

02-02-034

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

- - -

In Re: House Bill No. 562, Printer's No. 589  
Annual Vehicle Safety Inspection

- - -

King of Prussia, Pa., Thursday, August 27, 1981

- - -

Hearing held at Franklin Room,  
Sheraton Valley Forge Hotel, Route 363, King of  
Prussia, Pennsylvania, beginning at approximately  
10:00 a.m., on the above date.

- - -

BEFORE:

JOHN S. DAVIES, Chairman  
NICHOLAS MICOZZIE, Member  
THOMAS TIGUE, Member  
JOSEPH STEIGHNER, Member  
JAMES MARTINI, Member, *STAFF*  
JOSEPH KOLTER, Member  
TERRY PUNT, Member  
JOSEPH ROCKS, Member  
PAUL J. LANDIS, Staff Member  
THOMAS MURPHY, Member

**VINCENT VARALLO ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL REPORTERS

1515 LOCUST STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102  
(215) 561-2220



221 N OLIVE STREET  
MEDIA, PA 19063  
(215) 563-6150



P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2  
3 MR. DAVIES: Good morning. I'd like  
4 to call to order the public hearings of the Transpor-  
5 tation Committee on House Bill 562, Printer's No. 589.  
6 This is the fourth in a series of public hearings that  
7 we've had on the House Bill 562.

8 The rules are relatively simple. We  
9 have a schedule of testifiers or people who are  
10 willing to speak to this subject, with a tentative  
11 agenda. We run right through till around four,  
12 according to the print-out that we have here, and  
13 at that time anyone who, of course, wants to add  
14 comments or wants to testify to it will be welcome  
15 to do so. And those that want to stay for any  
16 questions or other input that they may have, we'll  
17 welcome at that particular time.

18 We'll start, first of all, with  
19 Mr. John Pachuta, Director of the Bureau of Traffic  
20 Safety, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation,  
21 and we're short with the mikes so we'll pass the mike  
22 around, if you have no objection.

23 MR. PACHUTA: Honorable Chairman,  
24 Members of the Transportation Committee, ladies and

1  
2 gentlemen, good morning. I am John Pachuta, Director  
3 of the Bureau of Traffic Safety Operations for the  
4 Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. I would  
5 like to express my appreciation for once again having  
6 the opportunity to testify before this committee in  
7 regards to House Bill 562.

8 I am certain you are aware that the  
9 department embraces the concept proposed in this  
10 legislation that would reduce our current vehicle  
11 safety inspection requirement from twice yearly to  
12 once a year. We believe the statistical evidence in  
13 the January 1981 report entitled Motor Vehicle Inspec-  
14 tion produced by the Office of Budget and Administra-  
15 tion is justly clear and valid. This report concludes  
16 that an annual periodic motor vehicle inspection for  
17 safety will not adversely affect highway safety in  
18 Pennsylvania.

19 As a former university researcher,  
20 accident investigator for the National Transportation  
21 Safety Board and Director of the Department's Bureau  
22 of Accident Analysis, I am familiar with accident  
23 investigation, statistics and analysis methodologies  
24 involved in studies of the type undertaken by the



1  
2 OBA. I can attest to the validity of that study.  
3 Mr. Beeman will offer further explanation of his  
4 findings but I believe they are clear. Our current  
5 system needs a change, and the proposed legislation  
6 for the alteration of the inspection period will not  
7 compromise the safety stature in the Commonwealth.

8           Periodic vehicle safety inspection  
9 is recognized as a requisite portion of an overall  
10 highway safety program. The Highway Safety Act and  
11 the Motor Vehicle Safety Act passed by the Federal  
12 Government are basically regarded as the foundations  
13 of Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection. One result of  
14 these enactments was the development of 18 Highway  
15 Safety Program Standards covering topics from acci-  
16 dent investigation and traffic control devices to  
17 driver licensing and traffic courts. Standard No. 1  
18 in this series 18 is Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection.

19           The purpose, as stated in the manual  
20 for Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection is, "To increase,  
21 through periodic vehicle inspection, the likelihood  
22 that every vehicle operated on the public highways is  
23 properly equipped and is being maintained in reasonably  
24 safe working order." Pennsylvania was ahead of the

1  
2 Federal legislation and has had PMVI since 1921 with  
3 the express purpose of reducing the number of motor  
4 vehicle accidents caused by unsafe or defective  
5 vehicles. The evidence cited in the OBA report that  
6 I mentioned earlier demonstrates that the existing  
7 procedure has outgrown its usefulness and accrues  
8 more costs to Pennsylvania citizens than benefits.

9 We in the department and in the State  
10 government in general are obligated to change this  
11 situation when the data shows that inspecting a  
12 vehicle twice a year is no more likely to improve  
13 highway safety than a once a year safety inspection.

14 Our program must address the needs of  
15 Pennsylvanians, both in the highway safety as well as  
16 the economical arenas. This cannot be based on "gut  
17 feelings" but solid statistical evidence such as the  
18 OBA report. We are managing a statewide program  
19 which effectively touches nearly every adult in the  
20 Commonwealth. The gross numbers in the statistical  
21 analysis must bear out the value of the program.

22 Current vehicle inspection laws and  
23 regulations in the Commonwealth require revision.  
24 Engineering and design enhancements have given us a

1  
2 vehicle mix that is equipped with longer-wearing and  
3 less failure-ridden components. Lengthened mainten-  
4 ance intervals for today's automobiles are evidence  
5 of this fact. Disc and self-adjusting brakes, dual  
6 braking systems, longer wearing brake linings, brake  
7 wear indicators, improved safety glazing, improved  
8 traction tires and longer-wearing tires with wear  
9 indicators are but a few of these items.

10                   Additionally, on-board vehicle component  
11 monitoring devices provide the operator with informa-  
12 tion that previously was only reported to him by the  
13 inspection mechanic that he visited twice a year.

14                   The other major input to the formula  
15 which logically leads to annual inspection is the  
16 general change in vehicle usage patterns which has  
17 accompanied higher fuel costs. Since many of the  
18 items just listed are designed such that they degener-  
19 ate through use; that is, brake shoes wear out as they  
20 are utilized, a reduction in individual vehicle miles  
21 of travel results in decreased wear rate among these  
22 components.

23                   Since our existing regulations have  
24 developed over many years, they include items which are

1  
2 not directly safety related. In recognition of this  
3 fact, we are currently working on a revision to the  
4 safety inspection regulation which concentrates on  
5 critical component inspections, components such as  
6 brakes, tires, steering/suspension, exhaust, glazing,  
7 et cetera, and it eliminates many of the items which  
8 are now in the inspection procedure but which are  
9 irrelevant in regards to highway safety.

10 A complete inspection, performed accord-  
11 ing to the Vehicle Equipment and Inspection Regulations  
12 Manual, would take about one and one-half hours.

13 According to the OBA report, Pennsylvania passenger  
14 car inspections are routinely done in 35 to 45 minutes.  
15 In other words, inspection stations are doing their  
16 own streamlining of the regulations. The time has  
17 come for the Department of Transportation to revise  
18 the rules in a realistic, safety-conscious way.

19 Today you will hear the contention that  
20 more extensive and expensive repairs would be necessary  
21 to correct defective components under an annual inspec-  
22 tion system. However, according to the OBA report,  
23 vehicle repair costs are not expected to be any  
24 greater under an annual inspection cycle. This is

1  
2 because, under the present system, most defective  
3 components already require complete replacement when  
4 discovered. In addition, very few component failures  
5 adversely affect other sound or undamaged vehicle  
6 parts.

7           For example, many cars fail to pass  
8 inspection because of lighting or electrical system  
9 failures. The failure of a bulb, for instance,  
10 obviously requires the complete replacement of that  
11 bulb and does not cause accelerated wear on other  
12 parts.

13           It is true that worn brake pads or  
14 linings could damage other portions of the braking  
15 system. However, the current method for determining  
16 the remaining life of brake pads or linings could be  
17 altered to conform with the annual inspection cycle.  
18 We do not intend to radically alter our standards as  
19 you might be led to believe. The idea that minimum  
20 brake lining thickness measurements should be changed,  
21 causing good linings to be discarded, is incorrect.  
22 As previously mentioned, brake lining wear is use re-  
23 lated. Since our inspection period is not tied to  
24 vehicle usage, as would be the case if the inspection

1  
2 period was based on mileage and type of driving, we  
3 do not propose to increase the standards.

4           Even if the contention concerning more  
5 expensive repairs were true, even if our present  
6 inspection process resulted in better maintained  
7 vehicles in Pennsylvania, the point is irrelevant. The  
8 Department of Transportation has no business in telling  
9 the public how to maintain their automobiles. Our  
10 concern is safety. State vehicle inspection is  
11 intended solely to identify and correct worn out or  
12 defective equipment that could lead to highway acci-  
13 dents. Anything beyond that is the individual  
14 citizen's responsibility.

15           You will hear a variety of reports  
16 regarding the number of vehicles requiring repair  
17 under the current program along with cost figures for  
18 this service. In the Bureau of Traffic Safety Opera-  
19 tions we randomly sample these items each month, and  
20 based on information submitted by every inspection  
21 station on what we term the TS-431 form over the past  
22 18 months, just under 36 percent of the vehicles  
23 inspected required maintenance. The sampling for this  
24 same period revealed the statewide average inspection

1  
2 costs, including repairs and fees, to be approximately  
3 \$49, with the urban areas averaging about \$15 more per  
4 inspection.

5           While we are on the subject of costs,  
6 a question previously came up regarding insurance rates  
7 and whether they would be raised with respect to this  
8 proposed change from twice yearly to once a year  
9 vehicle inspection. A recent study by an insurance  
10 research analyst for the Commonwealth stated that the  
11 possibility of the inspection period change causing  
12 an increase in insurance rates is, "remote to the  
13 point of nonexistence at this time."

14           Now, let me briefly describe two of  
15 the changes in the inspection process proposed by  
16 House Bill 562. First, only passenger vehicles and  
17 light trucks would be affected. All heavy trucks  
18 would still be inspected semi-annually, mostly  
19 because these vehicles tend to have unusually high  
20 mileage. Transit vehicles, school buses and emergency  
21 vehicles would all be inspected semi-annually. The  
22 rationale here in the Department is that those persons  
23 riding in these vehicles do not have control over the  
24 maintenance, nor do they have a close knowledge of the

1  
2 vehicles as the vehicle owner would.

3           Second, we hope to coordinate the  
4 annual inspection for vehicles with the staggered  
5 registration renewal program. Before a vehicle would  
6 be registered or its registration renewed, the vehicle  
7 must pass inspection. Because most vehicle inspections  
8 would then expire at the same time as their registra-  
9 tion, inspection station workloads would be more  
10 evenly distributed throughout the year.

11           An annual inspection program as proposed  
12 in House Bill 562 would result in dramatically reduced  
13 motorist inconvenience and cost while maintaining  
14 present levels of traffic safety. It is estimated that  
15 Pennsylvania's 6.8 million automobile and small truck  
16 owners would save more than \$61 million a year in  
17 inspection fees alone. The administrative burden in  
18 certain areas of the Department would also decrease,  
19 resulting in reduced operating costs for the  
20 Commonwealth. Additionally, we believe that security  
21 control to eliminate the use of stolen or forged  
22 inspection certificates would be greatly enhanced.

23           In summary, the Department believes that  
24 annual safety inspection will provide another major



1  
2 step in reducing unnecessary government regulation,  
3 reduce motorist expense and inconvenience while not  
4 adversely affecting present levels of traffic safety.  
5 Here is where you must make the key separation of  
6 issues: Vehicle safety versus vehicle maintenance.  
7 I represent the Bureau of Traffic Safety Operations,  
8 not the Bureau of Vehicle Maintenance Assurance. Our  
9 duty is insuring the safe operation of vehicles on the  
10 highways. The data indicates that once a year safety  
11 inspection will do this. Other consumer considerations  
12 for maintenance are beyond our scope; we do not exist  
13 to regulate that area which is the private citizen's  
14 option. However, if your concern with this program is  
15 safety, then there is no dilemma. Annual safety  
16 inspection will work.

17 Thank you very much for the opportunity  
18 to testify again in regards to House Bill 562, and  
19 I'm ready for your questions about the \$2 fee.

20 MR. DAVIES: That may have been prema-  
21 ture. Maybe we got that straightened out in a hearing.

22 I want the representatives who are here  
23 to identify themselves. I thought more would be here  
24 by now so that we have additional representatives to

1  
2 identify themselves.

3 We'll start over here with Nick.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: Nick Micozzie, Delaware  
5 County.

6 MR. TIGUE: Tom Tigue, Luzerne, Lacka-  
7 wanna and Monroe.

8 MR. STEIGHNER: Joe Steighner, Butler  
9 County.

10 MR. KOLTER: I'm Joe Kolter, Beaver  
11 County, near the Ohio line.

12 MR. DAVIES: I want to thank the two  
13 gentlemen on my immediate left for their endurance.  
14 They've been with us I think every session so that --  
15 and I know others that have had other things that  
16 they had to take care of as well as other legislative  
17 business.

18 Now, working on -- you say as far as  
19 the upgrading today eliminates many of the items not  
20 relative --

21 MR. PACHUTA: Yes, sir.

22 MR. DAVIES: -- to that. We've had  
23 counter things to that, particularly in the percentile  
24 in testimony that varied between the 36 percent quoted

1  
2 and the 70 percent averages that were given I think on  
3 about three occasions.

4 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

5 MR. DAVIES: Do you have comments on  
6 that?

7 MR. PACHUTA: Yes. The figures  
8 quoted -- well, I cannot dispute them. I haven't seen  
9 them, per se. Our figures are from the reports that  
10 every station in the Commonwealth that inspects a  
11 vehicle under the program must submit to the Department.  
12 On that form they indicate which vehicles required  
13 repair by serial number and license plate and so forth.  
14 That's the TS-431.

15 The other statistics that you received  
16 were from selected groups. I can only say that ours  
17 are from every station in the Commonwealth, and based  
18 on those numbers, 36 percent of the vehicles -- and  
19 it's held true for the past 18 months with very little  
20 variance -- just under 36 percent have required re-  
21 pair. And of those requiring repair, the average  
22 costs, as I stated, were what was borne out in the  
23 reports by the stations themselves to the Department.

24 I would say that, you know, any variation

1  
2 may be area to area or -- that I would doubt that  
3 inspection stations would fail to report those things  
4 to the Department since they are required by law to  
5 fill out that TS-431 form for every inspection.

6 MR. DAVIES: All right. With the differ-  
7 ential then, is it -- can I make any assumption or  
8 from your past experience or any other experience with  
9 the Department, can I assume that that particular  
10 individual in his diligence or the carrying out of his  
11 responsibility may reflect a failure in the current  
12 system to make that determination and that variance,  
13 and is there anything that this bill or any other bill  
14 or any piece of legislation, regardless of whether  
15 it's this bill or not, can speak to? Do we have a  
16 lapse of 34 percent?

17 MR. PACHUTA: Okay. I think -- the  
18 difference in numbers is reflected by two things;  
19 possibly a very conscientious inspector and also very  
20 complex and, quite frankly, irrelevant regulations.

21 I was told by a man, whose inspection  
22 knowledge I very much admire, that he could find -- he  
23 could flunk any vehicle in inspection because of the  
24 multitude of regulations, and I think what you're saying

1  
2 is the general streamlining of the regulations and so  
3 forth to major safety items, which lowers the overall  
4 percent to 36 percent failure.

5 Now, where it is much higher, there may  
6 be citings for, granted, failures under the current  
7 regulations but not true safety-related failures.

8 MR. DAVIES: All right. Are we going  
9 to be able to see or get or know of or be able to  
10 throw on the troubled waters those particular ones that  
11 are going to be taken out as irrelevant and those that  
12 --

13 MR. PACHUTA: Oh, sure.

14 MR. DAVIES: -- are going to be what  
15 you think have to be updated to take up the slack, if  
16 there is slack?

17 MR. PACHUTA: There are quite a few of  
18 the regulations, as they now exist, that, quite  
19 frankly, are not required, and we are changing those  
20 regulations.

21 For instance, the regulations read that  
22 all lights must work. Now, some mechanics will take  
23 that to mean the trunk light inside must work when you  
24 open the trunk. I don't consider that to be safety

1  
2 related, but you could fail someone on inspection  
3 because of that.

4 Another thing is all wipers must work.  
5 Now, you know, in most vehicles you say, well, the  
6 front wipers, they should work. That's -- I'll go  
7 with that. However, many of the new smaller cars  
8 as an option have a rear window wiper. If that wiper  
9 doesn't work, it's a fairly expensive repair oftentimes.

10 Now, what's the difference between that  
11 wiper not working on the deluxe model of the Dodge  
12 Omni or whatever and the model that does not have the  
13 rear wiper? How are those two vehicles different in  
14 their safety? One doesn't have a wiper at all and one  
15 has one that does not work.

16 So, quite frankly, there are many, many  
17 things on our regulations that, because of changes in  
18 vehicles -- and there didn't used to be trunk lights.  
19 So now there's trunk lights. We say all lights must  
20 work; the trunk light must work. We say all wipers;  
21 now there's a rear wiper. We didn't used to have  
22 that.

23 These regulations require updating and  
24 I think when we get rid of those, you'll see even less

1  
2 of a failure rate and probably more of a consistency  
3 across the board in failure rate so they won't have  
4 these wide variations between 75 percent and 36 percent  
5 that we quote you as a statewide average.

6 MR. DAVIES: Should this committee or  
7 the whole committee be looking at that laundry list  
8 before there's action taken then on this particular  
9 bill or try to separate out --

10 MR. PACHUTA: Well, of course, that's  
11 your option. We --

12 MR. DAVIES: Well, what's your opinion  
13 on that?

14 MR. PACHUTA: Well, we are in the  
15 Department right now revising regulations and streamlin-  
16 ing those regulations so that the inspection process  
17 will more reflect what is required for safety.

