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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

THE WHITE HOUSE

INFORMATION

WASHINGTON

November 25, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
 VIA: KEN COLE ^C
 FROM: MIKE DUVAL
 SUBJECT: 55 MPH Speed Limit

At the Cabinet meeting on October 30, you asked John Barnum, DOT's Deputy Secretary, for statistical information concerning the degree to which drivers are adhering to the 55 mph speed limit. The generally incomplete statistics which DOT currently has, show that open-highway speeds were reduced from an average of 65.1 mph to 57 mph in December of 1973. This was undoubtedly due to the energy crisis. However, average speeds, while remaining well below pre-energy crisis speeds, appear to have been rising slowly during the summer months of this year and are now generally in the 58 to 59 mph range.

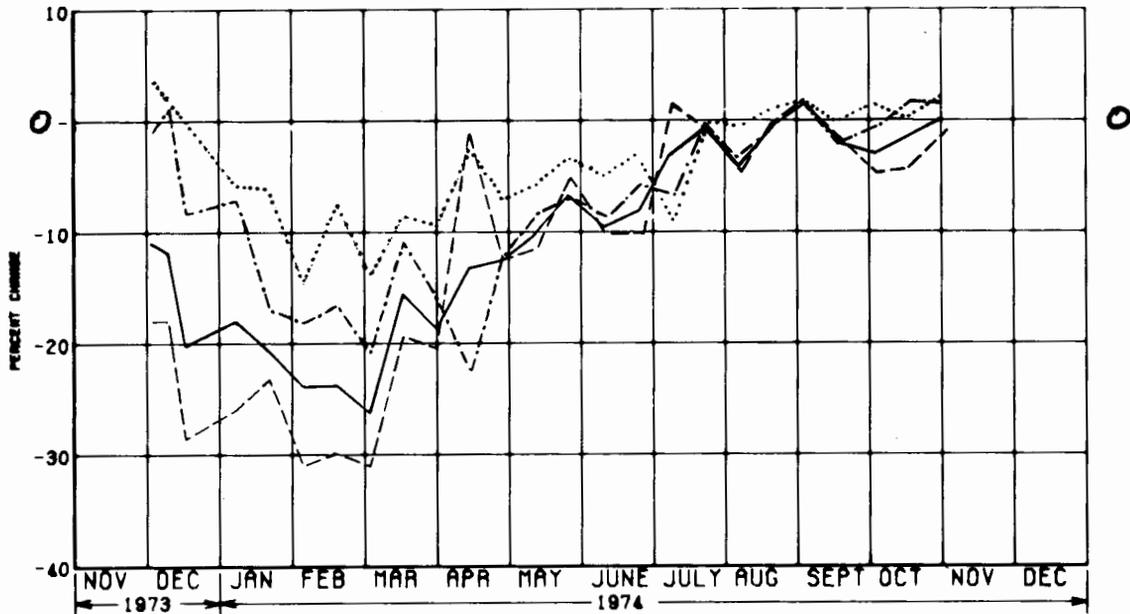
Before the energy crisis, 24 percent of the vehicles on interstate roads exceeded 70 mph. Speeds in the central and western regions of the country are about 5 mph faster than speeds in the eastern region.

DOT is collecting current speed data from each state and will have an updated report available by the end of this month. They are also studying options for enforcement incentives to maintain the 55 mph speed limit, including publicity and a state-by-state score card such as you suggested at the Cabinet meeting.

Attached at Tab A is a graph showing that week-end driving this year was sharply less than a year ago -- until summer when it reached last year's level (but no growth). A second chart shows that gasoline sales have remained below last year's levels.

The complete DOT report numbering 200 pages is available for your review.

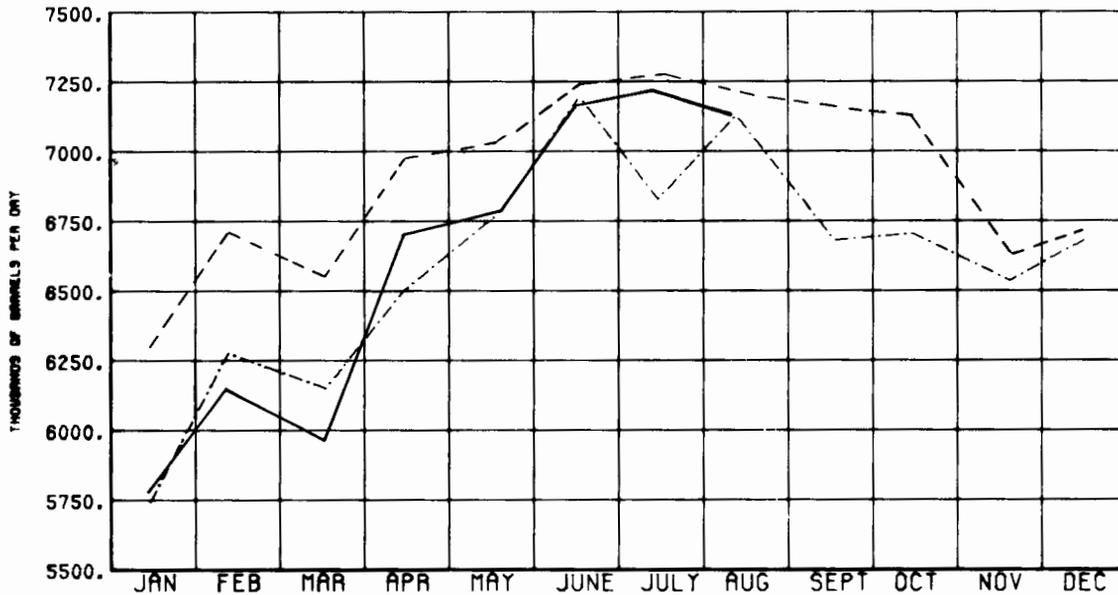
**AVERAGE CHANGES IN WEEKEND HIGHWAY TRAFFIC VOLUMES
FROM THE CORRESPONDING DAY ONE YEAR EARLIER**



SOURCE: FHWA SURVEY FROM STATE HWY. DEPT. AND TURNPIKE AUTHORITIES IN TEN STATES. TAKEN EVERY OTHER WEEKEND IN 1974.

..... FRIDAY
 - - - - SATURDAY
 _____ SMT. & SUN.

**NATIONAL SALES OF MOTOR GASOLINE
DAILY AVERAGE BY MONTH**



SOURCE: HIGHWAY STATISTICS DIVISION, OFFICE OF PLANNING, FHWA

..... 1972
 - - - - 1973
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