

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
UPON SIGNING THE  
NATIONAL MASS TRANSPORTATION  
ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1974

THE EAST ROOM

10:40 A.M. EST

Thank you all very, very much. I apologize for being late, but we had a meeting with the joint leadership, where I reported on the trip to Japan, to Korea and to the Soviet Union.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to see all of my old friends in the Congress and some of the mayors and some of the Governors.

On this occasion, the news of the passage of this legislation reached me overseas, and I considered this legislation a top priority of the 93rd Congress, and I congratulate the Senate and the House for acting so quickly and so decisively.

This marks a long-term and vital major Federal commitment to mass transportation. This legislation represents a compromise in the best sense of the term. Although different positions were set forth in the beginning, the views of the Administration, the Congress, Governors, mayors and others; we were able to reconcile our differences and develop legislation to meet our most urgent needs in mass transportation at a cost which is not inflationary.

This legislation is significant in our fight against the excessive use of petroleum, in our economic battle and in our efforts to curb urban pollution and reduce congestion. It assures that \$11.8 billion in Federal assistance will be available to States and to cities to meet transit needs for the rest of the decade.

This assurance of steady and predictable support for public transit for the first time will enable localities to plan intelligently for their long-term needs. Also, for the first time this legislation will permit the Federal Government to provide limited assistance toward the operating expenses of transit systems.

MORE

(OVER)

Provisions of the bill will minimize possible adverse effects of Federal involvement in such deficits. The act contains funds, again, for the first time, which can be used for rural public transportation.

Many in the Congress, and elsewhere, worked very hard to develop this legislation, and I am pleased that so many of you could be here today. Secretary Brinegar, Frank Herringer, John Tower, Pete Williams, Joe Minish, Bill Widnall, Garry Brown, Jim Delaney, John Anderson, Ray Madden -- and I could go on -- deserve special mention, and so do many mayors who made numerous journeys to Washington, all for a good cause.

I am encouraged here and now to use the excessive use of certain energy; that is, the kind of energy expended to enact this legislation by the Congress and by its supporters around the country. Let us put more and more of this personal energy into the effective solution of the important problems facing the Nation today. We surely will find solutions at a price that is right.

It is with a great deal of personal pleasure that I sign the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974.

Thank you all again. It is so nice to see so many of you, and I compliment in a personal way the cooperation, the assistance and the understanding. This is what produces results, and I thank each and every one of you very, very much.

END (AT 10:45 A.M. EST)