

STATEMENT OF  
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY  
OF THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
JULY 16, 1981

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE THIS SUBCOMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES, THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S LABS IN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, AND DOT'S ACTIVITIES TO COMPLY WITH THE STEVENSON-WYDLER TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION ACT OF 1980 (PL 96-480).

OUR DEPARTMENT FEELS THAT EFFECTIVE SUPPORT OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL THESE DAYS, CONSIDERING THE ONGOING REASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENTAL ROLES, AND THE FINANCIAL PRESSURES FACING ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. THIS VIEW IS SHARED THROUGHOUT THE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THE SECRETARY AND HIS POLICY OFFICIALS. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS LEE VERSTANDIG, IN WHOSE OFFICE I WORK, IS A PARTICULARLY ACTIVE PROPONENT OF THIS POSITION, AND IN FACT RECENTLY ISSUED A STATEMENT TO THE DEPARTMENT'S OPERATING ADMINISTRATIONS ASKING THEM TO EXPLORE HOW TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES MIGHT HELP STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS DEAL WITH REDUCED FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

FOR SOME TIME NOW, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN THE TECHNOLOGY SHARING OR TRANSFER PROCESS. AS A CIVIL SECTOR AGENCY, WE CONSIDER STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS A PRIMARY CONSTITUENCY FOR OUR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D) PROGRAMS, AND THE NEEDS OF THESE JURISDICTIONS IS NOW A MAJOR CONSIDERATION IN OUR R&D PROGRAM FORMULATION. THIS IS ONLY LOGICAL, SINCE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING A LARGE NUMBER OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS COUNTRY. TO PUT THIS IN PERSPECTIVE, OUR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET IN FY 1981 WAS ABOUT \$378 MILLION AND HAS AVERAGED NEAR THAT LEVEL FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT UP TO FIFTY PERCENT OF THE DEPARTMENT'S R&D FUNDS ARE SPENT ON PRODUCTS FOR WHICH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE OR CAN BE THE ULTIMATE USERS.

THE DEPARTMENT'S LABORATORIES ARE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THIS PROCESS, BOTH IN TERMS OF DEVELOPING THE TECHNOLOGIES AND DISSEMINATING THEM TO ULTIMATE USERS. THE DEPARTMENT HAS EIGHT FACILITIES WHICH CAN BE CLASSIFIED AS LABORATORIES OR TECHNICAL CENTERS. FROM A TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER STANDPOINT, I THINK IT IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT FOUR OF THESE FACILITIES HAVE BEEN LONG-STANDING, ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE FEDERAL LABORATORY CONSORTIUM:

1. THE RESEARCH AND SPECIAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION'S  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS CENTER, LOCATED IN CAMBRIDGE,  
MASSACHUSETTS,

2. THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S FAIRBANKS HIGHWAY RESEARCH CENTER, LOCATED IN THE VIRGINIA SUBURBS OF WASHINGTON,
3. THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION'S TECHNICAL CENTER, LOCATED IN ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY, AND
4. THE U. S. COAST GUARD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER, LOCATED IN GROTON, CONNECTICUT.

OUR LONG-TIME PARTICIPATION IN THE CONSORTIUM REFLECTS OUR RECOGNITION THAT THE FEDERAL LABORATORIES DO HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN RESPONDING DIRECTLY TO THE NEEDS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. THUS, WE VIEW THE STEVENSON-WYDLER ACT PROVISIONS AS A FOCUSING OF MANY OF OUR ACTIVITIES, RATHER THAN A CALL FOR LARGE-SCALE INITIATION OF NEW PROJECTS.

AT THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS CENTER IN CAMBRIDGE, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE IS AN OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY SHARING WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES WITH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR. WE WILL INCORPORATE WITHIN THIS OFFICE ANY ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS SPECIFIED UNDER SECTION 11(C) OF THE ACT WITHIN THE OCTOBER 1, 1981 TIMEFRAME.

