

There will be no commitment on my part to do or not to do anything before that time.

Mr. McEWEN. In other words, Mr. Secretary, the threat of a 10-percent cut in the highway funds, whether this Congress appropriates the Federal money or not, still exists; is that correct?

Secretary BOYD. It is very subjective.

Mr. McEWEN. Is that correct?

Secretary BOYD. The law is on the books and whether or not—

Mr. McEWEN. Is my question clear, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary BOYD. Yes. The threat of 10 percent loss exists whether or not the Congress appropriates. That law is on the books. Whether or not it is a threat, I say, is a very subjective proposition.

Mr. McEWEN. Let me amend and take the word "threat" out.

Secretary BOYD. Yes, sir.

Mr. McEWEN. The possibility exists that the State of New York will lose 10 percent of its Federal highway money unless it enacts this legislation?

Secretary BOYD. Absolutely.

Mr. McEWEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. The hearing will recess until 2:30.

(Whereupon, at 12:32 p.m., the hearing recessed, to reconvene at 2:30 p.m., the same day.)

AFTERNOON SESSION

Mr. KLUCZYNSKI. The hearings will come to order.

When we recessed this afternoon, we had on the witness stand the Secretary of Transportation. We also had Lowell Bridwell and Frank Turner. They have had a previous engagement, they are sitting in the anteroom now and may be there for 15 or 20 minutes.

I thought, to save time, we would call on our good friend Mr. Nelson, Deputy Chief of the Forest Service.

Mr. Nelson, please proceed.

STATEMENT OF M. M. NELSON, DEPUTY CHIEF, FOREST SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; ACCOMPANIED BY RICHARD F. DROEGE, ASSOCIATE DEPUTY CHIEF, FOREST SERVICE

Mr. NELSON. Thank you very much. I have with me Mr. Richard Droege, who is associate Deputy Chief of the Forest Service and has responsibility for protection and development of the National Forest system including our engineering work.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to represent the Department of Agriculture in support of the Federal-aid Highway Act of 1968. H.R. 16994 and H.R. 17134 would authorize appropriations for the fiscal years 1970 and 1971 for the construction of certain highways in accordance with title 23 of the United States Code.

First, we in the Department of Agriculture want to express our thanks for your keen interest in the transportation needs of the rural areas of our Nation. Particularly do we appreciate your consideration and response in past Federal-aid highways acts to the road and trail needs of our national forests and national grasslands. There is a vast