



095062

B-164497(3)
2-4-75

*REPORT TO
THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE 095062
UNITED STATES SENATE*

**Contributions Of Advisory Groups To
Federal Motor Vehicle
And Traffic Safety Programs**

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Department of Transportation

*BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES*

RED-75-315

~~706280~~
095062

FEB. 4, 1975



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

B-164497(3)

C1 The Honorable Warren G. Magnuson
Chairman, Committee on Commerce
United States Senate

22300

R Dear Mr. Chairman:

1 As part of our review of major activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration pursuant to your request of January 22, 1973, we are furnishing you with our report on the contributions of advisory groups to Federal motor vehicle and traffic safety programs. 405

This report is the third of several reports we plan to send you on Safety Administration activities in which you are interested.

2 We do not plan to distribute this report further unless you agree or publicly announce its contents. In this connection, we want to invite your attention to the fact that this report contains a recommendation to the Secretary of Transportation which is set forth on page 14. As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions he has taken on our recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations not later than 60 days after the date of the report and to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report. When we obtain your agreement to release the report, we will make it available to the Secretary and the four committees for the purpose of setting in motion the requirements of section 236. 29 02-05

Sincerely yours,

Comptroller General
of the United States

C o n t e n t s

	<u>Page</u>
DIGEST	i
CHAPTER	
1	INTRODUCTION 1
2	NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF ADVISORY RESOLUTIONS 3
	Council resolutions 4
	Resolutions on occupant restraint systems 4
	Other safety resolutions 5
	Establishment of private corporation 6
	Committee resolutions 8
	Resolutions on consumer information matters 8
	Resolutions to increase youth involvement 9
	Other Committee resolutions 10
	Conclusions 11
	Agency comments and our evaluation 12
	Recommendation 14
3	SCOPE OF REVIEW 15
APPENDIX	
	Letter dated September 16, 1974, from the Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Transportation, to GAO 17

*COMPTROLLER GENERAL'S REPORT
TO THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE
UNITED STATES SENATE*

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ADVISORY GROUPS
TO FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE AND
TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration
Department of Transportation

D I G E S T

WHY THE REVIEW WAS MADE

2 The Committee Chairman asked GAO to review major areas of Federal safety programs administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

This report discusses contributions made to these programs by the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council and the Youths Highway Safety Advisory Committee.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

2 The 15 Council resolutions directed to the Department of Transportation during a 2-year period covered a broad range of safety subjects, a major area of continuing concern being restraint systems for vehicle occupants.

Most of the Council's resolutions had the effect of giving support to matters that the Department was pursuing or planning, including some resolutions that urged more funding and greater and/or faster Department action. Because of the wide range of vehicle safety actions and programs being carried out or planned by the Department and the varied influences affecting Department actions, GAO could not, in most cases, specifically attribute subsequent Department actions as being the

result of the Council's resolutions. (See pp. 3 and 11.)

The Council also approved four resolutions concerning its own internal plans. One of these resulted in the formation of a corporation to which the Council transferred residual funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 conferences on automotive safety. The transfer to the corporation of funds collected from these conferences was improper. (See pp. 6 and 11.)

During a 3-year period the Committee approved eight resolutions. Most were concerned with consumer information matters and greater youth involvement in highway safety. Some endorsed vehicle safety actions underway in the Department; others proposed new or additional actions. Overall, GAO could identify relatively little in the way of specific new efforts by the Department resulting from the Committee's resolutions. (See pp. 3, 8, and 11.)

In addition to receiving advisory views on highway and safety matters through formal resolutions, the Department has received the Council's and Committee's informal views. These may have influenced some aspects of Department thinking, rulemaking, or other actions relating to motor vehicle and highway safety. (See p. 3.)

The Department's written responses to resolutions reflected generally a constructive attitude toward the basic thrust of the subject discussed. (See p. 11.)

AGENCY COMMENTS AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

The Department said GAO had understated the results and level of advisory group activities and their resulting impact on highway and motor vehicle safety programs.

According to the Department, the effectiveness of the Council should be measured by both its formal resolutions and the public voice it has provided through its numerous meetings and public forums.

GAO believes the real and tangible contributions of the Council are the positive actions taken by the Department as a direct result of advice received from the Council. The Council's public forums have value, but they are supportive to the Council's principal function of advising the Department.

Also, the Department pointed out a number of programs that GAO did not recognize as actions resulting from the Council's April 1972 resolution for the development of a two-way consumer information program. Subsequent GAO work showed that only one of the programs could be specifically related to this Council resolution.

The Department told GAO that it had always looked to the Committee to provide a catalytic effect for promoting highway safety among young drivers.

It said the Committee had recently concentrated its efforts on the problem of young drinking drivers, had exerted a positive influence on public information campaigns directed toward young people and alcohol, and had been helpful in the development of the media campaign against alcohol and driving.

The Department said it would recommend to the Council members, sitting as directors of the corporation, that they transfer the residual moneys from the 1972 and 1973 conferences into a gift account established by the Secretary.

The transfer to the gift account of monetary donations received by the Council is not objectionable to GAO. However, the only moneys that can properly be transferred are those originally received by the Council as donations. Moneys received by the Council incident to its sponsorship of auto safety conferences should be transferred to the Treasury's general fund. (See pp. 12 to 14.)

Council and Committee comments were considered in preparing this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Secretary of Transportation should direct the members of the Council sitting as directors of the Automobile Safety Education Fund to transfer to the Treasury, in accordance with the United States Code (31 U.S.C. 484 and 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1)), the residual funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 auto safety conferences. (See p. 14.)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, we reviewed selected activities of Federal motor vehicle safety programs established by the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 (15 U.S.C. 1381). This report discusses the extent to which the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council and the Youths Highway Safety Advisory Committee have contributed to the Federal safety program.

The Council was authorized in section 104 of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 (15 U.S.C. 1393) which provides that the Secretary of Transportation establish an advisory council and consult with it on motor vehicle safety standards.

In January 1973 the Secretary expanded the Council's advisory role to include the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act (15 U.S.C. 1901), which directed the Secretary, among other things, to (1) establish motor vehicle bumper standards, (2) make an automobile consumer information study dealing with such matters as the damage susceptibility and the degree of crashworthiness of passenger vehicles, and (3) establish diagnostic inspection demonstration projects.

