

# FOIA MARKER

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**Folder Title:**

DOT [Department of Transportation] Paper (Press Release, Speeches) [NEXTEA [National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act]

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# A-FAX

OFFICE OF SPEECHWRITING AND RESEARCH

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## TELECOPIER INFORMATION SHEET

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The following 6 pages (including cover sheet) are for:

Name:

Jake Siewert

Company Name:

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The pages are from:

Ilene Zeldin

Comments:

Here are Secretary Slater's  
remarks for tomorrow.

If you do not receive all pages please call

at

promptly.

Thank you

RS -- NEXTEA Ceremony White House -- 3/11/97  
draft 1 -- by Ilene (2 minutes)

**AFTER VP/ INTRO OF PRESIDENT**

Thank you, Mr. Vice President. In 1956, the act that created the interstate was called the Federal Aid Highway Act.

We are calling ours NEXTEA -- the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act. Why crossroads? Because the interstate system that your father and President Eisenhower put in place helped us to build a national economy.

But today, we are at a crossroads and we have to find security and some stability as our businesses compete on an international stage. This is designed to help us in that regard. It is to speak as much about the next six years, as it is the next 60 years.

Mr. Vice President -- just as you were schooled in highways from your father, I learned about it from my mother. I was a little boy when the interstate came to Marianna, Arkansas, and it enabled my mother to get a job

17 miles away in a factory, where she earned more than my father, who was working five jobs.

I then went on to spend many years in Arkansas working for President Clinton, who as Governor and now President shaped my conviction that transportation is more than concrete, asphalt, and steel. It's about people and providing access to opportunity.

It is my honor to introduce, the person who will use transportation to provide opportunity for all Americans in the 21st century ... President Clinton.

**REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER  
BRIEFING ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC CROSSROADS  
TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT  
MARCH 12, 1997  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Mr. President, less than a month ago when I was sworn in, I said that I had three goals. I wanted safety to be my number one priority; second, that we will invest in our infrastructure to ensure that America's transportation system meets the needs of the American people; and third, that we will use a common-sense approach to running a department.

Today, as you propose how our country will invest in highways and transit into the next century, I set all three goals in motion.

Yes, this bill will make our roads safer. Yes, it will make our air cleaner, because we're investing 30 percent more in the next six years.

Yes, it will cut red tape to give states the flexibility to build projects they want, not Washington dictates, and to build them sooner, every day and in every way, as we have done under your leadership in the past four years.

Yes, we will continue to build transit systems. Not since Woodrow Wilson sat in the Oval Office has as much been spent on new transit construction, and I'm very proud of that.

I want the nation to know that the \$175 billion we will invest will support almost one million jobs, across the country, in the next six years, as we build our roads and transit systems.

Mr. President, I know you promised America that we will build bridges. We will. But as important, we will also bridge gaps, especially the growing gap that America now faces of getting former welfare recipients, who may now have jobs, but no cars, to work. We are the to in welfare to work, and our access to jobs program will make a difference.

- more -

We developed NEXTEA by going around the country, by asking people what was good and bad about ISTEA, the previous law, and keeping the good.

I see Mayor Daley here. I remember when we went to Chicago, to hear what those in the heartland had to say. He stressed the need to continue mass transit funding. He said these systems must be considered national -- not just local -- assets. We listened, and learned from him.

And we listened and learned from Mark Schwartz, from Oklahoma City, who said preserving our investments in cleaning the air and solving the congestion problems were his priorities, and NEXTEA supports those efforts.

In NEXTEA, we've tried to be fair to all states. Forty-nine states will receive more dollars than they did under ISTEA. The formulas used to appropriate funds have been up-dated and make use of current data.

Now, I plan to visit our friends on Capitol Hill, to make this a bi-partisan bill. In 1991, when a Democratic Congress and a Republican President passed ISTEA, they rocked the boat.

The debate on NEXTEA will be different. I hope it's not about donors and donees, because NEXTEA builds more than roads and bridges.

I hope the debate is whether this is the transportation bill that will build a nation, a nation for the 21st century that can compete in a global economy.

