



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
WASHINGTON 25

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The President
The White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

You asked me to keep you advised of the progress being made in carrying out the provisions of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, with particular reference to the program for improvement of the Interstate Highway System.

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Authorizations totaling \$3.7 billion have been apportioned to the States. As required by the Act, \$1.125 billion for the fiscal year 1957 were apportioned immediately upon approval of the Act. In order to advance the program as rapidly as possible, particularly in those States having plans ready for the large amount of work, the authorization of \$2.550 billion for the fiscal year 1958 was apportioned to the States on August 1. These apportionments include a total of \$2.7 billion for the Interstate System.

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I am pleased to report that standards for improvement of the Interstate System were adopted by the State highway departments on July 12, only thirteen days after approval of the 1956 Act. These high standards for improvement of the Interstate System have been approved by the Bureau of Public Roads of the Department of Commerce for application to all Interstate System improvements.

The State highway departments have submitted general programs for the improvement of the Interstate System totaling over \$800 million in cost, on most of which their detailed plans and specifications and right-of-way acquisitions are yet to come. Meanwhile, during the period since the Act was approved on June 29, 1956, the States have been actually authorized to advertise for bids for construction of 122 miles of the Interstate System at an estimated cost of over \$36 million. Contracts

have been awarded for 110 miles of construction at a cost of about \$18 million. These Interstate System projects are being financed in part from the new funds authorized by the 1956 Act.

The first contract for construction on the Interstate System using funds authorized by the 1956 Act was awarded by the Missouri State highway department on August 2, only slightly more than one month after enactment of the legislation. The project provided for 2.6 miles of divided highway on U.S. 66 between Lebanon and Hazelgreen, Missouri. Other projects for improvement of the Interstate System in Missouri also have been awarded to contract, so that the State is now placing under construction six projects costing \$3.8 million in Federal and State funds under the provisions of the 1956 Act.

These developments and others to follow should afford substantial assistance in our efforts to improve our deficient highway systems. I am hopeful that the States will move swiftly in advancing projects with the assurance that they will be given prompt attention by the Federal Government.

Respectfully yours,

SINCLAIR WEEKS

Secretary of Commerce

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