The Council consists of 22 members appointed by the Secretary to serve 3-year terms. The Council's charter calls for it to meet eight times a year. In addition, the Council has sponsored an annual international congress since 1972 to consider specific motor vehicle safety matters. For fiscal years 1972, 1973, and 1974, the Department of Transportation financed expenditures of \$98,800, \$66,400, and \$111,400 respectively, for Council activities. The Department provided about 2 man-years of effort and supporting administrative services to the Council each year.

The Youths Highway Safety Advisory Committee was authorized by the Secretary in October 1970 under basic authority contained in the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1651). The Committee was to advise, consult with, and make recommendations to the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regarding programs and activities to attract and sustain the participation of young people in combating highway deaths, injuries, and property losses. The Secretary said the Department wanted new

ideas and expected young people to be a creative and effective force in combating the slaughter on the Nation's highways. The Committee's role was subsequently expanded to include review and evaluation of the effectiveness of Federal safety programs in producing desired results among the Nation's youth.

The Committee is composed of 15 members appointed to 1-year terms by the Administrator after approval by the Secretary. Some members are reappointed for continuity purposes. The charter calls for the Committee to meet quarterly. In addition, it sponsored national safety conferences in 1971 and 1974. For fiscal years 1972, 1973, and 1974, the Department financed expenditures of \$32,900, \$19,400, and \$15,900 respectively, for Committee activities. In addition, the Department provided about 3 man-years of effort and supporting administrative services to the Committee each year.

CHAPTER 2

NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF ADVISORY RESOLUTIONS

Council resolutions directed to the Department have covered a broad range of safety subjects, a major area of continuing concern being restraint systems for vehicle occupants. Most of the Council's resolutions have had the effect of giving support to matters that the Department was pursuing or planning, including some resolutions that urged more funding and greater and/or faster Department action.

Committee resolutions have been primarily concerned with consumer information matters and greater youth involvement in highway safety. Some of the Committee's resolutions have endorsed vehicle safety actions underway in the Department; others have proposed new or additional actions for Department consideration.

In addition to receiving advisory views on highway and vehicle safety matters through formal resolutions, Department representatives have received the Council's and the Committee's informal views. Both groups and their subcommittees have held numerous meetings and discussions at which Department representatives have been present to give briefings and/or to exchange ideas. The full Council met 22 times in the last 3 years, the Committee met 16 times in the last 4 years, and subcommittees of both groups held additional meetings and discussions. Minutes and/or transcripts of the meetings were made available to the Department. Also, some Council and Committee members said they often contacted Department officials informally to discuss matters of mutual interest. Consequently, the views of these advisory groups, as expressed in meetings and informal discussions with Department officials, may have influenced some aspects of Department actions relating to motor vehicle and highway safety.

The Council also sponsored public forums which provided opportunities for the general public to learn about and comment on the Department's safety programs.

In addition to directing resolutions to the Department, the Council approved resolutions concerning its own internal plans. One of these resulted in the formation of a corporation by the Council to which the Council proposed to transfer funds collected by it from two conferences on automotive safety.

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

From January 1, 1972, to December 31, 1973, the 22-member Council approved 19 formal resolutions; 4 pertained to internal Council matters and 15 were directed to the Department. Eight of the 15 resolutions dealt with motor vehicle occupant restraint systems--the major area of the Council's concern during this period. The remaining 7 involved such matters as consumer information, diagnostic testing, headlight requirements, and visibility requirements. The Department said the Council's meeting agendas generally paralleled the Department's rulemaking activities and program plans although it frequently highlights specific programs deserving Department attention.

Resolutions on occupant restraint systems

Five of the Council's eight resolutions on occupant restraint systems covered air bag testing and use. For example, in a March 1972 resolution, the Council advocated greater efforts, faster action, and more funds to obtain large-scale testing, under normal highway conditions, of air bags in Government and private vehicle fleets.

The Department agreed with the need for testing air-bag-equipped cars under normal highway conditions but said that its plans called for pilot fleet testing with production models before undertaking large-scale vehicle fleet testing. According to the Department, about 1,800 cars equipped with air bags had been made available by two automobile manufacturers and were being field tested in Government and private fleets as of November 30, 1973. An additional 50,000 cars equipped with air bags were to be tested in 1974. The Department also said the \$500,000 allocated for air bag fleet testing in fiscal year 1974 was adequate to carry out the program.

The Council also recommended establishing a Government-industry coordinated program for investigating accidents involving air-bag-equipped cars and for exchanging and sharing data by all interested parties having legitimate concerns. The Department replied that a cooperative program had been initiated. Government-owned crash recorders were installed in about 700 of the air-bag-equipped cars included in the test program. The Administration arranged for local police and for automobile operators to report accidents involving the test cars to a central location; it also

arranged for Federal investigation teams and/or federally-financed investigation teams to gather pertinent data on reported accidents.

Although industry teams were also investigating accidents involving the air-bag-equipped cars, the Department did not make formal arrangements to get copies of these accident investigation reports but obtained some accident data informally.

In other actions dealing with restraint systems, the Council recommended that the Department (1) withdraw its standard requiring starter-restraint system interlocks and (2) encourage States to make the use of belt restraint systems mandatory.

The Department believed that the standard concerning interlocks would provide benefits in excess of costs and that increased belt usage would result. With respect to mandatory use of seatbelts, the Department sponsored a national conference in November 1973 to emphasize the need for States to enact safety belt usage laws and it developed a program for making incentive grants to encourage State legislation requiring the use of seatbelts.

Other safety resolutions

Overall, resolutions relating to other matters directed to the Department appear to have produced little in the way of new or additional actions or new thinking by the Department. For example, the Council recommended that periscopes be deemphasized as a possible solution to the rearward visibility problem because the Council believed that they would distract drivers and that the benefit-cost ratio was questionable. The Department disagreed and said that all possible solutions must be fully evaluated.

In another case the Council recommended that the Department publish consumer information on fields of view for various types of vehicles. The Department said that its first priority was to develop visibility standards. Also a Department official said that information on fields of view might be too complex to be meaningful to an average consumer.

