

Florida passed, did it not, and frankly I am the one who helped encourage the State legislature to pass, what I consider to be one of the most farsighted safety programs anywhere in the United States of America. As a matter of fact, my former assistant and now State senator and minority leader of the senate was chairman of the senate committee and went all the way to provide a safety program for Florida.

Florida is now committed by legislation to that program. But now you see the Federal Government is reneging on its money, so what is Florida going to do? They did what we asked them to do. They passed the legislation. But now we are going to take the money out from under them.

Mr. BRIDWELL. Mr. Chairman, you are quite correct in your statement about what the State of Florida has done. It has passed enacting legislation, comprehensive in nature, clearly giving the executive branch of the Florida Government the authority to carry out a comprehensive safety program, to fully comply with the 13 standards announced by Secretary Boyd.

So without any question the State of Florida is to be complimented on the enthusiasm with which it has tackled this program.

Mr. CRAMER. It also provided the money to pay its share in anticipation of Federal matching funds to go along with it.

Mr. BRIDWELL. Yes, sir; and I hope that as the appropriation measure winds its way through Congress that the Congress will see fit to change its mind on the relative priority of dollars for this program.

Mr. CRAMER. Assuming it did, I doubt if it is going to give you the full amount or the amount apportioned to the State. That is just my comment.

So we have a pretty serious problem in this committee, the authorizing committee. The Congress gave the Secretary authority to apportion funds to the States, and the Secretary did apportion funds, upon which the States rely for the future year, upon the basis of which it passed its legislation, upon the basis of which it funds its share. And then we yank the rug out from under them by reducing the Federal funds available and, in effect, repealing the apportionment authority written into the basic act; is that not the effect of it?

Mr. BRIDWELL. I believe that is what the action of the House has done.

Mr. CRAMER. Here is what is of concern to me. I am one who wants to reduce spending as much as anybody else. I think there are other programs that could be reduced that have less priority. If the Committee on Appropriations can prevent the implementation of contract authority by denying the use of appropriated funds for the making of obligations with respect to the highway safety program, which it has done so far, it would appear to me that the Federal-aid highway construction program can be subjected to the same treatment.

Mr. BRIDWELL. I would assume so, Mr. Cramer, because, as you are aware, the Highway Safety Act of 1966 specifically states that it uses the same statutory language of chapter 1 of title 23, which contains all the provisions relating to apportionment and contract authority. So it is precisely the same statutory language involved in both the safety program and the Federal-aid construction program.