

taxes, on either the system rate base or on gross operating revenues would not be unreasonable, and that the Commission should encourage and facilitate the shifting to such gross operating revenue base as promptly as possible and as conditions warrant; and if conditions warrant not later than August 15, 1958. It is further declared as a matter of legislative policy that if the Corporation does provide the Washington Metropolitan Area with a good public transportation system, with reasonable rates, the Congress will maintain a continuing interest in the welfare of the Corporation and its investors.

SEC. 5. The initial schedule of rates which shall be effective within the District of Columbia upon commencement of operations by the Corporation shall be the same as that effective for service by Capital Transit Company approved by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia pursuant to the Act of August 14, 1955 (Public Law No. 389, 84th Congress; 69 Stat. 724), in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall continue in effect until August 15, 1957, and thereafter until superseded by a schedule of rates which becomes effective under this section. Whenever on or after August 15, 1957, the Corporation files with the Commission a new schedule of rates, such new schedule shall become effective on the tenth day after the date of such filing, unless the Commission prescribes a lesser time within which such new schedule shall go into effect, or unless prior to such tenth day the Commission suspends the operation of such new schedule. Such suspension shall be for a period of not to exceed one hundred twenty days from the date such new schedule is filed. If the Commission suspends such new schedule it shall immediately give notice of a hearing upon the matter and, after such hearing and within such suspension period, shall determine and by order fix the schedule of rates to be charged by the Corporation. If the Commission does not enter an order, to take effect at or prior to the end of the period of suspension, fixing the schedule of rates to be charged by the Corporation, the suspended schedule filed by the Corporation may be put into effect by the end of such period, and shall remain in effect until the Commission has issued an appropriate order based on such proceeding.

Rates.

SEC. 6. The Corporation is hereby authorized and empowered to engage in special charter or sightseeing services subject to compliance with applicable laws, rules and regulations of the District of Columbia and of the municipalities or political subdivisions of the States in which such service is to be performed, and with applicable provisions of the Interstate Commerce Act and rules and regulations prescribed thereunder.

Charter and sightseeing services.

SEC. 7. The Corporation shall be obligated to initiate and carry out a plan of gradual conversion of its street railway operations to bus operations within seven years from the date of the enactment of this Act upon terms and conditions prescribed by the Commission, with such regard as is reasonably possible when appropriate to the highway development plans of the District of Columbia and the economies implicit in coordinating the Corporation's track removal program with such plans; except that upon good and sufficient cause shown the Commission may in its discretion extend beyond seven years, the period for carrying out such conversion. All of the provisions of the full paragraph of the District of Columbia Appropriation Act, 1942 (55 Stat. 499, 533), under the title "HIGHWAY FUND, GASOLINE TAX AND MOTOR VEHICLE FEES", subtitle "STREET IMPROVEMENTS", relating to the removal of abandoned tracks, reglacing of track areas, and paving abandoned track areas, shall be applicable to the Corporation.

Conversion to bus operation.

Track removal.

SEC. 8. (a) As of August 15, 1956, paragraph numbered 5 of section 6 of the Act entitled "An Act making appropriations to provide for the expenses of the Government of the District of Columbia for the fiscal

Taxes.