

# CONTENTS

	Page
Statement of Hon. Abraham Ribicoff, a U.S. Senator from the State of Connecticut.....	1

## WITNESS LIST

H. A. Abersfeller, Commissioner, Federal Supply Service, General Services Administration.....	208
Hon. Anthony J. Celebrezze, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.....	213
Hon. John T. Connor, Secretary of Commerce, and Chairman, Interdepartmental Highway Safety Board.....	407
Robert B. Conrad, Commissioner, Transportation and Communications Service, General Services Administration.....	207
E. H. Cox, Chief, Section of Motor Carrier Safety, Interstate Commerce Commission.....	337
William S. Foulis, Executive Director, the President's Committee for Traffic Safety.....	145
Hon. John A. Gronouski, Postmaster General, Post Office Department.....	10
Gen. Alfred M. Gruenther, member, the President's Committee for Traffic Safety.....	83
Malcolm W. Jensen, Chief, Office of Weights and Measures, Institute for Applied Technology.....	445
Paul V. Joliet, Chief, Division of Accident Prevention, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.....	222
Lawson B. Knott, Jr., Acting Administrator of General Services Administration.....	186
Edward B. Landry, Director of Safety, Post Office Department.....	44
Daniel P. Moynihan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Labor.....	249
Richard J. Murphy, Assistant Postmaster General for Personnel, Post Office Department.....	42
Hon. Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from the State of Wisconsin.....	3
George C. Nield, Office of Research and Engineering, Post Office Department.....	41
Allen Pond, Assistant Surgeon General, Public Health Service, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.....	229
Herbert Qualls, Director, Bureau of Motor Carriers, Interstate Commerce Commission.....	393
Stephen N. Shulman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel, Industrial Relations and Civil Rights).....	584
Robert D. Stiehler, Chief of Evaluation Criteria, Institute for Materials Research.....	452
Charles A. Webb, Chairman, Interstate Commerce Commission.....	326
Rex Whitton, Federal Highway Administrator, Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Commerce.....	459
James K. Williams, Director, Office of Highway Safety, Department of Commerce.....	458

## EXHIBITS

No.		
1.	Statement prepared by Hon. Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from the State of Wisconsin.....	4
2.	Remarks by Senator Gaylord Nelson before the Federal Trade Commission on the marketing of automobile tires, January 13, 1965.....	6
3.	Post Office Department rural carriers: plan of proposed car.....	14
4.	Post Office Department safety program: Comprehensive material relating thereto.....	17
5.	Post Office Department: Motor vehicle accident tort claims cost.....	40
6.	Reflecting disk (stainless steel) mirror for improved front view vision at bumper level.....	45
7.	Interdepartmental Highway Safety Board report to the President.....	48
8.	Letter from General Motors relating to \$115,000 grant.....	51
9.	Biographical summary of Alfred M. Gruenther.....	78

EXHIBITS—Continued		Page
No.		
10.	Statement prepared by William Randolph Hearst, Jr.-----	84
	How the President's Committee for Traffic Safety functions-----	106
	Accident Trends: Excerpted from the Action Program—A Report to the President.-----	109
	Task group meeting—National Safety Council Traffic Conference to study the feasibility and method of developing a long-range plan to accelerate implementation of the highway safety action program, February 24 and 25, 1965-----	113
11.	Traffic control: The needs and the cost-----	146
12.	The President's Committee for Traffic Safety: Sources of private budget, fiscal years 1962-63, 1963-64, 1964-65-----	152
12A.	Traffic accident mileage death rate, 1964-----	155
13.	Minnesota's traffic safety needs-----	157
14.	Statement prepared by Lawson B. Knott, Jr., Acting Administrator of General Services Administration-----	187
15.	Tire safety testing-----	198
16.	Automotive safety standards: Advice and assistance supplied by agencies, organizations and associations-----	204
17.	Driver simulators can improve and expand community training pro- grams-----	217
18.	Traffic accident PHS research grant projects, fiscal years 1957-65-----	223
19.	Federal highway safety programs expenditures, 1964-66-----	231
20.	Car design and public safety-----	237
21.	Statement prepared by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Assistant Secretary of Labor-----	250
22.	A plague of our own-----	278
23.	Vehicular work injuries sustained by civilian Federal employees under Federal Employees' Compensation Act-----	284
24.	Passenger car design and highway safety-----	291
25.	Epidemic on the highways-----	313
26.	Report and recommendation: Subcommittee on Government Em- ployee Safe Driving Standards to Committee on Safe Driving Standards Advisory Council, President's Committee for Traffic Safety-----	323
27.	Statement prepared by Charles A. Webb, Chairman, Interstate Com- merce Commission-----	327
28.	Interstate Commerce Commission: Examples of motor carrier accident investigations-----	340
29.	Motor carrier safety program-----	395
30.	The Federal program in highway safety-----	408
31.	Management survey of safety organizational structure-----	434
32.	The great odometer mystery-----	446
33.	107 miles on odometer often equals 100 on car-----	448
33A.	Attack on Detroit-----	449
34.	Abandonment of tire endurance test by National Bureau of Standards-----	453
35.	Statement prepared by Rex. M. Whitton, Federal Highway Adminis- trator, Bureau of Public Roads, U.S. Department of Commerce-----	461
36.	Electric guidance for highway safety-----	483
37.	Correction of high accident location-----	488
38.	The American Association of State Highway Officials Manual for Signing and Pavement Marking of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, 1961-----	493
39.	Bureau of Public Roads research and development program for reduc- tion in traffic accident toll-----	572
40.	Department of Defense: Procurement of cars and commercial trucks by type, by manufacturer, 1964-----	585
41.	Statement prepared by Stephen N. Shulman, Deputy Assistant Secre- tary of Defense (Civilian Personnel, Industrial Relations, and Civil Rights)-----	596
42.	Department of Defense: Inventory of Traffic Safety activities-----	606
43.	Department of Defense: Commission on Accidental Trauma-----	617
44.	Department of Army: Safe operation of truck, utility, ¼ ton, M151-----	628
45.	Commission on Military Accidents: Director's summary report to the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board, 1963-64-----	637
HEARING DAYS		
	March 22, 1965-----	1
	March 25, 1965-----	213
	March 26, 1965-----	407