In April 1972 the Council recommended that the Department develop a meaningful dialogue with consumers and a two-way consumer information program. The Department replied that it was reviewing its consumer affairs program to find ways to better serve the needs of the Department and the public.

In response to Council recommendations to (1) increase research and development regarding human tolerance and test dummies, (2) take the lead in developing standardization for diagnostic vehicle-testing, and (3) continue and intensify research on vehicle mirrors and upgrade visibility standards, the Department's position has been that, generally, it was already moving in the directions advocated in the Council's resolutions.

Establishment of private corporation

Four of the 19 resolutions approved by the Council discussed internal actions planned by the Council and were addressed to the Council itself rather than to the Department. One of these proposed that funds collected from the first (1972) and second (1973) International Congress on Automotive Safety held by the Council be transferred to a new, nonprofit corporation to be used for advancing automotive safety education.

The Council funded its first two international safety conferences primarily through registration fees, sales of conference proceedings and author papers, and donations. At a meeting in June 1973, the Council noted that the receipt total exceeded the expense total for the first conference and that a surplus of funds was expected from the second conference. The Council approved the following resolution.

"The Council agrees to transfer the funds collected from the First and Second International Congresses on Automotive Safety to a non-profit corporation formed for the purpose of advancing education in the area of automotive safety."

Council records showed that receipts for the two conferences totaled \$64,341. As of March 20, 1974, the Council had surplus funds of \$11,676.

Pursuant to the resolution, a nonprofit corporation, the Automotive Safety Education Fund, was incorporated on July 12, 1973, in the District of Columbia by a Council member and his two law partners and, according to the Department, surplus funds from the 1972 and 1973 conferences were transferred to the corporation. According to the articles of incorporation:

"The purpose of the corporation is to provide, from dues, fees, gifts and contributions to the corporation, financial aid to activities furthering the advancement of education in the area of automotive safety and financial aid for the dissemination of information relating to automotive safety technology to persons working in the field of automotive safety and to the general public."

In light of the foregoing, it is clear that the Automotive Safety Education Fund was formed pursuant to the above-quoted Council resolution and that one of the purposes of its creation was to serve as the recipient of Council-derived funds from prior International Congresses on Automotive Safety.

Concerning the transfer of funds, 31 U.S.C. 484 states:

"The gross amount of all monies received from whatever source for the use of the United States * * * shall be paid by the Officer or agent receiving the same into the Treasury * * * without any abatement or deduction on account of salary, fees, costs, charges, expenses, or claim of any description whatever."
(Underscoring supplied.)

The purpose of this provision is to avoid the improper augmentation of appropriations and to control the expenditures of the executive branch. We believe that moneys received by the Council incident to its sponsorship of auto safety conferences are, because of the Council's status as an advisory body created by statute and its role in such meetings, "monies received * * * for the use of the United States." Therefore any transfer of moneys received by the Council to a depository other than the Treasury is improper.

Donations received by the Council also have to go into the Treasury but into a separate fund established by the Secretary of Transportation pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1). This provision authorizes the Secretary to:

"* * * accept, hold, administer, and utilize gifts and bequests of property, both real and personal, for the purpose of aiding or facilitating the work of the Department. Gifts and bequests of money and the

proceeds from sales of other property received as gifts or bequests shall be deposited in the Treasury in a separate fund and shall be disbursed upon order of the Secretary." (Underscoring supplied.)

The quoted provisions of section 1657 appear to provide a specific exception to the mandate of 31 U.S.C. 484, above. Thus, regarding donations, the right to receive and expend such moneys belongs either to the Secretary of Transportation (49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1), supra) or his delegatee of such authority, the Assistant Secretary for Administration.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

The first Youths Highway Safety Advisory Committee was formed in January 1971. In the 3 years ended December 31, 1973, the 15-member Committee passed 8 formal resolutions; 3 covered consumer information matters, 2 concerned the involvement of youth in highway safety matters on State and local levels, 2 endorsed Department actions regarding seatbelt usage and high-speed vehicle controls and warnings, and 1 urged research leading to counter-measures on the problem of drugs and driving by youth.

Resolutions on consumer information matters

The Committee approved a resolution in April 1971 to expand the Department's consumer aid series--publications designed to assist consumers in comparing motor vehicle safety performance--and to include such subjects as visibility, handling, environmental factors, lighting systems, number of recalls, and crash survivability. A Department official told the Committee in May 1971 that expanding and improving the series was needed but he cited leadtime and other problems in establishing performance measurement criteria. He said, however, that it might be possible to expand the series by the end of 1971 to include critical environmental data that would enable consumer comparisons by various vehicle makes and models.

A Department official subsequently told us that as of January 1974 no additional performance categories had been added to the series but that one on uniform tire quality grading was under consideration. The official added that, instead of working toward

including subjects recommended by the Committee, the agency preferred to work toward developing or improving safety standards in those areas. He said that the consumer aid series was not an effective communication means.

The Committee also recommended in April 1971 that consumer aid information be made more useful by developing and prominently displaying report-card-type charts comparing numerical ratings of different vehicle makes and models in various performance categories, such as braking and crash survivability. The Department said the availability of various possible combinations of equipment and accessories options would pose a major problem to developing a meaningful rating system for chart displays.

In July 1971 the Committee proposed that consideration be given to a national television campaign, using various suggested techniques and facts, to urge increased use of lap and shoulder belts. We did not find any formal reply to this proposal. A Department official subsequently told us that television spots on this subject had not been obtained because of the expense involved.

In a resolution approved in November 1972, the Committee urged that youth-oriented public information and education materials be submitted for its review and advice. The Committee also resolved to develop new issues in this field and to review those previously developed by the Department. The Department advised the Committee that its regular procedures had been modified to require that the Committee be involved in an advisory capacity in developing all youth-oriented public service ads and radio and television spots. At subsequent meetings, the Committee reviewed print ads and radio announcements prepared for the Administration. Also, the Department filmed a youth-oriented public service announcement for television using Committee members and staff.

