

DOT News

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DOT Studies Death on the Streets

D. C. Pedestrian Toll Soars

Last year 50 percent of pedestrian accidents in Washington, D.C. involved children 15 years old or younger and 45 percent of the persons killed in traffic accidents were pedestrians. And in 1975, according to the Metropolitan Police Department's statistics branch, one out of every 500 residents will be injured on District streets.

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Study submitted to Congress by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) earlier this year recommended increased involvement by state and local governments to reduce pedestrian fatalities and injuries.

Among the other findings in the NHTSA study were:

- Insufficient attention has been paid to "people accidents" considering the magnitude of the pedestrian safety problem.
- Not enough money is available to help provide an adequate safety program.
- The lack of normal policies and procedures on pedestrian violations of traffic laws results in little or no police enforcement.

- A scarcity of data exists on the types of pedestrian accidents, the effects of enforcement on accident rates and the involvement of alcohol in pedestrian-auto collisions.

- Traffic safety education is directed toward children rather than all pedestrians.

Larry Pavlinski, who is an expert on pedestrian education in NHTSA, says, "Let's recommend that all states give pedestrian safety a decent share of their highway safety program money—and let's have uniform pedestrian laws across the nation."

Among his other suggestions are that police departments should be instructed how to curb violators. All pedestrians—not just those in elementary school—should be educated and special messages should be made up to cover specific accident types.

"It can be done," Pavlinski says. "In Los Angeles, motorists stop whenever anyone starts to walk away from the curb into the marked pedestrian crossings. There's no reason we can't do that here."



Davis Retires; Air Security Plan Architect

Lt. Gen. (Retired) Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Environment, Safety and Consumer Affairs, retired from the Department of Transportation on Sept. 15.

Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., presented General Davis DOT's highest award, the gold medal.

General Davis was praised by Secretary Coleman for his unique contributions to the air traveler's safety. At the start

(See DAVIS, p. 2)

DOT Secretary Issues Transportation Statement

Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., has sent to Congress a "Statement of National Transportation Policy." The action includes a major appeal for a clearer understanding of the federal role in its relations with the private sector, state and local government.

In his opening statement, Secretary Coleman said a more efficient transportation system is attainable and should be achieved in consistency with other national goals and priorities.

He said progress "will evolve primarily through the efforts of an innovative, competitive and forward-looking private sector." He added that the federal government must support this evolution, "reinforcing the strength of our system and shoring up its weaknesses."

To explain, Secretary Coleman said this policy is "a means to direct decision-making along rational lines toward national goals." The policy statement, he said, should help guide departmental decisions on regulatory and grant programs, the development of legislative proposals affecting existing programs and the evolution of new approaches to solve transportation problems in a way to meet the needs of society both today and in the future.

Secretary Coleman said if the policies in his 53-page statement were adopted and translated into action, the nation



could experience the following transportation improvements:

- A healthy, competitive, privately owned network of marine, rail, truck, bus, pipeline and air freight and passenger service.
- A system of feeder lines and links, providing access to the national system from suburban, urban and rural areas—supported primarily by states and local governments, with federal financing, when necessary, and privately maintained, when possible.
- A safer, energy-efficient and environmentally-sound automobile that would be more intelligently utilized and continue as the most pervasive form of transportation essential

(See POLICY, p. 2)

New White House Fellow on Board

Dr. Martin C. Jischke, the first White House Fellow ever chosen from the University of Oklahoma and only the second from the state of Oklahoma in the program's 11-year history, has started his year of work in the Department of Transportation.

He is a professor of aerospace, mechanical and nuclear engineering at Oklahoma and in the last school year was chairman of the faculty and Faculty Senate.

Dr. Jischke will serve until Aug. 31, 1976 as a White House Fellow and Special Assistant to Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr.

He says he will soon find one or two main projects to concentrate on during his DOT tenure. Previously, he has studied the crashworthiness of aircraft and air accidents, and has done work on energy problems.

Born in Chicago, he received his bachelor's degree with honors in physics from Illinois Institute of Technology in 1963, and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in aeronautics and astronautics from M.I.T. in 1964 and 1968, respectively.



A trio of ensigns who were graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in June taught the Navy a thing or two about seamanship when they came from third place on the final day of competition to win the All-Navy sailing championship at Treasure Island Naval Station, Calif. Last year a Coast Guard crew also sailed off with the crown. Skipper Fred Wright (background) and crewmen Mike Holmes and Larry Hall secure their boat in preparation for competition against teams from NATO armed forces in Sweden this fall.

