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NEXTEA

*THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC
CROSSROADS TRANSPORTATION
EFFICIENCY ACT*

*SHAPING AMERICA'S SURFACE
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR THE
21ST CENTURY*

MARCH 12, 1997

THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC CROSSROADS TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT

Today, President Clinton will announce the National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act (NEXTEA), a six-year, \$175 billion investment program to improve America's highways, bridges, transit systems, and railroads; lower the toll in lives and health care costs from motor vehicle crashes; enhance America's environment; and support mobility and economic prosperity. NEXTEA increases surface transportation funding by \$17 billion, or 11 percent, over the \$157 billion authorized by ISTEA.

■ **“REBUILDING AMERICA” – \$175 BILLION INVESTMENT WHILE BALANCING THE BUDGET**

- Increases funding for core highway programs by 30 percent over ISTEA levels.
- Provides greater flexibility for states and localities to target funds that best meet community needs.
- Expands programs for innovative financing to leverage federal dollars.
- Provides \$600 million to deploy intelligent transportation technology to cut travel time and enhance safety.

■ **PUTTING A STRONGER EMPHASIS ON SAFETY**

- Increases funding for the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration by 25 percent to \$395 million.
- Increases highway and truck safety funding by \$2 billion.
- Increases funding for drunk driving prevention by 60 percent.
- Creates and expands programs to increase the proper use of safety belts and child restraints, reduce drunk and drugged driving, and continue research into building safer roads and vehicles.

■ **PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Increases funding for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) by 30 percent, to \$1.3 billion annually.
- Increases Transportation Enhancements funding by more than 25 percent to support bike paths, pedestrian walkways and other community-oriented projects.
- Expands CMAQ eligibility to include regions that fail to meet any new air quality standard.
- Provides greater flexibility for state and local investment in non-polluting modes of transportation.

■ **INVESTING \$600 MILLION TO MOVE PEOPLE FROM WELFARE TO WORK**

- Supports flexible, innovative transportation alternatives, such as vanpools, to get people to where the jobs are.
- Increases incentives for states and localities to provide job training for federally-funded technology and construction projects.

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REBUILDING AMERICA

America's prosperity and quality of life are linked to our transportation system's efficiency, which keeps production costs low and maintains our international competitiveness. When President Clinton promised to "rebuild America" five years ago, this system suffered from inadequate capacity, deteriorating infrastructure, and poor connections among different forms of transportation. The President has worked with Congress to make good on his promise, taking advantage of ISTEA to raise infrastructure investment to record levels.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ Under President Clinton, federal transportation infrastructure investment increased 21 percent, to an average of \$25.5 billion annually.
- ✓ Many indicators of highway conditions and performance have stabilized or improved. The condition of bridges and highway pavement, which had been deteriorating, has stabilized. We have kept pace with our transportation system's maintenance requirements and stopped its deterioration.
- ✓ Transit investment has increased, including over \$3 billion transferred using ISTEA's flexible funding provisions. Nearly 26,000 new buses and nearly 600 new rail cars have been bought for state and local transit agencies, and more than 100 miles of new transit lines serving more than 100 new stations are under construction. Transit speeds have improved by an average of about 10 percent.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA builds on ISTEA's successes while helping us to move towards a balanced budget. It would authorize about \$175 billion for surface transportation programs from 1998 through 2003, an 11 percent increase over ISTEA. The proposed authorization levels would sustain or expand core programs such as the National Highway System, maintenance of the Interstate Highways, bridge reconstruction, and mass transit.
- NEXTEA gives state and local officials greater flexibility to target funds towards projects that best meet community needs, including Amtrak and intercity rail passenger facilities. It also increases the tools available to them by making intelligent transportation systems eligible under all major program categories and by expanding innovative finance strategies to cut red tape and to leverage private and nonfederal public resources.

A COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

More than 40,000 Americans die and three million are injured in motor vehicle crashes each year, inflicting a tragic toll on millions of families. In addition, these crashes cost our economy \$150 billion annually, including \$14 billion paid directly by taxpayers for expenses such as health care and emergency services. Improved safety can help to control these costs.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ Under ISTEA, with its enhanced commitment to safety, highway fatalities have been lower than in decades, averaging about 41,000 annually. Safety belt use has grown from 11 percent of motorists in 1982 to 68 percent last year. Alcohol-related fatalities have decreased from 57 percent of crashes in 1982 to 41 percent in 1995.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

Our challenge is to continue the progress on safety even as traffic increases. Recently, we have seen warning signs that we may be approaching the limits of progress under ISTEA: the fatality rate has stagnated, increases in safety belt use have leveled off, and the number of alcohol-related deaths has increased. NEXTEA would attack these problems by focusing on three key areas: driver behavior, road design, and vehicle standards.