## FEDERAL ROLE IN TRAFFIC SAFETY

(Pursuant to S. Res. 56, 89th Cong.)

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 1965

U.S. SENATE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EXECUTIVE REORGANIZATION  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,  
*Washington, D.C.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:45 a.m., in room 1318, New Senate Office Building, Senator Abraham Ribicoff (chairman), presiding.

Present: Senators Ribicoff, Simpson, and Montoya.

Also present: Jerome Sonosky, staff director, and Constance Greess, chief clerk.

Senator RIBICOFF. The Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization will begin its hearings on the Federal role in traffic safety.

And I would like to make a short statement.

### STATEMENT OF HON. ABRAHAM RIBICOFF, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Senator RIBICOFF. Today we begin a long-range series of hearings on the role of the Federal Government in the field of traffic safety. We intend to examine and review from top to bottom those agencies—both public and private—Federal, State, and local—which direct and support the Nation's traffic safety efforts.

Two main points stand out clearly after an examination of the existing situation.

#### VAST EXTENT OF TRAFFIC SAFETY "ESTABLISHMENT"

First, the vast extent of the so-called traffic safety establishment. It extends from the local police station to community safety councils to State traffic safety commissions and to the White House itself. In the Federal Government alone some 16 separate agencies have some traffic safety responsibility or role. The key Federal agencies will be testifying in this opening round of hearings. We will examine the efficiency, economy and interagency coordination aspects of these various programs. We will endeavor to establish exactly what the present Federal role in traffic safety is, how much is expended to support it, how it might duplicate and overlap, and how it might be improved.

## CARNAGE CONTINUES DESPITE SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

The second main point is that despite the efforts of the past—despite massive safety campaigns both public and private—the awful carnage on our roads and streets continues and worsens.

There is no doubt that since the invention of the internal combustion engine we have practiced an unbelievable form of national self-destruction.

In the past minute 20 accidents have taken place. One-half hour from now three Americans will be dead who right now are alive. And for every half hour of this day and the days to follow three more human beings will lose their lives on our Nation's roads and streets.

The preliminary 1964 National Safety Council statistics, which try in hard cold numbers to describe our annual toll of suffering, misery, and death resulting from our highways, show that we have again set a record. As a result of traffic accidents which occurred in 1964, 47,800 people have already died, and before the records are closed the total is expected to exceed 48,000 which is 10 percent more than 1963 fatalities which numbered 43,400. What is even more significant is that the deaths per 100 million miles traveled rose from 5.3 in 1962 to 5.5 in 1963 to 5.7 in 1964. If the current increase in the traffic fatality rate continues, deaths will rise to 100,000 a year by 1975.

We are spending more than \$1 billion to assure the safety of the three men who will occupy the space capsule that goes to the moon. This is as it should be. Their safety is of prime importance. But one wonders about a Nation that is willing to expend \$1 billion to get three men to the moon but is seemingly unwilling to expend even one one-hundredth of that amount to protect its 190 million citizens from death or injury on our roads and streets.

Having stated the traffic safety problem, the question becomes, first, what are we doing about it, and second, what can we do about it?