Rec. Association Plans Money Talks

The DOT Employee Recreation Association will sponsor a free weekly seminar, open to all DOT employees, on financial planning from the investor's point of view.

The sessions will deal with questions commonly asked by many small investors, such as: How much stock should I buy? How much life insurance should I have? Should I buy a house? What type of retirement plan should I get?

John Ferguson of Financial Development Corp. will discuss the major causes of financial failure, the five hazards of creating a financial plan, ways to measure money, fixed versus variable investments and guidelines to a good investment plan.

The weekly sessions, open on a first-come basis, will be held every Wednesday, from noon until 1 p.m. starting Oct. 15, for five weeks in Room 4234 of the Nassif Building.

Coast Guard Offers Speakers

Program chairmen of local civic, service, youth and community groups planning their 1975-1976 schedule of guest speakers are encouraged to include representatives of the Coast Guard in their plans.

The Coast Guard has officer and enlisted speakers available to tell of the many unique duties of the versatile United States Coast Guard. Topics that can be presented include search and rescue, boating safety, oil pollution, law enforcement and many other interesting subjects.

A free speakers request form may be obtained by writing to Community Relations Branch G-APA-3/83 U.S. Coast Guard, Washington, D.C. 20590, or by phoning 426-1587.

CSC Chief Praises Workers

(Robert E. Hampton, Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, was interviewed by Washington Star Staff Writer John Cramer. Excerpts from the interview appear below).

There are some 3 million employees on the federal payroll these days and a lot of people say that's too many. What do you think?

You can't categorically say there are too many federal employees. Federal employment has been maintained at a level



pace for a number of years—and in recent years has actually decreased. And this while there have been a number of new programs that are being put into effect each year.

With fringe benefits added in, the federal payroll now runs to \$48 billion a year. Aren't some of these workers overpaid?

As a general rule I would say no. I think our system of pay comparability is a good one, but I think it needs to be perfected. Certain categories of federal employees may be overpaid. As you know, we have a major project going on now in the total pay area and we will be getting to the problem in terms of the way we compare pay in the federal service with that in industry, as well as the way we classify positions. But by and large I don't think we have large numbers of people being overpaid.

Generally, though, how do federal employees stack up against their counterparts on the outside?

I think that over the years the government has attracted very high quality employees. On the upper end of the scale we are having difficulty getting scientists and technicians and the professional people from the outside. I think that the quality of the federal employee is good, that they are dedicated. Productivity figures show that they are doing a good job.

But the image of the federal service employee obviously is very low. How do you explain that?

I don't have any explanation that is based on any kind of hard evidence but I think it's traditional for the American people to resist government in-

trusion. I think more and more we are seeing government programs touch on some facet of an individual's life. I think that if the government doesn't respond quickly and effectively to the satisfaction of that individual, he's naturally going to have a low opinion of it. But this is nothing new. The bureaucrat has been the whipping boy at least for every one of the 28 years that I've been associated with the government.

How do you rate the quality of government management in the face of this?

From those that I come in contact with, I think it's very high. Many of them are aware of what the problems are and are trying to do something about it. I'm impressed. I'm also depressed too. I see some that are not happy, and I think this is some kind of frustration that many agency heads see.

An increasing number of Federal employees are retiring at an early age, what's your explanation?

I think that this trend has recently slowed down. I think that a number of people left early to take advantage of opportunities to start a second career. We've had a pay freeze on now at the top for a considerable number of years, and this has had the effect of people leaving at an earlier age.

But one encounters dozens of employees who just can't wait to get out of government, who are counting the months, weeks and days to retirement. Doesn't this point to bad management?

Food for Thought

Luncheon Talks Are Popular

One of the longest-running shows at the Department of Transportation is the monthly production of the Transportation Brown Baggers. About once a month, for the past five years, the Brown Baggers have met to discuss transportation issues with a wide variety of speakers, and the show goes on with no sign of a slowdown.

The name Brown Baggers comes from the fact that the listeners bring their lunches with them to the presentation. Eating usually takes about 15 minutes and the remaining hour and a quarter is devoted to a talk by the guest speaker followed by a discussion period. Speakers are chosen from within and outside DOT.