Safer Drivers

- NEXTEA would increase NHTSA safety funding by 25 percent to \$395 million, and fund incentive programs to reduce drugged and drunken driving, to increase safety belt use, and to collect improved data on highway safety to better identify and solve safety problems.
- \$9 million annually in financial incentives would be provided for states to increase proper use of safety belts and child restraints.
- NEXTEA would increase funding for drunk driving prevention by 60 percent to \$40 million in 1998, and reward states for aggressively reducing drunk driving through administrative driver's license suspensions and revocations, programs to prevent minors from drinking, and effective sanctions for repeat offenders.

- NEXTEA would provide \$5 million annually beginning in 1999 in grants to states to prevent drugged driving. A state would be eligible for these grants if it adopted five of nine countermeasures, including zero tolerance laws, administrative license suspension for those driving under the influence, and pre-license drug testing.

Safer Roads

- Under ISTEA, funding was set aside to eliminate road hazards and to make highway-rail grade crossings safer. Grade crossing deaths alone have dropped by 31 percent. NEXTEA would build on this progress by replacing this set-aside with a flexible, six-year, \$3.2 billion Infrastructure Safety Program. States would now have the ability to transfer funds to enforcement and behavioral programs if they would have a greater impact on safety.

Safer Vehicles

- States would have increased flexibility for tougher enforcement, such as targeting shippers who encourage truckers to violate rules and increasing penalties for violators. States also would be reimbursed for border enforcement and other high-priority activities that improve trucking safety.
- Under NEXTEA, the freeze on the size and weight of larger combination trucks on Interstate Highways and other routes would continue. We are doing a comprehensive study of this and related issues, and may soon propose additional steps in future safety legislation.
- Much progress on safety has been the result of vehicle design aimed at protecting motorists in crashes. NEXTEA would build on the progress to date with a \$45 million annual research program targeted at improving crash avoidance and crash worthiness. In addition, more than a third of intelligent transportation systems research would be focused on collision avoidance systems and other "smart vehicle" technologies that prevent crashes.
- A new focus on performance in safety programs would measure effectiveness by looking at quantifiable results, not at how much money or effort is put into solutions.

I NCREASING INVESTMENT THROUGH INNOVATIVE FINANCING

In spite of ISTEA's record investment, the federal government alone cannot meet all of our infrastructure needs. President Clinton recognized this in his January 1994 Executive Order on infrastructure, in which he directed us to cut red tape to speed construction and supplement federal funds by leveraging private and nonfederal public investment.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ President Clinton's Partnership for Transportation Investment accelerated 74 projects worth \$4.5 billion, including \$1.2 billion in investment beyond that available through conventional financing. Projects are advancing an average of two years ahead of schedule, saving interest and inflation costs.
- ✓ Some innovative finance initiatives also advance other national priorities, such as in Missouri and Arizona, where entrepreneurs were given permission to install fiber optic cable within highway rights-of-way in return for reserving part of the cable as the backbone of statewide intelligent transportation systems.
- ✓ The new State Infrastructure Bank program uses federal seed money to leverage private and nonfederal public funds in 10 pilot states. Among the proposed uses of these funds are: a loan to start construction on a highway interchange without waiting for the full federal funding to be accumulated; a loan to finance a toll road's interest costs while it is being built, before revenues can begin to pay off the construction debt; and a loan to buy new light rail vehicles.
- ✓ We provided a direct loan to California's Alameda Corridor, which will speed shipping from Los Angeles' port by creating a dedicated freight rail corridor. We also provided standby lines of credit to secure private financing for California toll roads; at a cost of just \$18 million, we supported \$2.5 billion in construction financing

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA would open the State Infrastructure Bank program to all states, increase the federal seed money dedicated to these banks, and allow states to use up to 10 percent of their regular federal-aid highway funds to capitalize their banks.
- \$100 million annually would be dedicated to help leverage nonfederal public resources for projects of national significance, such as interstate trade corridors.