## ROLE OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IMPORTANT

I think it is time we took a close look at the role of the Federal Government in this field. The manner in which the Federal Government is carrying out its responsibility is of vital importance to the overall national effort to reduce traffic accidents. It can lead and give proper direction—or it can foot-drag and stagnate. We will determine if the latter now exists and make certain the former becomes a reality.

There has been a lot of talk, for a long period of time. Now is the time for responsible and positive action nationwide.

Our first witness is our colleague, Senator Gaylord Nelson, of Wisconsin. I welcome Senator Nelson for his deep and vital interest in this entire subject, not only as a Senator, but as one of the Nation's outstanding Governors who had a chance of seeing this problem close up, and who as a Governor took a leading role to try to protect the people of Wisconsin. Since Gaylord Nelson has been with the U.S. Senate, he has kept his interest in this field and has made many constructive suggestions.

We welcome Senator Gaylord Nelson as the first witness before our committee.

STATEMENT OF HON. GAYLORD NELSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE  
STATE OF WISCONSIN

Senator NELSON. Mr. Chairman, I will read, if the chairman will permit, part of my statement, and ask that the balance be included in the record. I have a matter pending subsequent to this one, and I know that you have some distinguished witnesses here appearing before you today. So it may be helpful if I just read part of this statement.

Senator RIBICOFF. Without objection, your entire statement may appear in the record.

Senator NELSON. I appreciate the opportunity of appearing before you this morning. I am interested in the subject, as I know many hundreds of thousands of people across this Nation are. I did not do anything very effective about the question of highway safety as Governor of my State. But the chairman of this committee did achieve a national reputation for his work in highway safety in Connecticut.

## STATISTICS ON TRAFFIC INJURIES AND DEATH

I think most of us are familiar with the statistics.

The automobile ranks as one of the four leading causes of death in the United States. While millions of dollars are spent on cancer and heart research, two other major killers, we continue to ignore these dramatic statistics:

Over 47,800 people were killed on our Nation's highways last year.

Approximately 4.8 million people were injured in automobile accidents last year.

In the critical age group of 5 to 29, the automobile was the No. 1 killer.

An American's chances of escaping injury in a car crash during the whole of his lifetime is no better than 50-50, as estimated by one expert in the January issue of American Trial Lawyers.

Approximately 50 times as many people died in auto accidents as died in airplane accidents last year.

The U.S. Air Force loses more of its men in auto accidents each year than in aircraft accidents.

The figures are appalling, yet the slaughter goes on. What is being done to protect the millions of Americans whose lives are directly affected by the automobile?

Progress has been slow, but there is at least some indication of possible action. The Senator from Connecticut, Mr. Ribicoff, deserves our congratulations for conducting these hearings. His proposal to review the Federal Government's role in accident prevention should receive universal support. The problems of poor highway construction, confusing signs and traffic markings, inadequate driver licensing programs, and mechanical failure of the automobile all deserve attention. They certainly contribute to the high death rate on our highways.

## PROPOSED EXTENSION OF NEW FEDERAL SAFETY STANDARDS

Several weeks ago I introduced a bill which would extend the new Federal safety standards for Government automobiles to all cars manufactured for, sold, or shipped in interstate commerce. We now know how to write safety standards for 60,000 publicly owned cars. The purpose of this measure is to give the benefit of such safety standards to the public as a whole.

This proposal will establish a number of required safety features. Among these are collapsible steering wheels, shoulder harness safety belt anchors, specific types of safety glass, smog-removing exhaust systems, standardized transmission controls to avoid confusion, and uniform bumper heights.

These new features have been tested, proven effective, and will be available in Government-purchased cars by 1967. Installation of these features will be of great benefit. And there are other steps which will increase our ability to deal with this problem.

## PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOTYPE SAFETY CAR

A second proposal would authorize and provide funds to the Federal Government to develop and test a prototype safety car.

Both the Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. and the engineering department of the University of Minnesota have developed "safety cars" with encouraging results. Some who have studied such designs contend that the adoption of special safety features could save as many as 640,000 lives over the next 15 years. I intend to introduce a bill to authorize safety car research in the near future.

The need for Federal action in this area has been clearly demonstrated. We have the opportunity, the technological know-how, and the manpower to eliminate one of the greatest hazards to the motorists and the public as a whole.

As this committee studies the role of the Federal Government in traffic safety programs, I hope they will consider consolidating these responsibilities under one Federal agency and recommending sufficient authority to act effectively to reduce the unnecessary slaughter on our highways. If we are to make any progress in traffic safety and accident prevention, we must have an efficient and well-coordinated program.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(The complete prepared statement of Senator Nelson follows:)

## EXHIBIT 1

## STATEMENT PREPARED BY SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON

Mr. Chairman, today automobile accidents are a major and increasingly serious hazard to the public. The automobile ranks as one of the four leading causes of death in the United States. While millions of dollars are spent on cancer and heart research, two other major killers, we continue to ignore these dramatic statistics:

Over 47,800 people were killed on our Nation's highways last year.