The sessions are held at any available conference room in the Nassif Building, usually on Thursdays starting at noon and running until about 1:30 p.m.

Perhaps the most popular session in the five years of the



Vice President Rockefeller presents William Heffelfinger, Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Administration, the Treasury Department's Liberty Bell Award for excellent employee participation in the payroll savings bond plan in a ceremony Sept. 10. During the recent federal bond campaign, 81 percent of DOT employees participated in the payroll savings plan, an increase from last year's 73 percent rate.

As for the individual who feels he hasn't achieved and is anxious to leave the government, we get into a difference of opinion on the value of that individual. In any organization, some people feel that they should be at a higher level. But that view may not be shared by their superiors. In all organizations, I think this a problem. When we talk about job enrichment, upward mobility, and management development the whole purpose is to achieve maximum utilization of skills at all levels. If all people were properly motivated they would use their skills to the maximum. I'm not sure we'll ever achieve that goal.

Nuts to You

The time has come to again place your orders for the new crop of genuine Alabama pecans. Orders must be placed in person. \$2.50 per pound for members of the DOT Employee Recreation Association, \$2.75 for non-members, payable in advance, in the DOT/ERA Store, Room 4338, Nassif Building. The store's hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

No telephone orders will be accepted. Delivery of the pecans is scheduled for November.

Policy—*from page one*

to our life style and economic activity.

- A modern highway system to serve the needs of the future in a manner consistent with environmental and energy concerns.

- Progress in safety performance, environmental protection, and energy conservation.

- Comprehensive metropolitan-wide transportation systems involving a mix of transportation modes to efficiently serve community development goals.

- Safe, modern, rural transportation with access to the Interstate Highway network to enhance rural living and development.

Davis—*from page one*

of the 1970's domestic airlines were constantly threatened by hijacking and air piracy. Under his leadership, the Federal Civil Aviation Security System has curbed criminal activity against aircraft and air facilities.

Secretary Coleman said, "His achievements will withstand the test of time in the annals of our nation's transportation history."

Earlier, President Ford acknowledged the retirement of General Davis "with deep regret" and commended the "physical and emotional well-being the program under his direction has brought to millions of American travelers."

General Davis, 62, joined DOT in 1970 as Director of Civil Aviation Security and became Assistant Secretary in August 1971. Since the imposition of the full Civil Aviation Security Program in early 1973, not a single commercial airliner from the U.S. domestic fleet has been hijacked or destroyed by bomb sabotage.

He was born in Washington, D.C. and graduated from West Point in 1936. In World War II, he led the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332nd Fighter Group in the European Theatre.

He retired as a lieutenant general in the Air Force after serving in numerous command and staff positions, including commander of the 13th Air Force in the Far East and Chief of Staff for the United Nations Command and U.S. Forces in Korea.

- A strong international transportation system with participation of financially healthy unsubsidized U.S.-flag carriers.
- Cost-effective and energy-efficient intermodal transportation technology.
- Accessible transportation for the poor, minorities, the handicapped and the elderly.
- Opportunities for employment and advancement for all citizens, particularly women, minorities and the disadvantaged.
- An economy that would stimulate capital formation to enable private firms to earn a reasonable return on investment in order to keep facilities modern, safe and environmentally sound.

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Limbo of the Lost

The U.S. Coast Guard And the Bermuda Triangle

By Howard Coan

On the afternoon of December 5, 1945 five Navy patrol bombers, carrying 14 men, took off in good flying weather from the Naval Air Station at Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on a routine training flight over the Atlantic Ocean.

About three hours later the flight commander radioed the Naval station that the planes were completely lost and their instruments were not functioning properly.

A Navy flying boat, a giant PBM Martin Mariner with a crew of 13 and fully equipped with rescue gear, was sent out from the Banana River Naval Air Station near Cape Canaveral to search for the missing bomber squadron. The rescue plane stayed in radio contact for two hours then it, too, vanished.

Despite one of the most intensive air-sea search efforts on record, no trace was ever found of the missing six aircraft and their 27 crewmen. A Naval board of inquiry examined the case carefully for more than a year and came up with no reasonable explanation. A spokesman called the case "the strangest ever investigated in the annals of naval aviation."

100 Ships Vanish

This case is possibly the most famous incident involving the Bermuda Triangle but there are many others. It is estimated that 100 ships and planes and more than 1,000 persons have disappeared within the Triangle in the past 30 years.