E NSURING GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Under President Clinton, America is once again the most economically-competitive nation in the world and its leading exporter, and this is due in great measure to the reliability and low costs of our transportation system. In an increasingly-global economy, keeping transportation efficient is crucial to our continued competitiveness and to taking advantage of the markets opened by NAFTA and GATT.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ Seamless connections among different forms of transportation, such as between trucks, railroads, and seaports, are important for efficiency, and ISTEA-funded projects are making possible these connections. These projects include truck-rail freight transfer facilities in Stark County, Ohio, and Auburn, Maine, and projects in Portland, Oregon and Seattle designed to improve rail and truck access to seaports.
- ✓ Projects such as the Red Hook barge transfer, which daily takes hundreds of trucks off New York's crowded streets, often have important social and environmental benefits, and ISTEA made them eligible for funding through such flexible initiatives as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and our innovative finance programs.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA would facilitate trade by creating new programs to improve border crossings and develop major trade corridors within the U.S., cutting congestion and eliminating bottlenecks.
- NEXTEA would support projects of national significance, such as those focused on trade corridors, through dedicated funds and by expanding the State Infrastructure Bank program.
- The proposal would expand funding eligibility to include access to intermodal terminals and water ports. This is a vital change since much international trade -- 98 percent by weight, 50 percent by value -- is shipped through ports. These programs also would make eligible for funding Amtrak and intercity rail passenger and public freight facilities and intelligent transportation systems projects, which can improve the logistics crucial to "just-in-time" deliveries.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO JOBS AND TRAINING

One of the biggest barriers faced by those moving from welfare rolls to payrolls is finding transportation to jobs, training, and support services such as day care. Poverty and welfare eligibility rules mean that few welfare recipients own cars, and public transit often provides inadequate connections to job and training centers. This problem is becoming more serious, since two-thirds of new jobs are in suburbs. To support his comprehensive welfare reform initiative, President Clinton proposes to build on existing transit programs that work with innovative approaches to helping people make the transition to the working world.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ Our Livable Communities program integrates transit with jobs, schools, and housing. In Corpus Christi, local residents worked with local officials on developing three bus transfer centers and improving pedestrian access to local amenities, and a Los Angeles neighborhood initiative generated a hundred new jobs and helped to cut crime by 19 percent.
- ✓ The Joblinks program provides transportation and training in both urban and rural areas. Oregon's Glendale-Azalea School District used Joblinks funds to transport 400 unemployed and undereducated residents to training and to jobs in the first year alone. The success of initiatives such as Joblinks and Livable Communities provides a model for new efforts to improve community access to jobs and other necessities.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA includes a six-year, \$600 million grant program to support flexible, innovative transportation alternatives, such as vanpools, to get people to where the jobs are. Funding would also provide access to training centers and to support services such as day care at transit links. This program would be closely coordinated with other human services assistance that would be provided to states and localities working to meet the special needs of the welfare population.
- Since transportation and construction jobs are among America's best-paying, we want to open opportunities in these fields for welfare recipients and other disadvantaged people. NEXTEA would increase incentives for states and localities to provide job training in conjunction with federally-funded technology and construction projects, and to enable them to offer hiring preferences to welfare recipients and residents of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Scientific research demonstrates the effects of pollution on our health and on the ecological systems which sustain human life. President Clinton has taken advantage of ISTEA's landmark environmental provisions to reduce air and water pollution, to preserve wetlands and open space, and to make transportation facilities more compatible with the environment.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ The largest ISTEA environmental initiative is the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), which authorized \$1 billion annually under ISTEA to help communities meet national standards for healthy air. CMAQ has funded such innovative projects as cleaner natural gas buses in Cleveland and Boise, a child care center to promote ridership at a San Jose transit facility, and an inspection and maintenance program in Indiana, which ensures that auto emissions systems continue to cut pollution.
- ✓ ISTEA supported important travel alternatives, such as bikeways and pedestrian paths, and preserved scenic and historic roadside vistas, supporting tourism and strengthening local economies.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA would increase CMAQ funding by 30 percent, to \$1.3 billion annually, and expand funding eligibility to include scrappage of higher-polluting pre-1980 vehicles. It also would act on new research on the dangers of particulate matter by allowing areas that do not meet health standards for this pollutant to receive CMAQ funds. NEXTEA also would ensure that no state loses CMAQ funds as a result of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed changes in air quality standards.
- NEXTEA would increase Transportation Enhancements funding by more than 25 percent, supporting projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of our transportation system.
- The National Scenic Byways program, which designates roads of aesthetic or historic value and funds improvements to them, would be continued, and the list of eligible activities would be expanded to include scenic byway marketing programs. Funding for recreational trails, bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways, landscaping, and wildflower plantings also would be continued, as would ISTEA's commitment to inclusive transportation planning which reflects such community values as environmental preservation.

IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Technology can improve the performance of roads and transit systems and effectively increase their capacity, especially in urban areas where new construction is too expensive or environmentally unsound. Technology also can make travel safe: most automobile crashes involve human error, and advanced collision avoidance systems and highway-rail grade crossing warnings can save hundreds of lives annually. Finally, technology can provide the logistical support needed for such innovations as “just-in-time” deliveries, which are cutting costs and improving productivity at nearly a third of U.S. companies.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ ISTE A established a major federal commitment to intelligent transportation systems (ITS), the application of advanced information and communications technologies to travel. The federal role includes providing seed money for development and deployment, assistance in the creation of technology standards to promote system integration, and the coordination of public and private research efforts.
- ✓ The first generation of ITS is already being deployed: in Denver, synchronized traffic signals reduced travel times by over 15 to 20 percent, and in Seattle, ramp metering has cut accident rates by more than 60 percent. *Operation TimeSaver*, an initiative to reduce travel times in 75 cities by 15 percent over the next decade, was launched last year. Under this initiative, states may use their federal transportation funds to deploy ITS systems.
- ✓ Overall federal transportation research and technology investment increased to record levels, \$930 million in 1997 alone. Initiatives resulting from this investment include high-performance materials, such as Superpave asphalt, which cost less and last longer, and the application of global positioning satellite systems to aviation and maritime navigation.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA would provide states and localities with ITS training and technical assistance, and fund a \$600 million incentive program to help cities integrate their ITS programs and to help rural areas deploy ITS to improve safety, mobility, and commercial vehicle operations. It also would expand the eligibility of all major program categories to include ITS, so technology will always be considered as a strategy for meeting travel demand.
- NEXTEA would increase overall federal investment in technology research for initiatives including advanced composites for stronger, safer roads and bridges and second-generation ITS technologies such as collision avoidance systems.

S TRENGTHENING URBAN COMMUNITIES

Sound transportation is crucial for sustaining economic prosperity and a high quality of life in our cities. Targeted infrastructure investment can reduce congestion and improve connections so businesses can take advantage of the city's proximity to suppliers, support services, markets, and amenities. Such investment also can generate jobs for city residents, directly through construction, and indirectly by attracting new businesses.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ **ISTEA strengthened the role of cities in the transportation planning process, giving cities greater control over a substantial portion of federal funds and enabling them to choose projects which best met urban needs.**
- ✓ **Together with the increased flexibility of many programs, this enabled funding to be transferred to such urban needs as transit. Over \$3 billion traditionally earmarked for highways was used for high-priority transit projects, most in cities, and overall transit funding increased under ISTEA, reaching a record \$6 billion in 1995 alone.**

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- **NEXTEA sustains investment in mass transportation by increasing direct federal transit funding to \$5 billion a year, by increasing the flexible Surface Transportation Program, and by making Amtrak and intercity rail terminals eligible for funding. Transit programs would be streamlined to make it easier for local officials to select the options that make the most sense for their communities**
- **NEXTEA includes a six-year, \$600 million program to support flexible, innovative transportation alternatives, such as vanpools, to get people to where the jobs are and to provide access to training and such support services as child care.**
- **Technology can provide needed additional urban travel capacity with less disruption to established communities and at less cost than new construction. NEXTEA proposes to make intelligent transportation systems eligible under all major programs, and to create an incentive program to ensure that these technologies are fully integrated.**
- **NEXTEA would further strengthen the role of central cities in regional planning and simplify federal planning requirements.**

SERVING RURAL AMERICA

Transportation is as vital to rural areas as it is to cities. Sound transport is vital for shipping raw materials and agricultural products. Tourism, generated by the four in five Americans who drive for pleasure in rural areas, sustains many local economies. And many rural residents rely on transit to reach schools, health care, and other necessary services.

ISTEA SUCCESSES

- ✓ ISTEА provided over \$1 billion for special projects in rural America, such as protecting scenic roadside vistas, preserving historic transportation facilities, and beautifying communities with bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- ✓ ISTEА benefitted rural areas with provisions like special transit programs for small communities, transportation enhancements, scenic byways, and set-asides for off-system bridges.

KEY NEXTEA PROVISIONS

- NEXTEA would strengthen rural communities' involvement in transportation planning by requiring coordination with local rural officials when statewide transportation plans are developed.
- NEXTEA would increase investment in core programs affecting rural areas, such as the National Highway System, Transportation Enhancements, and Rural Transit Assistance, and expand funding eligibility to include Amtrak and intercity rail and bus, two key lifelines for rural America.
- NEXTEA would raise authorizations for the Federal Lands Highways Program to \$525 million, funding improvements on roads in national parks and forests, Indian reservations, and other public lands.