

Twice in a period of a little over a year, those funds were reduced or deferred, by formulas which differed each time. The Federal Highway Administration has made an effort, which we appreciate, to correct some of the inequities in last January cutback through the revised obligation schedule it announced in April.

All of us are well aware of the budgetary pressures we are presently experiencing, and the shared responsibility of Congress and the Administration to postpone less essential expenditures. In determining how those reductions can best be made on the basis of a realistic set of national priorities, no program should be considered automatically sacrosanct—and that includes the highway program.

But the experience of recent months has demonstrated the urgent need for legislative and administrative guidelines for the manipulation of the highway trust fund, based on an honest assessment of the short-range and long-term actual economic effects of reduced spending for the highway program, and a fair and balanced formula for reducing funds once a determination is made that such action is essential.

If a highway director knows for sure how and in what circumstances his funds might be affected, and if he is given as much advance notice as possible that such reductions will be forthcoming, then—undesirable as the cuts may be—they hopefully will not have the same disruptive effect on individual programs which they have had in the past.

I urge the Subcommittee to give careful consideration at this critical juncture to appropriate steps by the Congress to insure that this important construction program is marked by orderly progress rather than confusion and controversy.

#### THE GREAT RIVER ROAD

Since the Subcommittee is dealing in these hearings with long-range questions of the future of the nation's highway program, I would also like to take this opportunity to comment briefly on the Great River Road.

Americans drive more than 300 billion miles a year for pleasure, it is estimated, and driving outranks every other type of recreation in this country today—42% of all such activity.

Completion of this 2300 mile highway along both sides of the Mississippi River from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico could therefore realize a vast potential for recreation and tourism in the 10 states which border the river.

It would mean the development of the important third dimension of tourism to the economy of a major part of the Midwest, supplementing agriculture and industry.

And it would provide for the American people from every section of the country access to the natural beauty, the recreational opportunities, and the history and folklore of the Mississippi River—one of the greatest scenic as well as economic assets of this nation.

Development of the Great River Road would serve two major objectives of national policy today. First, it would encourage domestic travel and tourism in the context of the Discover America campaign. And second, it would aid measurably in the development of the nonurban areas of the Middle West as attractive alternatives to life in the congested cities.

During the time that I have been in Congress, we have been working closely with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, local and state officials, and interested members of Congress to encourage the development of the Great River Road.

Last year, I sponsored a meeting of the 20 Senators and 32 Congressmen who represent the districts and states on the river, with representatives of the Departments of Commerce, Interior, and Transportation, the National Governors' Conference, and the Parkway Commission.

We were encouraged by the report of the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty in 1967, which identified the Great River Road as a prototype for a national scenic highways program, and it is our hope that by coordinating the efforts of all interests, we might at last be able to see the completion of the Great River Road, which has been envisioned since the 1930's.

Your Subcommittee has before it H.R. 11298, the measure I introduced to provide a modest authorization for each of the next three years, to develop the scenic parkway features of the Road. I am pleased that a number of members of the House from Great River Road areas, including my colleague from Iowa who sits on this Subcommittee, have sponsored identical legislation.