

short supply. This problem is aggravated more for minority groups who have difficulty obtaining accommodations, or the credit to finance these accommodations, in areas where decent, safe, and sanitary housing and business locations are in adequate supply. In addition to difficulties associated with the highway relocation program, the disparity between relocation assistance under the highway program and relocation assistance under other programs, such as urban renewal, creates further citizen misunderstanding and opposition in highway projects.

Individual attempts are being made by some local governments to minimize problems which relocation programs presently pose. However, federal aid to improve relocation programs is needed because only the Federal government has the financial resources necessary to support and improve relocation programs on the same broad scale as the federal grant-in-aid programs which, in their implementation, cause many of the relocation problems.

The highway program is neither the best, nor the worst, of the federal programs which may require citizens to relocate. Some programs, such as those carried out by the General Services Administration, provide no compensation for relocation expense at all and only the fair market value for property that is taken. However, the highway program, because of its magnitude and the admitted inadequacy of its relocation program, is perhaps more associated with relocation difficulties than any other program. In 1967, the Department of Transportation estimated that 48,983 families and 5,559 businesses will be displaced annually between now and 1970. Thus, improvement of relocation efforts under the highway program is crucial to a general improvement of relocation practices associated with federal grant-in-aid programs.

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

To correct present deficiencies in the relocation provisions of the Federal Aid Highway Act and to reduce citizen opposition to highway construction programs, the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties urge that the relocation provisions be revised to include the following elements:

(1) An equitable relocation program, once established by the Congress, should not require authorization by each individual state in order to become effective in that state. The present relocation program is generally admitted to be inadequate even in those states that have authorized the full payment prescribed in the Highway Act, yet fourteen states have not authorized expenditure of any money for relocation programs and a number of others have authorized less than the amount permitted by the Highway Act. Inaction of individual states should not be permitted to thwart development of a national highway system by continuing inequitable relocation policies which raise citizen opposition and stall highway improvements. Section 133(c) of the Highway Act should be amended to assure that the relocation program will apply in all states, regardless of state inaction.

(2) The new relocation program must require that adequate provision be made for relocation of persons and businesses to be displaced by the highway program before demolition of property begins. Section 133(b) of the present Highway Act requires the states to give assures that relocation "advisory assistance" be provided to families displaced by highway projects. This is not enough, the Act should require that before displacement begins, new quarters should be actually identified for all those to be displaced; families, individuals, and businesses, whether they be tenants or owners of the property. An approved relocation plan should be a condition precedent to approval of any highway project.

The recent report to the Congress by the American Association of State Officials notes:

"Purely from the humanitarian point of view, and to be fair and equitable to those who are inconvenienced by the construction of needed highway facilities, ways and means of supplying adequate, sanitary housing before actual construction starts on the highway project must be found."

The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations has stated:

"The Congress should require that state and local governments administering federal grant programs assure the availability of standard housing before proceeding with any property acquisition that displaces people."

(3) To the extent possible, federal programs should be designed so that relocation activities in connection with various improvement programs can be