Approximately 4.8 million people were injured in automobile accidents last year.

In the critical age group of 5 to 29, the automobile is the No. 1 killer.

An American's chances of escaping injury in a car crash during the whole of his lifetime is no better than 50-50, as estimated by one expert in the January issue of American Trial Lawyers.

Approximately 50 times as many people died in auto accidents as died in airplane accidents last year.

The U.S. Air Force loses more of its men in auto accidents each year than in aircraft accidents.

The figures are appalling, yet the slaughter goes on. What is being done to protect the millions of Americans whose lives are directly affected by the automobile?

Progress has been slow, but there is at last some indication of possible action. The Senator from Connecticut, Mr. Ribicoff, deserves our congratulations for conducting these hearings. His proposal to review the Federal Government's role in accident prevention should receive universal support. The problems of poor highway construction, confusing signs and traffic markings, inadequate driver licensing programs, and mechanical failure of the automobile all deserve attention. They certainly contribute to the high death rate on our highways. I introduced legislation to protect the consumer from faulty tires by requiring minimum safety standards and a system of quality grading and labeling.

These approaches to traffic safety problems attempt to get at part of the problem. They deserve consideration. But there is more to be done. We must direct our attention to another fundamental matter: the unsafe construction of cars themselves.

Forty-three percent of the people who die in auto accidents die under survivable conditions, according to the estimate of Elmer Paul, of the U.S. Public Health Service Accident Prevention Bureau. Their accidents have many causes, but their deaths have one: the unsafe nature of the car itself.

This means that almost one-half of our total highway fatality rate is unnecessary and could be eliminated by simple reconstruction of the vehicle.

It is only realistic to acknowledge that as long as the human being is in control of the vehicle, accidents will occur. Our attention must therefore be focused on reducing injury after the original impact has occurred. This concept is often referred to as safety during the "second collision"—the collision not only of the car in the accident, but of the occupant of the car with the interior of his own vehicle.

Dr. James Malfetti of the safety project at Columbia University recently stated: "We design cars and roads and then tell the driver to adapt himself to them as best he can. We should start the other way around. Let us first find out what the driver's capacities are and then build cars and roads to fit them."

How to achieve safety in the "second collision" is a concept which has been studied by the experts. Serious research has been going on for over a decade. There is agreement that the present construction of most cars hampers the driver's ability to avoid accidents. This results in the actual causation of accidents. Beyond this, there is a consensus that the construction of cars contributes to unnecessary injuries and deaths after the original impact.

The findings of such groups as the crash injury research project at Cornell University, the Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering of the University of California, the University of Minnesota, the University of Michigan Medical School, Harvard University, Wayne State University, the American Association for Automotive Medicine, and the U.S. Public Health Service are important contributions to the field of safety research. These expert groups have shown that:

If cars were built so that protection could be provided for the head alone, at least one out of five people who are now dying in auto accidents would be saved.

If cars were built with seat and shoulder belts which hold people in the car in an accident, thousands of lives would be saved. If a person is thrown from the car, the chance of death is five times as great.

If cars were built with only three basic changes, occupants could probably survive any crash up to 35 miles per hour—and statistics show that 87 percent of all accidents occur at impact speed of 35 miles per hour or below. The three basic changes are: shoulder harnesses; doors which will stay closed in a crash; and collapsible steering shafts.

What do these statistics mean in practical language? Simply, that if we take action now to make cars themselves safer, the frightening number of deaths and injuries occurring on our highways can be dramatically reduced.

The need for changes is obvious. But one factor impedes progress in this area. That factor is the conviction in Detroit that "safety doesn't sell." It is the stylist who reigns supreme in the automobile industry, not the safety and engineering experts.

The slightest mention of safety standards seems to cause panic in the automobile industry and I can understand their concern about ill-considered regulation. But, there is no intent to propose impractical or unreasonable standards. The industry will be consulted at each step of the way. This is a matter of great public concern. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to find a way to reduce the death toll on the highways.

Last year a very important step toward safety regulation of the automobile industry was taken when the Congress passed legislation authorizing the drafting of minimum safety standards for federally purchased automobiles.

Several weeks ago I introduced a bill which would extend the new Federal safety standards for Government automobiles to all cars manufactured for, sold, or shipped in interstate commerce. We now know how to write safe standards for 60,000 publicly owned cars. The purpose of this measure is to give the benefit of such safety standards to the public as a whole.