The apexes of the Triangle are generally considered to be Bermuda, Miami, Fla., and San Juan, Puerto Rico. The area encompasses the heavily-traveled stretch of water between Florida's Gold Coast and the Bahama Islands.

Among the other names sailors have used for the treacherous region are the Devil's Triangle, the Triangle of Death, the Hoodoo Sea and Limbo of the Lost.

Ships, yachts, small boats and aircraft have disappeared inside the Triangle without any distress calls, and no wreckage has ever been found. As far as anyone knows, these losses occur when the weather is clear and the seas are calm.

In 1918 the U.S.S. Cyclops, a 540-foot Navy coal supply ship bound from Barbados to Baltimore, vanished inside the Triangle with the loss of all 309 men aboard. No calls for help

were received, and no evidence of the ship's loss ever located.

One of the many theories about the ship's fate was that it had turned over in a sudden storm, trapping all crewmen and passengers inside until it sank. This version was used by Paul Gallico, a novelist, a half-century later to depict the last hours aboard a fictional ship, the S.S. Poseidon. The book was made into the film, "The Poseidon Adventure."

Other mysterious disappearances that resulted in massive, unsuccessful searches inside the Triangle include an Army C-54 Skymaster in 1947, two British airliners in 1948 and 1949, a 425-foot freighter, the Marine Sulphur Queen, in 1963 and a C-119 Air Force cargo plane in 1965.

The ocean-racing yacht *Revonoc*, with publisher Harvey Conover and his family aboard, was lost in 1967 on a cruise from Key West to Miami. The boat had emergency equipment and Conover was an experienced sailor, but he never sent any message.

Supernatural Theories

These mysteries have led to mind-stretching theories on supernatural and occult forces within the Triangle. Several recent books including two best sellers have given wide exposure to the wild speculations.

The supernatural theories discussed in the books fall into different categories. Some writers say flying saucers have carried off these vessels and planes into outer space, or unidentified flying objects (UFOs) have absorbed them into another time dimension by the suction generated by magnetic vortices.

Others claim the unfortunate passing planes and ships have somehow set off the mysterious energy sources of the supposedly lost continent of Atlantis, which sank to the bottom of the ocean about 18,000 years ago. The energy crystal from the lost land scrambles the ships' instruments and draws them into the ocean deep.

According to another group of occult writers, an advanced civilization from outer space is living in the unexplored depths of the Atlantic and most of the missing people and vessels are being studied by this higher level of intelligence.

The U.S. Coast Guard, however, does not attribute these disappearances to any supernatural phenomena or occult forces. In fact, it does not even recognize the existence of a Bermuda Triangle that can



Chart by Don G. McGibbon—TAD-486

be called a special hazard to ships or planes.

A Coast Guard review has not revealed any losses that resulted from "anything other than physical causes." The Coast Guard adds, "No extraordinary factors have ever been identified."

The Coast Guard says the Triangle's location is probably the "greatest single factor" causing the losses in the western Atlantic. Actually, the area of above average search and rescue activity should really be a semi-circle extending from the Triangle to Cape Sable, Nova Scotia and then down along the Atlantic coast to Miami.

Micro-weather Factor

Within that area three warm ocean currents combine into the Gulf Stream flowing north and converge with the cold Labrador Current from the north. The Gulf Stream is much warmer than the surrounding water and the Labrador is much colder.

The interaction of the two currents with the continental land and air mass sometimes sets up small weather systems of enormous energy and violence "which can and do inflict serious damage to vessels or aircraft caught up in them." The Coast Guard comments, "The micro-weather factor is probably the principal cause of vessel and aircraft losses within the area."

The weather disturbances can be in the form of sudden, violent thunderstorms, waterspouts similar to tornadoes that tear apart ships and planes trapped in them, and small, powerful storms called "neutercanes." Named "neutercanes" by the National Hurricane Center in Miami because they do not fit into any classification, the storms spring up quickly over the Gulf Stream and strike unsuspecting victims without warning.

The neutercane normally is about 100 miles wide although it can be only a few miles in diameter, but its strong winds can kick up dangerous waves as high as 20 feet. The result may be total destruction for any vessel or plane caught in its midst. However, the increasing use of weather satellite photos has enabled meteorologists to keep closer track of the larger neutercanes.

