

As I stated yesterday, we took a good, hard look at the existing State highways. We found a number of things that were causing accidents. We decided that we could fix up about 1,700 of these with normal traffic engineering devices and traffic engineering tools. And I think that a program of this nature——

Mr. CRAMER. You are hard pressed, are you not, to put substantial money into safety when it has to compete with construction money; is that correct?

Mr. WILSON. It is difficult to——

Mr. CRAMER. You do not have that problem as it related to beautification; there is no competition there, is there?

Mr. WILSON. I am not familiar with beautification.

Mr. CRAMER. You get a separate appropriation for beauty.

Mr. WILSON. I understand you do.

Mr. CRAMER. Yes. So again I say I think we are putting our priorities down; esthetics and beauty with high priority, and safety with low priority.

Does anyone else on the panel have a comment relating to what might be done?

Mr. WILSON. I would like to make one further comment. When I reviewed the legislation involving highway safety and reviewed House Report 1700 on the Highway Safety Act of 1966 and found that there was actually in fact no construction money available to go back and fix up hotspots and locations that were having accidents, I as a highway engineer was somewhat disappointed in this.

Mr. CRAMER. Does anyone else have any suggestions?

Mr. Skeels?

Mr. SKEELS. I certainly agree with your objective, that some funds should be made available to fix up these now recognized deficiencies.

Briefly, for our proving ground road system, we did make money available. We went back over our obsolete road system and we built it much in this manner.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Huff?

Mr. HUFF. Mr. Cramer, I would like to say a highway becomes obsolete through impairment of capacity and safety. Often the two go together.

Now, in my department in Texas, we think we have been conscious of safety for several years; but for some 10 years we have been spending about one-third of our available research on safety projects. We have begun putting a great many of those to use. And as I stated yesterday, we spent considerable amounts of money on rehabilitating our 6,000- or 7,000-mile system, bringing it up to safety standards and better, more comfortable capacity standards.

Now I believe our administration, who I am not empowered to speak for what they might or might not like, but I believe my administration will say we always need more money to bring our highways up.

Mr. CRAMER. Can you justify having a separate fund for beauty and not having an equal fund for safety?

Mr. HUFF. I do not believe I can comment.

Mr. CRAMER. I mean construction aspects.

Mr. HUFF. I do not believe I can comment on that, sir.

Mr. CRAMER. Well, commonsense would indicate safety is as important as beauty; would it not?