18 If you want to trust us, let us run with  
19 it. If you care to take a look at our revisions to  
20 date and what we plan to do before they are published in  
21 the Bulletin, then you're more than welcome to, of  
22 course. I'd say trust us, but that's my job.

23 MR. MICOZZIE: I've heard that before.

24 MR. DAVIES: Now, you heard the pros and

1  
2 cons about going to professional versus state police  
3 and that one. Now, we've kicked that one around I  
4 guess on about two occasions. Your comment on that,  
5 would the cost then take away from what your figures  
6 are showing as far as savings, add to it or where do  
7 we end up with that one, and your within-house, what  
8 have you looked at within-house on that?

9 MR. PACHUTA: Within-house right now,  
10 on the -- for the vehicle inspection program, we  
11 allocate about 2.2 million dollars to the Pennsylvania  
12 State Police to provide services as far as station  
13 appointment and audit work and investigation into  
14 faulty inspections and so forth.

15 If we were to do it ourselves, I  
16 believe that we could probably drop the costs slightly  
17 because the state police personnel have other duties  
18 that they must be called upon to do because they are  
19 state policemen first, then garage supervisors second.

20 I think that -- I believe that quite  
21 possibly through a private bid to an independent organ-  
22 ization, we may be able to make out even better than  
23 state work, which is what we're commonly finding in  
24 the Department as we contract more and more work, since



1  
2 it's more effectively done on the free marketplace by  
3 competitive bidders than it might be by Department  
4 forces.

5 MR. DAVIES: I only have one thing to  
6 add to that. I'm talking about upgrading standards.  
7 I'm not talking about the situation where we have  
8 had testimony to the fact that in many instances they  
9 are so overburdened that all they can do is keep the  
10 books --

11 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

12 MR. DAVIES: -- and that's almost --  
13 that -- I'm talking about better and higher standards  
14 and better quality in the once a year, in the enforce-  
15 ment of that once a year so that we're going to get  
16 somewhere between that 70 percent and 36 percent  
17 figure.

18 MR. PACHUTA: Well, while I can't speak  
19 for what added duties the state police would have on  
20 their once a year, I do believe they will be lessened  
21 and, therefore, they should be able -- if they maintain  
22 the same level of devotion and services to the inspec-  
23 tion program, would be able to better provide audit  
24 services and so forth, since under once a year there

1  
2 will be hopefully less bookkeeping for the station  
3 and less work for the state police in that regard.

4           So it should -- it should decrease  
5 their workload in regards to the bookkeeping effort  
6 and, therefore, be able to increase their enforcement  
7 effort and hopefully result in a tighter program to  
8 drop those number differences.

9           MR. MICOZZIE: I have -- the streamlining  
10 of the regulations --

11           MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

12           MR. MICOZZIE: -- when is that going to  
13 be completed?

14           MR. PACHUTA: Well, we had hoped that  
15 we would be able to have those regulations out by the  
16 end of the summer for comment. With the passage of  
17 the recent bill regarding street rods, which I'm sure  
18 you all recall, those regulations also require special  
19 inspection regulations. Now, that added another  
20 chapter, so to speak, or another interation to the  
21 inspection regulations. And it was hoped that we'd  
22 be able to include all of those regulations in one  
23 package. So that set our timetable back, unfortunately.

24           And we're all aware also of the mandated

1  
2 regulation review requirements. Being that these are  
3 quite lengthy, we expect them to be some time in  
4 between the Attorney General's office and --

5 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. So --

6 MR. PACHUTA: So I could have said -- I  
7 was hoping to say by the end of the summer. Now, I  
8 don't feel that's likely any further.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: That's why "trust me" is  
10 not a good --

11 MR. DAVIES: You must admit you said --  
12 well, I did denote a smile before that.

13 MR. MICOZZIE: I've been told to trust  
14 before and --

15 MR. PACHUTA: Yes. Well --

16 MR. MICOZZIE: By PennDOT, I mean.

17 Now, the other question has to do with  
18 philosophy. I'd like you to comment on this statement:  
19 "The Department of Transportation has no business telling  
20 the public how to maintain their autos. Our concern is  
21 safety. State vehicle inspection is intended solely  
22 to identify and correct worn out or defective equipment  
23 that could lead to highway accidents. Anything else is  
24 the individual citizen's responsibility."

1  
2 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

3 MR. MICOZZIE: I have a problem with  
4 that philosophy.

5 MR. PACHUTA: Okay. In traffic safety  
6 operations we're charged with maintaining the safety  
7 on the highways. The evidence in the OBA report indi-  
8 cates that once-a-year inspection will maintain that  
9 same level of safety. However, the common argument  
10 against it is that repair costs will be higher. Well --  
11 because people will ignore maintenance.

12 Your choice to ignore maintenance is  
13 not my purview. My purview is to make sure that the  
14 vehicle is safe. If it is poorly maintained, if you  
15 have increased engine wear because you didn't change  
16 the oil when you went in for inspection, because  
17 you're now only going in once a year, that's not my  
18 concern. My concern is the safe operation.

19 The statistics show that safe operation  
20 will be -- will continue to occur with once-a-year  
21 inspection. So with that evidence, we must base our  
22 decision for safety inspection on the statistics, and  
23 it says once a year will do the job.

24 If, in fact, your maintenance costs for

1  
2 your own personal vehicle, because you let components  
3 go further and, you know, rust deterioration and so  
4 forth doesn't get arrested and it costs you more for  
5 the bill, I don't feel that we at Traffic Safety  
6 Operations are in a position to tell you that you  
7 must take your car in to have that maintenance done  
8 so that you'll have a lower bill later on.

9 Does that clear up my philosophy or does  
10 it confuse it more?

11 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, it just seems to  
12 me if you're talking about safety --

13 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

14 MR. MICOZZIE: -- traffic safety, it just  
15 seems to me you almost have to, next step, to follow up  
16 on that, you almost have to tell the automobile owner  
17 exactly, you know, how he's going to have to maintain  
18 this car.

19 MR. PACHUTA: For the safety purposes,  
20 yes, we do, and that's why we feel that we must base it  
21 on the accident statistics. The accident statistics  
22 say that a once-a-year look will give us the same  
23 quality of safety on the highway as twice a year. It  
24 may end up with different bills to the consumer for

1  
2 other repair costs, because other things have deterior-  
3 ated, but as I say, that's not really our concern. We  
4 want to make sure that safety is assured, and we feel  
5 that based on the statistics in the OBA report, once-  
6 a-year inspections will maintain the safe profile for  
7 Pennsylvania highways.

8 MR. MICOZZIE: I have a problem with  
9 your philosophy. I just have a simple -- it just  
10 seems to me that the safety has to come down to telling  
11 the vehicle owner just exactly what has to be done on  
12 that vehicle.

13 You're leaving an awful lot of responsi-  
14 bility on the mechanic on once-a-year inspection. If  
15 the mechanic doesn't do his job on once-a-year inspec-  
16 tion, it's going -- and if they don't do it on twice-  
17 a-year inspection, the same thing -- but it's going to  
18 be twice as bad, because now you're leaving it -- and  
19 from what I understand, it's not only once a year; it  
20 could be once every -- there's an overlap, I understand,  
21 once every 15 months, that they can go in --

22 MR. PACHUTA: If we tie it into the  
23 registration renewal cycle, it could be once every  
24 15 months.

1  
2 MR. MICOZZIE: And I start seeing people  
3 driving their cars until that last day, which is going  
4 to be like they do now, to the last day of inspection,  
5 that once -- they're going to take care of their cars  
6 once every 15 months. Their car is just about going to  
7 be falling apart on the highway.

8 Now, in your philosophy, which you  
9 stated in that paragraph, you really don't care. You  
10 have the standards set up --

11 MR. PACHUTA: I wouldn't say I don't care.

12 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, I'm talking about  
13 the Department of Safety.

14 MR. PACHUTA: The Department.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: You really don't care,  
16 as long as in 15 months, within a 15-month period,  
17 your guidelines are that -- you have said that this  
18 component has to be replaced or whatever, but you  
19 really don't care about the 15 months where that car's  
20 almost falling apart, and I as another driver coming  
21 down a highway, that vehicle has to be unsafe.

22 MR. PACHUTA: I would care if, in fact,  
23 it was demonstrated to me that in a state where they  
24 have once-a-year inspection, there are more accidents

1  
2 relating to vehicle defects than there are in Pennsyl-  
3 vania where there's twice-a-year inspection, in other  
4 words, if your contention, this car coming down the  
5 road to me is a hazard. But Mr. Beeman's report shows  
6 that that vehicle coming down the road to you that has  
7 only been inspected once a year is not any more of a  
8 hazard.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: But there's a disagreement  
10 on that. I mean that's his report, but you can talk  
11 to experts -- the last time I was at the hearing, I  
12 think it was in Harrisburg, we had other experts in  
13 the field on the other side of the coin.

14 MR. PACHUTA: There are many.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: That's right. And, of  
16 course, everybody can be an expert in something like  
17 that.

18 MR. PACHUTA: Sure.

19 MR. MICOZZIE: But, you know, there's  
20 arguments about that.

21 MR. PACHUTA: And that's -- we've  
22 accepted one argument. If you choose to accept a  
23 different one, then so be it. We've weighed the  
24 arguments and we have accepted this.



1  
2 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, it's one thing,  
3 somebody else putting forth an argument, you know,  
4 from the consumer, but your responsibility, the  
5 Department of Transportation's responsibility is to  
6 make sure it has the right argument because you're  
7 dealing with lives.

8 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: You're dealing with lives.  
10 The consumer or the mechanic are dealing with economics  
11 and all that business. You're dealing with the safety  
12 of --

13 MR. PACHUTA: That is correct.

14 MR. MICOZZIE: -- myself and my family.

15 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct. We did  
16 review the reports and we reviewed the statistics and  
17 we've put our money on the OBA.

18 MR. MICOZZIE: That's all I have,  
19 Mr. Chairman.

20 MR. TIGUE: John, have you found any --  
21 first question is on school buses. The question was  
22 asked in Erie if we have any information regarding  
23 incidents --

24 MR. PACHUTA: Yes. In the --

1  
2 MR. TIGUE: -- regarding school bus  
3 accidents comparative to private vehicles.

4 MR. PACHUTA: As I recall -- I'm certain  
5 that I don't have it now in front of me -- the school  
6 bus incidence has generally been stated to be -- how  
7 should I say it -- seven times better than the automo-  
8 bile incidences of accidents.

9 In other words, the number of people  
10 transported per mile and so forth, if there are three  
11 fatalities in under a million vehicle miles for auto-  
12 mobiles, there may be, you know, one-seventh of that  
13 or three in seven million vehicle miles for school bus  
14 travel.

15 School bus track record, in Pennsylvania  
16 particularly, is excellent.

17 MR. TIGUE: Has there been any studies --

18 MR. PACHUTA: In fact, I think in the  
19 last three or four years -- excuse me -- I don't think  
20 there has been a student killed inside a bus in Penn-  
21 sylvania. There have been -- I believe last year there  
22 were six fatal accidents involving school buses; they  
23 were outside the bus. And for the past three or four  
24 years there has not been a fatality inside a school bus

1  
2 in Pennsylvania.

3 MR. TIGUE: Have there been any studies  
4 to try to determine why?

5 MR. PACHUTA: Well, I don't know that  
6 there's been any really rigorous studies. We'd like  
7 to think that it has a lot to do with our school bus  
8 driver safety program that we have in the Department  
9 that requires special licensing, special training for  
10 school bus operators and special physical exams for  
11 those operators, along with more rigid requirements  
12 for them to have a school bus operator's license.  
13 We have put considerable funds into that program, con-  
14 tinue to do so as a result of some Federal funding  
15 mechanism by which we are able to pick up a percentage  
16 of the costs through Act 406 monies -- Section 406  
17 monies, and with that kind of backing we have a top  
18 rate program that continues to produce very, very low  
19 accident statistics.

20 MR. TIGUE: Another thing that was  
21 brought up at one of the prior hearings was the cost  
22 to the Department for the inspection program.

23 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

24 MR. TIGUE: And revenue was generated by

1  
2 the cost of the inspection sticker.

3 Do you have any information on that?

4 MR. PACHUTA: Yes, I do. It's a good  
5 program for us I guess in that sense in that the  
6 program costs that we now have -- and these, unfortun-  
7 ately, do not include computer time, which is fairly  
8 minimal, because we are not terribly systematized in  
9 this area -- are approximately 25 percent of the  
10 revenue from the program. The revenue then would be  
11 about 14 and a half million dollars. The total cost  
12 would be about 3.6 million. Minus -- that does not  
13 include computer time, as I said. That might boost  
14 it up slightly.

15 The remainder of the money -- well,  
16 actually all the money goes into the Motor License  
17 Fund. As you well know, the Motor License Fund  
18 also contributes 120 million dollars a year to the  
19 state police for their operations, provides for driver  
20 training courses in area high schools, and so forth,  
21 safety improvement programs, salaries for district  
22 personnel involved in safety improvements, many, many  
23 other things.

24 So on a net basis, this program is a

1  
2 moneymaker for the Department. However, those same  
3 monies are channeled --

4 MR. TIGUE: Right. The money's used  
5 for other programs, I understand, but --

6 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

7 MR. TIGUE: -- but the cost of the --

8 MR. PACHUTA: Of running the inspection  
9 program --

10 MR. TIGUE: -- of running the inspection  
11 program is 25 percent of the revenues generated by the  
12 cost of the sticker.

13 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

14 MR. TIGUE: What would the new changes --  
15 would that differ? Since you should save money.

16 MR. PACHUTA: Very slightly, because --  
17 for instance, our -- you know, depending on how the  
18 system is implemented -- mailing costs are \$62,000.  
19 They could be reduced possibly, since we're not mailing  
20 out four stickers a year, depending on the scheme we  
21 use.

22 Sticker printing is 474 -- almost \$475,000  
23 a year. Obviously if we've reduced the sticker printing  
24 costs, you know, by half, we should cut that operation

1  
2 in half.

3 MR. TIGUE: It would be cut by more  
4 than half, though, if you're going to use one sticker  
5 as a combination for inspection and registration.

6 MR. PACHUTA: The inspection sticker  
7 itself, if we say we're going to maintain one sticker  
8 and it will be like the inspection sticker, then it  
9 will probably come out of here. If it is eliminated  
10 completely, then the 475 would go. However, Motor  
11 Vehicle also has a sticker on the license plate.  
12 Their sticker is considerably more expensive than  
13 the inspection sticker, and if we were to eliminate  
14 a sticker, I believe it will probably be the one on  
15 the license plate since that's the more expensive  
16 one, if we can work out a scheme that way.

17 MR. TIGUE: So I'm saying you're really  
18 saving more than 50 percent.

19 MR. PACHUTA: Possibly in the other area.  
20 However, you know, all things considered, processing  
21 may be more complex as far as the forms required  
22 coming in; new scanning equipment, mailing and  
23 searching equipment, so on and so forth.

24 In the entire balance, hopefully, yes,

1  
2 money will be saved in the Department. I would not  
3 want to say across the board what it will be, but in  
4 the inspection area, it could be several hundred  
5 thousand dollars, a couple hundred thousand dollars.

6 MR. TIGUE: Another question is: In  
7 reviewing the guidelines or the standards as they now  
8 sit, who besides the Department, if anyone, has had  
9 input in the change in standards?

10 MR. PACHUTA: The Department funds and  
11 maintains an inspection advisory board, which is made  
12 up of various professionals in the field, garage owners  
13 and association leaders, and so forth, that meet on  
14 an irregular basis, you know, in Harrisburg, generally.

15 Those people have reviewed the inspection  
16 -- it is my understanding that they have reviewed the  
17 inspection regulation revisions, minus, of course, the  
18 street rod regulation and so forth, and were in  
19 general concurrence with the streamlining effort that  
20 we're trying to complete right now.

21 MR. TIGUE: Thank you.

22 MR. STEIGHNER: Joe, on page 5 of your  
23 testimony, the last paragraph, I have some problem  
24 following that. It starts out, "Even if the contention

1  
2 concerning more expensive repairs were true, even if  
3 our present inspection process demonstrably resulted  
4 in better-maintained cars in Pennsylvania, the point  
5 would be irrelevant."

6                   It's my thinking that a better-maintained  
7 car is a safer car; okay?

8                   MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

9                   MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. If that's true  
10 and if you agree with that, how could the point be  
11 irrelevant?

12                   MR. PACHUTA: The point is irrelevant  
13 to the Department in regards to a demonstrated  
14 statistical difference in accident rates. There is  
15 none between -- or Mr. Beeman contends and we agree  
16 that there is none between once-a-year or twice-a-year  
17 inspection. So it is irrelevant in regards to the  
18 accidents which are produced.

19                   If they are better maintained and  
20 thus we'll hear bringing a higher price on the state  
21 line used car lots, that doesn't affect us. If they  
22 are better maintained and therefore looking better and  
23 running longer, that doesn't concern us. What we want  
24 to know is, "Are the hard accident figures there? If



1  
2 we have once-a-year will we be killing more people  
3 on the roadway? The OBA says no; we agree, and  
4 therefore that is our concern.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: That's not really, as  
6 I read it, what you're saying. You're saying, even if  
7 it demonstrably resulted in better-maintained cars --

8 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

9 MR. STEIGHNER: And you agree that a  
10 better-maintained car is a safer car?

11 MR. PACHUTA: Okay. No, no. I  
12 shouldn't have said that then. The statistics do not  
13 show that an inspection cycle as is proposed would  
14 cause a declination -- a decline in the safety on the  
15 roadway. So while it may be better maintained in  
16 regards to not rusting out as early or looking better  
17 and so forth, it is not necessarily safer, and the  
18 connection that I jumped at earlier that you made  
19 between better maintained and safer is not necessarily  
20 true.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. Would you agree  
22 then that from where you're coming from, that this is  
23 too strong a statement?

