

FOR PENNSYLVANIA—A DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION  
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Pennsylvania today is criss-crossed by a variety of excellent transportation systems, modes and services, provided by both public and private enterprise. Yet, this splendid network of land, water and air transportation has serious shortcomings. For example, while there is healthy competition between elements of this "system" in many instances, there is uneconomic duplication of services and facilities in others. There are also serious transportation deficiencies in some areas, causing congestion and threatening economic vitality and growth. In the larger view, we need not only to adapt better to the transport systems and needs of the states and the world around us, but more important, because of our strategic location, Pennsylvania's network should become an international pace-setter in new and improved transportation technology. In short, our overall system requires continual improvement, and better "balance" and coordination.

Looking to the future, we in Pennsylvania already have highway plans, rail and transit plans, airport plans, waterway plans. We have local plans, regional plans and state plans involving transportation, and we have numerous research and development efforts by public and private enterprise for future transportation needs and new technology. What we lack and therefore need, however, is a state-wide comprehensive transportation plan that brings together all these separate, yet highly essential, plans so they make sense for Pennsylvania's future. Perhaps, the most serious shortcoming in this complex situation is the lack of unified direction of statewide transportation planning that would utilize this potent tool intelligently to guide and shape the kind of Commonwealth we want and need for the future.

Hence, it became clear to us in State government that we must take the leadership to direct a whole new, *total* approach to transportation in our Commonwealth. Stated simply, what we did not have, and needed desperately, was a Master Plan for transportation in Pennsylvania, and a means at the State government level for developing, guiding and implementing it.

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Today, transportation responsibilities are vested in several Commonwealth departments, bureaus and agencies. After considerable study by two committees<sup>1</sup> appointed by me of the steps taken in other states and the Federal Government who had faced a similar problem, and the results of their efforts, we drafted legislation which defines and would create a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.<sup>2</sup> Following public hearings and appropriate revisions, the Penn DOT bill, as it is called, is expected to be considered by the Pennsylvania General Assembly during its 1969 session.

Penn DOT would, in essence, gather together under one roof most of the varied agencies, commissions, bureaus and Departments now in State government which are associated with transportation in Pennsylvania. It would provide a suitable base for planning and implementing a transportation network on a sound, rational and business-like basis. It is the logical step to be taken in order to give direction to an industry which has grown like Topsy and needs stabilization to its policies and procedures.

The primary objectives we are seeking in creating a single department to deal with transportation matters at the State level are:

—To provide a focal point in State government for the development and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated Commonwealth transportation policy and program.

(1) Governor's Committee for Transportation and Interdepartmental Transportation Committee.

(2) Senate Bill No. 1740 introduced July 17, 1968 and referred to Senate Committee on State Government.

—To bring greater safety in the movement of all persons and goods within the Commonwealth regardless of transportation mode.

—To develop and apply the best of an expanding technology to each mode of transportation.

—To strengthen the Commonwealth's partnership with private enterprise and with Federal and local governments in meeting the Commonwealth's urgent transportation needs.

—To develop an even closer working relationship with other State agencies and local planning groups on all transportation matters, with particular emphasis on urban transportation.

—To improve Pennsylvania's transportation links with the rest of the Nation.

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Since highways play such a large role in the Commonwealth's involvement in transportation, we visualize our existing Department of Highways as the nucleus around which Penn DOT would be organized. The legislation as drafted would transfer all of the Highway Department's present functions and personnel to the new department. It would also transfer motor vehicle, traffic safety and other transportation-related functions and personnel, now in the Department of Revenue, to Penn DOT. The State's mass transportation and high-speed ground transportation programs, now in the Departments of Community Affairs and Commerce, respectively, would be transferred to the new department.

Likewise, the functions of the Pennsylvania Aeronautics Commission, the Hazardous Substances Transportation Board, and the Navigation Commission of the Delaware River would be transferred to Penn DOT. However, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, State Police and Public Utility Commission—each with substantial transportation responsibilities—would not be directly affected.

How will the Highway Department fare in this new organization? Basically, there would be very little change in the duties of the present highway organization. The establishment of Penn DOT will not alter the fact that of all the transportation modes included in it, highway, rail, air, water and pipe line, only highway is public owned and operated. The design, construction and maintenance of the highway network will continue to be entirely controlled by the public agency. The vast organization now existing for this purpose will continue to function in its present fashion. The main difference, the overwhelming benefit obtainable from Penn DOT, is that every penny spent on new construction, every decision made to improve a highway, will be spent or made knowing that the expenditure has been made, the decision reached, with just a little more certainty that the step taken is the right one insofar as the total future of Pennsylvania is involved.

Will the Highway Department lose its identity inside a Penn DOT? Perhaps, but it may be hard to lose entirely over 23,000 highway oriented employees in a Department whose total personnel is envisioned originally to be only 25,500. Nor is it easy to imagine that a Department having a fiscal year budget of around \$877 million would soon forget that some \$844 million of that amount are dedicated highway funds. The vital role that highways play on our Commonwealth's transportation system would not be ignored.

There has been some comment on the size of the new Department. Would it be too large, too unwieldy? Not likely. In fact it would be

neither the largest in number of employees nor in budget. The proposed Department of Health and Public Welfare would contain almost 38,000 employees and the present Department of Public Instruction has a budget of over a billion dollars. There should be no problem with size.

It is interesting to note that most of the units to be brought into Penn DOT are already funded from the Motor License Fund. Two units from the Department of Revenue comprise the bulk of the personnel involved. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles, with 1,481 employees, and the Bureau of Traffic Safety, with 684 employees make up almost 90% of the people involved. Another unit which is presently funded from restricted receipts from the Motor License Fund and which would be absorbed by Penn DOT is the Pennsylvania Aeronautics Commission.