This proposal will establish a number of required safety features. Among these are: collapsible steering wheels, shoulder harness safety belt anchors, specific types of safety glass, smog removing exhaust systems, standardized transmission controls to avoid confusion, and uniform bumper heights.

These new features have been tested, proven effective, and will be available in Government-purchased cars by 1967. Installation of these features will be of great benefit. And, there are other steps which will increase our ability to deal with this problem.

A second proposal would authorize and provide funds to the Federal Government to develop and test a prototype safety car.

Both the Liberty Mutual Insurance Co., and the engineering department of the University of Minnesota have developed "safety cars" with encouraging results. Some who have studied such designs contend that the adoption of special safety features could save as many as 640,000 lives over the next 15 years. I intend to introduce a bill to authorize safety car research in the near future.

The need for Federal action in this area has been clearly demonstrated. We have the opportunity, the technological know-how, and the manpower to eliminate one of the greatest hazards to the motorist and the public as a whole.

As this committee studies the role of the Federal Government in traffic safety programs, I hope they will consider consolidating these responsibilities under one Federal agency and recommending sufficient authority to act effectively to reduce the unnecessary slaughter on our highways. If we are to make any progress in traffic safety and accident prevention, we must have an efficient and well-coordinated program.

Senator RIBICOFF. Thank you.

I have one or two questions for you, Senator.

#### MARKETING OF AUTOMOBILE TIRES

I have your recent statement before the Federal Trade Commission on the marketing of automobile tires. It is a very impressive statement. Without objection, I would like to have it made part of the record.

(The statement follows:)

#### EXHIBIT 2

#### REMARKS BY SENATOR GAYLORD NELSON BEFORE THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ON THE MARKETING OF AUTOMOBILE TIRES, JANUARY 13, 1965

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Federal Trade Commission for this opportunity to present testimony on tire safety. The Federal Trade Commission is to be commended for conducting this hearing.

In the last year the need for action in this area has received important recognition from a variety of groups: State and Federal legislators, the industry, the press, and the private consumer. This interest is climaxed today with these hearings. A consensus has emerged, I think, that some constructive action must be taken to protect the life and the pocketbook of the consumer.

The rising fatality rate on our highways can no longer be ignored. Just last week the National Safety Council, in an announcement that is becoming all too familiar, reported that more people had been killed on our highways over the



recent New Year's weekend than ever before. The 1964-65 figure of 474 surpasses the previous alltime high for a 4-day New Year's weekend of 409 in 1956-57. This is a substantial increase and one that is not confined to holiday weekends. In December the council reported that deaths for the first 10 months of 1964 numbered 39,250, an 11-percent increase over the same period in 1963 and an alltime high. Beyond this, at least 1.4 million people suffered injuries that disabled them beyond the day of the accident in the first 10 months. The attack on this problem must be made on a number of fronts. This is one of them.

The correlation between tire failure and traffic accidents has been proven. Turnpike and thruway studies of emergency road service calls show that about 20 percent are because of tire trouble. The National Safety Council reports that in 1962 tire failure accounted for 7 percent of all highway fatalities. For the same year the council also reported that in their safety check program 7.9 percent of all tires checked were defective.

The evidence speaks for itself. We know that bald, worn, overloaded, or shoddily made tires cause accidents. We know that safe tires can save our lives. Unfortunately, however, we have no standards for judging how safe and durable a tire is.

The problem is twofold: We do not have accurate information on tire safety and the consumer has no way to appraise existing hazy and contradictory information.

A set of minimum safety standards should be applied to all tires so that the consumer will be protected from inadequate tires and so that he can have an idea of the quality and safety features of the product he is buying.

Mr. A. J. White, director of motor vehicle research of New Hampshire, has done a great deal of research in this area. "It is generally accepted," he states, "that approximately 3 percent of all tires manufactured are substandard and will fail prematurely. \* \* \* Tire research already has greatly improved tire life, safety, and vehicle stability. Enough is known about tire design to improve almost every tire safety property further."

Also needed is a system of grading or labeling to guide the consumer in comparing one brand with another and to clarify the present confusion of tire nomenclature.

In January 1964 Senator Humphrey's Subcommittee on Retailing, Distribution, and Marketing Practices issued a report on the automobile tire industry, recommending the introduction of such a system of quality rating in the tire industry. I quote from this report:

"The currently used complex methods of naming different brands or lines of tires is misleading and confusing to the public. The FTC 'Tire Advertising Guide' proscribes misleading terminology in advertisements, yet it does not provide for an objective standard of quality rating to be applied to all tires. Such a standard is needed as the average buyer is not equipped to rate the quality of tires. A system whereby tires are rated according to Government standards of safety, endurance, general quality, and construction, such as is done in the meat industry, would let the consumer know exactly what he is buying. Your subcommittee recommends that a system of quality rating would be in the interest of safe transportation and should be enacted."