24 MR. PACHUTA: Well --

1  
2 MR. STEIGHNER: First sentence, last  
3 paragraph.

4 MR. PACHUTA: Well, I guess you're  
5 asking me now to eat it and I suppose I could. But,  
6 no, I do not believe that a shinier car, or whatever,  
7 in Pennsylvania or a less rusted car in Pennsylvania,  
8 or whatever it is, you know, more frequently oil-  
9 changed car in Pennsylvania is any safer, no.

10 I've said it four times now so I guess  
11 I mean it.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. The second  
13 question I have -- I don't know that I was going to  
14 bring up the fees today but since you mentioned it, I  
15 feel compelled.

16 MR. PACHUTA: We're on a streak. I  
17 don't see how we can stop.

18 MR. STEIGHNER: Since this is the  
19 fourth and the last of the scheduled hearings, has  
20 the Department rescinded in their position that --  
21 where you readily and openly and publicly admitted  
22 that the Department's going to save money but you're  
23 going to now ask to double the fee per inspection?  
24 Has there been any discussion within the Department to

1  
2 rescind that position?

3 MR. PACHUTA: The bill as it's now  
4 written calls for a \$2 fee. We'd like -- since the  
5 majority of the income now goes to other highway  
6 safety purposes and only 25 percent goes for the  
7 inspection program itself, a cut of 50 percent in  
8 the income would more greatly affect those other  
9 highway safety areas than they would the inspection  
10 program.

11 So the savings, even if we cut our  
12 program costs in half for inspection -- and I'm not  
13 saying that we will, but even if we did, it takes a  
14 very small piece out of the total monies that come  
15 in. So we do remain committed to those other highway  
16 safety areas and we do feel that that income, so to  
17 speak, to the Department, that revenue to the Depart-  
18 ment is still required to maintain those other levels.

19 So that even if we cut our costs in  
20 half, we would devote those savings to other highway  
21 safety areas and we do feel a commitment towards  
22 those.

23 MR. STEIGHNER: I can appreciate your  
24 concern about the Department's finances, but I think

1  
2 you have to appreciate where I'm coming from. I don't  
3 think it's necessarily fair to the public to convince  
4 them that you're going to be safer on the roads if we  
5 reduce the inspections from twice a year to once a  
6 year; however, we're not willing to give up anything  
7 in state government and we're going to double your  
8 fee per inspection.

9 MR. PACHUTA: Well, let us say then that  
10 if we would take all the savings -- let us just say in  
11 the hypothetical that we would cut the costs by 50  
12 percent, the operating costs of the program by 50 per-  
13 cent -- and I don't believe that's true because the  
14 majority of the program costs are to the state police,  
15 over 2.2 million dollars of 3.6 million dollars. So  
16 two-thirds, roughly, is state police activity.

17 If we were to cut our operating costs,  
18 which are only a third of the total operating costs,  
19 which are only 25 percent of the total income -- let's  
20 work that backwards now -- our operating costs are  
21 one-third of 25 percent, right, which would be about  
22 8 percent; we cut them in half, cut them to 4 percent  
23 of the total program income, then a reduction in  
24 half -- I mean a reduction of the total amount for the

1  
2 sticker by that same percentage would only reduce it  
3 to \$1.60 as opposed to \$2 a year.

4           So if we put every saving that we would  
5 achieve directly into a reduction in the costs, we  
6 would cut it to \$1.60 a year instead of \$2.

7           MR. STEIGHNER: I guess it's a part  
8 of semantics. You're really not reducing anything.

9           MR. PACHUTA: No. We're reducing a  
10 very, very small portion of the total monies that are  
11 spent in inspection, from the inspection income.

12           MR. STEIGHNER: I was referring to the  
13 fee itself. I don't see where it is really fair to  
14 ask the public to go to a once-a-year inspection and  
15 we're going to convince them that this is the way to  
16 do it; you're going to be very safe, but at the same  
17 time we're not willing to pass any savings on that  
18 the Commonwealth is going to incur and --

19           MR. PACHUTA: As I said, if we pass  
20 them on directly, the reduction would only be, you  
21 know, by my quick mental calculations, which could  
22 be in error by more than 100 percent, obviously,  
23 would only be about 40 cents a year, if we pass  
24 directly those cost savings.

1  
2 Most of the money, like 75 percent of  
3 the money that comes into the program does not pay for  
4 the program. It goes to other purposes.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: Run that by me again.

6 MR. PACHUTA: 75 percent of the revenue  
7 from the inspection program goes to other purposes.

8 MR. KOLTER: Since when?

9 MR. STEIGHNER: But the program itself  
10 still picks up 14 or 15 million dollars --

11 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: -- which more than pays  
13 for the program.

14 MR. PACHUTA: Yes, it more than pays  
15 for the program. It more than pays for the program  
16 now. The program now -- the program costs now are 25  
17 percent of the revenue from the program.

18 MR. KOLTER: It's my understanding  
19 back years when we had a 25 cent cost --

20 MR. PACHUTA: 25 cent fees for the  
21 sticker.

22 MR. KOLTER: Right. At that point in  
23 time that 25 cents paid for the state police; it paid  
24 for everything that was connected with the Department.

1

MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

2

3

MR. KOLTER: What has changed?

4

5

MR. PACHUTA: It still does. The 25 cents still does.

6

7

MR. KOLTER: So anything above 25 cents is considered over and above and is used elsewhere?

8

9

10

MR. PACHUTA: Well, the 25 percent of the income from the program goes towards the program costs.

11

12

MR. KOLTER: 75 percent goes to the others.

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

MR. PACHUTA: 75 goes -- if you want to call it profit, please do. We don't. It's revenue that goes towards other safety programs. Motor vehicle registration fees by the same token pay for that operation early in the year. The rest of those monies go toward other programs that you gentlemen see fit to probate out of the motor license fund, state police activity, \$120 million and so forth. It is a parallel situation. It is a matter of collecting fees overall that go back into transportation services but perhaps not directly into providing the inspection service itself.

1  
2 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. To move on -- I  
3 guess we could disagree on fees all day. I would like  
4 a copy of the proposed revisions the Department's  
5 considering prior to the time of the Pennsylvania  
6 Bulletin, if that's possible. I'd appreciate that.

7 MR. PACHUTA: By all means.

8 MR. STEIGHNER: You mentioned about a  
9 survey or study done concerning buses. Was that done  
10 in vehicle miles or passenger miles or how was it done?

11 MR. PACHUTA: Those figures, unfortun-  
12 ately -- well, not unfortunately. Those figures were  
13 provided generally by the Federal government, and it is  
14 my understanding late yesterday that they relate to  
15 the unit of transportation, in other words, passenger  
16 miles.

17 MR. STEIGHNER: Passenger miles?

18 MR. PACHUTA: Well, I found it hard to  
19 believe that. I felt it was probably vehicle miles  
20 traveled, myself.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: In other words, if it  
22 was passenger miles and there were 45 kids on a bus  
23 and they went 100 miles, that would be 4,500?

24 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.



1

MR. STEIGHNER: But --

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

MR. PACHUTA: I can only believe that it's vehicle miles of travel, personally, you know, those numbers themselves. If you look at the statistics in Pennsylvania alone, there were six fatals last year. In the 1980 calendar year there were only six fatals, and none of those were inside a bus. For the past three or four years there has not been a fatal accident inside a bus in all those miles of travel, and that must be vehicle miles of travel.

12

13

14

15

If you expand that by passenger miles of travel, you can imagine the astronomical amount of transportation service delivered at a very, very low accident cost.

16

17

MR. STEIGHNER: If you could find that out for me, I'd appreciate it.

18

19

MR. PACHUTA: Yes, sir.

20

MR. STEIGHNER: My last question: Are there any mechanics on the advisory board?

21

22

MR. PACHUTA: As I understand it, yes, there are.

23

MR. STEIGHNER: Full-time mechanics?

24

MR. PACHUTA: I believe so, yes.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. That's all I have.

MR. KOLTER: Joe, I think in the Harrisburg session you stated you were on the job just a few months; is that correct?

MR. PACHUTA: Yes, sir. Since June.

MR. KOLTER: Well, I'll tell you --

MR. PACHUTA: Late June.

MR. KOLTER: -- either by assimilation or osmosis or hard work, you seemed to get a great knowledge about the job here.

MR. PACHUTA: Thank you.

MR. KOLTER: I think, quite frankly, the 13 years I've been associated with the legislature, you've done about the finest job I've ever seen.

MR. PACHUTA: Thank you.

MR. KOLTER: However, have you ever inspected a vehicle?

MR. PACHUTA: Under the Pennsylvania regulations? No, sir.

MR. KOLTER: Yes. You have?

MR. PACHUTA: Under Pennsylvania regulations, no, sir. I have done many post accident vehicle

1  
2 autopsies in my professional career.

3 MR. KOLTER: Then you really are consid-  
4 ered a professional then about the position you hold  
5 and about the subject matter here? The reason I say  
6 this, as you were --

7 MR. PACHUTA: I am not a licensed  
8 vehicle inspection mechanic.

9 MR. KOLTER: As you were being interro-  
10 gated by our chairman here, the gentlemen back here  
11 in opposition seemed to shake their head no at some  
12 of the things you were stating. So I just wanted to  
13 know whether or not you're a real expert at this.

14 MR. PACHUTA: There's a definition of  
15 expert that I don't think I want to say in public.  
16 Which one are you using?

17 MR. KOLTER: Well, one that is most  
18 knowledgeable about the position of a state inspector.

19 MR. PACHUTA: Well, I have a job; I'm  
20 doing the best I can. I feel that I have something to  
21 offer to that job, and whether you want to call this  
22 professional expertise or not, I feel it is.

23 MR. KOLTER: There's an article here  
24 in the newspaper stating, not by PennDOT or by you but

1  
2 by somebody else, that, "Today the garage operators  
3 are making unnecessary repairs and that the inspection  
4 system today is an easy way to make a buck."

5 Is there any information at your disposal,  
6 at PennDOT's disposal, that would justify that type of  
7 statement perhaps?

8 MR. PACHUTA: Well, as I've said, we  
9 did not make that statement. There are probably more  
10 familiar to the state police than to us the results of  
11 investigations into inspection fraud and so forth.

12 In my limited time on the job, I have  
13 not had an opportunity to review files to that degree  
14 to find out whether there is sufficient information  
15 to make a statement like that from the Department of  
16 Transportation.

17 The state police and the gentlemen here  
18 have a much more extensive experience in this and may  
19 be able to answer that question for you.

20 MR. KOLTER: Well, since in your prior  
21 employment you did a lot of investigatory work --

22 MR. PACHUTA: That's correct.

23 MR. KOLTER: -- was that in Pennsylvania?

24 MR. PACHUTA: I did some work in

1  
2 Pennsylvania; I did most of my work in the southeastern  
3 United States for the -- in the employ of the Federal  
4 government, and prior to that in the Florida area.

5 MR. KOLTER: As a result of some of  
6 this investigatory work, were any of the results found  
7 to be negatory to some of the workings of the  
8 operators here in the Commonwealth? Are they really  
9 in your judgment doing a good job or a bad job?

10 MR. PACHUTA: If you mean that in my  
11 investigations did I find many vehicle defects --

12 MR. KOLTER: That's right.

13 MR. PACHUTA: -- causing accidents,  
14 I can say no, I did not.

15 MR. KOLTER: Not necessarily --

16 MR. PACHUTA: Particularly light trucks

17 --

18 MR. KOLTER: I mean are the operators  
19 actually trying to lie and cheat the public?

20 MR. PACHUTA: As garage operators?

21 MR. KOLTER: Yes, as inspectors.

22 MR. PACHUTA: Oh, I couldn't say.

23 MR. KOLTER: As inspectors.

24 MR. PACHUTA: I couldn't say. I really

1  
2 don't know. I can only say from my own experience  
3 with my own vehicle being inspected, I feel I have a  
4 very reputable mechanic and he gives me all the infor-  
5 mation I ask and gives me, you know, what I consider a  
6 good inspection, and I feel confident that he's doing  
7 so.

8 Of course, now he sees my name on the  
9 bottom of the inspection bulletin he gets in the mail,  
10 so that may have changed his attitude.

11 MR. KOLTER: Well, that's been my  
12 experience also. I don't recall --

13 MR. PACHUTA: No. Even before that --  
14 I shouldn't say that. Even before that he did an  
15 excellent job.

16 MR. KOLTER: Right. I think the  
17 statement was made earlier by other people and it may  
18 not be factual.

19 One last question, John: Both in  
20 Harrisburg and in Pittsburgh and Monroeville, statements  
21 were made by garage operators, inspection station  
22 operators, that if we go to a one-a-year inspection,  
23 they'll have to raise their prices.

24 MR. PACHUTA: I've heard that.

1  
2 MR. KOLTER: All right. Stated publicly  
3 here. If they would do that, do you suppose the  
4 administration, perhaps PennDOT, would consider  
5 putting in legislation to make a standard cost for  
6 inspecting vehicles?

7 MR. PACHUTA: That has been brought  
8 up before, and if you, as a member of the legislature,  
9 of course, would be amenable to that, it frankly could  
10 be proposed.

11 We do not feel that the inspection  
12 procedures as we will be redefining them for the  
13 annual inspection should take any more time; therefore,  
14 cost any more money to the garage operator.

15 If by collusion or whatever the prices  
16 get out of hand and the free marketplace does not keep  
17 the prices at a reasonable cost, then perhaps more  
18 stringent measures should be considered through legis-  
19 lature for a maximum cost.

20 MR. KOLTER: Thank you, John. That's  
21 all.

22 MR. DAVIES: Do you feel as if the  
23 free marketplace then is really a free marketplace  
24 today?

1  
2 MR. PACHUTA: It has been to date.  
3 There are 18,000 inspection stations. The competition  
4 is fairly fierce.

5 MR. DAVIES: Any reason why with that  
6 question, it would go the other way?

7 MR. PACHUTA: Well, they said that  
8 about the airlines too and I mean there can be price  
9 fixing anywhere, whether it be in the trucking industry  
10 or the garage inspection thing, whatever it is. It's  
11 a matter of people wanting to take -- measuring the  
12 risks of a, you know, trust-type thing against the  
13 added profits.

14 MR. DAVIES: Well, I caution you  
15 there with bananas and pears, airlines to that. I'd  
16 rather go to some states that have gone out of it and  
17 have you heard anything from the records there --

18 MR. PACHUTA: No.

19 MR. DAVIES: -- as to whether or not  
20 there has been substantial in either Florida or other  
21 states that have the change?

22 MR. PACHUTA: No, I have not seen any  
23 evidence to the fact that there will be a dramatic  
24 increase in the costs.



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

MR. STEIGHNER: One very quick question. First, I'd like to thank you for bearing through four hearings like this. I have also appreciated it -- I haven't agreed with all of it but at least I appreciate it.

You mentioned to Representative Kolter, in the fair marketplace, if the price gets out of hand and gets beyond a reasonable cost. What would you consider a reasonable cost today for inspection?

MR. PACHUTA: Well, I think what you have to do is say that inspection regulations as they will be revised or as the inspection is now being done takes less than an hour. We could -- you know, a reasonable investigation would determine what an hour's worth of labor in a garage is worth.

MR. STEIGHNER: I'm talking about today though, not six months, a year, but what do you think a reasonable cost for an inspection is today in Pennsylvania?

MR. PACHUTA: I believe the general average and what would appear to be based on labor input might be in the neighborhood of \$10 for the labor

1  
2 involved in an inspection as it is now being done in  
3 the Commonwealth.

4 MR. STEIGHNER: You consider that  
5 reasonable?

6 MR. PACHUTA: Well, I guess when I  
7 compare it to my salary or whatever, I might have  
8 different opinions, but I'd say that's what the market  
9 seems to say.

10 MR. STEIGHNER: I'm trying to get some  
11 feelings where you'll be coming from if some place  
12 down the line they increase or decrease the price.  
13 What do you consider today to be --

14 MR. PACHUTA: What I consider --

15 MR. STEIGHNER: Not for the purpose of  
16 -- a high and low.

17 MR. PACHUTA: No. I think that what  
18 has to be done is a determination of -- see, I don't  
19 want to do this gut feeling as we so often want to go  
20 to in state government. We're talking about a statewide  
21 program now, every vehicle, 6.8 million cars.

22 MR. STEIGHNER: Give me a high and low,  
23 if you can.

24 MR. PACHUTA: I can't. I would want to

1  
2 see how much labor time is involved in the inspection  
3 per the regulations, and I would want to determine  
4 what the average labor cost is, and based on that,  
5 a factual piece, I would want to determine what the  
6 cost should be.

7 MR. STEIGHNER: Why do I have the  
8 feeling I never should have asked this.

9 Do you think what you're charged now is  
10 reasonable?

11 MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: That's all.

13 MR. DAVIES: Now, that begats another  
14 question. I don't want to become a -- but then  
15 between Joe and Joe's question comes the other,  
16 because there has been somebody's name taken through  
17 the mud by name in testimony stating that the \$3.95  
18 super-duper special, lick 'em, stick 'em deal,  
19 somebody quoted, then should there be the reverse  
20 of that, the minimum so that the lick 'em, stick 'em  
21 loss leader concept in marketing can be done away with?

22 MR. PACHUTA: There's a lot of benefits  
23 to the loss leader to a lot of people, and I don't  
24 consider us to be -- you know, I don't consider myself

1  
2 to be very, very aggressive in that stance as far as  
3 economics are concerned, but control of that sort does  
4 hamper free enterprise and, you know, if I want to  
5 give away inspection stickers so I can get you in to  
6 buy a case of Coke, because that's where I'm going to  
7 make my profit, or get you to stop at my store to buy  
8 fertilizer, then that's my choice, and I would hesitate  
9 to hamper free enterprise in that way.