Resolutions to increase youth involvement

In November 1972 the Committee approved a resolution calling on each State governor or his representative to appoint a statewide youth council or committee to coordinate the efforts of young people interested in highway safety. Although the Department endorsed the resolution and advised the Committee that it would contact the States and encourage them to establish such groups, a Department official told us in November 1974 that the Department subsequently decided not to take any action.

At a later meeting in September 1973, the Committee passed a resolution supporting a national federally-sponsored youth conference to discuss youth involvement in highway safety on State and local levels. The Department endorsed the resolution and sent letters to all States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia advising them of the planned conference. The conference was held in March 1974. The Department said the September 1973 resolution and the Department's actions were efforts to achieve the intent of the Committee's November 1972 resolution.

Other Committee resolutions

One of the Committee's earliest actions (April 1971) was to pass a resolution endorsing the Department's efforts to issue a high-speed warning and control standard for vehicles. The Department had published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking on vehicle speed controls in 1967 and a proposed standard on high-speed warning and control in 1970. In its resolution, the Committee specifically agreed that the planned standard should provide for:

1. A top vehicle speed limit of 95 miles an hour.
2. A top speedometer reading of 85 mph.
3. A driver audiovisual warning system.
4. An external visual warning system.
5. Activation of both warning systems at speeds of 81 to 85 mph.
6. An effective standard date of October 1, 1972, as proposed by the Department.

The Department's reply in May 1971 expressed appreciation for the Committee's support. As of November 1974 a Federal safety standard on high-speed warning and control had not been issued.

At its meeting in February 1973, the Committee passed a resolution endorsing the Department's development of model legislation for a mandatory seatbelt law as guidance to the States.

In another case, the Committee recommended that the Department undertake research on the problem of young people combining drugs and driving, to provide information needed to formulate effective countermeasures. The Committee also expressed its intention to encourage action programs on the drug and driving problem and to investigate and suggest ideas for youth-oriented alcohol countermeasure projects. The Department told the Committee that such research was being considered. Subsequently, in mid-1973 a contract was awarded for the identification of countermeasures for the youth crash problem related to alcohol. Research on countermeasures for drugs, other than alcohol, has not been undertaken. A Department official told us in November 1974 that the Administration was not in a position to look at countermeasures for other drugs and that the Committee was satisfied with the research that had been undertaken.

CONCLUSIONS

The resolutions approved by the Council and the Committee deal with subjects independently selected by these groups as matters of particular interest to them at the time.

Many of the Department's written responses to advisory resolutions explain what is being done or planned in various areas or state that consideration or study will be given to advisory recommendations and, on the whole, appear to reflect a generally constructive attitude toward the basic thrust of the resolutions. Because of the wide range of vehicle safety actions and programs being carried out or planned by the Department and the varied influences affecting Department actions, we could not, in most cases, specifically attribute subsequent Department actions as being the result of the Council's resolutions. Moreover, we could identify relatively little in the way of specific new efforts by the Department resulting from the Committee's resolutions.

With respect to the Council's resolution proposing transfer of funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 conferences on automotive safety to a nonprofit corporation, we believe that the transfer to the corporation of funds derived from the auto safety conferences was improper.

AGENCY COMMENTS AND OUR EVALUATION

The Department said (see app.) that we had understated the results and level of the Council's and the Committee's activities and their resulting impact on highway and vehicle safety programs of the Administration. The Department believes it is impossible to document any discernible cause-effect relationship between Council resolutions and Department actions because of the many varied and diffused forces at work influencing the Administration. The Department said the effectiveness of the Council should be measured by both its formal resolutions and the public voice it has provided for those who are affected by safety regulations. The Department believes we should have given more recognition to this latter aspect of Council activities and mentioned the well-attended seven full Council meetings, 17 subcommittee meetings, and several Council-sponsored public forums as examples of the opportunities provided the public to learn about and comment on the Department's safety programs.

We believe the real and tangible contributions of the Council are the positive actions taken by the Department as a direct result of the advice received from the Council. The Council's public forums have value, but they are supportive to the Council's principal function of advising the Department.

The Department also pointed out that we did not fully recognize the actions taken as a result of the Council's April 1972 resolution for the development of a two-way consumer information program. The Department said monthly investigatory reports; an expanding series of consumer protection bulletins, alerts, and advisories; an internal system of quick response and referral; a toll-free "hot line"; and a greatly expanded liaison and referral system were programs which either were initiated or were under discussion since the April 1972 resolution.

Our discussion with Department officials and followup review showed that, with the possible exception of monthly investigatory reports, the other programs could not be specifically related to this Council resolution. Consumer bulletins, alerts, and advisories have been issued since 1970, although we were told that a greater number were issued after the Council's resolution. The internal system of quick response and referral preceded the resolution and the hot line and expanded referral system were new initiatives for which the Department sought Council advice in May 1974.

The Department said that it had looked to the Committee to provide a catalytic effect to promote highway safety among young drivers and that after 1972 the Committee concentrated its efforts on the problems of young drinking drivers. It said the Committee had exerted a positive influence on the public information campaign directed toward young people and alcohol and had been helpful, through their comments, in developing the media campaign against alcohol and driving.

The Department said that the Automotive Safety Education Fund was a properly formed corporation under the laws of the District of Columbia and that its continued existence as a distinct corporate entity was a matter over which neither the Department nor the Council had direct power to dissolve. The Department pointed out that the incorporators were by virtue of 15 U.S.C. 1393(c) not Government employees and that, under 18 U.S.C. 201 through 207, they were not subject to any conflict of interest in acting to create the corporation.

Regardless of whether, in the final analysis, the corporation was formed by the Council or by others, there would still remain the statutory prohibition against transferring Council moneys to the corporation.

The Department said that during the 1974 conference registration fees were the only funds derived and that they were used only to defray the costs of activities such as luncheons and refreshments that could not be paid from appropriated funds. Also the receipts were deposited into a suspense account for nongovernmental funds in the Treasury, the account was drawn on to pay the luncheon and refreshment costs, and the remainder will be paid into the Treasury's general fund.

The Department further said that, in view of our position regarding Council-derived moneys transferred to the corporation and, in order to preclude any possible administrative contest adversely effecting the activities of the Council, the corporation, or future international conferences, it would recommend to the Council members sitting as directors of the corporation that they transfer the conference-derived portion of the corporation funds into a gift account established by the Secretary pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1).