I would like to briefly review some of the recent actions taken in this area to further prove the general and widespread concern over tire safety. A great deal of credit must go to the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Motor Vehicles and Traffic Safety and its former chairman, Senator Edward Speno. The legislation prepared by this committee and by former Congressman Kenneth Roberts, of Alabama, in the House has done much in bringing this problem to the fore. I have also submitted legislation in this area.

Contrary to the popular feeling that there is no public interest in this problem, Mrs. Esther Peterson, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs, informs me that her office daily receives many complaints about faulty tires and misleading advertising. In a letter to me, Mrs. Peterson said: "The continuing number of traffic fatalities proves the need for further investigation of tires and some positive action to protect the consumer from any shoddy tire construction and deceptive tire advertising. \* \* \* The public wants and has a right to know that what they are buying is safe." Mr. Chairman, I would like to insert a copy of Mrs. Peterson's letter in the record of this hearing.

Further proof of the existence of this problem is evidenced in the response I received following the introduction of my safe standards tire bill in the last session of Congress. In addition to letters from private citizens with personal

complaints, I received endorsements from purchasing agencies throughout the country. I would like to quote from several of these letters.

The National Association of Purchasing Agents:

"\* \* \* it is very gratifying to know that someone 'at the top' is interested in automobile tire standards. This is certainly one of the bigger headaches of the purchasing agent for a large municipality such as the city of Houston and we shall have our eyes upon the progress of this bill."

The California Association of Public Purchasing Officers:

"You have our wholehearted support and that of many other purchasing organizations throughout the country."

City Purchasing Agency for Milwaukee, Wis.:

"I heartily applaud your announced program to set certain standards on automobile tires to improve the safety and reduce the appalling death rate on the highways. \* \* \* The National Institute of Government Purchasing, the Wisconsin Association of Public Purchasers, and this buying agency heartily endorse and back your program for some adequate standards in the tire industry. \* \* \* With many confusing terms and claims by the manufacturers of tires, the consumer has been in a quandary, especially the public buyers, for whom I am speaking, who are in an endless search to get specifications covering their tire requirements so that they can purchase these intelligently and competitively."

Mr. Chairman, I think I should call attention to one more group which has been instrumental in this area, the National Tire Dealers & Retreaders Association. This organization, a trade group of approximately 3,400 tire dealers, has worked tirelessly for improvement of tire safety and has continually reaffirmed its support of uniform safety standards for tires. Dr. Warren W. Leigh, NTDRA marketing consultant, said recently that "The tire industry spends altogether too much time juggling tire names, qualities, and prices. It should wake up, establish some quality standards, and get away from the eternal higgling and bargaining."

In response to various pressures exerted on it the industry, through the Rubber Manufacturers Association, issued last July a set of minimum tire safety standards which became effective January 1, 1965. To enforce these standards the association has contracted with an independent testing agency to conduct tests at random on the more than 900 tires which have been certified by the RMA.

I am pleased to see the industry moving forward in this area but at the same time I am disturbed by the reception these new standards have received. Their adequacy has been questioned by many experts in the field.

The National Tire Dealers & Retreaders Association, at its annual conference in September, passed a resolution acknowledging the RMA standards but calling them "inadequate to prevent the marketing of automobile tires and truck tires of undersized outside diameter, low quality, and questionable safety. \* \* \*"

In reply to a request from me as to the effectiveness of the new standards, the Department of Commerce points out that many of the tests included in the Federal specifications for tires developed over 10 years ago are not part of the RMA standards. This raises a number of serious questions. But specifically it shows that the standards are not adequate because they have been formulated on superficial evidence. The Department maintains that "an extensive program of testing and evaluating would be needed to produce complete and reliable data on the numerous types and quality levels of tires now available to the public." I would like to insert this letter in the hearing record.

These are technical questions and it would seem we must rely to a great extent on the opinions of experts in forming our judgments. And in this case the experts do not seem to be satisfied.

Howard Freas, Commissioner of the Interstate Commerce Commission, which is presently engaged in drawing up new tire regulations for commercial vehicles, stated the problem well recently: "Safety is a public concern which must be accorded a precedence wholly apart from an economic distinction between private and for-hire carriers; it cannot be left wholly to self-regulation by the industry, no matter how enlightened its interest."

I trust these hearings will provide the basis for drafting sound legislation. It would seem to me that any useful legislation would at least require minimum safety and performance standards and a system of grading or labeling.