10 MR. DAVIES: Now, the enforcement thing  
11 doesn't become a problem and --

12 MR. PACHUTA: Well, you know, all these  
13 things are in the ideal sense. The ideal sense, good  
14 inspection --

15 MR. DAVIES: You're saying it can't be  
16 legislated?

17 MR. PACHUTA: Oh, it could be. They  
18 could legislate practically anything you please.

19 MR. DAVIES: But it would be detrimental,  
20 is what you're saying?

21 MR. PACHUTA: It may be detrimental to  
22 the American way of life or whatever you want to say,  
23 but I don't know whether it would be detrimental to  
24 the inspection program. I can flag wave a little here.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

MR. MICOZZIE: I have one more question. John, have we ever thought about making a pilot program out of this? In other words -- not in Delaware County, of course.

MR. DAVIES: In the 14 other counties.

MR. MICOZZIE: Somewhere out west.

MR. STEIGHNER: We have enough pilots out there already.

MR. MICOZZIE: Inasmuch as you're basing a lot of your remarks and your programs on Federal reports and Federal safety --

MR. PACHUTA: Yes.

MR. MICOZZIE: -- with another state. Now, you know, within Pennsylvania itself --

MR. PACHUTA: I think if we said -- if we asked for volunteers from the people for once-a-year safety inspection, we would be killed in the crush. So how you would keep the null group in the twice-a-year, you'd have to probably have more troubles than --

MR. MICOZZIE: Same way you do the emission.

MR. PACHUTA: I was going to make refer-

1  
2       ence to -- we do have a once-a-year inspection of  
3       sorts in mind for certain areas of the Commonwealth,  
4       but I just --

5                   MR. MICOZZIE: Delaware County is one  
6       of them.

7                   MR. PACHUTA: Among several, including  
8       some of the areas out west. We don't have that  
9       particularly in mind. The Federal government.

10                   MR. MICOZZIE: It just seems to me you  
11       would have an experience within the boundary of --

12                   MR. PACHUTA: It would be very difficult  
13       to control that. We've relied on the rigorous  
14       statistical methods of Mr. Beeman and the OBA to ease  
15       that out of the data, rather than to go to a controlled  
16       experiment of that sort, which would be expensive and  
17       difficult to do; you're correct.

18                   MR. DAVIES: Thank you, sir.

19                   Mr. Gene Beeman, the Assistant Chief  
20       of the Division of Program Planning and Evaluation,  
21       Office of Budget and Administration.

22                   MR. BEEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
23       Members of the Committee, guests. My purpose here  
24       today is really not to argue the efficacy of the annual

1  
2 versus semi-annual inspection but to inform the  
3 Committee and the guests of the research which has  
4 gone on since the late 60's, which offers the best  
5 evidence to date of the effectiveness of the presence  
6 or absence of inspection systems and the effectiveness  
7 of various levels of frequency of inspection.

8           In studying all 50 states with regard  
9 to PMVI, Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection, we find  
10 that -- we find confidence in the state that inspection  
11 systems are implemented in virtually every state that  
12 has done so for two purposes, and the purposes are  
13 based on two primary assumptions; number one, that a  
14 large proportion in any given jurisdiction of motor  
15 vehicle accidents that occur are the result of  
16 vehicle malfunction and that an inspection system  
17 once adopted, regardless of how it's implemented,  
18 whether it's run by the state, private enterprise or  
19 what, are capable of detecting and removing these  
20 malfunctioning components, thereby having some  
21 beneficial effect on the accident rates, serious  
22 accident rates occurring within that jurisdiction.

23           I am here to present evidence, which I  
24 think is fairly strong, not only from the OBA standpoint.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

the research that we did, but there is a significant confluence of evidence done by the academic community as well as studies contracted for by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, that agree that this first assumption is probably false, and we can demonstrate a virtually zero sensitivity of accident levels to the presence or absence of inspection systems among the states.

The second assumption upon which motor vehicle inspection systems is based is that whatever system is adopted by a particular jurisdiction, it will somehow be worth the cost; that is, the benefits will be in some rough proportion to the costs both to the jurisdiction as well as the driving public.

It follows, it seems to me, that as you increase the frequency, let's say from once to twice a year, you should also have some proportional incremental benefit as well, whether it be the saving of lives or a substantial reduction in the occurrence of serious motor vehicle accidents. I am also here today to present evidence both by us and by the research community and various universities in the United States that this is also quite probably a false assumption.



1  
2 We certainly detect no incremental  
3 increase in the benefits from motor vehicle inspection  
4 from once to twice a year. During the point in time  
5 when northeastern states were engaged in implementing  
6 inspection systems in the late 20's and early 30's,  
7 they were done so under the Save A Life Campaign in  
8 New York and Pennsylvania and elsewhere. It seemed  
9 logical, a vehicle which is in safe -- I use the  
10 quotes -- operating condition is probably a safer motor  
11 vehicle on the highway and will get in fewer accidents  
12 somehow, and indeed the fatality rates among the  
13 states from let's say the 50's to the late 60's seemed  
14 to show incontrovertible evidence.

15 For the benefit of the member that I  
16 haven't had the pleasure of testifying before, I will  
17 bring out this tired chart. And this was used by  
18 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for  
19 many years to show the plain truth of the matter about  
20 inspection systems.

21 You'll notice here the chart begins in  
22 1955 and these are fatality rates per 100 million  
23 vehicle miles, and these are for all states, the lower  
24 line showing the states with periodic motor vehicle

1  
2 inspection and the top line, the red line, showing  
3 the states without (indicating).

4           There were some 14 in this group (indi-  
5 cating), and I have a slight correction in my earlier  
6 testimony, Mr. Chairman. This is not 19 states; this  
7 is all other states (indicating). The chart is entirely  
8 correct in every other respect though.

9           The 14 states remain fairly constant,  
10 quite constant, with the change of one state; Arizona  
11 in 1962 inaugurated an inspection system and then re-  
12 versed itself three years later, about in here (indi-  
13 cating). So there is just one state that changed during  
14 this time period.

15           But the evidence seemed incontrovertible.  
16 This wide gap represented really the effectiveness of  
17 inspection, so it was thought (indicating). However,  
18 as you see here, the inspection states begin to adopt  
19 a trend that increased their fatality rates over time.  
20 The non-inspection states kind of dipped here, take a  
21 moderate increase and then too also descend (indicating).  
22 And, of course, at about the time that the National  
23 Traffic Safety -- National Safety Act was adopted by  
24 the Congress mandating periodic motor vehicle inspection

1  
2 by the states, the lines crossed. All of a sudden we  
3 have a situation in 1968 where the non-inspection  
4 states actually have a better fatality rate than do  
5 the inspection states.

6 Now, the reason I bring this chart is  
7 that it was offered in testimony in 1972 by the then  
8 administrator, Mr. Tomms of the National Highway  
9 Traffic Safety Administration and because it's widely  
10 seen in the literature, but it demonstrates that  
11 accident rates behave independently of the presence  
12 or absence of motor vehicle inspection. That is to say,  
13 knowledge about whether a state has inspection systems  
14 or not doesn't seem to bear the slightest relevance  
15 in predicting whether or not that state will have  
16 higher or lower accident rates. No evidence whatsoever  
17 to indicate that.

18 Now, in responding to Mr. Murphy's  
19 question, I have an extended time series, and I don't  
20 know whether all the members have this little graph or  
21 not, but I extended the same data out to 1975 to  
22 reaffirm my earlier assertion that if we were to  
23 extend the time series in this big chart past 1968,  
24 you would see a trend that the non PMVI states and PMVI

1  
2 states sort of tumble and intertwine over one another  
3 for the duration of the time series. Now, this only  
4 goes to 1975. I regret I couldn't get '78, place of  
5 residence data.

6 But the trends are firm and the trends  
7 are clear that the two trend lines are intermingling.  
8 I might say that beyond 1968 we get some fairly rapid  
9 changes in state PMVI status; that is to say, states  
10 are continuously, seems like, adopting PMVI systems  
11 of one form or another. They seem to be continually  
12 rescinding legislation for these systems.

13 So beyond 1968 the states are changing  
14 status quite frequently, until we get to the current  
15 time, 1981, when I guess 27 states now have some  
16 form of PMVI. The rest have either a random system  
17 that they have adopted somewhere along the line or  
18 no system at all.

19 The point is that the trends behave  
20 independently of presence or absence of PMVI. Now,  
21 with the confluence of those two trend lines, that  
22 stimulated a great deal of research both inside the  
23 government and among the university community. And we  
24 think we have a good representative sample of that

1  
2 research; that is, we picked those research pieces  
3 that were the most rigorously done, that adopted the  
4 greatest number of ways to measure accidents and that  
5 looked at the largest and we think best number of  
6 other variables which could account for the differences  
7 in accident rates among the states.

8           We based our research methodology on  
9 a kind of best of all of this literature review, and  
10 I'd like to briefly go over the way we structured our  
11 analysis.

12           We used all 50 states' accident histories  
13 for three years, 1971 through 1973, including the  
14 District of Columbia. We employed six ways of measur-  
15 ing accident rates; fatalities or fatal accidents per  
16 100 million vehicle miles, fatal accidents per 10,000  
17 registered vehicles, fatal accidents per 100,000 popula-  
18 tion, and we use fatal accidents combined with injury  
19 accidents for the same three sets of measures.

20           This is important, because we find  
21 sectional differences among the states. I can give  
22 you an example; Pennsylvania, which has I think among  
23 the lowest fatality rates of all the 50 states, has an  
24 extraordinarily high incidence of injury accidents.

1  
2 Some of the southern states which tend to be the  
3 largest in terms of fatal accident occurrence tend to  
4 be the smallest in terms of injury accident occurrence.

5           So we wanted to get a measure that  
6 blended them together to reflect all serious accidents  
7 to see whether presence or absence of vehicle inspec-  
8 tion would have any influence on that total aggregate  
9 rate. And since we suspected that other factors were  
10 responsible for the movement of fatal accident rates,  
11 as the chart shows, we included several other variables  
12 that are commonly included in the research that we re-  
13 viewed; per capita income we find is heavily associated  
14 with motor vehicle accidents; the higher the per capita  
15 income, the lower accidents tend to be; percent rural  
16 travel, that is the proportion of total mileage  
17 experienced by the state that is traveled on rurally  
18 designated roads; general accident deaths in the  
19 population, that is some measure of the propensity of  
20 the population in general to get into accidents or get  
21 injured or killed by them; vehicle miles traveled per  
22 population unit, and then we have a couple of environ-  
23 mental variables; the average annual temperature and  
24 average annual rainfall.

1  
2 By and large our experience agrees  
3 with the general literature in that we can explain  
4 anywhere between 60 to 80 percent of the accident  
5 variation among the states by these variables alone,  
6 not even including presence or absence of motor  
7 vehicle inspection.

8 We then took these variables with their  
9 ability to explain the differences in accidents and  
10 divided the states up into semi-annual, annual and  
11 no inspection systems, which also included random  
12 inspection systems. Then we allowed these variables  
13 to explain whatever they could explain, and we found  
14 no increase in explanatory power; that is, we could  
15 not explain the percentage variation in accident rates  
16 among the states through the inclusion of motor vehicle  
17 inspection; that is, we found no difference among the  
18 states which had no inspection systems, once these  
19 variables have been allowed to have their effect, and  
20 between semi-annual, the most stringent inspection  
21 system. No difference whatsoever. No statistically  
22 discernible difference.

23 And I urge you to read the literature,  
24 not only that we've presented but to use our

1  
2 bibliography and go back to the original sources, if  
3 you wish. I urge you to be like all good researchers  
4 and don't believe a single study, because there is no  
5 single definitive study done on a social problem, that  
6 I know of. What I think you're looking for is a  
7 general tendency among good researchers to come to  
8 similar conclusions. And we have found that in this  
9 instance.

10 In conclusion, I would like to make a  
11 couple of observations about the way that the Pennsyl-  
12 vania Motor Vehicle inspection system is applied. In  
13 writing the last chapter to our study, we went to the  
14 state police mechanics and asked them to -- they were  
15 quite familiar with the inspection system regulations --  
16 we asked them to estimate the time it would take to do  
17 an inspection as per the published -- currently pub-  
18 lished regulations by the Department of Transportation.  
19 Their concensus was that it would take approximately  
20 an hour and a half to do a good inspection.

21 We then asked those mechanics who were  
22 most familiar with inspection practices in the field  
23 that is done by the certified inspection stations, and  
24 we came up with a concensus of anywhere between 30 and 40



1  
2 minutes to do an inspection in the field, roughly two  
3 cars an hour.

4                   And given that shop rates; that is, the  
5 rate at which inspection stations charge the consumer,  
6 are in excess of \$10, \$50, and since inspections  
7 generally cost anywhere between \$9 and \$12, we must  
8 assume that unless the garages are giving away a  
9 portion of their time, that priorities among the  
10 respective components is being made. Some priority  
11 decisions about which components to inspect is being  
12 made.

13                   This can have several interesting impli-  
14 cations: For one, there's no assurance that every  
15 inspection station is making the same priority decisions;  
16 that is, do they all recognize what a safety-sensitive  
17 component is and do they inspect that, eschewing all  
18 the lesser safety-sensitive components? We have no  
19 evidence to say that that's the case at all.

20                   Secondly and probably more importantly  
21 is that it gives -- it may give the consumer a false  
22 sense of security, depending on the priority decisions  
23 that the inspecting mechanic has made. It doesn't  
24 make any difference which ones -- which components he

1  
2 has inspected. The consumer thinks that all have been  
3 inspected. And it may give him a false sense of  
4 security into thinking that his car has been rigorously  
5 checked through.

6           The second observation is that the  
7 state has in place currently no capability to verify  
8 the quality of inspection. The state police, as  
9 you've heard testimony on previous occasions, checks  
10 inspection station records. They are auditors of  
11 inspections done and recorded more than verifiers of  
12 the actual components inspected.

13           Indeed as Captain Rickert has testified,  
14 it is only coincidence that the inspecting state  
15 policeman happens to be there while a car is being  
16 inspected and looks over the mechanic's shoulder while  
17 he's engaged in inspecting that automobile.

18           So the state has no method of verifying  
19 whether quality inspections are done in any given  
20 inspection station in the Commonwealth at all.

21           I have concluded with that. I'd be open  
22 to questions, if you have any.

23           MR. DAVIES: You leave me hanging with  
24 that then. You're saying that there should be a

1  
2 guarantee of time as to get a ratio in relationship  
3 to what's been looked at?

4 MR. BEEMAN: No, sir. I make no such  
5 assertion. I merely pointed out facts. The state  
6 has no means of satisfying itself that even though  
7 it does suspect priority decisions are being made  
8 among inspected components, it has no means to assure  
9 itself that safety-sensitive components are being  
10 inspected uniformly throughout the state. It has no  
11 mechanism in place now to verify that notion.

12 MR. DAVIES: Yes, I know. Then you  
13 won't say it should?

14 MR. BEEMAN: No, sir.

15 MR. DAVIES: I yield.

16 Tom, would you identify yourself.

17 MR. MURPHY: Sure. Tom Murphy,  
18 representative from the northside.

19 Mr. Beeman, would it be possible for you  
20 to graphically portray, as you've done the fatalities,  
21 injuries and accidents --

22 MR. BEEMAN: Of course.

23 MR. MURPHY: -- for states?

24 MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

1  
2 MR. MURPHY: I think that would be  
3 helpful if we could have all three charts basically  
4 in the same format.

5 MR. BEEMAN: You shall have it.

6 MR. MURPHY: This question might be  
7 better addressed to the state police officer here, but  
8 I'll ask you also: Do you have some ideas as to how  
9 we might check inspections, not just records? There  
10 have been allegations -- we talked about this earlier --  
11 of ripoffs taking place in garages. I did have a  
12 personal experience with that. I'm wondering if you  
13 have some thoughts as to how we might also check  
14 inspections, that there are not those kinds of ripoffs  
15 taking place.

16 MR. BEEMAN: Well, there are several  
17 ways to do it, all of them I suspect are expensive,  
18 because it requires a state policeman or some designee  
19 of the state to reinspect that automobile.

20 There are sampling methods, however,  
21 that can narrow the costs a bit. You can select cars  
22 at random and ask the owner if he would submit to a  
23 reinspection. You can target your reinspection  
24 efforts to the inspection stations which tend to

1  
2 receive over time the most complaints by the citizenry.  
3 Several variance on those two methods I suspect could  
4 chop down the size of the reinspection process every  
5 year.

6 MR. MURPHY: Okay. You've cited a  
7 number of studies demonstrating that there has been  
8 very little difference in the accident injury rate.  
9 There are those studies that state otherwise, and  
10 we've received a copy of a letter that talks about  
11 14 percent.

12 Have you thought anymore how you  
13 reconcile those kinds of differences between studies?

14 MR. BEEMAN: No. I haven't read the  
15 entirety of Mr. Johnson's study.

16 MR. MURPHY: Yes.

17 MR. BEEMAN: I've only seen it referred  
18 to in summary form.

19 It was our opinion then and it still is  
20 that the methodology was not acceptable. There was  
21 an enormous amount of potential for those people who  
22 were most safety conscious to bring their cars in to  
23 get them inspected. That can have, and I've seen it  
24 in the past, have enormous distortion in the results.

1  
2 I don't know that it took place here; he may have got  
3 a random sampling of people who care and don't care  
4 about inspections. I doubt it.

5 MR. MURPHY: Okay. And, finally, in  
6 the letter to Dr. Larson from -- have you seen this  
7 letter?

8 MR. BEEMAN: No, sir, I haven't.

9 MR. MURPHY: Okay. From regional  
10 administrator of -- he cites an inspection program  
11 that was done on motor carriers in Pennsylvania in  
12 1978. Are you aware of this --

13 MR. BEEMAN: No, sir.

14 MR. MURPHY: -- where they stopped  
15 352 vehicles and found 52 percent imminently -- having  
16 imminently hazardous conditions?

