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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**

John T. Connor, Secretary

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REMARKS BY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE JOHN T. CONNOR  
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY TO THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE  
FOR STATE LEGISLATIVE LEADERS, EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILD-  
ING, 9:30 A.M., THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1966

I am very happy to be here with this distinguished group this morning.

I am confident that this conference will further strengthen the bonds of cooperation and joint achievement that are being forged under President Johnson's leadership between the Federal Government and the governments of the 50 States.

The emergence of this productive Federal-State team relationship is one of the truly significant achievements of our time.

Acting jointly, the Federal and State Governments have the strength and resources and know-how to meet the compelling problems that face our cities, our rural areas, and our growing population in the latter half of the Twentieth Century.

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Without this Federal-State teamwork, however, many of the tasks that must be accomplished simply will not be accomplished. And all Americans will be the losers.

This morning my Commerce Department associates and I would like to focus briefly on four subjects of vital concern to all Americans and in which this Department is your partner and collaborator here in Washington. These are highway safety; economic development; industrial progress; and the preservation of America's natural beauty and enhancement of the landscape, especially as related to our highways.

After my own brief remarks, we will be at your disposal for questions or further discussion of any Department activities as you may wish.

Let me introduce these gentlemen so that you can begin sharpening your questions for them: Under Secretary for Transportation Alan S. Boyd; Federal Highway Administrator Rex M. Whitton; the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development, Eugene P. Foley; and Dr Charles L. McCabe, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Science and Technology.

Now let us turn to beauty -- beauty as an integral factor in our great national system of roads and highways. In the Commerce Department,

as you know, the Federal-aid highway program that is concerned with a significant portion of this system is administered by the Bureau of Public Roads under Mr. Whitton.

This is an area in which many States and localities have been active over the years, and a good deal has been done in the past 18 months.

The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 is dedicated to the proposition that our roads and highways must preserve and enhance--not scar and mar--the natural beauty of our country. To this end, it provides for control of billboards and junkyards, and landscaping and scenic enhancement of the roadsides flanking our major highways.

In accordance with the Act, public hearings have now been held in every State. The Bureau of Public Roads is currently engaged in the task of reviewing the material gathered.

At the conclusion of this process, it will be my responsibility to promulgate minimum standards as required by the Act.

Actual control of outdoor advertising and junkyards will, however, rest in your hands in the States.

It is up to State legislatures, also, to provide their highway departments with the necessary authority to enter into agreement on standards.

Thus far, 21 States have introduced legislation to implement the outdoor advertising provision of the Act, and 20 States are acting on the junkyard control provision.

Twenty-three States have introduced legislation which would give State highway departments authority to utilize 100 percent Federal funds to acquire easements on property flanking highways to restore or preserve natural beauty.

Some type of legislation for control of advertising has been enacted by 10 States, for control of junkyards by 11 States, and for acquisition of easements by 13 States.

Obviously, you state legislators are in position to play a decisive role in keeping our country beautiful, and I am sure that this is a goal we all share, not only because it will improve the quality of life in America in our time but for all time.

If natural beauty is a matter of importance to Americans, it is obvious that safety on the roads is of paramount concern.

As you know, there is a direct correlation between highway improvements and safety, as evidenced by the Interstate System's safety record. But it is apparent, also, that there must be a more comprehensive safety program.

President Johnson's proposed highway safety bill, now pending in Congress, calls for a coordinated Federal-State approach to highway safety that includes:

1. Federal grants to assist the States in developing their own broad highway safety programs.
2. Authorization for the Secretary of Commerce to prescribe mandatory safety performance standards for vehicles.
3. Establishment of a national highway safety research and test program.

Success in this broad safety program will call for the best efforts of the automobile industry, as well as close Federal-State cooperation.

The fight against accident and injury on the nation's roads can bring meaningful victories to the American people but we must all work together if we are to accomplish significant breakthroughs.

Another kind of fight--against the deep, chronic economic problems that beset some communities or areas in every state of this prosperous Union--is being waged by the Economic Development Administration under the direction of Secretary Foley.



EDA, established at the last session of Congress, is working through a system of grants and loans to rebuild the economic foundations of such communities so they can sustain sound local economies and broaden the employment base.

Long-term unemployment and low family income are the basic criteria for assistance. EDA's job, when these conditions are present, is to provide this assistance in response to locally initiated requests. These may come from the public or private sectors.

By the end of this month, EDA expects to have provided about \$300 million to communities and individual business firms.

An example is a public works loan of more than \$9 million made to construct new harbor facilities at Morehead City, North Carolina. This loan will cover 100 percent of the project cost and is repayable in 40 years at 3-3/4 percent interest, the maximum terms for a public works loan. This project means almost 400 immediate new jobs and a potential of many more.

In another case, EDA has provided a public works grant of \$469,000 for a new industrial water and sewer system in Monroe County, Michigan, with the county government putting up an equal amount.

And in a third case, a \$1.7 million loan has gone to help equip a new steel plant in Harriman, Tennessee. This means about 125 new jobs for that community.

EDA is essentially an investment agency. The object is socially and economically productive investment, and I am confident that it will pay rich dividends in making our lagging areas self-sufficient and able to share more fully in the nation's prosperity.

The final major Federal-State program that I want to touch on briefly was described by President Johnson, when he signed the enabling act last year, as "the sleeper of the 89th Congress."

"This bill," he said, "will do for American businessmen what the great Agricultural Extension Service has done for the American farmer. It will put into their hands the latest ideas and methods, the fruits of research and development."

I am referring to the State Technical Services Program,

The program is designed to make scientific and technological advances--information on processes, materials, current technical innovations--available to businessmen and manufacturers throughout the country.

The goal is higher productivity, greater efficiency, and progressively broadening prosperity for the nation's business and industry. And this of course means benefits for localities, for states, for the national economy--for labor as well as business.

Primarily, this is a task of communication and education--distribution of technical reports, establishment of technical information centers and reference services, conduct of industrial workshops and seminars, training programs, and utilization of other like mechanisms.

The key to the program is State leadership, State initiative, State resourcefulness, and State participation. In short, it is up to the States to make it work for their own people. The Federal Government provides planning grants and matching funds to carry out State programs. And scientific and technological material produced by Federal programs over the past 20 years is already moving in increasing volume into the State programs over the bridge provided by the Office of State Technical Services.

The governors of all the States, plus Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia have designated agencies or universities to plan and coordinate programs. The 13 State programs already under way include training courses, seminars, technical reference services, and research in subject areas from electronics to



business administration, from industrial health to manufacturing controls, from petroleum to power systems.

This State Technical Services program, as President Johnson has emphasized, possesses truly vast potential for economic growth and development in every part of the nation -- and that will become increasingly apparent with the passage of time.

I have now held the floor quite long enough, uncontested, in the presence of this legislative all-star team. So allow me, at this time, to yield to the discretion of this distinguished body. Thank you all.

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