

E. Administration

Legislation should be passed which will restructure the Department of Transportation and eliminate the administrative level between the Secretary of Transportation and the Director of Public Roads. The Bureau of Public Roads should be given the clear responsibility to develop policies for highway activities and be empowered to act as technical and engineering partners with the States in the accomplishment of the highway program.

A reduction of "red tape" and delays in approval could be accomplished through use of a Federal-aid Plan for all Federal-aid highway systems such as the current Secondary Road Plan. Such a procedure sets forth guidelines of procedure that are acceptable to all agencies involved and effectively reduces multiple review and approval time. Secondary Road Plan procedures have been tested and have proved effective in application.

F. "After 1975" Federal-aid Highway Program

Ohio has followed closely the development of the AASHO recommendations for a continuing Federal-aid Highway Program and subscribe to them. We feel that a workable program will be presented to Congress that will be equitable and administratively feasible. We are not in favor of Federal-aid highway maintenance. If states reach the point that they must rely on Federal-aid for non-capital improvements, it is time to look at the highway user tax structure relationship between federal, state and local governments.

With the tremendous need for revenues to meet our present highway programs, we see no reason at this time to take on the extra burden of paying off toll roads and paying states for free highways incorporated into the Interstate System.

We strongly urge that Congress take steps toward establishing a continuing Federal-aid Highway Program at an early date. Guidelines for such a program should be established this year. We endorse the AASHO recommendations.

We are particularly concerned that continued delay will be to the detriment of the Highway Trust Fund. More and more, we are noting public statements by the Department of Transportation which indicate that the Trust Fund concept of financing should be abolished when the Interstate Highway System is completed. Firm guidelines would assist in controlling the numerous attempts to direct highway user funds to other programs.

We are opposed to the trend toward defining and enacting separate highway programs within the broad scope of a total highway program. It is believed that all essential coordination in respect to objectives, standards, priorities, and funds can be effectively attained without the detailed individual programs, transaction by transaction, decision by decision, supervision and audit by ever-increasing numbers of employees whose primary contribution to the program is delay, procrastination, red tape—all supported by an endless stream of ever-expanding regulations and procedures directed to the control of the most elemental, routine activities of competent State highway organizations.

We appreciate your interest in highway legislation and your giving us the opportunity to comment on the items that may be given consideration for legislative action.

Very truly yours,

JAMES A. RHODES,
Governor.

OKLAHOMA

STATE OF OKLAHOMA,
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS,
Oklahoma City, Okla., May 17, 1968.

Hon. JOHN KLUCZYNSKI,
Chairman, House Roads Committee,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KLUCZYNSKI: Regarding your telegram of May 15, 1968 requesting information concerning future Interstate needs in Oklahoma: we are submitting a map and cost information, however, there are a number of factors bearing on this matter that should be considered during the formulation of any future highway program.

While we certainly agree that need does exist for some revision in the existing designated Interstate System, we would hesitate to support any action resulting in immediate addition to the Interstate System of significant amounts of additional mileage. When it is considered that the Interstate Program as now con-