ALSO, THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION HAS TRADITIONALLY WORKED CLOSELY WITH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ASSIST IN THEIR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS. THE FAIRBANKS RESEARCH LAB IS ONE ELEMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER MECHANISMS

RUN BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING A "DIVISION OFFICE" IN EACH STATE WHICH HAS A FULL-TIME TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER COORDINATOR.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, PER SE, IS REQUIRED BY LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ACT. MY OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY SHARING, IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, WAS CREATED TO SERVE AS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE MODAL ADMINISTRATION TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES. WE HAVE ENCOURAGED THE LABS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FEDERAL LABORATORY CONSORTIUM, AND THEIR MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN RESPONSIVE TO, AND SUPPORTIVE OF, SUCH PARTICIPATION. WE WOULD HOPE TO MAKE CONTINUING USE OF THIS CHANNEL IN THE FUTURE.

IN MY OFFICE, WE SUPPORT AND SUPPLEMENT THE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATIONS, AND IN PARTICULAR MAKE SURE THAT TECHNICAL MATERIALS FIND THEIR WAY TO STATE AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS. TECHNOLOGY, AS WE DEFINE IT AND THE LABORATORIES INTERPRET IT, BROADLY INCLUDES HARDWARE SOFTWARE, OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS, AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES.

I VIEW THE NEXT FEW YEARS AS A PARTICULAR CHALLENGE, FOR THEY WILL REQUIRE SOME RETHINKING OF THE WAY WE APPROACH STATE AND LOCAL OFFICIALS, AND THE ENTIRE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROCESS.

WE ARE REVIEWING OUR ACTIVITIES AND APPROACHES TO INCREASE OUR OUTREACH WITHOUT ANY INCREASE IN ADDITIONAL RESOURCES. FOR EXAMPLE, WE ARE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, ANOTHER OFFICE UNDER THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS. THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS OFFICE HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR WORKING WITH AND RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ON VARIOUS GENERAL AND SPECIFIC ISSUES. BY USING THAT OFFICE'S EXTENSIVE CONTACTS AND KNOWLEDGE, WE CAN BETTER TARGET AND DISSEMINATE OUR TECHNOLOGY SHARING PRODUCTS AND PROCESSES.

I WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT NETWORKS LIKE THE LABORATORY CONSORTIUM CONTINUE, FOR THEY STRONGLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE MOST PRODUCTIVE USE OF ALL THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES BY THE WIDEST VARIETY OF PARTIES. ONE OF THE BIGGEST QUESTIONS WHICH WE LOOK FORWARD TO ADDRESSING IS HOW LINE RESEARCHERS WILL REACT TO THE CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIPS THAT WILL BE NECESSARY WITH THE CONSUMERS OF THEIR RESEARCH. THERE WILL ALSO BE THE NEED FOR EARLIER CONSIDERATION OF NEWLY DEVELOPED TECHNOLOGIES, AND FOR MORE CREATIVITY IN DEVELOPING SPIN-OFFS FROM EXISTING ONES. UNDOUBTEDLY, THIS WILL NOT BE EASY, BUT WE IN THE DEPARTMENT ARE CONFIDENT THAT IT CAN BE DONE.

ALSO, ALTHOUGH MY REMARKS HAVE PRIMARILY PERTAINED TO OUR ACTIVITIES WITH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, OUR TECHNOLOGY SHARING EFFORTS ARE VERY RELEVANT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR. WE VIEW

PRIVATE SECTOR INVOLVEMENT AS PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT  
IN THE FUTURE.

IN SUMMARY, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OR SHARING IS AN INHERENT AND  
IMPORTANT FUNCTION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION; AND  
THE LABORATORIES OF THE DEPARTMENT ARE AN INHERENT PART OF THE  
FUNCTION. WE FEEL OUR OVERALL PROGRAM MEETS THE INTENT AND  
REQUIREMENTS OF THE STEVENSON-WYDLER TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION ACT  
OF 1980.

THANK YOU.