.

It will be co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The conference host is the Transportation Institute of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University in Greensboro. Other sponsors are the National Council on the Transportation Disadvantaged, and the Rural Transportation Subcommittee and Committee on the Transportation Disadvantaged of the Transportation Research Board.

The conference will permit persons interested and involved in rural transportation to learn new concepts and exchange information. The first two days will include a series of workshops for a limited number of invited planners and rural transit system managers that will focus on operating and implementing rural public transportation. The topics will include system design, operational problems, personnel and management, securing support and funds, and marketing.

General sessions, open to anyone interested in rural public transportation, will be held on the second and third days. Panels and presentations will provide current information on the status of on-going rural transportation systems and the results of recent research.

Examples of state involvement in rural transportation will be given by state transportation or highway department officials from California, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Other panels will discuss such topics as the role of intercity transit, taxis as a viable alternative, legal and regulatory considerations, selection and purchase of vehicles, and alternative solutions to rural mobility.

Funds for the conference are provided by the department's Office of University Research and Technology Sharing Program.

Lawrence Schulman, director of the Office of Policy Development in the department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, will deliver the keynote speech at a dinner on June 7. He will discuss DOT views and policies on rural and small urban area public transportation. In addition, Robert Bruton, acting director of DOT's Office of Rural Transportation Policy, will address the conference on June 8.

UMTA administers the Mass Transportation Act of 1974 which authorizes up to \$500 million in assistance for non-urban area transportation programs through fiscal year 1980. UMTA and the department's Federal Highway Administration jointly administer the rural highway public demonstration program which is aimed specifically at innovative transit services for rural and small urban areas.

All conference activities will be held at the Holiday Inn-Four Seasons in Greensboro. The fee for participants is \$50.

For further information contact Arthur Saltzman, conference chairman and director of the Transportation Institute at North Carolina A&T State University. Phone: (919) 379-7745.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
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MARYLAND PRESENTED DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Referring to the state of Maryland as "a model for the nation" U.S. Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr. today presented Col. Thomas Smith, superintendent of the Maryland State Police, the NHTSA's highest public service award for his role in the enforcement of the national 55 mph maximum speed limit.

Secretary Coleman, commending Maryland's record in bringing its highway death toll down 16 percent since 1973 as "an outstanding achievement," called the award a tribute "to all the citizens of the state of Maryland."

He also commended Bill Clark, public affairs officer of the Maryland State Police, for keeping the public and the media informed about the purpose and the results of Maryland's enforcement campaign, thereby adding immeasurably to its success through increased public understanding and compliance with the speed limit.

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The text of the plaque awarded by the Secretary to Col. Smith reads as follows:

"To Colonel Thomas S. Smith, Superintendent, Maryland State Police, in recognition of and appreciation for his extraordinary contribution to the cause of highway and motor vehicle safety, to wit: For distinguished service through his ingenuity in developing effective enforcement techniques, and by his initiative in the use of public information and education methods in winning wide public compliance with the 55 mph speed limit in the State of Maryland."

Secretary Coleman noted that, nationally, the imposition of the 55 mph speed limit had reversed an upward trend in highway fatalities and saved an estimated 9,000 lives in both 1974 and 1975.

He pointed out that the U.S. Department of Transportation, in cooperation with The Advertising Council, the states, and interested citizens, is conducting a nationwide public information campaign -- using the theme "55 -- It's Not Just A Good Idea; It's the Law" -- to point up the speed limit law and its benefits, and to gain more widespread public adherence to the law. He noted that the Department is supplying technical assistance and promotional materials to the states to assist their own enforcement/education efforts.

Calling for a national crusade to save lives and save fuel, Secretary Coleman declared: "There are no ceasefires on the highways of America in the campaign to reduce accidents and deaths."

"We are battling for people's attention and understanding," he said, "for there must be enlightened public understanding of the 55 mph law and the benefits it brings if, in the long run, it is to continue to succeed."

Secretary Coleman introduced Lt. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. (USAF-Ret.) as the campaign's national spokesman who is visiting state governors, enforcement officials, and national organizations to enlist further national support for the program. Gen. Davis is a former assistant secretary of transportation for environment, safety and consumer affairs.

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The Secretary commended the work of The Advertising Council in developing the national public service campaign as well as the Baltimore firm of VanSant Dugdale, which is the volunteer advertising agency which is producing the creative materials for the campaign.

Similar awards have been given to the states of Georgia, Kansas and Arizona, and will be awarded early next month to the states of California, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

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