We believe all moneys that were not received by the Council as donations should have been paid, without abatement, into the

Treasury's general fund. The transfer to the special gift account of monetary donations received by the Council is proper. However, the only moneys that can properly be transferred to such a special account are those funds that were originally received by the Council as donations.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Secretary of Transportation direct the members of the Advisory Council sitting as directors of the Automobile Safety Education Fund to transfer to the Treasury, in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 484 and 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1), the residual funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 auto safety conferences.

CHAPTER 3

SCOPE OF REVIEW

We reviewed legislation and regulations pertaining to the organization and objectives of the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council and the Youths Highway Safety Advisory Committee. We examined reports and transcripts of their meetings and various other records relating to their activities, resolutions, and recommendations. We also interviewed Council and Committee members and Administration officials.

Our work covered the 19 formal Council resolutions approved during the 2 years ended December 31, 1973, and the 8 resolutions approved by the Committee in the 3 years ended December 31, 1973. Our work was done at Administration headquarters in Washington, D. C.

BLANK PAGE

14



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR ADMINISTRATION

September 16, 1974

Mr. Henry Eschwege
Director, Resources and
Economic Development Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
441 G. Street, NW.
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Eschwege:

This is in response to your letter dated May 15, 1974, requesting comments on the General Accounting Office's (GAO) report on contributions of advisory groups to Federal motor vehicle and traffic safety programs. The GAO found that, in most cases, Departmental actions on motor vehicle and traffic safety could not be attributed to resolutions directed by the Advisory Council. In addition, the Council took action which resulted in the formation of a corporation which would receive residual funds derived from two conferences on automotive safety. GAO believes the Council lacks the authority to do this and recommends that the Secretary direct the Council to dissolve the corporation. During the past three years, the Youths Committee approved eight resolutions concerning highway safety, but GAO could identify little in the way of specific new efforts by the Department which resulted from these resolutions.

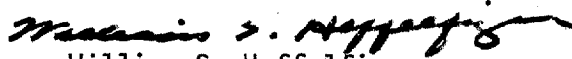
The Department does not agree with the GAO recommendation. The Automotive Safety Education Fund is a properly formed corporation under the laws of the District of Columbia and may be dissolved only by actions of the members or by a court decree. Because of the opinion expressed by GAO, the Department is concerned that administrative hindrances may develop in carrying out the activities of the Council, and have a collateral undesirable effect on the Automotive Safety Education Fund. To preclude this, the Secretary will request those members of the Council who serve as directors of the Fund to transfer that portion of the Fund derived from the conferences on automotive safety into a gift account established by the Secretary.

APPENDIX

With respect to the GAO assessment of advisory groups' activities, the report understates the results and level of these activities and the resulting impact on the highway and motor vehicle safety programs administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The activities of the advisory groups are documented, and the cause-effect results of the NHTSA responses and follow-on actions are not difficult to trace. We believe a review of the advisory groups' activities approached with a positive perspective might have produced findings opposite to those presented in the report.

I have enclosed two copies of the Department's reply.

Sincerely,


William S. Heffelfinger

Enclosure
(2 copies)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REPLYTOGAO DRAFT REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCEUNITED STATE SENATEONCONTRIBUTIONS OF ADVISORY GROUPS TOFEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC SAFETYSUMMARY OF GAO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, requested the General Accounting Office to review major areas of Federal safety programs administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Two advisory groups and their relationships to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration were reviewed: the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council, covering activities for the two years ending December 31, 1973, and the YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Committee, covering activities for the three years ending December 31, 1973. The General Accounting Office recommended that the Secretary of Transportation:

"--direct the Advisory Council to dissolve the corporation, which was formed to receive funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 automobile safety conferences, and transfer the funds to the U. S. Treasury."

Additionally, in the discussion of study findings with respect to the contributions of these two advisory groups, the report, although not altogether negative, apparently viewed the contributions with less than affirmative approbation:

"--GAO could not, in most cases, specifically attribute subsequent Department actions as being the result of the Council's resolutions."

"--Overall, GAO could identify relatively little in the way of specific new efforts by the Department resulting from the Committee's resolutions."

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION POSITION

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) does not agree with the recommendation of the General Accounting Office (GAO). Firstly, that portion of the recommendation that would have the Secretary of Transportation "direct the Advisory Council to dissolve the corporation" (Automotive Safety Education Fund) is not valid. The Automotive Safety Education Fund (the referenced "corporation") is a properly formed corporation under the laws of the District of Columbia and may be dissolved only by action of the members or by decree of a court.

Secondly, NHTSA interprets the provisions of 34 U.S.C. 484 as not applicable to the fees and contributions received by the Council to underwrite the 1972 and 1973 International Congresses on Automotive Safety as "monies received . . . for the use of the United States." The funds, therefore, were legitimately transferred to the nonprofit Automotive Safety Education Fund.

For the 1974 International Congress on Automotive Safety, sponsored by the Council, a new approach to the funding was developed. Contributions were not accepted and the fees for registration were used to defray the expenses of the Congress. Funds were maintained in an account for nongovernment funds at the Treasury. The excess of funds above expenses will be transferred to the general fund of the Treasury.

Additionally, because of the contentions now existing as a result of the GAO report, the Department is concerned that administrative hindrances may develop in carrying out the activities of the Council and the Congress, and have a collateral undesirable effect on the Automotive Safety Education Fund. In order to preclude such hindrances, the Secretary will request those members of the Council who serve as directors of the Fund to transfer the Congress derived portion of the Fund into a gift account established by the Secretary pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1).

With respect to the GAO assessment of advisory group activities, the report understates the results and level of these activities, and the resulting impact on the highway and motor vehicle safety programs administered by NHTSA. In several instances, the report is not factual or is in error regarding both the contributions of the Council and the Committee, and the counterpart NHTSA actions. Moreover, although the report gives the appearance of summarizing the total efforts of the groups, it has failed to mention many significant activities, resolutions, and recommendations of the two groups, and the resulting impact on the safety programs or affirmative responses by NHTSA.