17 MR. BEEMAN: By motor carriers, do you  
18 mean --

19 MR. MURPHY: I'm talking about basically  
20 trucks.

21 MR. BEEMAN: -- commercial vehicles?

22 MR. MURPHY: Yes. I'm assuming many  
23 of these vehicles have been inspected twice under our  
24 existing program, and so I'm wondering what your

1  
2 comments would be, why would these vehicles have such  
3 a high percentage of hazardous conditions if they've  
4 been in some cases under an inspection program?

5 MR. BEEMAN: Enormous number of miles  
6 driven per year could be one causal explanation. I  
7 don't -- I'm not familiar with trucks as a subsection --

8 MR. MURPHY: You're not familiar with  
9 that study, then, that was done in Pennsylvania?

10 MR. BEEMAN: No, sir, I'm not.

11 MR. MURPHY: Thank you.

12 MR. DAVIES: Vehicle miles are really  
13 significant.

14 MR. MICOZZIE: From your testimony  
15 then, evidently we should put legislation in that we  
16 should have no inspection?

17 MR. BEEMAN: You may suffer from adverse  
18 Federal consequences should you do so. It is still  
19 mandated by the Federal government, by National  
20 Highway Traffic Safety Administration, that states  
21 must have motor vehicle inspection or suffer the loss  
22 of traffic safety monies and a certain percentage of  
23 construction monies as well.

24 MR. MICOZZIE: That's contrary to your

1  
2 report. Your report has said -- that graph that you  
3 just gave us --

4 MR. BEEMAN: Yes, sir.

5 MR. MICOZZIE: -- says that whether you  
6 have periodic inspections or not, it really doesn't  
7 make any difference as far as fatalities; correct?

8 MR. BEEMAN: And injuries --

9 MR. MICOZZIE: And injuries.

10 MR. BEEMAN: -- combined with fatali-  
11 ties, yes, sir.

12 MR. MICOZZIE: It doesn't make any  
13 difference?

14 MR. BEEMAN: That's true.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. So the Federal  
16 government is mandating that the states do have a  
17 periodic --

18 MR. BEEMAN: Yes, sir.

19 MR. MICOZZIE: -- even though the  
20 reports show that it doesn't make any difference.

21 MR. BEEMAN: Right.

22 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. There are certain  
23 conditions that you mentioned that contribute to the  
24 lack of fatalities or injuries; per capita income is



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

one of them; environmental.

Let's start with per capita income. Explain that to me. Expand that for me. In other words, the more money you have, the more you take care of your car?

MR. BEEMAN: It's that simple. And the more money you have, the better driver you may be; that is, in terms of observing traffic laws, the more capability you have to maintain your automobile --

MR. MICOZZIE: I tend --

MR. BEEMAN: -- the more safety conscious generally you may be.

MR. MICOZZIE: I think that's a fallacious argument.

MR. BEEMAN: Possibly so.

MR. MICOZZIE: I think that -- in other words, I know guys that make good incomes and don't take care of their cars.

MR. BEEMAN: Yes, I do too, but we're talking here though about general tendencies now. If we had an inspection system in this state that required every automobile to be inspected every month, I still bet I could come up with automobiles that were in

1  
2 pretty shoddy condition. You'll always have the shoddy  
3 few that disagree with the general trends.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. There was -- what  
5 was the other one? It was environmental --

6 MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

7 MR. MICOZZIE: -- because --

8 MR. BEEMAN: Annual rainfall, annual  
9 average temperature.

10 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. What's the other  
11 ones? What's some other ones? I didn't read the  
12 report so you might know them --

13 MR. BEEMAN: The amount of mileage that's  
14 driven in the state on rural roads tends to explain,  
15 generally speaking, a large amount of fatal accidents,  
16 tends to be associated, for some reason.

17 High density urban roads, urban mileage,  
18 tends to be associated with fatal accidents to a very,  
19 very distinctly lesser degree.

20 MR. MICOZZIE: Let's talk about that.  
21 Let's say a rural road --

22 MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

23 MR. MICOZZIE: -- two-way traffic.  
24 We're not on an interstate; we're on two-way traffic.

1  
2 I'm driving down a road and my lights are -- I'm driving  
3 at night and my lights are defective or my steering is  
4 -- my wheels are not balanced and I have a steering  
5 problem.

6 MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

7 MR. MICOZZIE: Okay. That seems to me  
8 to be the problem, not because it's a rural road.  
9 That seems to be the problem that's going to cause the  
10 accident, because the vehicle hasn't been taken care  
11 of.

12 Now, of course, you're shaking your  
13 head. You have your statistics and your report. I'm  
14 questioning those statistics and report. I don't  
15 think it's because the rural road, it's two-way traffic  
16 on a late night and the driver -- of course, there are  
17 other conditions as well as the driver himself, his  
18 physical -- whether he's fallen asleep or whatever,  
19 but lending to the problem is that the vehicle could  
20 be not maintained properly, as far as the front end,  
21 the lights, the -- all that type of thing.

22 You showed me a lot of statistics and  
23 you're saying that, you know, it's due to the economic  
24 -- the per capita income and the environment and all

1  
2 that, but I think to say that that -- the only causes  
3 for reduced fatalities or whatever, I think --

4 MR. BEEMAN: Well --

5 MR. MICOZZIE: I don't know. It seems  
6 to me there has to be a lot more studies to convince  
7 me on that.

8 MR. BEEMAN: When you say there is the  
9 possibility that the circumstance that you've described  
10 could take place, I'd agree. I have no problem with  
11 that. It could agree. It could take place.

12 The general tendency, the overall weight  
13 of the evidence doesn't bear you out.

14 MR. MICOZZIE: From your report.

15 MR. BEEMAN: From my report. Motor  
16 vehicle components have been shown to be involved, and  
17 contributorily so, to around two to three percent of  
18 the accidents. That's borne out not only in Pennsyl-  
19 vania's statistics, when the state police and the  
20 Bureau of Traffic Safety assign causal factors to each  
21 accident, but it's also the findings of a very, very  
22 good in-depth study done by Indiana University.

23 There does seem to be some very small  
24 core of accidents where vehicle components rise to the

1  
2 top among the causal factors assigned.

3 MR. MICOZZIE: I have nothing else.

4 MR. DAVIES: Franklin County's  
5 representative, would you introduce yourself, sir, for  
6 the record and do you have any questions?

7 MR. PUNT: Terry Punt from Franklin  
8 County.

9 MR. DAVIES: Any questions, sir?

10 MR. PUNT: No. I questioned him last  
11 week in Pittsburgh.

12 MR. DAVIES: Okay.

13 MR. STEIGHNER: Mr. Beeman, you stated  
14 earlier and I think in all the hearings that the  
15 Department estimates that an inspection should take  
16 between an hour and an hour and a half; is that right?

17 MR. BEEMAN: The state police estimate  
18 that.

19 MR. STEIGHNER: Perhaps I shouldn't ask  
20 this, but how was that derived?

21 MR. BEEMAN: We asked the state police  
22 mechanics that inspect the state police cars, we asked  
23 the supervisor if he could have his mechanics come up  
24 with some kind of estimate of what it would take to go

1  
2 clear through the manual and inspect all the components  
3 called for. The concensus was about an hour and a  
4 half.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: Do you know how many  
6 mechanics were involved --

7 MR. BEEMAN: Not offhand.

8 MR. STEIGHNER: -- the experience of the  
9 mechanics, whether he was a three-month old mechanic,  
10 a twenty-year mechanic?

11 MR. BEEMAN: No, I don't, sir.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. The second ques-  
13 tion, and I think why I at least on this committee  
14 am having a problem with this issue is you suggested  
15 earlier about the -- you know, we read as many studies  
16 as possible. I guess I should point out that that's  
17 probably the major problem.

18 I'm convinced today that I could conduct  
19 a study based on the color of automobiles over the  
20 next two weeks, as far as related to fatalities in  
21 Pennsylvania, and come back here and suggest that we  
22 should get all the red and blue cars off the highway;  
23 you know, here's my evidence; here's my chart.

24 Looking at your chart, let me throw out

1  
2 a couple of possibilities to you: If I am an Ohio  
3 resident and drive into Pennsylvania and I am the 100  
4 percent cause of an accident; I crash into someone  
5 else and that Pennsylvania resident is killed, where  
6 does he go on the graph?

7 MR. BEEMAN: He's chalked up to the  
8 Ohio accident rate.

9 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. I'm now an Ohio  
10 resident and I come into Pennsylvania and I'm involved  
11 in a fatality and I am 50 percent at fault and so is  
12 the Pennsylvania driver and the Pennsylvania driver's  
13 killed. Where does he go now?

14 MR. BEEMAN: The fatality is probably  
15 on our statistics.

16 MR. STEIGHNER: As where? As coming  
17 from a state with twice-a-year inspection?

18 MR. BEEMAN: No. The person killed was  
19 a Pennsylvania resident; therefore, he is counted as  
20 a fatality by place of residence.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: Was the percent of fault  
22 in an accident figured in as far as the graph is con-  
23 cerned?

24 MR. BEEMAN: No. Just --

1  
2 MR. STEIGHNER: I thought you said,  
3 though, if I was an Ohio resident coming into Pennsyl-  
4 vania and killed someone, the Pennsylvania resident  
5 would go on Ohio's inspection.

6 MR. BEEMAN: I didn't understand you in  
7 the first instance to say you killed someone.

8 MR. STEIGHNER: Right. Both situations  
9 involved fatality.

10 MR. BEEMAN: Oh. The fatality in that  
11 case would be a part of Pennsylvania's statistics. If  
12 it were just a property damage accident, it probably  
13 wouldn't be.

14 MR. STEIGHNER: It would be part of  
15 Pennsylvania's -- what was the last part of that?

16 MR. BEEMAN: Fatal accident statistics.  
17 A resident was killed in that instance; therefore,  
18 accidents by place of residence or fatalities by place  
19 of residence, we've added another fatality to our  
20 statistics.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: Now, that fatality would  
22 have come from a state that had twice-a-year inspection?

23 MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

24 MR. STEIGHNER: Now, I'm a Pennsylvania



1  
2 resident and I drive into Ohio and I kill a resident of  
3 Ohio. Where does that resident of Ohio fall?

4 MR. BEEMAN: Okay. Then the --

5 MR. STEIGHNER: And it's 100 percent  
6 the Pennsylvanian's fault, the accident.

7 MR. BEEMAN: Yes. We would have --  
8 probably that person would be on Ohio's fatality  
9 statistics. He is a resident; therefore, he is  
10 included as part of their statistics.

11 MR. STEIGHNER: And he had nothing  
12 whatsoever to do with the accident; it was not his  
13 fault.

14 MR. BEEMAN: Even so; right.

15 MR. STEIGHNER: It's amazing. I'm con-  
16 vinced I can come in here next week and tell everybody  
17 we ought to get the blue cars off the highway.

18 MR. BEEMAN: You might be able to, but  
19 there is one question I would want to ask if you had  
20 such evidence.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: I'm sure.

22 MR. BEEMAN: What does color have to do  
23 with accidents?

24 MR. STEIGHNER: I'm not so sure on the

1  
2 charts that I'm receiving and information I'm getting  
3 that all the factors were involved in these studies.  
4 I think with every study that's been presented to the  
5 committee, at least two or three members have asked  
6 -- given different examples that I don't know that  
7 we've gotten 100 percent replies to it.

8           There are so many factors, in my  
9 opinion at least, involved in an accident --

10           MR. BEEMAN: Yes.

11           MR. STEIGHNER: -- that to list one,  
12 two, three, and here's my chart and this is the Gospel  
13 evidence as to what's available for traffic fatalities,  
14 it's almost impossible.

15           MR. BEEMAN: Yes. I quite agree. I  
16 pointed out I think once before, sometime back, that  
17 there is a substantial percentage of variation among  
18 the states' accident rates that cannot be accounted for  
19 by these measures, inspection included. Nobody has  
20 found or has been able to define a variable or a set  
21 of variables which breaks into this 30, around 30 per-  
22 cent, depending on the measures used.

23           We are therefore left with no other  
24 explanation currently than there is a large random

1  
2 component attached to traffic accidents. The sun hits  
3 the dirty windshield just at the right time when an  
4 oncoming car is a bit over the center line just at the  
5 right time, and an accident results. I have no better  
6 explanation for that unaccounted variance.

7 I know that when we rigorously specify  
8 inspection system presence, we get no additional level  
9 of explanation. That's not breaking into it either,  
10 but I don't know what will. I don't know what -- I  
11 don't know whether we'll be able to account for all of  
12 the accidents. If we did, then we'd be able to predict  
13 accident rates and we can't, with absolute precision.  
14 Traffic accidents vary for random reasons, I'm sure.

15 MR. STEIGHNER: That's all I have.

16 MR. DAVIES: Representative Joe Rocks  
17 from Philadelphia County. Welcome. Do you have any  
18 questions?

19 MR. ROCKS: No.

20 MR. DAVIES: Tom?

21 MR. TIGUE: Just one question as a  
22 followup to Mr. Micozzie's question: The logical  
23 conclusion of the statistics, both in your testimony  
24 and Mr. Pachuta's testimony, is that there's no need

1  
2 for any inspection. Your retort to that was that the  
3 Federal guidelines have mandated PMVI, but in your  
4 testimony you also said there are the majority or a  
5 number of states, anyway, who do not have any inspection  
6 whatsoever. So, in fact, the Federal regulations are  
7 not being enforced.

8 MR. BEEMAN: True. True.

9 MR. TIGUE: If that's the case, why  
10 would you not -- why would you not recommend doing away  
11 with the inspection procedure completely?

12 MR. BEEMAN: They could be enforced.

13 MR. TIGUE: But they're not. We know  
14 they're not.

15 MR. BEEMAN: They haven't been to date,  
16 to my knowledge.

17 I said in the beginning that I don't  
18 recommend annual inspection or semi-annual or no  
19 inspection or either one. I'm not in a position to  
20 recommend anything. I reveal research.

21 The lack of sensitivity of accident  
22 rates to the presence of inspection systems regardless  
23 of their stringency or frequency I think is astonishing  
24 and compelling.

1  
2           If the logical conclusion in your mind  
3 is that no inspections are preferable, then I would  
4 have no evidence to say anything at all to the con-  
5 trary.

6           MR. TIGUE: Thank you, Mr. Beeman.

7           MR. BEEMAN: Yes, sir.

8           MR. DAVIES: Joe?

9           MR. KOLTER: Nothing.

10          MR. DAVIES: Also introduce Representative  
11 George Saurman from Montgomery County. Do you have  
12 anything?

13          MR. SAURMAN: No, I have nothing.

14          MR. DAVIES: We'll take a short break.

15          (A short recess was taken.)

16          MR. DAVIES: I call the meeting back  
17 to order. Captain Russell C. Rickert of the  
18 Safety Services Division of the Pennsylvania State  
19 Police. Captain.

20          CAPTAIN RICKERT: Honorable Chairman,  
21 Members of the Transportation Committee, ladies and  
22 gentlemen, good morning. I am Captain Russell C.  
23 Rickert, representing the Bureau of Patrol of the  
24 Pennsylvania State Police. I wish to give you an

1  
2 overview of the department's responsibilities and  
3 participation in the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program.

4           The Commonwealth's Motor Vehicle In-  
5 spection Program is administered through a cooperative  
6 effort of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation  
7 and the Pennsylvania State Police.

8           The responsibility of the state police  
9 in this program is primarily to supervise the vehicle  
10 inspection program in all 67 counties of the Common-  
11 wealth.

12           The actual field duties in the program  
13 are the responsibility of those state police members  
14 assigned to the Motor Vehicle Inspection Program and  
15 designated as inspection station supervisors, commonly  
16 referred to as garage inspectors.

17           There are currently 67 troopers serving  
18 in this capacity on a full-time basis. There are  
19 an additional 55 troopers who are assigned as alternates.  
20 The latter only serve in this capacity when the  
21 permanently assigned supervisor is on leave or must be  
22 absent from his primary duties for other authorized  
23 reasons. In addition, the alternate must perform  
24 garage inspector duties at least four days per month.

1  
2           The following is a summary of the most  
3 prominent vehicle inspection program activities per-  
4 formed by the garage inspector: Official inspection  
5 stations are visited at least once each year. These  
6 visits are unannounced, at which time the station is  
7 checked for sufficient and proper tools, qualified  
8 mechanics, accurate record keeping and an exact inven-  
9 tory of and sufficient security for the inspection  
10 stickers.

11           When an application for establishing  
12 an official inspection station is submitted, super-  
13 visors conduct a complete investigation to determine  
14 whether the applicant meets the appropriate require-  
15 ments.

16           Station owners and mechanics are pro-  
17 vided assistance in making application for certifica-  
18 tion as an inspection station owner or inspection  
19 mechanic. This is accomplished by the supervisors  
20 consultations on requirements, procedures, et cetera.  
21 The applicants are also tested for their ability to  
22 inspect a vehicle in conformance with regulations.

23           In addition to the annual station  
24 visits, supervisors conduct unscheduled periodic

1  
2 visits to insure conformance with requirements of the  
3 statutes and regulations.

4 Citizen complaints regarding faulty  
5 inspections are investigated by the garage inspector.  
6 These investigations are performed to ascertain if  
7 vehicle code laws or inspection regulations have been  
8 violated, which can result in subsequent prosecution.

9 School buses are inspected annually  
10 prior to the start of a new school year. This inspec-  
11 tion is in addition to the present semi-annual  
12 inspections and is performed by the garage inspector.  
13 There are approximately 18,000 school buses in Pennsyl-  
14 vania. School buses are also spot checked during the  
15 school year by the garage inspectors.

16 When a vehicle is reconstructed (kit  
17 cars) it must be submitted to a garage inspector for  
18 verification that the safety requirements are met as  
19 per regulation.

20 While these are the primary duties  
21 directly related to the motor vehicle inspection  
22 program, there are other indirectly related duties  
23 that are performed by the garage inspectors. These  
24 include duties such as dealer investigations, visits



1  
2 to junkyards and visits to local speedometer testing  
3 stations.

