The Federal Railroad Safety Act of 1968 (H.R. 16980) should also be of great value in effectively determining penalties for violations of safety regulations.

E. Regarding grade-crossing accidents:

1. Through a technical evaluation, ICC should develop for future statistical study the various characteristics common to the 220,000 grade crossings in the United States.

2. Future grade-crossing accidents should be evaluated on the basis of the characteristics determined under 1 above so that more effective statistical data can be attained as to those grade-crossing characteristics and combinations thereof which constitute the greatest potential danger.

3. Reflective markings should be placed on the sides of freight cars as well as other railroad rolling stock.

4. The ICC should seek a workable solution to the impasse with regard to the enforcement of safety standards at rail-highway grade crossings.

Subparagraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 are now under study by a DOT joint action group, inside the Department of Transportation, to work with interested parties throughout the country to improve safety at rail-highway grade crossings. (See attachment A.) Progress reports can be supplied to the committee as benefits are established. This joint action program was established by Secretary Boyd on August 8, 1967.

ATTACHMENT A

RAILWAY-HIGHWAY GRADE CROSSING ACTION PROGRAM

1. Make available to all States guidelines for diagnosing hazards, based on current information available to the Federal Highway and Railroad Administrations.

2. Request State highway departments to select one grade crossing for each 4,000 miles of Federal-aid highway for the testing of the most suitable known or proposed system of protection.

3. Encourage railroads to rehabilitate existing protective devices and sites under their jurisdictions.

4. Improve accident data collection and enforcement of traffic sfety regulations at grade crossings.

5. Identify those crossings that are heavily used by commercial vehicles transporting hazardous cargo and upgrade the protection or reroute this class of traffic to diminish this hazard.

6. Identify crossings frequently used by school buses and work with school officials to reroute school bus traffic or to improve the crossing protection.

7. Examine the possibility of closing or limiting the use of existing crossings or preventing the opening of new ones, and develop recommendations for any needed administrative or legislative steps.

8. Initiate a study of present Federal and State motor carrier safety regulations and laws pertaining to the mandatory stopping of certain vehicles at railway-highway grade crossings.

9. Intensify the accident investigation program of the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety and Bureau of Railroad Safety to study adequately the crossing accidents involving federally regulated carriers.

10. Undertake a research and development program to develop more effective measures and devices to reduce the occurrence of rail-highway grade-crossing accidents.

11. Initiate a study to determine the logical division of responsibility for the protection against grade-crossing accidents now shared by the railroads and the public and develop suitable administrative and legislative recommendations in this regard, including the questions of liability and cost sharing.

Mr. BROOKS. Secondly, I know that the Department is currently engaged in some kind of contractual arrangement with the Pennsylvania Railroad for high-speed rail transportation between Washington and Boston. It is my understanding that it is running well behind the anticipated schedule, and that there are a number of problems unanswered. I wonder if you would give us a status report on this and what the major obstacles are.

Mr. LANG. Would you like me to speak to that right now, Mr. Chairman?