These activities of the advisory groups are documented. The cause-effect results of the NHTSA responses and follow-on actions are not difficult to trace. A review of the advisory groups' activities, approached with a positive perspective, might have produced a more factual, complete draft report with findings opposite to those of the current draft.

POSITION STATEMENT

The draft report recommends that the Secretary:

"direct the Advisory Council to dissolve the corporation, which was formed to receive funds derived from the 1972 and 1973 automobile safety conferences, and transfer the funds to the U.S. Treasury."

In recommending the dissolution of the Automotive Safety Education Fund and the deposit of the monies into the Treasury under 31 U.S.C. 484 and 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1), the GAO has addressed two separate issues:

1. The disposition of the Fund. The report purports that the Automotive Safety Education Fund is a Council-formed corporation and that the Council lacked authority for its establishment. As a properly formed corporation under the laws of the District of Columbia, its continued existence as a distinct corporate entity is a matter over which neither the Department of Transportation nor the Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council has direct power to effect dissolution. It may be dissolved only by vote of its members or by decree of the court.

Although one of the incorporators was, at the time of incorporation, a member of the Council and the initial members of the Fund's board of directors were all Council members, they were, by virtue of 15 U.S.C. 1393(c), not Government employees. Under 18 U.S.C. 201-207, they were not subject to any conflict of interest in acting to create the corporation or barred from service on the Fund.

At this point, we cannot predict that the enumerated goals of the Fund will fail to be carried out. We would, therefore, demur to the report's recommendation that the Department request the Council to dissolve the Fund.

2. The transfer of International Congresses' receipts to the Fund. The basis of this issue is the disposition of receipts in excess of costs of two (1972 and 1973) International Congresses on Automotive Safety that were sponsored by the Council. These receipts were transferred to the Automotive Safety Education Fund to further the safety education objectives enumerated in the Fund's incorporating documents. The resolution of this issue involves the construction of statutory language whose application to the Council's activities is not as patently clear as the draft report implies.

APPENDIX

The report states that because the Council is an advisory body created by statutes, the fees and contributions it received to underwrite the International Congresses were "monies received . . . for the use of the United States" and must, therefore, be paid into the U. S. Treasury pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 484. To the extent that some part of the receipts could be termed a "donation," the report suggests the deposit of such funds into a trust fund account under 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1), as a partial exception to the mandate of 31 U.S.C. 484.

The cited statute offers no guidance as to how to determine whether monies are received for the Government's use. In the distant period in which 31 U.S.C. 484 was enacted (ca. 1825), the principal aim of the Congress was to insure that the Government's basic revenues--tariffs, customs duties, taxes--were not directed into the pockets of tax officers and customs agents. Such revenue clearly belonged to the Government, so there was no need for specific definition of "Government use." In the rare cases in which the statute has been cited, the issue has not been raised.

The report's conclusion, therefore, appears to rest wholly on the assumption that the U.S. Congress' creation of the Council makes it a part of the Government and that, ipso facto, any money it receives is for the Government's use. The Department does not think this assumption is justified. There are attributes of an advisory committee such as the Council that necessarily set it at some distance from the Governmental agencies to which it renders advice. The Council was designed by the U.S. Congress to offer independent and diverse views to the Secretary of Transportation in his development of safety standards. In their statements and resolutions, the members of the Council are not speaking as employees or agents of the Government, nor do they acquire status as a result of being paid, as 15 U.S.C. 1393(c) carefully points out.

In the Department's view, it is consistent with the role of the Council as an independent voice to see the Council's sponsorship of the International Congresses as a nongovernmental activity. Ultimately, the International Congresses will be of benefit to the Government through the greater insight that the Council gains in its advisory capacity. An activity, however, that only indirectly benefits the Government is not thereby governmental, nor are the funds received to produce this indirect benefit necessarily funds "for the use of" the Government. The fees and contributions that were received through the sponsorship of the International Congresses were not advertised by the Council members as being funds for the Government, nor does it appear that the contributors understood that they were contributing to the Government.

Within the foregoing rationale, if the receipts of the International Congresses were not for the use of the Government, they would fall outside the provisions of 31 U.S.C. 484 and could, therefore, be retained by the Council and be used for the furtherance of the Council's goals through the agency of the Automotive Safety Education Fund. It has been the Department's position that the receipts should be used for the furtherance of the International Congresses and of the Council's principal function as consultant on the safety standards. Any discussion to the effect that the enabling statute did not specifically authorize the Council to receive funds is balanced by the fact that it was not specifically prohibited from receiving funds for Council objectives.

It is important at this juncture to note that although the Automotive Safety Education Fund is handling special funds in support of the Advisory Council's annual International Congress on Automotive Safety, there has been public accountability of the funds. The Council's support staff, the NHTSA Executive Secretariat, has had audits of Council-contributed funds conducted each year under Section 12(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The results of these audits and all appurtenant records are placed in a file available for public inspection.

An entirely different approach was taken in funding the Third International Congress on Automotive Safety (ICAS). NHTSA, at the request of the Council, provided the basic staff, planning, and administrative support for the ICAS, and assumed the costs of these services and the costs of the meeting rooms and facilities. In the initial two Congresses, such support and services were provided through the Council's resources--registration fees, sales of proceedings, and donations--independent of any significant Government funding. In the just concluded ICAS, registration fees, the only funds derived, were used only to defray the costs of those activities such as luncheons and refreshments that could not be paid from appropriated funds. The receipts were deposited into a suspense account for nongovernmental funds in the Treasury. The account was drawn on to pay the luncheon and refreshment costs of the ICAS, and the remaining balance is to be paid into the general fund of the Treasury.

The funds that were transferred to the Automotive Safety Education Fund by the Council would have been used to support the concluded ICAS and future Congresses, and to support the independent annual awards of the Council, the Excaliber and Speno Awards, which are not supported by Government funds.

In view of the position of the GAO regarding Council-derived monies transferred to the Fund, and in order to preclude any possible administrative contest that would adversely impact the activities of the Council, future International Congresses, or the Fund, the Secretary of Transportation will recommend to the Council members sitting as directors of the Fund that they transfer the ICAS-derived portion of the Fund into a gift account established by the Secretary pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 1657(m)(1).