4 In conclusion, I would like to thank  
5 the committee for this opportunity to present this  
6 statement of the state police responsibilities in  
7 the Commonwealth's vehicle inspection program.

8 MR. DAVIES: Sir, you had the opportunity  
9 to, over all of these four different ones, to hear  
10 various input. I couldn't pin the experts down that  
11 a time factor may be somewhat relevant to the quality.

12 Would you have any comment on that as  
13 to whether or not there's any way, manner, shape or  
14 form that, maybe by regulation or not maybe even by  
15 law, that a time element does come into play rather  
16 than a bottom or worrying about a minimum amount  
17 relative to what's done as far as the priorities of  
18 what they're selecting to look at in inspection or  
19 any other suggestions that you might have that you  
20 think would be relevant to even higher or better  
21 standards?

22 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Two things, sir: One,  
23 the regulations presently call that only eight inspec-  
24 tions can be accomplished by one mechanic, you see;

1  
2 number two, to put a time limit on an inspection or  
3 anything, I don't think it could be done. Some guys  
4 -- look at your staffs, look at me -- I may go through  
5 it bing, bang, boom (indicating). Another guy, he  
6 sort of takes his good old time. He's in no hurry to  
7 get done. I don't really see, sir, how it could be,  
8 other than the way it is. These are the components,  
9 parts to be checked and they shall be checked. One  
10 guy does it in a hurry, another guy takes his good  
11 old time.

12 No, sir. I'm sorry.

13 MR. DAVIES: And there's nothing else  
14 that you could suggest as far as enforcement, not look-  
15 ing to say that there can't be something other than  
16 the state police or a back-up or the private sector or  
17 -- I hate to say, add to the bureaucracy of things --  
18 that can raise any quality, whether it's once or twice  
19 a year or whether it's a commercial vehicle or the  
20 private automobile, as far as enhancing the standards  
21 of safety even though we reduce the list of items that  
22 are not really part of it, as was given in the first  
23 testimony.

24 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No, sir. Nothing.

1  
2 MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

3 MR. MICOZZIE: Captain, do you think  
4 the state police should be involved in the state  
5 inspection program?

6 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Not really, anymore  
7 so than -- Representative Murphy and I were chatting,  
8 and I used the example, if you will, the Department  
9 of Labor and Industry is responsible, for instance, I  
10 believe, for elevators, the operation of elevators  
11 and the care, et cetera, of elevators. Should they  
12 then decide the state police should regulate and  
13 check and make sure the elevators are in conformance  
14 with regulations?

15 What I'm trying to say, sir, is we've  
16 been doing this job since I guess about 1929 or in  
17 the 30's, but in effect what you have are highly  
18 trained policemen and at this stage of the game  
19 expensive policemen.

20 MR. MICOZZIE: That's why I asked my  
21 question. How many state police are there throughout  
22 the State of Pennsylvania?

23 CAPTAIN RICKERT: In the state?

24 MR. MICOZZIE: How many state troopers

1  
2 do we have?

3 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I think right now  
4 we're up to close to the 4,000 mark with the hirings  
5 we've been taking on.

6 MR. MICOZZIE: So we have one state  
7 trooper for every county; is that what you said? I  
8 thought you said that. Sixty-seven counties?

9 CAPTAIN RICKERT: We have 67 counties.  
10 For instance, in Philadelphia I believe you have 14,  
11 I believe.

12 MR. MICOZZIE: Fourteen just in Phila-  
13 delphia?

14 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: How many do we have in  
16 Delaware County?

17 VOICE: Three.

18 MR. MICOZZIE: Do we have three?

19 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I'm sorry. That's  
20 14 for Troop K, Philadelphia, which would include  
21 Delaware and Montgomery County. We go by troops. I  
22 don't have the individual county list with me, sir.

23 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, based on the report  
24 that was just heard previous to you, we really don't

1  
2 even need the troopers to go around because it  
3 doesn't make that much difference as far as the -- the  
4 inspections, the annual inspection or semi-annual  
5 inspection, it really doesn't make any difference if  
6 they're performed on an annual basis or whatever, as  
7 far as it relates to accidents and fatalities.

8 CAPTAIN RICKERT: You're correct, sir.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: So I think the 67 state  
10 troopers would be better -- the Commonwealth would be  
11 better served if the troopers were out patrolling the  
12 highways and byways for speeders and whatever. That's  
13 a comment; that's just --

14 MR. PUNT: They were on the turnpike.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: I would like to talk  
16 about SEPTA buses.

17 Do the state troopers go -- I was on a  
18 subcommittee which had to do with buses, SEPTA buses.  
19 Do state troopers go into the garages of the transpor-  
20 tation systems throughout the state and check, like  
21 they do the stations, the private stations?

22 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No, sir. We have  
23 for SEPTA --

24 MR. MICOZZIE: Yes.

1  
2 CAPTAIN RICKERT: -- we have one man  
3 assigned full time.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: Full time?

5 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Full time to SEPTA.

6 MR. MICOZZIE: That's in the garage,  
7 and he --

8 CAPTAIN RICKERT: He's down there every  
9 day.

10 MR. MICOZZIE: He's down there all the  
11 time?

12 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I don't know what his  
13 schedule is, but he's down there every day at one of  
14 those --

15 MR. MICOZZIE: There was some question  
16 about the inspections of public buses during the  
17 committee hearings. And he stays right at the different  
18 garages on a full-time basis?

19 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir.

20 MR. MICOZZIE: That's all I have.

21 MR. MURPHY: Captain, we talked earlier  
22 and we were talking about how the state police, if  
23 they're handling the inspection, might more aggressively  
24 pursue allegations of fraud that are taking place at

1  
2 garages now. Do you have any thoughts on that? That  
3 really is --

4 CAPTAIN RICKERT: More aggressively --  
5 let me put it this way, sir: We investigate every  
6 complaint that comes in.

7 MR. MURPHY: Okay. That is not really  
8 clear that that's your responsibility; is that cor-  
9 rect?

10 CAPTAIN RICKERT: What you must under-  
11 stand is when we investigate, as I read in my prepared  
12 statement, only, only for violations of the regulations  
13 or the law. We have nothing to do with prices charged.  
14 If you think the guy ripped you off by charging you too  
15 much, we have nothing, no control, no way, shape or  
16 form over the prices charged.

17 MR. MURPHY: Okay. Typically, either  
18 the state or a county consumer department would pursue  
19 that kind of allegation?

20 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Normally we refer that  
21 portion of the complaint to the Consumer Protection  
22 Agency, yes. We refer them --

23 MR. MURPHY: Do you have any sense of  
24 how many complaints come that you receive annually,

1  
2 those kinds of complaints? Are they significant or  
3 a small amount?

4 CAPTAIN RICKERT: This is a figure of  
5 all investigations now. This would be complaints of  
6 all different kinds. So I can't specifically spot  
7 check them.

8 For the fiscal year to June 1981, in  
9 other words, just two months ago --

10 MR. MURPHY: Yes.

11 CAPTAIN RICKERT: -- 5,028.

12 MR. MURPHY: Statewide.

13 What is the bureau, I guess -- is it  
14 a bureau within --

15 CAPTAIN RICKERT: The Bureau of Patrol.

16 MR. MURPHY: Okay. What is the budget,  
17 annual budget?

18 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I don't have that.

19 MR. MURPHY: You don't know what you're  
20 spending for inspections?

21 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No. I do have our  
22 state police figure, which I heard Mr. Pachuta give,  
23 which is for the inspection portion.

24 MR. MURPHY: For everything that the



1  
2 state police do concerning inspections, do you know  
3 what that is, the number is for that?

4 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes.

5 MR. MURPHY: Okay.

6 CAPTAIN RICKERT: We were budgeted this  
7 year \$2,217 for the inspection program.

8 MR. MURPHY: Two million.

9 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Two million two, yes.  
10 But that's for the inspection program now.

11 MR. MURPHY: Okay.

12 MR. MICOZZIE: That's not their salary?

13 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Sir?

14 MR. MICOZZIE: That's not the 67 --  
15 that's other than the salaries; right?

16 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, yes. That would  
17 be your traveling and -- I don't know what all they  
18 would throw in there, sir, but I would certainly --

19 MR. MURPHY: Let me make a statement  
20 and tell me if I'm correct: I'm hearing that the  
21 state police would not be real upset if we remove  
22 the inspection responsibilities from them and maybe  
23 placed them within another department or within the  
24 Department of Transportation with personnel other than

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

state police; is that correct?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: As one of the troopers said, at Custer's Last Stand, when they pulled the arrow out, "Ooh, that feels good."

MR. MURPHY: Thank you.

CAPTAIN RICKERT: I'm sorry. I didn't want to be facetious but --

MR. MURPHY: You're essentially saying that we would --

CAPTAIN RICKERT: We would certainly have no objection.

MR. ROCKS: Mr. Rickert, how many violations would there be in a year?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: We made 1,596 arrests.

MR. ROCKS: Arrests?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Arrests. Violations and warnings and suspensions without an arrest, that would have to come from the Department of Transportation.

MR. ROCKS: Could you give us some idea, the committee, of when you get to the point of being arrested, what would that violation be for?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, when you prove that

1  
2 they did do a faulty inspection -- a few different  
3 sections of the vehicle code would apply to it.

4 MR. ROCKS: Is there a breakdown of  
5 that available? How many of them were, for example,  
6 in Philadelphia -- I'm sensitive to this -- to counter-  
7 feit stickers --

8 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Well --

9 MR. ROCKS: -- stolen stickers.

10 CAPTAIN RICKERT: -- that would have  
11 nothing to do with inspection, sir. I mean that would  
12 be like -- stolen inspection stickers, that would be  
13 like burglary or whatever the charge may be.

14 MR. ROCKS: And that's not calculated  
15 into --

16 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, no, sir.

17 MR. ROCKS: Do you have a breakdown of  
18 the 1,596? Could you get it?

19 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I could probably get  
20 it for you, sir, yes.

21 MR. ROCKS: What are most of them?

22 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Of the arrests?

23 MR. ROCKS: Yes.

24 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I really don't know,

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

sir. I don't have the breakdown for it.

MR. ROCKS: Does the department have that?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Would we have it?

MR. ROCKS: (Indicates affirmative.)

CAPTAIN RICKERT: We would have the arrests by section. Yes, sir, I could get you that. I could go back to the computer runs.

MR. ROCKS: What happens when a citizen is issued an equipment warning by a state police officer? Could you take me through that?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Sure.

MR. ROCKS: I'm driving and my headlights are out.

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Your headlights are out. Okay. I stop you; I write up an equipment warning. You have --

What's the hours?

VOICE: What, sir?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: How many hours to get the headlight fixed?

VOICE: You have five days to get it fixed.

1  
2           CAPTAIN RICKERT: Five days. You take  
3 that -- or fix it yourself. That one you could fix  
4 yourself, if you wanted to install a headlight.

5           Then after you get the repairs, whether  
6 you made them -- have them done by yourself or have  
7 somebody else do them, you mail that card to the  
8 address on it or take it into the nearest Pennsylvania  
9 State Police Station and they'll notify -- for instance,  
10 you're from Philadelphia. Let's say you got stopped  
11 out in Pittsburgh. You needn't mail that to Pittsburgh.  
12 If you take it into Philadelphia headquarters, they'll  
13 see that Pittsburgh gets the information.

14           MR. ROCKS: Is that followed up on  
15 that? I mean is that system working in your mind?

16           CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, yes, because you  
17 get a copy and also our fellow retains the original.

18           MR. ROCKS: And if I don't do it?

19           CAPTAIN RICKERT: Then he files the  
20 charges.

21           MR. ROCKS: And you get a summons?

22           CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir. Citation  
23 through the mail.

24           MR. ROCKS: And my final question is

1  
2 related to Representative Micozzie's question, and  
3 we both have a very real sensitivity -- it's probably  
4 a little bit removed from what we're about today --  
5 but as a result of the committee that he described to  
6 you, the law was changed in Pennsylvania so that that  
7 officer that's assigned to SEPTA is now a matter of  
8 statute, and it was my understanding that in addition  
9 to that trooper's daily monitoring of what's going on  
10 at the depot, vis-a-vis state inspection of buses in  
11 particular but also now to include other pieces of  
12 mass transit, that there was a spot-check responsibility.  
13 Is that being conducted; do you know?

14 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I really don't know,  
15 sir. I do know, as a I stated to the representative,  
16 that he is there 24 hours a day, and I don't know how  
17 he schedules his time, how he schedules his visits to  
18 each of the installations.

19 MR. ROCKS: Let me ask the question  
20 another way, just to get a glimpse into state police  
21 policy -- we don't get this opportunity every day, so  
22 while you're here --

23 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir.

24 MR. ROCKS: If a bus -- I'll give you a

1  
2 routed A bus -- goes from Roxborough into Center City --  
3 is on the Schuylkill Expressway and it's driving like  
4 this (indicating), because something is wrong with  
5 its suspension system, would a state trooper, by  
6 routine, pull that bus over and give it the same  
7 equipment warning that it would give a private citizen  
8 whose vehicle was in the same condition?

9           CAPTAIN RICKERT: I couldn't say yes  
10 or no, but I would hope he would.

11           And another thing you must understand;  
12 any policeman has that power, not just the Pennsylvania  
13 State Police.

14           MR. ROCKS: I understand that, but I'm  
15 interested in the state police.

16           CAPTAIN RICKERT: In our policy?

17           MR. ROCKS: Yes.

18           CAPTAIN RICKERT: I would hope, I would  
19 hope there would be no favoritism shown for any person  
20 or type vehicles.

21           MR. ROCKS: Thank you.

22           MR. PUNT: Captain, last week at the  
23 hearing in Pittsburgh, something of interest was  
24 brought up and it somewhat concerns me, and I'd like

1  
2 for you to elaborate on this: Last week individuals  
3 gave testimony that to inspect a car, time factor  
4 involved -- and I guess this may be coinciding here  
5 with Representative Davies' initial question -- they  
6 stated that it takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes  
7 to inspect a car, okay, but if you went by the book,  
8 by the regulations for auto inspection, it would take  
9 approximately an hour and 15 minutes to do so.

10 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I would think the  
11 latter figure would be the norm, yes.

12 MR. PUNT: Okay. Are your troopers  
13 that inspect, enforce the inspection laws within the  
14 counties, do they inspect the car themselves as part  
15 of their training --

16 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No, sir.

17 MR. PUNT: -- not in the garage itself  
18 but --

19 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, have --

20 MR. PUNT: Have they ever inspected a  
21 car themselves as part of their training?

22 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes. They go through  
23 that same course that an inspection mechanic goes  
24 through.



1  
2 MR. PUNT: Okay. Now, an individual  
3 car dealer last week, who's also a certified mechanic  
4 inspector, stated that if this bill becomes law and  
5 we go to an annual auto inspection, he's automatically  
6 going to increase his inspection fees.

7 Now, in view of what areas concerning  
8 the vehicle inspection are presently conducted on and  
9 in view of the provisions within the confines of this  
10 legislation, the five specific areas, is there going  
11 to be much more time factor involved as far as inspect-  
12 ing that vehicle compared what they're inspecting now  
13 under the existing law?

14 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I don't see how it  
15 could be. I mean -- these are the things you have  
16 to inspect.

17 MR. PUNT: They're not going to spend  
18 a great amount of time, more time in the inspection  
19 process under the confines of 786, or whatever it is?

20 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I don't see how. No,  
21 sir. I don't see why it would.

22 MR. PUNT: Okay. Thank you.

23 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I have no idea why it  
24 would.

1  
2 MR. PUNT: The reason I'm asking that  
3 question, for the benefit of the committee, is because  
4 this individual said outright, the inspection fee is  
5 going to increase if we go to an annual inspection.  
6 And I attempted -- for those members of the committee  
7 that were not there last week, I asked to justify the  
8 need for an increase. And I'm sure -- I'm certainly  
9 in support of an increase if it's justified, but  
10 there's no justification made. It's just simply  
11 because we're reducing from twice a year to once a  
12 year; he is going to increase the fees to make up for  
13 that lost revenue.

14 MR. DAVIES: I have to interject, but  
15 to the same question that I had posed to a gentleman  
16 who added his testimony at the end of Erie, at Erie,  
17 in reference to paraphrasing what that gentleman said,  
18 that gentleman from -- that testified at Erie, who  
19 covers something like a 14-county area, said that he  
20 would take more time because of his personal responsi-  
21 bility, and because of his personal responsibility or  
22 liability, he would make sure he checked every blooming  
23 thing there. Just to add to that, because that's what  
24 he said, and I'm paraphrasing. If anybody wants to

1  
2 correct that for the record, they can correct that  
3 for the record.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: But isn't -- I wasn't  
5 at Erie, but it seems to me, I think what he's talking  
6 about, what he would be talking about, in my talking  
7 with garage owners and mechanics, is that if you have  
8 a semi -- if you have a once-a-year inspection as  
9 opposed to a semi-annual inspection, that the brakes  
10 are going to be far more gone; it's going to be more  
11 expensive for the replacement parts. And I think  
12 that was testified in Harrisburg, I think they were  
13 talking about the same thing. So, therefore, the  
14 price of inspecting is going to increase instead of  
15 decrease.

16 MR. PUNT: The repair costs and labor  
17 charges --

18 MR. MICOZZIE: Yes, repairs.

19 MR. PUNT: -- but not the inspection  
20 fees.

21 MR. MICOZZIE: You said inspection fees?

22 MR. PUNT: Inspection fees.

23 MR. DAVIES: To further paraphrase, he  
24 said he would take all four wheels off; he would not

1  
2 take two wheels off; he would take off all four, and  
3 he would go on all the check items practically verbatim.  
4 That's what his testimony -- what I assumed the gentle-  
5 man was saying.

6 I said if I'm wrong, somebody then can  
7 correct me, but that was the testimony that he gave in  
8 Erie.

9 MR. TIGUE: Captain, if we should adopt  
10 once-a-year inspection, would that in any way change  
11 the amount of time or the number of people, increase  
12 or decrease, if at all, that you would need to enforce  
13 the regulation?

