

An adequate network of forest roads and trails is very important to southern Illinois and the Shawnee National Forest. It is equally important to the other national forests throughout the United States. These road networks are needed, really demanded, if these public lands are to serve for the many uses all of us envision. Adequate roads are needed to diversify economies and provide new employment opportunities.

The House of Representatives recently approved my request and included funds to proceed with some further planning of the George Rogers Clark Scenic Highway. This scenic highway in the future will provide the backbone for wonderful and outstanding recreation opportunities and recreational experiences across the Shawnee National Forest.

This committee has been doing a good job in recognizing the many problems in providing for balanced road systems. You are to be congratulated and I support you.

This country's present financial situation is fully recognized and I believe wholeheartedly in delaying those projects which can be delayed. I do not believe, however, that some of the investments in rural area roads can be postponed. These investments are wise and they mean jobs and a fuller and better life for rural Americans.

The authorization for forest development roads and trails should not be reduced below the level authorized in the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1966.

I believe this authorization of \$170 million per year should be extended to fiscal years 1970 and 1971. The record should not show reduced authorization. The authorizations should be there for the job ahead. We can proceed with planning and constructing the required supporting roads and then be ready to move on with larger projects immediately when the world situation improves. Being ready for special projects means completion and readiness of project plans.

I want to add a few words about the forest highway program which has remained at an authorization of \$33 million per year since 1960. Illinois has 446 miles of forest highways. Of this amount, 377 miles are considered inadequate and need reconstruction. The annual apportionment of forest highway funds is about \$38,000 each year for Illinois. With needs of 377 miles of forest highways, I am sure we do not need to go through many mathematical calculations to show that at a financing level of only \$38,000 per year the reconstruction goals cannot be reached for many hundreds of years in my State. Needless to say, I support increased forest highway authorizations to construct forest highways which are the main highways through the national forests.

In summary, I want to point out that I believe the authorizations for forest development roads and trails should reflect the intent for the Forest Service to continue planning and building the forest road systems needed for managing the national forests and to help in achieving a better rural America. The work can and should go on. It is my feeling that funds used for constructing rural roads cannot be thought of merely as expenditures. Rather, the funds must be looked upon as an investment in rural America and the job opportunities provided. It is important that these job opportunities not be thought of only as directly involving actual road construction work but of the new