

A View From The Governor's Office

By Gov. Raymond P. Shafer

One of the most important pieces of legislation now before the General Assembly is a bill introduced recently by Senator Richard C. Frame of Venango County to create a new State Department of Transportation.

Designed to carry out the recommendations of my Transportation Study Committee, this bill not only will assure continuation of the record-breaking highway construction program begun in this Administration but bring better coordination of all transportation systems in the Commonwealth.

Personally, I am convinced that Pennsylvania's future growth and development will depend on the type of unified transportation system we develop. Our cities, towns and rural areas will grow and prosper only if they are made more accessible through more and better highways and new modes of

transportation on air, land and water.

Although a somewhat similar proposal was before the Legislature last year, this year's version adds two very important provisions aimed at implementation of a master plan for transportation as proposed by the study committee.

First, it proposes a clear division of authority among five Deputy Secretaries — Administration, Highway Administration, Safety Administration, Planning and Local and Area Transportation.

Secondly, it creates a new advisory committee representing both involved governmental agencies and all transportation industries in order to make certain that various points of view may be considered before decisions are made.

In addition, there is nothing in the bill that would change in any way current powers and

duties of the Public Utility Commission in the field of transportation.

Under the bill, the powers and duties of the five Deputy Secretaries would be delineated as follows:

—Administration, fiscal affairs, office personnel, and management information systems

—Highway Administration similar to the present Secretary of Highways

—Safety Administration highway safety and motor vehicle licensing and registration.

—Planning advance planning, economic research and programming, transportation statistics, and landscape development.

—Local and Area Transportation: services to municipalities, local and public transportation, technological development of air, rail, water or other modes of transportation

The latter also would take over the functions of the Mass Transportation Division in the

Bureau of Community Development of the Department of Community Affairs; the Pennsylvania Aeronautics Commission in the Department of Military Affairs; and the Department of Commerce in regard to high speed rail demonstration programs.

The major purpose of the State Transportation Advisory Committee would be to assist the Secretary of Transportation in the development of goals and the allocation of available resources.

It would consist of the Secretary of Transportation, the Executive Director of the State Planning Board, the Chairman of the Public Utility Commission, the Secretaries of Commerce, Agriculture and Community Affairs, two House members and two Senators representing both political parties, plus representatives of transportation industries and the public at large.

Another change from the original bill would be the trans-

fer of the Hazardous Substances Transportation Board from the Department of Revenue to the new Department.

In its report last January, the Transportation Study Committee concluded:

"Single elements of our transportation network cannot be evaluated in isolation. . . If transportation is to be used as a tool to promote State-wide goals, it must be looked at as a State-wide network composed of all existing modes of transportation. Only a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation can have this viewpoint. . ."

Authored Epitaph

Henry (Light Horse) Harry Lee was the author of the famous epitaph of George Washington: "First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen." He used this phrase in an oration which he delivered to Congress after Washington's death.

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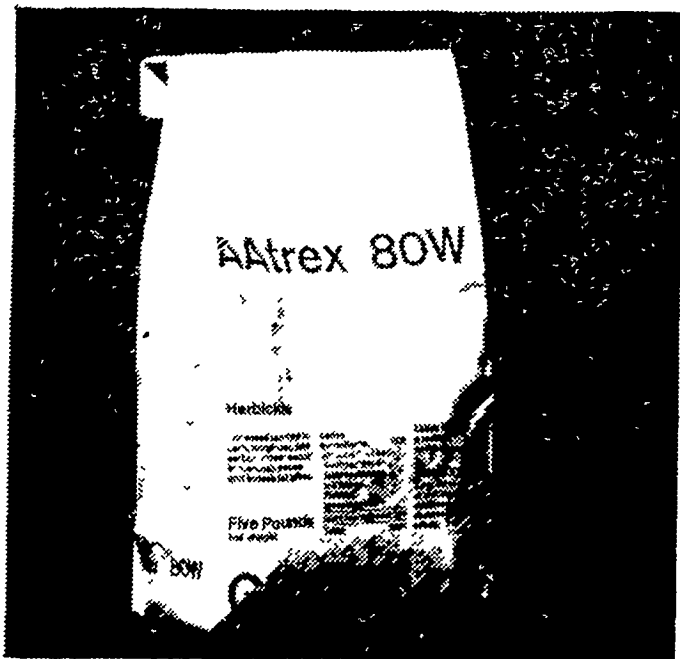
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