14 CAPTAIN RICKERT: It would probably  
15 give us more time, surprisingly, because it would cut  
16 down on the investigations of complaints of faulty  
17 inspections, which is what our people are tied up most  
18 on now. Plus the stickers, we wouldn't have to be  
19 going in, checking them.

20 No. It would probably give us more  
21 time to supervise it.

22 MR. TIGUE: So in essence what you're  
23 saying is by going from semi-annual to annual, the  
24 state police will in fact be, you think, in your

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

opinion, better able to enforce the regulations?

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir. They'd have more time to make more visits.

MR. TIGUE: Thank you.

MR. STEIGHNER: Captain, I think it was Mr. Beeman, when I asked him how the hour to an hour and a half that it should take to perform the inspection --

CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes.

MR. STEIGHNER: -- should take place, I think he said it was the state police that --

CAPTAIN RICKERT: If I understand him correctly, he --

MR. STEIGHNER: I believe Mr. Beeman stated it was the state police who furnished the Department of Transportation the information that it should take an hour to an hour and a half to perform an inspection.

CAPTAIN RICKERT: If I understood Gene correctly, he went to our transportation division garage, which is 21st and Herring, and talked to our transportation division director, who I guess stood there and they watched the car being inspected. If I understood him correctly, that's where he came up with

1  
2 the hour and a half.

3 MR. STEIGHNER: He watched the inspec-  
4 tion take place and that inspection took between an  
5 hour and an hour and a half and that's how the figure  
6 was arrived at?

7 CAPTAIN RICKERT: That was found -- I  
8 wouldn't have any trouble with that.

9 MR. STEIGHNER: That was found unbe-  
10 lievable to me, that they would take one inspection  
11 and take that as that's how long an inspection should  
12 take.

13 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Well, I don't know.  
14 I don't know -- if you're asking me if I think an hour  
15 and a half is too long for an inspection, no. I don't  
16 know what Mr. Beeman did down there. I don't have  
17 the slightest idea.

18 MR. STEIGHNER: How long do you think  
19 an inspection should last, should take place?

20 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Somewhere around an  
21 hour, because don't forget, one of the components of  
22 the inspection is after you have made all the required  
23 component checks, you're supposed to take that out on  
24 the road for a road test. Now, just imagine yourself,

1  
2 whether one would be in a highly urbanized area like  
3 Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, et cetera, or whether one  
4 would be out along a country road, just for the time  
5 factor there.

6 MR. STEIGHNER: I guess I can take that  
7 up with the Department as to exactly how that time  
8 was arrived at.

9 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir. I have no  
10 idea.

11 MR. STEIGHNER: I wanted to know exactly  
12 who performed it and how much experience they had or  
13 what was done, or, you know, was it a typical motor  
14 vehicle or, you know, one that hadn't been inspected  
15 for two years or whatever. I guess I can get that  
16 from the Department.

17 That's all I have, Joe.

18 MR. KOLTER: Captain Rickert, what are  
19 your personal feelings about House Bill 562, the once-a-  
20 year inspection.

21 CAPTAIN RICKERT: There's no way I could  
22 argue against it, sir.

23 MR. KOLTER: You would approve this  
24 legislation?

1  
2           CAPTAIN RICKERT: There's no way I could  
3 argue against it.

4           MR. KOLTER: Today we inspect our  
5 school buses twice a year by the license of the  
6 Pennsylvania inspection station and once by the state  
7 police. How would you feel if at a later date the  
8 legislature would come up with a bill to reduce the  
9 inspections of school buses to two a year as opposed  
10 to three a year?

11           CAPTAIN RICKERT: By two, you mean one --

12           MR. KOLTER: Today you have --

13           CAPTAIN RICKERT: One vehicle inspection  
14 and one state police inspection; is that what you're  
15 saying?

16           MR. KOLTER: Right. Say we eliminate  
17 one of the vehicle inspections by an inspection station,  
18 how would you feel about that as far as safety goes?

19           CAPTAIN RICKERT: I think personally I'd  
20 have a little bit of qualms on that one.

21           MR. KOLTER: I don't see the correlation,  
22 sir, then. It's all right for the general public to  
23 have his inspection reduced to one a year but school  
24 bus, no. I don't see the thinking you have here.



1  
2 In other words, is there a safety  
3 factor involved?

4 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I think -- I don't  
5 know whether Mr. Beeman or Mr. Pachuta mentioned on,  
6 I think it was regular school buses or regular buses  
7 that the passengers there have no control. They're  
8 at the mercy, if you will, of the school bus or the  
9 bus.

10 MR. KOLTER: My wife claims that when I  
11 drive too.

12 That's all, Mr. Chairman.

13 MR. MICOZZIE: I have one other ques-  
14 tion: There's no follow-up as far as the state police,  
15 after an accident occurs, as far as whether the vehicle  
16 was inspected properly?

17 CAPTAIN RICKERT: That all depends on  
18 the accident, sir, circumstances involved.

19 MR. MICOZZIE: In other words, if it's  
20 a suit or something of that sort?

21 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No. I mean at the  
22 scene. You know, depending on the type of accident,  
23 the circumstances involved, somebody says this failed,  
24 that failed or -- it would all depend --

1  
2 MR. MICOZZIE: And you would conduct  
3 an investigation, if that was the case, that somebody --

4 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Oh, yes. We usually  
5 call -- well, even the local police will call our  
6 garage inspector in --

7 MR. MICOZZIE: In other words --

8 CAPTAIN RICKERT: -- to help him out.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: -- if I complained about  
10 my brakes failing --

11 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Yes, sir.

12 MR. MICOZZIE: How about the tires, the  
13 condition of the tires, for instance, that there was  
14 an inspection and the tires are bald or something of  
15 that sort? Does the state trooper -- I'm not talking  
16 only the state trooper, but I guess the local police;  
17 they don't write that up, that the state police would  
18 then go in and check the records back at the garage,  
19 if indeed there was an inspection and indeed something  
20 was overlooked, like tires or that sort of thing? We  
21 don't --

22 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Only if it was brought  
23 to our attention, yes, sir. If it was --

24 MR. MICOZZIE: You don't have any

1  
2 statistics as far as accidents being caused and from  
3 your investigation that there was a -- there was  
4 faulty workmanship or faulty -- something was overlooked,  
5 there's no statistics kept on that kind of stuff?

6 CAPTAIN RICKERT: No, sir.

7 MR. MICOZZIE: That's all.

8 MR. ROCKS: If I may, following up  
9 directly on that, maybe the statistic that would show  
10 the committee that is, how much exposure does the  
11 Commonwealth have, since the loss of our Sovereign  
12 Immunity Act; I wonder how many lawsuits have been  
13 filed in the case of automobile accidents where  
14 they've questioned the vehicle inspection and --

15 CAPTAIN RICKERT: To the best of my  
16 knowledge, none.

17 MR. ROCKS: Sorry to give the attorneys  
18 of the world the idea then.

19 CAPTAIN RICKERT: I understand they got  
20 a few of those --

21 MR. ROCKS: I'm sure there have been,  
22 but I'll find out from the Department.

23 CAPTAIN RICKERT: Okay. I'm sorry I  
24 can't help you there.

1  
2 MR. DAVIES: George?

3 MR. SAURMAN: Just a comment with  
4 regard to saying that if we went to once-a-year  
5 inspections, that then the inspection people would  
6 take longer because they would check out all points.  
7 That seems to me to be kind of a concession that  
8 they're not abiding by the regulations, but if they  
9 now have to go to once a year instead of priority  
10 inspection, they're going to do the whole thing.

11 I wonder if they feel that the next  
12 time around they would catch the things that they  
13 didn't catch on the first inspection, when they didn't  
14 feel they had to do the whole inspection or didn't  
15 take the time to do it.

16 MR. DAVIES: In making an effort to  
17 paraphrase the individual -- and I think he was sincere  
18 -- I would have to say that his comment was relative  
19 to the liability aspects of it, and I can't -- motiva-  
20 tion or otherwise, I'd be reading something into it  
21 that wasn't given in the exchange of question-answer.  
22 I'm only saying what he said as far as his retort to  
23 the question that specifically addressed itself to  
24 the liability concern.

1  
2 I mean I would -- I would have to ask  
3 you to put that question to the individual in writing  
4 rather than without his being able to respond.

5 MR. SAURMAN: Thank you.

6 MR. DAVIES: Any others?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. DAVIES: Thank you very much, sir,  
9 again also for your patience.

10 CAPTAIN RICKERT: On a personal note,  
11 I would like to, on behalf of myself and Trooper Ohio  
12 who's accompanied me, compliment the committee -- and  
13 not all of them are here. I know some are at Erie and  
14 Harrisburg, but I would like to compliment the  
15 committee on an excellent job, and I would also like  
16 to thank you for the courtesy that you did show me  
17 when I hit the hot seat.

18 Good luck in your deliberation.

19 MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

20 MR. PUNT: Pass the word along the  
21 turnpike, we'll be coming back.

22 MR. DAVIES: Okay. In the interest of  
23 time, we're not going to take the hour lunch break but  
24 we're going to try to get started at one. We're going

1  
2 to try to -- I know that there are some people here  
3 that can't do it in that time, but my intention is  
4 to get started at one.

5 We'll stand in recess until one.

6 - - -

7 (A luncheon recess was taken at  
8 12:25 p.m.)

9 - - -

10 (Hearing resumed at 1:05 p.m.)

11 MR. DAVIES: Mr. Innis, past president  
12 of Delaware Valley Chapter, Automotive Service Councils  
13 of Pennsylvania. Sir.

14 MR. INNIS: Honorable Members, ladies  
15 and gentlemen, thank you for honoring my wish to  
16 testify today. My name is John Innis, Jr., vice  
17 president, part owner of Pyle & Innis, Incorporated,  
18 an automobile repair service located in Drexel Hill,  
19 Pennsylvania, suburbs of Philadelphia, since 1933. I  
20 am a certified automobile repair technician and have  
21 been a certified Pennsylvania state inspection mechanic  
22 since 1960. I am also past state and local officer of  
23 Automotive Service Councils of Pennsylvania.

24 On the outset, I would like to say that

1  
2 I am in favor of keeping the semi-annual inspection  
3 program because it is cheaper and safer over the years  
4 for our families, friends and customers.

5 In these last months of increased dis-  
6 cussion concerning changing the present inspection  
7 program to an annual one, I have conducted an informal  
8 survey, with the vehicles in our shop for state in-  
9 spections. Being as objective as possible, I tried  
10 to learn which vehicles would have trouble passing a  
11 twelve-month inspection.

12 Our company inspects approximately 1,700  
13 cars and trucks per year. I found that a high per-  
14 centage of vehicles have at least one marginal safety  
15 item, which would probably be okay for six months but  
16 not for twelve months. Many vehicles had more than  
17 one marginal safety item. Does this mean that under  
18 an annual inspection program, a vehicle that has some  
19 marginal safety items either gets passed as it is,  
20 either to end up twelve months later needing very expen-  
21 sive repairs, or does it mean that the same vehicle  
22 gets overhauled now, which is possibly six months pre-  
23 mature? This cannot be very cost effective. How does  
24 \$9 savings a year compare to these unnecessary costs?

1  
2           The motoring public cannot benefit in  
3 any way from this. The potential compromise in safety  
4 must be considered. I keep thinking about all the  
5 vehicles I see every day, new and old, that have  
6 defects, real world safety-related problems. If most  
7 of these problems were not found and repaired, there  
8 would be loss of steering and braking ability, just  
9 to name a few.

10           Just the other day we inspected a car  
11 that had very little brake hydraulic fluid left in its  
12 master cylinder and a leaking hydraulic power steering  
13 hose. Suppose these had not been found out. It has been  
14 stated that people are driving less because of economic  
15 conditions. I cite a recent report that Goodyear Tire  
16 and Rubber Company produced which states motorists are  
17 driving more but are distributing the mileage over  
18 more vehicles. This accounts in lower per vehicle  
19 mileage.

20           The number of vehicles in operation in-  
21 creased 18 percent between 1973 and '79, far outdistanc-  
22 ing a seven percent population growth. Also while the  
23 price of gas jumped 200 percent in the same period,  
24 driving increased 12 percent to 1.14 trillion miles.



1  
2 In our inspection station we still see vehicles, as  
3 always, with 1,000 to 20,000 miles traveled between  
4 inspections.

5 If it is true that vehicles are going  
6 less miles a year, we must consider the fact some parts  
7 on a vehicle deteriorate faster with nonuse than with  
8 use. I point to rusty fuel lines and tanks, rusty  
9 brake lines and rusty exhaust systems.

10 A recent survey by the University of  
11 Michigan states that in the years ahead new car buyers  
12 will keep their cars for an average of five years.

13 There's another survey by the Motor  
14 Vehicle Manufacturers Association that says from 1971  
15 to '74 people kept their cars five to seven years, and  
16 in 1980, the early 80's, they're expected to keep  
17 them seven years.

18 We know that people are keeping their  
19 present used cars longer than ever before. Does the  
20 age and total mileage of the fleet require more or less  
21 periodic motor vehicle inspection? Since the trend is  
22 towards smaller, lighter composition cars, I wonder  
23 how they would stand up. Will they have the durability  
24 and safety to stand less periodic motor vehicle

1  
2 inspection?

3           In conclusion I would like to state  
4 that Pennsylvania has in operation one of the best  
5 and highly respected periodic motor vehicle inspection  
6 programs in the world. Of course, there are problems.  
7 There are abuses and excesses. But would it not be  
8 better to curb the bad element than radically change  
9 a viable and successful program? I would add that any  
10 legitimate, honest inspection station operator would  
11 consider letting the state inspect the vehicles, if  
12 done properly according to the manual. This would  
13 eliminate any chance of incompetent or dishonest in-  
14 spection.

15           I brought with me three items to  
16 hopefully make a point. They're back on the table  
17 in the rear, if anyone would like to look at them  
18 when they get a chance.

19           One is a shock absorber that has a  
20 slight leak from the top, which under the present  
21 inspection manual would pass inspection, but if it  
22 were not looked at six months later, I question  
23 whether it would still be safe.

24           Another item is a motor mount which is

1  
2 cracked, just beginning to crack. Under the current  
3 inspection manual it would not pass because of that  
4 crack, but if it were -- it's at the stage where it's  
5 just started. If it were not looked at for twelve  
6 months, I wonder whether it would be probably broken  
7 and maybe cause an accident.

8           And the other item I have is a piece  
9 of rusted brake line which is completely rusted through,  
10 which is a real potential killer.

11           So they're back there if anyone would  
12 like to look at them. I hope they do.

13           I also would like to say that, previous  
14 testimony, I understood there are around 5,000 complaints  
15 in a year's time. That's I think a small percentage of  
16 what would be about 14 million inspections in the state  
17 per year. I also would like to say that the school bus  
18 argument or the difference between school buses that are  
19 required to be inspected and supposed to stay under the  
20 current situation, twice, three times per year, I just  
21 can't see a difference in criteria between that and the  
22 car that people are driving as a private citizen.

23           Perhaps trucks and buses have better  
24 drivers because they're professional drivers. I'm sure

1  
2 there's multi drivers driving these vehicles, which  
3 can sometimes enhance the chance of problems, but we're  
4 in an age today, according to one of the figures I  
5 just cited, where people are driving more by driving --  
6 they're driving many vehicles instead of one vehicle.  
7 So in one household you might have four or five drivers  
8 for one car. I feel it's important to consider that  
9 also.

10 That's the end of my testimony. I  
11 thank you for the opportunity. If you have any  
12 questions I'll be glad to answer them to the best of  
13 my ability.

14 MR. DAVIES: If there would be a perfect  
15 system or if there would be any way of reaching per-  
16 fection, would it be mile related as opposed to the  
17 time factor or could there be a mileage factor that  
18 would address any of the three items that you brought  
19 along or that in any way could be legislated, enforced,  
20 administrated, rather than the time factor?

21 MR. INNIS: Well, the three items I  
22 brought along, which were just three that I picked  
23 quickly out of our trash basket this morning, are  
24 perhaps all -- well, the brake line is a time factor,

1  
2 weather factor -- mileage, no, I wouldn't say,  
3 although the higher mileage, the older the car.

4           Perhaps the fact that rust occurs when  
5 things are just sitting, decomposing in front of you --  
6 time would be the big factor I think on the brake  
7 line. The motor mount, which is a rubber piece, time  
8 deteriorates rubber and mileage and torque against it  
9 also does.

10           Shock absorber, again you can have  
11 that dry out and oil that leaks. You can take an old  
12 car that was perfect and park it for a year and start  
13 driving it, and all of a sudden things start to leak  
14 that wouldn't have if the car had been driven all of  
15 that year. So the shock absorbers wear out from  
16 sitting; they wear out from mileage.

17           As far as a perfect system, you mean  
18 for -- you mean to arrive at a set mileage where a car  
19 should be inspected? Is that what you meant by that  
20 question?

21           MR. DAVIES: Well, I use mileage myself  
22 as -- I don't use a time factor. I use mileage myself  
23 for my own reasons. I relate mileage as to mine. I  
24 have moonlighted and driven professionally for over a

1  
2 fifteen-year period that way, and I always based the  
3 thinking that mileage rather than the time factor, and  
4 I put on 33,000 a year now just in legislation, just  
5 in business as such. So I use mileage as a factor.

6 MR. INNIS: They both --

7 MR. DAVIES: I don't believe in the  
8 inspection thing alone simply because of the fact that  
9 I've had other experiences myself that are I think --  
10 maybe I'm kidding myself -- but professionally I  
11 think it's a mileage factor as far as I'm concerned.

12 You don't seem to think that that is  
13 -- it may be a standard by which I'm having to look at  
14 it, but you don't think it would be a workable factor  
15 as far as inspection, related to safety inspection.

