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recognizing the importance that everyone here and myself attached to the interstate system, it continues it to a level of over three billion dollars a year. Just recently Secretary of Transportation Brenneker announced that the interstate is 90% complete, or underway. We are committed to the completion of the interstate at the earliest possible date, we, and we are proud of the success. Secondly in an area very important to all of you, the bill would increase rural development funding to a strong level of one billion dollars a year. Furthermore in recognition of the valid needs of our rural communities to increase public transit, the bill would permit rural funds to be used for purchase of bus facilities. We feel that this is a needed change for our rural citizens. Thus states will have additional choice in providing the most adequate form of transportation for their rural communities. In addition and this is the proposal which has perhaps raised the most controversy and we think has been largely overblown, one point one billion dollars in new 74 authority will be provided for the urban systems. We would also include a provision that communities, urban communities working with the state could use these funds for urban highways, if they so choose, however, should they feel that the best decision would involve perhaps the capital improvement as a special bus lane, fringe parking, purchase of buses or in some cases, purchase of rapid rail cars and facilities, they would have that option. The new emphasis of this bill is to give local communities an option which they have never had before, it is to secure flexibility to the local community to meet its transportation needs effectively, and to find the best investment for our and your transient dollar. We are not robbing Peter to pay Paul, as has been accused, rather we are suring that the same pot of money that is available is available for the most pressing transportation needs in each individual locality. To us it seems logical that if the residence of any given city feel that additional buses or additional link of a rail transient system will better serve their needs then additional mile of highway, they should be able to invest their federal highway funds in that manner. The residence of each city will then be in a position to dictate and select their own trade offs. Dictation of priorities by big rigid national government in Washington, will give way to creative thinking and acting by state and local Government. The daunt legislation would give cities this choice directly. It passed through provision is contained in our legislation, under it the 57 metropolitan areas in the United States with more than four hundred thousand population would receive a portion in funds directly. This is because we feel that this size city does have adequate organization and staff to use these monies effectively. For urban areas smaller than four hundred thousand in population, we believe that the states should continue to play the major role in developing transportation programs. Funding would be administered through state Government to these smaller localities. Let me make it clear that this pass through provision which has been widely misunderstood, will not affect the total federal funding allotment coming to Nebraska or any other state. The pass through provision effects only the distribution of money within a state, not the total money coming to that state. We feel it is essential that cooperative state, local, transportation development processes be continued in all organized areas, and we expect the states to play an important role in working with the localities in determining the proper institutional arrangement. We have had to come to grips with increased urbanization of our country since the establishment of the highway trust fund. Consequently the highway trust fund, since 1956 has been continually updated to keep pace with changing national transportation needs. The purposes of the trust fund have been broadened each year to include highway safety measures, relocation and replacement