APPENDIX

CONTRIBUTIONS OF ADVISORY GROUPS

The Department is distressed over the failure of the GAO report to view the innovative activities and contributions of the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council and the YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Committee to the programs administered by the NHTSA in a more affirmative light. While the Department's responses to the groups' resolutions and recommendations are viewed as constructive, nevertheless, the report generally indicates a lack of apprehension of the underlying philosophy of advisory groups, and specifically the goals and products of the Advisory Council and YOUTHS Committee.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE NATIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The GAO draft report states the Council presented eight resolutions on occupant restraint systems during the 1972-1973 period under study (page 9). This is consistent with the Council's continuing concern--as early as 1969--with air bags and other improved restraint systems. In fact, in July 1969, the Council first recommended ". . . accelerated effort toward implementation of the air bag . . ." and there have been seven more occupant crash protection recommendations from 1969 up to the 1972-1973 GAO study period. The general and continuing thrust of the Council's recommendations is probably best summarized in the June 10, 1970, resolution calling for:

- intensive research and development geared to earliest implementation of passive restraint systems;
- extensive fleet testing;
- free exchange of information on passive restraint technology;
- continued refinement of and requirements for better belt systems until proven not necessary.

The "cautious optimism" and direction advised in this 1970 Council resolution have been echoed by the course of passive restraint rulemaking in the Department since the first proposal in 1969. Research has been accelerated, technology advanced, information shared, fleet testing begun, and belt systems improved and retained until proven not necessary.

In its commentary (page 11) assessing the Department's reaction to the Council's 1972 recommendation for developing a "meaningful dialogue with consumers, a two-way consumer information program,"

(See GAO note, p. 29.)

The NHTSA's Office of Consumer Affairs, recently renamed the Office of Consumer Services to reflect its expanding effort toward two-way dialogue and communication, has steadily enlarged its program, precisely aimed at the objectives which the Council defined. Among the programs initiated since the Council's recommendation are the following:

- Monthly Investigatory Reports (free) listing all defect investigations newly opened, newly closed; together with detailed summaries of the background, potential hazards, vehicle symptoms associated with each newly opened defect investigation.
- An expanding series of Consumer Protection Bulletins, Alerts, and Advisories; each treating a specific hazard in detail and each requesting from the consumer-public all experience from individuals who have sustained the same type of hazard or failure.
- An internal system of quick-response and referral through which every individual report is immediately acknowledged and processed through the investigatory and data processing offices of NHTSA...a substantial increase in timely, real-world vehicle performance data being the immediate result.

Among later programs under discussion, further expanding on the Council's recommendations and resolutions, are these:

- The proposal for an NHTSA toll-free "hot-line" through which the desired dialogue can be instantaneous, detailed, and provide maximum benefit, two-way, in the exchange of safety related information.
- A greatly expanded liaison and referral system, as between NHTSA's Consumer Services Office and the counterpart offices of the States and major metropolitan areas.

The Department's reaction to the 1972 Council recommendation has been both a review and an expansion of its dialogue with consumers. The expansion continues and has enjoyed the support of Council recommendations and advice.

APPENDIX

The draft report states: "Overall, resolutions relating to other matters directed to the Department appear to have produced little in the way of new or additional actions by the Department." (page 10)

This understates the level of Advisory Council activities and the scope of required policy decisions inherent to the resolutions submitted to the Secretary of Transportation. The subjects discussed and commented upon by the Advisory Council were all agenda items which had been reviewed and approved by the Secretary. (page 7) Generally, and logically, the Advisory Council agendas paralleled Departmental rule-making activities and program plans. Additionally, the Advisory Council frequently highlighted specific programs deserving Secretarial attention. Notable among these were the research programs to develop an anthropomorphic dummy suitable for standards testing and the need for standardization of equipment and fittings used in automotive diagnostic testing.

The draft report indicates that the Council recommended ". . . increased research and development regarding human tolerance and test dummies . . ." (page 11).

The Council had long recognized the need for improved anthropomorphic dummies both for testing and for research. The need for such dummies, highlighted to the Secretary as early as 1970, was substantiated by a 1972 Cincinnati court decision regarding the dummy specifications in FMVSS 208. Lack of what the court considered to be suitable specifications resulted in a delay in issuing standards for passive restraint systems until early 1974. The Secretary had responded to a 1972 Council resolution for increased dummy research and development with a report that efforts would be significantly increased and that by 1974 the funding level would be doubled. Whether this decision was influenced by the series of Council resolutions is, of course, indeterminate.

The opportunities provided for the general public to participate in discussions with the Council were not mentioned in the draft report. In April 1973 the Council sponsored a public meeting to discuss visibility standards, and in October 1973 a 2-day meeting on vehicle safety defects. Participants at both meetings included private citizens and representatives from the auto industry, consumer groups, the legislative branch of Government, private research groups, aftermarket equipment manufacturers, and members of the executive branch of Government. More than 100 persons attended each meeting.

The five resolutions resulting from the visibility standards meeting were more specific than indicated in the draft report: ". . . continue and intensify research on vehicle mirrors and standards on visibility . . ." (page 11). The Secretary agreed with three of the Council's recommendations which related to increased research on convex exterior mirrors and the need to upgrade FMVSS 111 (Rearview Mirrors) and FMVSS 103 (Windshield Defrosting and Defogging). He disagreed on providing consumer information on field of view and a deemphasis on research of single-source rearward visibility devices. These Secretarial actions were dismissed in the draft report by simply stating: ". . . the Department . . . was already moving in the directions advocated by the Council's resolutions." (page 11)

The October 2-day meeting on safety defects resulted in five recommendations to the Secretary. These are not mentioned in the draft report, possibly because they were not sent to the Secretary until January 16, 1974. A key issue of the meeting was the definition of a "safety related defect," and whether the Secretary should define the parameters for declaring such defects. After considering the arguments of auto industry representatives and consumer groups, the Council agreed with the view expressed in a letter from Senator Magnuson that any definition which would tend to limit the discretion of the Secretary would be undesirable. Senator Magnuson asked that the Council focus its attention on the administrative process of determining whether a safety related defect exists. The Council has formed a special Task Force to investigate this issue.

