

Mr. O'Hara is one of our Nation's top investigators. He has served as associate counsel on the staff now for a number of years. He is not an engineer. He is not a design expert, but he has made this study of the beltway.

Mr. O'Hara will you proceed with your presentation.

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN P. O'HARA, ASSOCIATE COUNSEL, COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS**

Mr. O'HARA. Thank you, Mr. May. Mr. Chairman, in December of last year I was assigned to look into the design features of the Capital Beltway around Washington.

Mr. BLATNIK. Please proceed, Mr. O'Hara.

Mr. O'HARA. In December of last year I was assigned to look into the design aspects and roadside objects on the Capital Beltway.

I started out by acquainting myself with the beltway from one end to the other. At this time I would like to go to the map which we have mounted here.

This is a map of the Capital Beltway [indicating] surrounding Washington, D.C. This is the Capital area in here where we are.

The beltway circumscribing this area here [indicating] is a 66-mile highway.

Mr. BLATNIK. How many miles?

Mr. O'HARA. Sixty-six. The last segment of this highway was opened in August of 1964, completing the circle.

There are approximately 42.8 miles in Maryland, 22.1 in Virginia, and down here on the Potomac River on the Wilson Bridge, 650 feet which lie within the jurisdiction of the District of Columbia.

The costs which we have ascertained to date have been \$172.5 million. The Wilson Bridge was constructed entirely with Federal-aid money.

Mr. W. MAY. One hundred percent Federal money?

Mr. O'HARA. That is correct, 100 percent Federal money.

In the last 2 years, from 1965 through 1966, there were 2,676 accidents on this stretch of road. There were 50 fatalities. There have been 1,620 people injured. In connection with fatalities, I would like to mention this. We did not have complete statistics available for the year 1964. We did have fatal accidents. There were 10 in 1964. And in 1967, to June 6, Tuesday of this week, there have been 17 additional fatalities.

Breaking this down we find that, of the accidents in Maryland, there were 1,694 in this 2-year period.

Mr. W. MAY. Excuse me. According to your figures, there have been 77 persons killed on the Capital Beltway since it opened in August of 1964?

Mr. O'HARA. Approximately 3 years, 77 fatalities.

Mr. W. MAY. Where did you obtain your statistics?

Mr. O'HARA. The statistics I obtained came from the Maryland State Police for Maryland, from the Virginia State Police for Virginia, and from the District of Columbia Highway Department and the Metropolitan Police Department.