The Coast Guard also lists the human factors that may be involved in these disappearances, including operator incompetence, mechanical failures causing disastrous accidents, and collisions and running over of small boats by larger vessels in darkness or bad weather. Some individuals also may want to disappear for their own reasons.

The last possibility is piracy or hijacking, which the service calls "the most controversial and least documented of all the factors," but it remains a "viable one."

However, the myth of the Bermuda Triangle dies hard. As Capt. Marshall K. Phillips, the Coast Guard's chief of Flag Plot Staff at DOT headquarters and the pilot on many search-and-rescue missions over the Florida Gulf Stream, recently wrote to Lawrence Kusche, author of "The Bermuda Triangle Mystery—Solved":

"It has been apparent to many Coast Guardsmen for a number of years that simple denials and rebuts of much of the nonsense written about the so-called 'Triangle' has been ineffective, and barring a unique expose, that the myth would continue to grow, each writer feeding off the misinformation of others.

"Your book and its attendant recognition should serve to put the thing to rest but alas, I have in front of me a copy of a television script which is currently under consideration by a studio, which uses all of the old tales so clearly debunked in your book."

Phillips and others consider Kusche's book the most reasonable and best-researched work on the Triangle.

Kusche and all Coast Guardsmen believe that supernatural forces cannot explain disasters at sea. An official Coast Guard statement on the Triangle explains, "It has been our experience that the combined forces of nature and unpredictability of mankind outdo science fiction stories many times each year."

Federal Women's Program at DOT

Woman's Place? It's Everywhere

Eleanor Shannon is the first person to hold the position of the Department of Transportation's Departmental Coordinator of the Federal Women's Program. She came to her present job in September 1974 from the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. A native of Hawaii, Ms. Shannon has worked for the Air Force, Navy and Department of Commerce in her home state and the Far East, primarily in personnel management and equal employment opportunity, before she came to Washington, D.C. in 1973.

(Ms. Shannon was interviewed by DOT News Staff Writer Howard Coan.)

What is your job at DOT?

My primary responsibility is to advise the Departmental Civil Rights Officer on any problem concerning women in DOT. I have major responsibility for the Federal Women's Program which is a special emphasis program within the total Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program.

What is the Federal Women's Program?

It's a federal-wide program which has a legislative base, the EEO Act of 1972. Before I was appointed full-time Federal Women's Program Coordinator (FWPC), people had done the job on a part-time basis. The first breakthrough was establishing a full-time position.

All of the operating elements within DOT have a FWPC, the majority of whom are part-time. FAA, FHWA and NHTSA coordinators are called full-time but to be effective they have to work on the total EEO program. The operating administrations have appointed FWPCs for all of their regions and districts, so there are approximately 50 or more FWPCs nationwide.

What are your impressions of the employment situation for women at DOT?

The latest statistics show where DOT stands. As of May 31, 1975 in General Schedule (GS), excluding other plans, we have 17.7 percent women, an increase from 17.2 percent in November 1974. In October 1972 it was 17.6 percent, then it dropped to the 17.2 percent figure.

The average grade of all employees was GS-10.5, but the average grade of women is GS-6 and for men it is GS-11.5. We're still assessing where women stand in the Department in regard to various occupational groups and series, and turnover rates. We will get deeper into the question.

The only way to measure DOT's progress is with statistics. But this does not tell the full story because so much is being done to raise the awareness level through supervisory training courses and EEO seminars, and the results of increased awareness cannot be measured right now. Although the efforts of managers may be positive, it's hard to measure at this early stage.

How does DOT rank with other departments in the employment of women?

Of 11 major departments, DOT ranked last as of May 1975. In DOT 16.3 percent of its 71,000 civilian employees, including blue-collar workers, are women. The next lowest department is Agriculture where 23.2 percent of the employees are women.

Why does DOT rank so low?

The problem is the occupation of air traffic controller. It is the Department's largest single occupation with 26,000 employees, which is about 40 percent of DOT's 64,000 GS jobs, and only 752 controllers are women, about 3 percent. The average grade of all air traffic controllers is GS-11.4 and for women is GS-8.3.

The uniqueness of air traffic control as a professional career is that it does not require a college degree. Men get the related experience in the military to qualify as air traffic controllers whereas women generally do not have this opportunity. Most men also have veterans' preference which puts them ahead in the recruiting process.

Could you discuss the employment situation for women at FAA?