The Council's recommendation that the Administration ". . . take the lead in developing standardization for diagnostic vehicle testing . . ." (page 11) was a significant conclusion reached after the First International Congress on Automotive Safety. This recommendation supported the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act (P.L. 92-513) and alerted the Administration to the most critical issue involved in diagnostic testing. As the Department's program for implementation of the Act was still in its embryonic stage, the recommendation was timely and was given full consideration in later developments of equipment standards.

The Second Congress on Automotive Safety, in July 1973, produced further information for Council consideration. Although not mentioned in the report, the Council submitted a recommendation to the Secretary for further standards development in six areas concerning recreation vehicles and submitted six resolutions for further action to improve motorcycle safety.

The GAO draft concludes, however, that "Because of the nature and broad scope of most of the resolutions, and the wide range of vehicle safety actions and programs being carried out by the Department, we could not, in most cases, specifically attribute subsequent Department actions as being the result of the Council's resolutions." (page 6)

Whether one can prove the Department has followed the Council's advice or whether the Council was merely accurate in predicting future events is moot. The forces at work influencing a Government regulatory agency, particularly one without a powerful and supporting constituency, are many, varied, and diffuse. To attempt to document any single discernible cause-effect relationship from any one of these influences--including the Council--is impossible and would border on folly. The broad, general policy recommendations--such as whether the Department should move to passive restraint rulemaking--are best suited for a composite, basically nontechnical citizens' group, such as the Council, to consider in making recommendations.

APPENDIX

On the other hand, the question could--and should--be asked; "Where would the motor vehicle safety program be without the Council?" The Council, to this end, over the years, has carried out its legislative purpose of providing a public voice for those who are affected by safety regulations, including the motoring public, the State and local governments and the regulated motor vehicle industry. Surely, the Council's public recommendations, which must be publicly acknowledged and responded to by the Department, provide an open exchange on issues and safety standards which might not otherwise exist. The popularity of the Council's public forums, which are independent of Government as well as industry, indicates they are of value to many. Where else can the public, as well as other interested parties, better learn of NHTSA policies and programs than through the public meetings of the Council? Certainly not through the requisite and tightly restrained channels of prescribed rulemaking procedures.

The legislative history of the Act mandating the establishment of the Council shows that Congress envisioned an advisory group, free from the responsibility of administering the safety program, which could bring forth the wide range of outside points of view and technical possibilities affecting motor vehicle safety. The Council, of course, cannot accomplish this just through the abilities of its members. The public forums created by the Council--the informal public dialogues and briefings as well as the formal recommendations--are of value, and really determine the effectiveness of the Council.

Although the GAO draft concedes these forums and exchanges of information do exist, it understates the issue with "...the views of these advisory groups, as expressed in meetings and informal discussion with Department officials, may have influenced some aspects of Department actions relating to motor vehicle and highway safety." (page 7) It would seem the well-attended seven full Council meetings, the 17 additional subcommittee meetings, and the 6 days of public, Council-sponsored information gathering forums would have to be more fully and fairly considered in evaluating the Council's role. It would seem that the U.S. Congress, as the continuing sponsor of many open hearings on issues and problems facing this Nation, could best be the judge of the value of public forums such as the Council provides for the motor vehicle safety program.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE YOUTHS COMMITTEE

The activities and functions of the YOUTHS Committee are summarized in the draft report as follows:

"YOUTHS Committee resolutions have been primarily concerned with consumer information matters and greater youth involvement in highway safety. Some of the Committee's resolutions have endorsed vehicle safety actions underway in the Department; others have proposed new or additional actions for Department consideration. Overall, we could identify relatively little in the way of specific new efforts by the Department resulting from the Committee's resolutions." (page 6)

For the last two years (1972-1974), the YOUTHS Committee has concentrated its efforts toward highway safety rather than motor vehicle safety. The educational and experience level of the members is insufficient to warrant their consideration of the relatively complicated motor vehicle standards. An area of prime concern has been the problem of young drinking drivers; therefore, they have specifically deliberated on the NHTSA Alcohol Safety Action Projects (ASAPs).

Public information directed toward the young driver population and the development of countermeasures to reduce the number of young drivers who drive under the influence of drugs and alcohol were of prime concern to the Committee. Also, recognizing that a national program against drinking and driving requires State and local participation to be effective, the Committee explored various means for encouraging State and local youth involvement in the campaign.

The YOUTHS Committee exerted a positive influence upon the ASAP public information campaign directed toward young people. They reviewed each television commercial, radio announcement, and poster advertisement. While their comments on these media subjects are not expressed in written resolutions, their on-the-spot recommendations were frequently incorporated. The validity of their recommendations was recognized by the NHTSA contractor in charge of the campaign, Grey Advertising Company of New York.

(See GAO note.)

The YOUTHS Committee urged the Administration to encourage the establishment of similar advisory and action groups at the State and local level. They believed that only through direct youth involvement could the young driver be properly influenced. A program to assist States in establishing youth groups was developed by the Committee for presentation at a national conference. The Administrator endorsed the concept and wrote to each State Governor asking him to delegate two persons from his State to attend such a conference, which was held in Scottsdale, Arizona, on March 30-31, 1974, with attendees from 47 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Indian Tribes. Followup activities have included visits to local and national organizations by NHTSA officials and Committee members, and development of an informal newsletter which is to be sent to State and local groups.

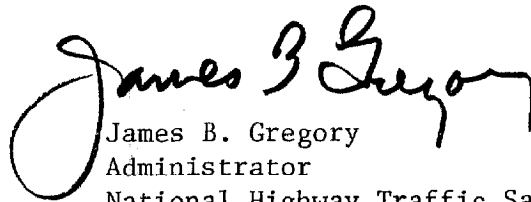
The Committee examined the range of ASAP countermeasures and found that most were directed toward the adult driver. The Committee recommended that the NHTSA initiate an extensive research program which would identify and test countermeasures directed toward young drivers who might use drugs or alcohol.

(See GAO note.)

GAO note: The deleted comments refer to matters included in the draft report but revised in the final report.

APPENDIX

The Administration has always looked to the YOUTHS Committee to provide a catalytic effect to promote highway safety among young drivers. This effect is being realized at minimal cost.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James B. Gregory". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

James B. Gregory
Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration