

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 20, 1999 LB 829

had several people come representing the Federation for the Blind, and also the League of Human Dignity. Senator Suttle has been very kind to give me a throat lozenge. Efficiency benefits are those which reduce costs and economic impact of motor vehicle use. In 1996, the Federal Transit Administration estimated the annual cost of congestion in America to be around \$40 billion in lost time, productivity and additional fuel consumed. And my friends are all helping me out here. Thank you very much. (Laugh) More recently, the Texas Transportation Institute put the costs of congestion, delay, increased fuel consumption, increased vehicle emissions, and reduced air quality, increased cost of goods transported, and that resulted in increased cost to consumers and increased driver volatility, and you all may know what driver volatility is, that's road rage. They put those costs at \$50 billion. I won't be talking about road rage today. I'm sure you all are going to be very happy to hear that. But there are also other benefits as a result of having commuter rail. There are safety benefits. We must take into consideration the actual deaths, property damage, medical services, lost productivity, and reduced quality of life that come as a result of traffic congestion. And we know that there are estimates of between \$2 billion and \$5 billion annually of loss from those very things. We have some other cost savings that I want to talk about very briefly. There are parking cost savings, estimated between \$5.1 billion and \$11.8 billion annually, across the United States. We also know that there are social program benefits which allow low-income people to access medical and social services by public transit, which otherwise would have had to have been paid for at a much higher cost. There are user cost savings, with heavy reliance on automobiles. There are roadway related costs, which are continual repair costs. And anybody who's been driving down Interstate 80 this days know about some of those repair costs. There are law enforcement costs; emergency services costs; and land acquisition costs; auto costs, which are congestion, traffic-related deaths, injuries and accidents; air pollution; groundwater pollution; and urban sprawl. The economic effects of oil importation are harder to calculate, but the price of gas, as all of my colleagues are probably aware, has recently been noticeably higher. We also know that five oil producing nations have banded together to cut back on oil production in order to drive the price significantly higher. Highway user