

We recommend that if Congress gives consideration to the authorizations proposed in section 5(2) on the subject of traffic operation projects in urban areas, that your action be for a biennial period only in line with ABC program practice.

Many of the States feel that the increase in funding included in this subsection should not be limited to a TOPICS program alone, but should also be available for improvements on the ABC systems.

In fact some of the States are of the opinion that the cities involved in the proposed TOPICS activity would not be able to furnish matching money at the present time and, of course, the States are limited to expending their own funds for matching purposes and for maintaining and operating these roads that are included in their official State highway systems.

The proposed program, as outlined in H.R. 17134, would include many streets off the State highway systems.

In regard to the proposal for providing authorizations for the traffic operation program in urban areas, we would strongly suggest your committee give consideration to make any additional funds available for establishing and helping finance necessary improvements on a new Federal-aid category which our After 75 Committee on a continuing Federal-aid highway program calls a Federal-aid metropolitan arterial street system.

Such a system would be developed in the 233 metropolitan areas through the 3C planning process in accordance with section 134, title 23, United States Code: Highways, and would give to the cities the same kind of participation in the Federal-aid highway program that is now available to the counties in the secondary program.

AASHO, the National League of Cities, and the National Association of Counties are all in accord that such a system is essential and should be provided for as soon as possible in light of the expanding transportation needs.

AASHO has agreed with the National League of Cities that a separate Federal trust fund, separate and apart from the highway trust fund, would be a desirable thing to help provide money to the cities for transportation purposes for which the highway trust fund is not allowable.

The National League of Cities has been talking in the neighborhood of a billion and a half dollars annually. We make no recommendations as to how the money would be raised, but we agree that something of this nature is desirable to cope with the ever-expanding transportation needs of the cities and could be used for furnishing parking facilities, subsidizing mass transit operations, and other things that are outside the scope, purpose, and intent of the highway trust fund, but are needed. We do not want such a new trust fund to be a part or special account in the present highway trust fund or to be financed from any of the present revenues assigned to the highway trust fund.

Since our after 75 committee will be talking to your committee on June 3 on the subject of our after 75 recommendations, we will go into more detail on this and other items mentioned later in this statement at that time, which we understand will be before the time that the record is closed on these current hearings.