

and far more than that if you go outside of those immediate areas who are now linked by a very highly inadequate road system and it just does not do the job.

You look at the map and you recognize the geography of Florida, you see what it does to the commerce and transportation in the State, and it is almost an automatic first high priority adjustment gap in the State of Florida. There is no question about it.

Our State Road Board feels about the same way I do and will so testify. I want to take the opportunity of commending my colleague from Florida by saying that the Florida State Highway Department is up here to testify on the bill. This is a very important matter. I was very disappointed when the announcement came out and they were not thinking of testifying.

We recognize that this is a vital thing to the State of Florida and I am sure our State highway department will corroborate everything that we as members of the delegation will say to this committee.

The other gap, Mr. Chairman, is a 28-mile gap running from the city of Miami to the city of Homestead, Fla., which is outside and south of Miami. For three reasons this is a very, very obvious gap in the Interstate System.

First of all, Homestead is the center of one of the most productive agricultural areas in the country for winter truck farming. It is a big operation.

Our present main highway system out of that area is just not able to do the job and therefore it is reflected in prices and in deliveries all over the country.

Secondly, we in that south part, south of Miami are in one of the fastest growing population areas in the country. We have an urban crisis and it is just not fair to those one-half million or 600,000 people who live in that area not to be able to get on the Interstate System and go anywhere in the country which they are able to do from Miami.

This brings up a very important point, Mr. Chairman, and that is the obvious increased emphasis which is going to be necessary either on emergency gap filling on or after 1972 on the urban needs in this country.

We just are, as we all know, not able to keep pace with them, but if we do not make an extra special effort either in the consideration of the high priority adjustment gap filling on or after 1972 in the urban needs of this country, we will, in effect, have wasted all the money we have put into this system.

We might have some obvious connectors that might have to be filled in, but it seems to me the great need, the great emphasis in the emergency part and also the after 1972 is going to be on the urban needs.

While we have other obvious needs in Florida, Mr. Chairman, and members, these are two which I would recommend for your consideration for such action as you intend to take with respect to filling the gaps on the high-priority basis.

We respectfully submit that the technical testimony will be such as to meet whatever criteria you want to lay down, or the Department wants to lay down, to put these projects in and we will take our chances on the after 1972 program along with everybody else.