From George Washington, to Lincoln, to Wilson, to Roosevelt, to Eisenhower -- our nation has always recognized that transportation is about the unity of a diverse nation and a diverse people. I look forward to helping President Clinton and Vice President Gore and this Congress carry that tradition into the 21st century.

Thank you.

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U.S. Department of  
Transportation

Washington D.C. 20590

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, March 12, 1997

DOT 30-97

Contact: Bill Adams

Tel.: (202) 366-5580

**President Clinton Unveils Reauthorization  
Proposal for Transportation for the Twenty-First Century**

President Clinton today proposed a six-year, \$175 billion National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act (NEXTEA) program to continue building and operating a safe, efficient and environmentally-sound surface transportation system into the next century.

"Our nation's prosperity and quality of life depend greatly on our transportation system," President Clinton said. "This landmark legislation puts safety first, protects our environment, continues rebuilding our transportation infrastructure and spurs job creation throughout our economy."

"NEXTEA will build on past success," Transportation Secretary Rodney E. Slater said. "President Clinton promised to re-build America at a time when our transportation system suffered from inadequate capacity and deteriorating infrastructure. Working together with Congress, we've made great improvements. The core elements of this bill will set a firm foundation to carry us into the next century."

NEXTEA's eight core elements are:

- Putting safety first,
- Rebuilding America,
- Ensuring global competitiveness,
- Improving access to jobs and training,
- Protecting the environment,
- Improving transportation through technology,
- Strengthening urban communities and
- Serving rural America.

The bill would authorize about \$175 billion for surface transportation programs from

--more--

1998 to 2003, an 11 percent increase over the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. According to Slater, the proposal builds on ISTEA's success while helping the United States toward a balanced budget. The proposed authorization levels would expand core programs like the National Highway System, maintenance of the Interstate highways by 30 percent and mass maintain mass transit investment at high levels.

Secretary Slater said that the challenge in safety is to continue progress even as traffic increases. "We've recently seen warning signs that tell us to re-focus on traffic safety: the fatality rate has stagnated, safety belt use has leveled off and the number of alcohol-related deaths has increased. NEXTEA will seek to improve safety on our roads by focusing on driver behavior and road design."

NEXTEA would increase NHTSA overall safety funding by 11 percent to \$333 million and fund incentive programs to reduce drugged and drunken driving, to increase safety belt use and collect improved data on highway safety to help solve safety problems, he said.

The President's proposal would increase the amount of funding available for transportation through the use of innovative financial tools. It would open the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) program to all states, increase the amount of federal seed money available to these banks and allow states to use up to 10 percent of their regular federal-aid highway funds to capitalize these banks.

U.S. competitiveness would get a boost from the proposed transportation bill because it would create new programs to help international trade by improving border crossings and developing major trade corridors within the United States -- corridors that would have reduced congestion and fewer bottlenecks. Trade aspects of the bill would expand the eligibility of existing programs to include access to intermodal terminals and access to ports.

A six-year, \$600 million competitive grant program in NEXTEA would support flexible, innovative transportation alternatives for people trying to get to work and off welfare. It also would increase incentives to provide job training so that welfare recipients could take advantage of transportation and related careers.

To help protect the environment, NEXTEA would increase funding for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) by more than 25 percent to \$1.3 billion annually, increase transportation enhancements funding by more than 25 percent and continue funding for National Scenic Byways, recreational trails, bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways.

Secretary Slater said that technology can help deliver additional safety and capacity for less monetary and environmental cost so NEXTEA will invest in research and fund a \$600

million incentive program to help urban areas integrate their intelligent transportation systems to provide smoother service.

Transit funding from the federal government would increase to \$5 billion annually under NEXTEA, and intercity rail terminals would become eligible for these funds. Secretary Slater said local officials would find it easier to fit transit funds to their community's needs because transit funding options in NEXTEA are streamlined.

Noting his commitment to rural America and its essential contribution to American prosperity, Secretary Slater said the proposed bill would extend to rural areas the benefits of inclusive planning by requiring states to consult rural officials in developing transportation plans. It also would raise authorizations for the Federal Lands Highways Program to \$525 million.

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