About 52,000 GS employees worked in FAA as of May 31, 81.5 percent of whom are GS-9 and above. Women hold 2.8 percent of the jobs GS-9 and above, and men hold 97.2 percent. For DOT as a whole, 76.7 percent of all employees are GS-9 and above. As I have said, the major problem in FAA for women is the single occupation of air traffic controller.

Do you have any advice for women working at DOT?

Women should be thinking about career goals instead of just jobs to make money. Many women look for advancement in their jobs rather than careers, but careers provide the opportunity for advancement.

Up to now many women have worked mainly to supplement the family income. Now many women must work. Many are heads of households and many are remaining single for longer periods of time.

How should women look for careers?

They should know and investigate the major career opportu-



nities in this Department, such as air traffic controller. DOT can't create careers it has no need for. Besides air traffic control, the Department has many technical and engineering jobs.

First, women must decide what careers they want to pursue—administration, personnel management, or whatever. Some may be satisfied with being secretaries, others aren't. Women must ask themselves whether they are happy with their present jobs. If not, they must decide what career to go into and what training is needed to advance in that career.

Where can women in DOT go for career advice?

They can start by discussing their situations with their immediate supervisors and respective personnel management specialists. They can talk with educators and guidance counselors in the college and universities, and get involved with women's organizations in the community.

They can join Federal Employed Women (FEW), a

nationwide organization set up outside the system. This group gives them a chance to communicate with other women on how they have achieved their goals. FEW is an organization recognized by all federal agencies. If a woman is interested in FEW, she can contact her FWPC or check with personnel for the FWPC's name in her particular operating administration.

What can managers do?

They can assist women to identify their career goals and provide, if possible, the necessary training to reach these goals. Managers also can help by giving women more responsibility. They may detail women into other jobs for limited periods in order to provide them additional experience and training. Besides the experience, the woman also can find out whether she might want to do that type of work on a full-time basis.

The key things are career counseling, detailing and on-the-job and off-the-job training.

What is International Women's Year?

International Women's Year (IWY) increases the level of awareness, world-wide and nationwide, of women's problems and the need to come up with solutions. President Ford has established a National Commission for IWY and an Interdepartmental Task Force on IWY. Sallyanne Payton, UMTA's chief counsel, and I represent DOT on the Task Force.

DOT has designated Fiscal Year 1976 as Women in Transportation Year in support of IWY. A calendar of monthly programs has been developed through next June to highlight the opportunities for women in each operating administration. In October and November, the Coast Guard will discuss civilian and military opportunities and in December it will be the Federal Railroad Administration. The total calendar is listed in DOT's Civil Rights Review for June.

What is the IWY Task Force doing?

We were established in late July, and met in August and again in September. Our major object is to identify and assess federal programs that have an effect on women. For example, which programs have the greatest impact on women, either positive or negative, and if negative can we eliminate the negative aspects?

Do you foresee a larger role for women at DOT in the future?

Yes, I have great expectations and a positive outlook DOT-wide and government-wide. Secretary Coleman is totally supportive of the goals of IWY and Federal Women's Program and his DOT affirmative action statement for FY 1976 reflects this.

Are there any jobs a woman cannot do?

No. If she makes up her mind to be successful in a certain career, and works hard enough, she will achieve her goals.

Don't Monkey with the Odometer

Stiff Penalties for Tampering with Mileage

It's the law. Anyone selling a new, or used car less than 25 years old, be it a dealer or a private individual, must render a written statement attesting to the true mileage of the vehicle.

The purpose of the recent federal odometer law is to protect buyers from the deceptive practice of concealing a car's true mileage by turning back or disconnecting the odometer. Vehicles weighing more than 16,000 pounds, and those not self-propelled, are exempt.

Failure to declare the true mileage with intent to commit

fraud can result in a fine of \$1,500 or three times the amount of damage suffered, whichever is greater, plus court and attorney fees.

The statement must be filled out just prior to the transfer of ownership and must include:

- Odometer reading at time of transfer—
- Date of transfer—
- Seller's (transferor's) name, address and signature—
- Make, body type, year, model, vehicle identification number of the vehicle—

- A statement certifying that the seller is complying with the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act of 1972 and is aware of his civil liability under its provisions—

- If the seller has reason to believe that the mileage reading on the odometer is incorrect, the disclosure statement must indicate that the actual mileage traveled is unknown.

If you suspect that you've been victimized, call NHTSA Consumer Services on 60670.