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BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, TRADE AND TOURISM
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE
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Mr. Chairman, we appreciate the opportunity to appear before your Committee today to discuss the National Travel Survey (NTS) and the Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey (NPTS).

While the information provided in these surveys are related and for our purposes supplement one another, the historical development of these surveys has been quite different. From the beginning, the NTS has been a Bureau of the Census sponsored and conducted survey which was part of the quinquennial economic censuses. It was funded and conducted in 1963, 1967 and 1972 by the Census Bureau. In 1977, the Department of Transportation supplemented the Census Bureau's funding in order to expand the number of households in the sample, which would allow more detailed geographic tabulation of the data. For the 1982 NTS, the Department initially intended to again provide supplementary funding for the NTS. However, the limits placed on our research budget by the effort to reduce the national deficit did not permit us to provide funding in FY 1982. Without the supplemental DOT funds, the Census Bureau concluded that a useful survey could not be conducted with the available funding, and it was then canceled.

the interviewers and respondents. Some of the planned analysis of the data required that information from both the NPTS and the NTS interviews be available in the same household record. This was later found not to be possible because of Census confidentiality requirements. In general, however, both surveys were successful and yielded useful data.

In 1982, an attempt was made to design both an NPTS and an NTS that would be conducted separately but with improved compatibility in the definitions used in framing the survey questions. While this approach promised to work well it was never implemented. As noted earlier, the 1982 NTS was canceled, and the NPTS was delayed one year until sufficient funding could be arranged.

Funding for the NPTS has come from several sources within the Department of Transportation. In 1969, the funding was entirely by the Federal Highway Administration. The 1977 and 1983 NPTS was jointly funded by the Office of the Secretary, the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration.

Another NPTS for 1987/88 is now being planned. The Office of the Secretary hopes to participate in its funding as we did in 1977 and 1983, contingent, of course, on the appropriation of the required monies. It is estimated that the total cost of the 1987/88 NPTS is \$1.4 million.

each sample household once during the survey year, and requesting information about all trips made by the household on the previous day. In order to increase the number of observations of the longer trips, households have been asked to report additional trips over 75 miles from home made in the two-week period prior to the interview. Even with these supplementary observations the number of "long trips" collected in the sample of interviewed households is inadequate for many purposes. While there are very few of these long trips, they account for about 17 percent of total highway vehicle miles of travel, and for about 30 percent of all person miles of travel on all modes of transportation.

To further increase the number of observations of these long trips essentially requires either expanding the sample size or reverting to an NTS methodology wherein the same household is contacted several times during the survey year to collect that household's long distance travel patterns over a longer time period than can be obtained in the two week recall period used in the NPTS. Either approach, using the home interview technique, would be prohibitively expensive for the Department.

For the proposed 1987/88 NPTS, the Department is considering using a private sector contractor to conduct the survey using primarily telephone interviews, rather than the in-home interviews that had been used in past NPTS surveys. The primary advantage of telephone interviews is that they are considerable cheaper than home interviews and we can increase the sample size and thus, the

If this approach is found workable in practice, we could obtain a more statistically relevant number of long trip observations in the data set without incurring the costs associated with obtaining more observations of the short trips than actually needed. This approach could also be used in expanding the number of observations of public transportation trips, another statistical rare event in tripmaking. In this case, additional households would be contacted rather than going back to the same households.

We would like to emphasize to the subcommittee that the techniques described above are as yet unproved although they now appear to be promising as a way of conducting the survey. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, funding for the survey is dependent on future appropriation action by the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, that completes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions that the Committee may have.