

The safety bill we passed last year, the Highway Safety Act of 1966, does not provide funds for construction money to build in safety features, does it, Mr. Prisk?

Mr. PRISK. No, sir.

Mr. CRAMER. So if a State wants to build in safety features, it has to take its regular Federal-aid construction money to do so; is that right?

Mr. PRISK. That is correct.

Mr. CRAMER. If it wants to go back and build in safety features, it has to take construction money to do it, right?

Mr. PRISK. That is right. That is why we are trying to get them changed.

Mr. CRAMER. We are offering the States up to 100-percent incentive payments to plant trees and flowers, to buy up lakes, to buy up beautiful rock formations off the highway, to buy up creek banks, to buy up beautiful agricultural vistas off the right-of-way. And I just wonder why in the world we are willing to provide Federal money for that purpose and said or suggested or proposed little help for safety purposes. And I asked the panel yesterday what their recommendation might be relating to providing an incentive, giving the proper priority, to safety. It seems to me saving lives is as important as saving trees and planting flowers.

I would like to ask the panel again—I understand we provide 100-percent money for overpasses for railroad lines, do we not? One hundred percent Federal money? Is that not right, Mr. Prisk?

Mr. PRISK. Yes.

Mr. CRAMER. We provide up to 100-percent Federal money for beautification and that is a high priority item. And I just wonder why there is not some discussion, why there are not some suggestions as to how we can provide an incentive to the States to get the safety job done, concentrate on safety and eliminate these death traps that have been built into the highways.

Does anybody on the panel have any suggestions or recommendations?

I see the problem; we have been looking at it for 2 or 3 weeks now, but what are we going to do about it?

Mr. PRISK. May I say, Mr. Cramer, that the first action of the new Director of Public Roads, Mr. Frank Turner, was to address a letter to the State highway department commissioners, and included in that he said this, and I would quote:

I consider that available Federal-aid highway funds can be put to no better or no more urgent use today than in the very prompt initiation of a broad program to increase the safety of public highways.

I think this indicates the attitude of the Bureau of Public Roads.

Mr. CRAMER. That is a fond expression of hope. But they are not given the financial incentive like they are given for beauty; are they?

Mr. PRISK. No, sir.

Mr. CRAMER. So I would like to address my question to the panel: Do you have any suggestions as to what the Federal function ought to be as related to safety?

Mr. WILSON. I think my opinion would be any highway department ought to have a balanced program of new construction and going back and fixing up the old highways.