## LACK OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC ON TIRE SAFETY

Senator RIBICOFF. What concerns me is the lack of availability of this type of information to the public. My understanding is that the Federal Trade Commission has held a series of hearings on tire safety and has compiled a massive amount of information. To your knowledge, has this information on the safety factors of tires been made available to the public and to consumers' groups?

Senator NELSON. The Federal Trade Commission did conduct extensive hearings. The record, I understand, is to be a matter of public information. It is open for public inspection. It would be expensive to print it. I have asked one of the members of my staff to read the record, which I understand to be approximately 1,000 pages. I am going to read it myself. A very reliable and distinguished reporter came into my office about a week ago and said that the statistics demonstrated in those FTC hearings were shocking. I think that it ought to be printed and made available for study by the Members of Congress, and made available for studies by the public. I understand, without having talked with the Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, that the printing problem is one of cost.

Senator RIBICOFF. Do you think both as a Member of Congress and as a member of the public that there is any justification for a Federal agency to develop information, which may affect the lives and safety of our people, and then not have it made available to the public? Don't you think that the Federal Trade Commission should make the results readily available to the Congress and the members of the press and the public as a whole?

Senator NELSON. I think if the report has any value at all, it ought to be printed and made available for the public and the Members of the Congress. And as I said, I understand it to be a rather impressive report in terms of the statistics submitted on tires. I am going to look at it, and if it is necessary to make some moves in Congress in order to get funds for the Federal Trade Commission to be able to print it, then I think we ought to initiate it in Congress.

Senator RIBICOFF. I want to commend you for the work you are doing in this field. I intend at a later hearing, when the members of the Federal Trade Commission are before this committee, to find out why this information, which is of value, should not be made available to the public.

Senator NELSON. As to the Federal Trade Commission, a member of my staff who sat in on the hearings and others to whom I have spoken about it thought that the hearings were very well conducted and very fruitful, with fine expert testimony from many people all over the Nation. And therefore, I would be strongly inclined to the view that we ought to have printed reports of those hearings.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RIBICOFF. Thank you very much, Senator Nelson.

Our next witness is Postmaster General Gronouski.

We welcome you here, Mr. Gronouski.

You are responsible for operating probably the largest fleet of automobiles and trucks in the country. My understanding is that your Department operates 88,000 motor vehicles.

Postmaster General GRONOUSKI. That is right, sir.

Senator RIBICOFF. You may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN A. GRONOUSKI, POSTMASTER GENERAL;  
ACCOMPANIED BY RICHARD J. MURPHY, ASSISTANT POSTMAS-  
TER GENERAL FOR PERSONNEL; GEORGE C. NIELD, OFFICE OF  
RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING; AND EDWARD B. LANDRY, DI-  
RECTOR OF SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Postmaster General GRONOUSKI. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I didn't bring this group with me to outnumber the committee, as much as it may look that way. Rather, Mr. Richard Murphy, Assistant Postmaster General for Personnel, directly to my left, Mr. George Nield of our Office of Research and Engineering, and Mr. Edward Landry, our Director of Safety, are with me because they are most intimately involved in our highway safety program, and I thought perhaps you might want to direct some question to the technicians in our Department.

Certainly, it is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to appear before the committee this morning. As Postmaster General, my primary responsibility is moving the mail. But I have other responsibilities, too, which cannot be subordinated to efficiency.

As the head of one of the world's largest civilian work forces, I have a solemn commitment to the safety and well-being of our nearly 600,000 employees.

And, as the head of an organization which is in closer contact with the American people than any other agency of Government, I have a similar commitment to all of our citizens.

**TRAFFIC SAFETY IS OF VITAL CONCERN**

Certainly, one area of vital concern to me is that of traffic safety. As you noted earlier, we operate one of the largest fleets of motor vehicles in the country. This fleet consists of approximately 88,000 Government and privately owned vehicles, driven by 133,000 postal employees and traveling more than 1.1 billion miles each year.

In addition, we have more than 22,000 star route contract vehicles traveling another 450 million miles per year.

Further, we estimate that postal employee families own more than 300,000 motor vehicles. These, too, come under the scope of our concern.

In other words, traffic safety is our business. It is a problem which cannot be ignored. As President Johnson has said, the staggering death toll on the highways "is clearly a major national problem. The rising cost in life and property must be reversed. I am convinced that a significant national effort is called for."

**MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM IN POST OFFICE  
DEPARTMENT**

To meet these responsibilities and challenges, the Post Office Department has a motor vehicle accident prevention program. This program is supervised by a staff of professional safety engineers who plan, develop, and evaluate the Department's accident prevention needs and advise me on required actions.

We have adopted a continuing program of safety requirements in vehicle maintenance.