Is there a possibility that some of the dedicated Motor License Funds might be siphoned off to a new use within Penn DOT? There is no argument about the immensity of the existing need for more and improved highways. The proposed projects brought to the Highway Commission yearly, far exceed available funds. There is no attempt made by any one, pro or anti-highway, to refute this well documented demand. Funds could not be re-distributed then on the basis of lack of need. In addition the Motor License Fund is dedicated, not through a policy decision within the Department of Highways or by an executive order by the Governor, but by the Constitution. It is dedicated, not by policy, but by law, and it would take a constitutional amendment to change the status. If the public demand for such an amendment was evident, it could be accomplished just as easily if there was a separate Department of Highways or if it was only a part of Penn DOT. The fund allocation does not rest with a Department head, but rather with the people, through their constitution. As long as such action is not taken, as long as the Legislature continues to support the Highway program in the way it did when the first six-year highway program was formulated, there need be no fear of any reduction of emphasis in the highway field.

On the other hand, the increased awareness of the total transportation problem, made possible through the coordinated efforts of all the elements of Penn DOT, may well point out deficiencies existing in the other modes of transportation. Hopefully it will provide, along with awareness, the methods by which these deficiencies can be eliminated. In many cases solutions may be obtained, not through public funding, but through the lifting of archaic regulations and by

coordination of efforts by the various modes, rather than the interdisciplinary in-fighting which now exists.

It is highly improbable, then, that the Highway Department, or perhaps we should say the highway program, will suffer from a decrease in personnel, funds or emphasis. What can the Highway Department offer Penn DOT? Certainly it has available a well-structured organization which can easily be expanded, to accommodate the additional duties of a Penn DOT. Those administrative units now in support of the Highway Department, such as personnel, fiscal, data processing, management information systems and public information, could adapt themselves to the extra and varied workload. Likewise the District organizations, without too much trouble, can be altered to include elements of planning and programming which will insure that the total transportation picture is constantly in focus and being considered.

Among the many advantages we see accruing to the Commonwealth and its taxpayers through creation of Penn DOT are:

—A single department in State government would recommend decisions to the Governor involving the overall priority of transportation work and the emphasis to be placed on each project, irrespective of mode.

—There would be more logical, total planning for the overall transportation requirements of the Commonwealth. To implement this, for example, present Highway Department district offices would expand their horizons for total transportation development.

—Penn DOT would permit better consideration of the proper site locations for all types of transportation facilities and place emphasis on facilities complementary to one another, presently somewhat difficult to achieve under numerous jurisdictional responsibilities.

—Creation of Penn DOT would permit the Commonwealth to become more deeply involved in total systems analysis, thus recognizing all factors concerned with transportation.

Further advantages of the creation of Penn DOT could be:

—Since Penn DOT would function parallel to the U.S. Department of Transportation, relationships with Federal programs should be enhanced.

—Improved corridors for the movement of people and goods could be developed and accomplished. One right-of-way might be utilized to serve various types of transportation resulting in better service and economy.

—Urban transportation would receive a major thrust in such a department.

—Penn DOT would greatly simplify, accelerate and improve the statewide transportation safety program.

—By placing the control of a major revenue source, motor vehicle and operator licensing, within the using agency, a much better flow of information for planning, forecasting and development of future sources of revenue would result.

—More efficient use of personnel should result through eliminating duplication of functions, e.g. mail, payrolls, personnel functions.

However, in proposing a Master Plan and Department of Transportation for Pennsylvania, we are not expecting to benefit just from consolidating many transportation functions into a single coordinated effort. The principal benefit we anticipate is that this unified approach will make it possible for us, for the first time, to incorporate a *computerized* strategy for the input and feedback of every development in transportation needs, techniques, and funding; every change in population, employment, and other demographic data; every new requirement of Pennsylvania citizens and industry as the years go by; to provide a continuous, systematically updated sheaf of facts and information for use by our transportation planners and decision-makers.

We in Pennsylvania believe that the approach we are taking is not only unique, but that it is mandatory if we are to be fully prepared to meet the complex transportation needs and challenges facing us. This is not only an era of innovation in transportation technology, but also in the techniques of transportation *planning*. There have been rapid advances both in the concepts of analysis and in the computational techniques for dealing with large and complex quantities of data. Pennsylvania can become one of the first states to utilize these advances in planning methodology, but it can do so effectively only if there is a single agency at state level charged with the overall responsibility for collecting and using the necessary information and for producing and implementing a Master Plan.

Transportation has, from time immemorial, been the catalyst that changed a forest outpost to a booming steel center, an Indian village to the greatest city in the world; and the lack of it has withered many a grandiose dream on the vine, has kept at status quo many a sleepy country town. Good transportation, like a good name, is more to be desired than great riches. And the obtaining of it has become increasingly complex, too complex and too important not to be given every chance to succeed. Pennsylvania is strategically located as the hub State in the center of 93,000,000 people and the Nation's major

industries. We cannot afford to hold onto the old methods of determining priorities. We must become even more comprehensive in our planning; more efficient in our organization and methods; more certain that the way we move, the decision we make, is the proper one. Penn DOT is the vehicle by which we can achieve this goal.

Thus, the two major recommendations of the Governor's Committee for Transportation—the design for Penn DOT, and a Master Plan for the guidance of Pennsylvania's planners and legislators—go hand in hand, toward the solution of one of society's most pressing problems: Mobility.