

STATEMENT BY ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

I am pleased to appear before your Committee this morning to testify on the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1968. I have with me Mr. Lowell K. Bridwell, Federal Highway Administrator, Mr. Francis C. Turner, Director of the Bureau of Public Roads, Dr. William Haddon, Jr., Director of the National Highway Safety Bureau, and Dr. Haddon's Deputy, Dr. Robert Brenner.

Since we last testified before you on authorization legislation two years and one month ago, dramatic changes have taken place in the field of transportation. The Department of Transportation has been created, and in operation for 13 months. This department includes among its modal agencies the Federal Highway Administration, which encompasses the Bureau of Public Roads and the new National Highway Safety Bureau established by the Congress to bring about increased safety on the nation's highways. The Federal Highway Administration and these two of its Bureaus now have the major responsibility within the Department for supervising the development of the finest, most efficient, and safest transportation network attainable, as a basic component of our national transportation system.

DIFFERENCES FROM PAST

Let me emphasize that the bill this year is significantly different from traditional highway legislation in several important respects. Overall, it comprises the first comprehensive program for the solution of urban highway problems that has yet been written. It attempts to deal with the vast problems of urban congestion and highway safety now facing our cities and their restless populations. The extent to which the Department of Transportation is involved in these problems is indicated by the transfer to it of the urban mass transit authority of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The biggest part of the authorizations requested in the bill will be used for completion of the Interstate System. But what is of even more significance is the way in which we intend to spend the rest of it, as an outgrowth of the closer look that we are taking at the building of highways in cities in view of the millions of people who have to live with those highways. So what we are proposing are new programs—programs to improve the traffic capacity of existing roadways as an alternative to new construction, to provide Federal funds for fringe parking spaces, to permit States to buy land for highways as long as seven years in advance of need, and to expand the new highway safety programs and supportive research. Not in the bill, but basic to it, is consideration of a new compensation formula for homes and businesses purchased for highway use.

PROGRESS OF PROGRAM

Before discussing the details of the legislation before you, I should like to report briefly on the progress of the Federal-aid highway program. The shape of future highway programs is now under active discussion, so it is important that we recognize what already has been accomplished.

At present, work is underway or has been completed on some 40,064 miles of the 41,000-mile Interstate and Defense Highway System, which is about 98 percent of the total. Almost 25,900 miles are now open to traffic, and construction is underway on another 5,678 miles. This means that about 64 percent of the system is now open to traffic, while only two percent has not been advanced beyond the preliminary status.

Of the 25,892 miles of the Interstate system now in use by motorists, 20,325 miles comply with prevailing standards of adequacy for future traffic; 3,262 miles are fully capable of handling current traffic, but will require additional improvement to meet projected needs. Toll roads, bridges, and tunnels incorporated in the system total 2,305 miles. In addition to sections open to traffic, 5,678 miles were under construction as of March 31, and engineering or right-of-way acquisition was being performed on another 8,494 miles.

Some \$32.6 billion has been put to work on the program since 1956. Work completed since July 1, 1956, has cost \$22.93 billion of which \$18.71 billion was for construction and \$4.22 billion for engineering and right-of-way acquisition.

PENDING BILLS

Turning now to the pending legislation, may I note there are two bills before the Subcommittee. H.R. 17134, introduced by request, comprises the Administra-