We have adopted a stringent qualification and licensing program for our drivers, administering driving tests, requiring physical examinations, and examining the driving records of all applicants.

For the safety of children who might be playing near our trucks, we have installed a specially designed mirror to improve front view vision at bumper level. Some 25,000 city delivery vehicles have been equipped with these mirrors, and another 15,000 are in the process of being equipped. In addition, we have installed backup buzzers in 15,289 vehicles. These are buzzers that warn anyone behind the vehicle when it starts backing up. As a result, child fatalities in fiscal year 1964 were reduced 64 percent from the previous year—from 14 to 5.

We now conduct a special orientation and training program for drivers of our right-hand-drive trucks.

To stimulate driver-safety awareness and safety competition among postal units, we have, for the past 10 years, participated in the national fleet contest.

In order to encourage suggestions and recommendations from our employees, we have set up joint labor-management safety and health committees at more than 550 of our larger post office installations.

For our postal employee families, we provide information on safe motor vehicle operations through off-the-job safety programs, and we encourage participation in community safety programs.

And, finally, we initiated, in October of 1962, a seat belt program and proceeded immediately into engineering modifications to install belts in all of our postal vehicles, with the exception of the right-hand, sit-stand vehicle which required the development of a specially designed restraining device suitable to that vehicle. Right now, 37,400 of our vehicles have been equipped with seat belts.

SEAT BELT PROGRAM—CONTRACT WITH GENERAL MOTORS CORP. FOR  
RESEARCH

I think perhaps I should expand a little on this seat belt program, inasmuch as the chairman of this committee has indicated a specific interest in it.

The installation of these seat belts was based on the best engineering information available, but we were not satisfied that this information was adequate. In other words, we proceeded to provide some measure of protection for our drivers, even though we knew that further improvement could be made. The problem was that there has been very little research done in the area of seat belts for trucks, particularly for trucks equipped with special seats such as we use.

And so, we entered into a research contract last November with the General Motors Corp. to test, under impact conditions, the type of belts we had already installed. The results so far show the wisdom of that move, for GM's research people have already uncovered flaws in several of our belt installations—flaws which are now being corrected.

I understand the concern of the chairman over our having to pay for a research project that might well be considered part of the industry's responsibility. But the fact is that such research had not been conducted and we felt that the safety of our drivers justified going

ahead with it ourselves. Undoubtedly we could have waited for industry to get around to it, but I do not like to think of the lives that might have been lost in the interim.

A further consideration was the testing of our little mailsters. Since these are manufactured by small business concerns around the country, it is unreasonable to expect General Motors—or any other automotive firm—to test them for safety factors at their own expense. And it is significant to note that one of the seat belt flaws uncovered by GM was in the mailster.

#### REDUCTION OF URBAN MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

These, then, are a few of the steps that we have undertaken in our overall safety program. As a result, we have been able to reduce our urban motor vehicle accident rate from 130 accidents per million miles driven in 1953 to 30 in 1964. This represents a solid accomplishment and we are proud of it.

However, we know full well that there is still room for improvement. I think, on the national level, we should improve physical and mental driver licensing standards, intensify our safety research programs increase our support of driver education programs, encourage wider exchange of driver records among law enforcement agencies, and provide for better exchange of highway safety research data. I might say that we have under study right now a psychological testing program such as I remember when I was an Air Force Cadet in the early 1940's in connection with prospective aircraft pilots. We would use this test to weed out the relatively small proportion of drivers who tend to have a very high proneness for accidents before they ever get behind the wheel. We have not completed this study yet. There is some concern about using these kinds of psychological tests. I think they are well worth developing, particularly in an agency such as ours with 133,000 employees actually driving vehicles. We have not come to any conclusion on it yet, but we are working on it at this time.

#### NATION'S FIRST TRAFFIC SAFETY STAMP

I might also add that in terms of the national highway safety picture we have been very impressed by various organizations around the country interested in traffic safety who have asked us to help focus national attention on the Nation's traffic safety effort. On September 3, in Baltimore, just before the Labor Day weekend, we will have the first day of issue ceremony for the issuance of the Nation's first traffic safety stamp. Because of the many who are interested in traffic safety this appears to be a fruitful use of our commemorative stamp program.

#### PROPOSAL TO LEASE CARS TO PROVIDE TO RURAL CARRIERS

One other thing that we are doing will depend upon some legislation this year. We have 31,000 rural carrier routes where the rural carrier supplies his own car. In such cases we have no direct control over the safety features of the cars themselves. And so, we are proposing this year, to introduce bills in the Congress, to convert this driver-owned car program to a lease program, where the Government leases the cars and provides them to the rural carriers.