offers a timely and promising opportunity to test the market demand for modern, high-speed rail passenger service.

We are convinced that high-speed rail transportation offers the best solution to the transportation problems in our multiplying urban corridors. It is clearly the most economic means of moving large numbers of people through crowded metropolitan areas.

The unacceptable alternative is a steady worsening in the ability of our highways and airways to handle peakloads. The resulting congestion threatens health and safety and represents a growing economic loss in wasted man-hours. We cannot continue to strangle our cities and stifle our economy for want of solutions that are obtainable today through technological innovation, creative marketing, and ambitious promotion.

The time to unclog our arteries of commerce is now—before the spiraling rise in intercity passenger traffic overwhelms us. The High Speed Ground Transportation Act is the vehicle by which we may determine the sure course to our objective—the maintenance of the high degree of personal mobility that is essential to a dynamic society.

Under the leadership of Transportation Secretary Alan S. Boyd, Federal Railroad Administrator A. Scheffer Lang, and Dr. Robert A. Nelson, director of the Office of High Speed Ground Transportation, we have made significant progress in developing the potential for high-speed rail passenger service in the Northeast Corridor.

Penn Central's participation in the development of high speed passenger service between Washington and New York has been right on schedule. We have dedicated our best efforts, assigned top engineers and technicians and have spent substantial amounts of money to help assure the success of this program.

Once the decision was made to participate in this program with the Department of Transportation and various railways suppliers, Penn Central embarked on an extensive 2-year program to upgrade its roadway and related facilities between New York and Washington.

The track upgrading program alone included the following requirements: new welded rail, 298 miles; rail surface grinding, 302 miles; track raising and tie renewals, 352 miles; ties renewed, 388,000; switch timbers installed, 160,000 lineal feet; joint welding and reformed splices, 67 miles.

In addition, we constructed the new high-level train platforms at Wilmington, Baltimore, and Washington, and at Baltimore we now have in operation a moving ramp for the convenience of passengers and their baggage. We completely rebuilt Penn Central Station in New York and extensively modernized Union Station in Washington. Other improvements included upgrading our electrical system, installing the most modern signaling devices and replacing the standard-weight overhead power wire, the catenary system, with heavy-weight wire.

By October 1967, all necessary plant improvements were completed and Penn Central was ready for operation of the Metroliner service.

We have already spent $31,740,000 of our own funds on plant improvement to prepare for high-speed service. We have an additional $17 million scheduled for investment in the project. The Penn Central roadbed between New York and Washington now is the finest in the Nation.