16 MR. INNIS: Well, I think the point is,  
17 you have to consider both mileage and time, time where  
18 mileage does not accrue and mileage where time does not  
19 accrue, and you have both. You just do.

20 MR. DAVIES: I saw a lot of smiles this  
21 morning and I have to comment on the blue and red car.  
22 You can laugh all you want, but there are studies that  
23 prove that back-end accidents are less with certain  
24 colored cars than they are -- and blue and red are two

1  
2 of those that get hit more often than other colored  
3 cars. So that there is a factor. You can smile all  
4 you want, but there are people that can prove that  
5 with statistics and have done it.

6           So that when you start hearing facts  
7 and figures, you know, you've got to stop -- you've  
8 got to take all your variables and everything else,  
9 and that's one of the things that -- I'm saying when  
10 you get locked in that mileage, maybe you think  
11 you're right and yet as far as that goes, maybe you're  
12 not right. At least, you know, you begin to even  
13 question your own standards, when are you really  
14 thinking about safety, because I think it's a matter  
15 of education. I think it's a matter of the public  
16 knowing that they damn well better take their car  
17 in and never depend upon even the inspection, period.  
18 I think that's a ridiculous thing to do for anyone,  
19 even as far as safety's concerned, and we don't do a  
20 job of educating the public to that end.

21           So I think maybe some of the money from  
22 that over the amount of the 25 cents better go to that,  
23 address itself to that, because I have a pet peeve  
24 about that myself, although I guess I may not be right

1  
2 as far as the mileage factor's concerned. At least I  
3 can't get you to agree and you've been in the business  
4 since 1960 or you've been doing it since 1960.

5 Nick.

6 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, John, I'm not too  
7 far from your shop. I live in Westbrook Park so I  
8 know where the shop is. And there's one question: As  
9 a past president of the Delaware Valley Chapter and  
10 the type of statistics that have been presented by  
11 studies, has the chapter engaged itself in studies  
12 that would be the direct opposite of the bottom line  
13 that comes out with the business that there's no, you  
14 know -- well, the argument was that you don't really  
15 need any inspections because of safety.

16 Has the chapter or -- it just seems to  
17 me that your organization and plus the other organiza-  
18 tions that concern themselves about state inspections  
19 and automobile maintenance haven't done that type of  
20 study as organizations; is that true?

21 MR. INNIS: Well, the Automotive Service  
22 Councils of Pennsylvania did a survey amongst them-  
23 selves whereby they asked each participant to write  
24 down a summary of his inspections for a period of time,



1  
2 what percentage of the cars inspected had brake prob-  
3 lems, steering problems, light problems, no problems,  
4 whatever, and they were compiled and sent back to the  
5 state office.

6 And I do not have a copy of that with  
7 me, but it was -- the incidence of problem was far  
8 greater than 50 percent, I know that.

9 Maybe one of my colleagues here has a  
10 copy of that and we could elaborate more.

11 MR. MICOZZIE: That would amplify or  
12 expand what you were -- as far as what you were  
13 trying to point out about the three items that you  
14 have back there that have deteriorated over a period  
15 of time. That would be included in that statistical  
16 study?

17 MR. INNIS: Sure, sure. You know, I was  
18 trying to make the point that the argument that cars  
19 are driven less, hence, don't require inspection, don't  
20 have as many problems, is not valid, because every  
21 day I see -- every day you're dealing with these kinds  
22 of things and they're real; they're there.

23 MR. MICOZZIE: That's all I have.

24 MR. DAVIES: Gentlemen, any questions?

1  
2 MR. STEIGHNER: Yes. I apologize for  
3 not being here to hear your testimony.

4 MR. INNIS: Apology accepted.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: But reading what you  
6 had to say, bottom of the first page: "I found that a  
7 high percentage of vehicles have at least one marginal  
8 safety item, which would probably be okay for six  
9 months but not for twelve months."

10 I'm not a mechanic. It's my under-  
11 standing that either that component either passes or  
12 fails. You don't base it on future expectations; is  
13 that right or wrong?

14 MR. INNIS: That's correct. That is  
15 correct. But, if it's marginal now, what's it going  
16 to look like six months from now versus a year from  
17 now. It's marginal today. In six months the car may  
18 be in trouble.

19 MR. STEIGHNER: I'm not exactly follow-  
20 ing you.

21 MR. INNIS: There are a lot of marginal  
22 things on this particular car we're inspecting right  
23 now that are marginal, such as a shock absorber that's  
24 just starting to leak. Six months from now that shock

1  
2 absorber may have burnt out, but we won't know that  
3 because we're not going to look at the car for twelve  
4 months. That's --

5 MR. STEIGHNER: How can you be sure  
6 when you check, whether it's going to be driven  
7 5 miles, 50, 5,000, 50,000 miles?

8 MR. INNIS: There's no way to know that.  
9 You can tell me based on how far it went from the  
10 last inspection to this one, what kind of driver or  
11 something, but -- I don't mean to say that we should --  
12 if it passes, it passes or if it doesn't, it doesn't,  
13 but there are so many marginal items that would pass  
14 today and we know six months from now it's going to be  
15 a defective part.

16 What would we do today? Let the car  
17 go, which legally is what we're mandated to do; tell  
18 the driver that in six months he better have something  
19 looked at again or --

20 MR. STEIGHNER: Or nine months.

21 MR. INNIS: Nine months.

22 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. That's all I  
23 have. Thank you.

24 MR. MARTINI: Is there any problem with

1  
2 measuring the accuracy of the amount of lining left on  
3 brakes? The reason I'm asking is approximately what,  
4 four months ago at the end of my last inspection period,  
5 I got my car inspected. I was told that I would need  
6 brakes and that he said, "Because you put a lot of  
7 mileage on," usually about 15 to 20,000 miles a year,  
8 he said, "chances are by your next inspection" -- "you  
9 have five thirty-seconds left, which is a good deal."  
10 He said, "YOU will probably need new brake linings."  
11 These were both at Chrysler dealerships.

12 I went to a different Chrysler dealer-  
13 ship in the beginning of this inspection period and  
14 was told on the exact same brake lining that I had  
15 five thirty-seconds the last time and now had six  
16 thirty-seconds.

17 MR. INNIS: Well, I think I can answer  
18 that. What kind of car is yours?

19 MR. MARTINI: Plymouth Volare station  
20 wagon.

21 MR. INNIS: Volare. Disc brakes, par-  
22 ticularly, create a problem because you can't see the  
23 lining, how high it is above the rivet unless you take  
24 the brakes apart. So, consequently, a lot of judgments

1  
2 are made by eye, right or wrong. If brakes are brand  
3 new or look brand new, they're as thick as they were  
4 the day they were put on, you obviously don't have  
5 to take the brake apart to see. Bonded brake linings,  
6 disc pads, you can see pretty much.

7 Now, in some cases you can't see all  
8 the way around the pad because of obstructions. And  
9 again if there's --

10 MR. MARTINI: It just struck me as very  
11 funny that my brakes supposedly got better between  
12 inspection periods and I put on about 5,000 miles.

13 MR. INNIS: Well, it could be that the  
14 fellow that inspected it, you know, maybe -- you use  
15 calipers to measure them, where you can get to it, and  
16 maybe his caliper was wrong. I don't know.

17 . 5,000 miles of turnpike driving, you  
18 know, maybe you didn't wear them appreciably. 5,000  
19 miles in Philadelphia would be a different story  
20 entirely. Yes, I've had that happen.

21 MR. MARTINI: Thank you.

22 MR. DAVIES: Any others? George?

23 MR. SAURMAN: After the break I was  
24 speaking to Captain Rickert, and because Mr. Innis

1  
2 mentioned the school bus situation, I just wanted to  
3 add a comment that he made, that he said he would have  
4 liked to have made and didn't, and that is that the  
5 third inspection a year that the state police make of  
6 school buses inspects entirely different aspects of the  
7 bus than that that's inspected at the station. So  
8 that is a different inspection.

9           And he also felt that the use of the  
10 school bus is different than a passenger car in that  
11 it does stop so frequently, it's subject to frequent  
12 vandalism, and there are other differences between a  
13 school bus and a passenger car which would make it  
14 more susceptible to a need for more frequent inspection.

15           MR. PUNT: Mr. Innis, in your comments  
16 just a moment ago you used an example about the shock  
17 absorber. Let me ask you a question: If we had this  
18 not covered under the state inspection program and you  
19 said that if we went from a periodic inspection to an  
20 annual inspection, we may go another six months; that  
21 person's piece of equipment will go bad, whose responsi-  
22 bility is it to fix it, to repair it or replace it? Is  
23 it the state's responsibility to tell that person, to  
24 remind that person, or is that the motorist's responsi-

1  
2 bility to take care of his own vehicle? Where should  
3 the responsibility lie?

4 MR. INNIS: Well, I think the responsi-  
5 bility should lie with the owner of the car, but the  
6 problem is I think that responsibility is not always  
7 there, unfortunately.

8 The area -- is there a confusion on this  
9 marginal thing I brought up or is that understood,  
10 what I was trying to bring out there?

11 MR. PUNT: Give us an example of a  
12 marginal item.

13 MR. INNIS: Well, the shock absorber  
14 is a marginal item, the one I have. The state in-  
15 spection manual says a shock absorber will not pass  
16 inspection -- talking about leaks now, which is one  
17 of the reasons that they can't pass inspection, if  
18 there's a severe leak. You're not supposed to reject  
19 the shock absorber for a slight leak. You know,  
20 business.

21 I have a shock absorber back there with  
22 a slight leak that was replaced for another reason,  
23 but it's got a slight leak in it. That is to me a  
24 marginal item that today passes inspection. Six months

1  
2 from now, a month from now, it could be a blown-out  
3 shock absorber with no oil left in it and, therefore,  
4 no action from it.

5           There are many marginal items that you  
6 run into in the course of doing an inspection.

7           MR. PUNT: In your opinion --

8           MR. INNIS: Knowing that six months  
9 later the car will be back gives me a much better  
10 feeling than knowing twelve months or more.

11           MR. PUNT: In your opinion could minimum  
12 standards be drawn up that would suffice for an annual  
13 auto inspection?

14           MR. INNIS: Yes, they could be.

15           MR. PUNT: Providing the safety factor  
16 involved for that vehicle. Could minimum standards  
17 be drafted?

18           MR. INNIS: Standards could be drafted.  
19 How reliable they would be, I don't know. In six  
20 months cars can pass -- we have -- cars can pass today  
21 when we inspect it and six months later be in trouble  
22 because the car was driven hard, because something  
23 happened, like a brake froze and all of a sudden the  
24 brakes started to disintegrate.



1  
2           So I mean you can't build standards for  
3 things like that. Twelve months is such a long period  
4 of time.

5           MR. PUNT: Okay. One final question:  
6 It was announced in the introduction to this proposal  
7 that approximately \$61 million is going to be saved  
8 by the motorists, basically which was -- I asked  
9 Department of Transportation personnel this question  
10 last week in Pittsburgh, and the basis of those  
11 savings would be realized from the reduction -- the  
12 elimination of one of the two inspections. That's  
13 what they base that \$61 million savings on.

14           Now, I seriously question if in fact  
15 there's going to be any savings at all, because I  
16 really believe that the inspection fees are going to  
17 be increased to make up for that loss.

18           In the area which you encompass, has  
19 there been any discussion? Do you plan on raising,  
20 increasing inspection fees if this bill becomes law?

21           MR. INNIS: There has been no discussion  
22 that I'm aware of, at least with my immediate colleagues  
23 and in my own business, concerning raising the fee. I  
24 don't know that there -- I don't know that there would

1  
2 be a reason to raise the fee, based on the information  
3 that I have at the moment.

4 If it indeed took longer to inspect  
5 the car that you see once a year versus twice a year --  
6 I don't really know whether it would take longer or  
7 not. Would wheels be rusted because they weren't  
8 pulled in six months? Would there be actual physical  
9 reason to take longer? I don't know. But that -- I've  
10 heard nothing about raising fees. At the moment I  
11 don't see a reason to.

12 MR. PUNT: If we go to an annual inspec-  
13 tion, in your opinion will there be a considerable  
14 increase in repairs and replacement of parts?

15 MR. INNIS: Yes, most definitely.

16 MR. PUNT: Okay.

17 MR. INNIS: Most definitely. There  
18 has to be.

19 MR. MICOZZIE: To follow that up, John,  
20 on that shock absorber that was leaking, which is a  
21 marginal situation --

22 MR. INNIS: Yes.

23 MR. MICOZZIE: -- the tendency would  
24 then be for an automotive mechanic to change that

1  
2 instead of waiting for the twelve-month or the fifteen-  
3 month period.

4 I mean the pressure would be -- because  
5 you would know that if it's a good -- well, you would  
6 probably explain it to your customer, if you're con-  
7 scientious, if an automobile mechanic's conscientious,  
8 he would push to change that part instead of waiting  
9 to twelve, fifteen months or impress upon the person  
10 that they should bring it in in another two months,  
11 three months, four months.

12 So that tendency would be to increase  
13 the costs of the work that was going to have to be  
14 done, it would seem to me.

15 MR. INNIS: It would seem to me also.  
16 It's either going to increase the cost now or a year  
17 from now.

18 MR. MICOZZIE: If he waits a year from  
19 now, the cost would probably be more damage than if he  
20 would have taken a preventive maintenance-type step.

21 MR. INNIS: Yes. Just the other day we  
22 replaced two front disc rotors on a Lincoln that cost  
23 \$90 for the two because of brakes that wore out pre-  
24 maturely, but, you know, you're going to see -- this is

1  
2 fairly rare right now. I expect to sell a lot of  
3 rotors.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: You know, I said this  
5 in Harrisburg and I say it again: I think the  
6 organizations which you represent and all the mechanics  
7 that are involved in it all, to get this message  
8 across to the public, they're not getting that  
9 message. Of course, the message they're getting,  
10 they're going to save money, and the question comes  
11 out whether they are really going to save money or  
12 are they just prolonging an agony that they are going  
13 to have to replace parts at a much later date and a  
14 higher expense.

15 MR. INNIS: Sure. A lot of people look  
16 at it as a tax, you know, why pay more tax when you  
17 can pay less.

18 MR. PUNT: I'd like to follow up with a  
19 question here: As far as an increase in costs, I  
20 think somebody's trying to fool someone when they say  
21 they're going to save money. I don't see any savings  
22 coming out of this either through replacement of parts  
23 or if we change to annual inspection. I believe that  
24 we're going to increase the inspection fees for that

1  
2 annual inspection, and the people that are promoting it  
3 I think are misleading the general public.

4           What I do question here is: Could there  
5 be a savings if people, if the public took upon them-  
6 selves, their own initiative, to bring that car in  
7 periodically for repair or to be checked? If a person  
8 brought it in, whether or not the state told them they  
9 had to bring it in at such a time, if people just  
10 brought it in on their own, they could, in all pur-  
11 poses, I guess, not realize an increase in repairs and  
12 replacements; am I correct in that?

13           MR. INNIS: Sure.

14           MR. PUNT: If people did that?

15           MR. INNIS: Yes, if, a big if. They  
16 don't want to bring it in when they have to, let alone  
17 bring it in when they don't have to.

18           MR. PUNT: But why should government --  
19 why should government tell the public you have to do  
20 this?

21           MR. INNIS: Well, the premise is safety  
22 for us all. So you have to. It's the only way it  
23 would get done.

24           MR. PUNT: But the studies have verified

1  
2 there's virtually no difference in fatalities between  
3 states with twice-a-year inspection versus states with  
4 no year inspections as a result of faulty equipment on  
5 a car on that vehicle so that I can't put much credi-  
6 bility into that argument and --

7 MR. INNIS: That's not the study I've  
8 read, though.

9 MR. PUNT: What study have you read? If  
10 you have information in contrast to that, I would  
11 appreciate if you would give that to the committee.

12 MR. INNIS: I believe the committee  
13 has -- the committee has the letter from the National  
14 Highway Traffic Safety.

15 MR. DAVIES: It was submitted in Erie.

16 MR. INNIS: That was sent to Thomas  
17 Larson.

18 MR. DAVIES: That was submitted in Erie,  
19 I believe.

20 MR. INNIS: But that completely refutes  
21 the other argument.

22 MR. DAVIES: I'm confused as to the  
23 ground around the end also. Are you knocking or are  
24 you saying that the Jersey system is a viable system,

1  
2 or I just don't quite follow that last --

3 MR. INNIS: New Jersey?

4 MR. DAVIES: Yes. In other words, you're  
5 saying, "I would add that any legitimate, honest  
6 inspection station would consider letting the state  
7 inspect the vehicles," like they do in Jersey, or  
8 aren't you commenting on that or are you saying that  
9 there should be another step in Pennsylvania's program  
10 that isn't there now that will improve the quality of  
11 the program?

12 MR. INNIS: What I meant by that is  
13 that I feel so strongly for the twice-a-year inspection,  
14 if the problem is consumer problems, improper inspec-  
15 tions, ripoffs, whatever, I would rather see the state  
16 inspect the cars properly, not like New Jersey.  
17 Properly, according to the manual that we're living  
18 with now or, you know, a revised manual, if there are  
19 certain things that shouldn't be done, but I mean a  
20 good inspection with wheels pulled and things looked  
21 at, which New Jersey does not do. I'd rather see that  
22 than go to once-a-year inspection.

23 MR. DAVIES: Thank you. Any others?

24 MR. MICOZZIE: I think the state will

1  
2 or I just don't quite follow that last --

3 MR. INNIS: New Jersey?

4 MR. DAVIES: Yes. In other words, you're  
5 saying, "I would add that any legitimate, honest  
6 inspection station would consider letting the state  
7 inspect the vehicles," like they do in Jersey, or  
8 aren't you commenting on that or are you saying that  
9 there should be another step in Pennsylvania's program  
10 that isn't there now that will improve the quality of  
11 the program?

12 MR. INNIS: What I meant by that is  
13 that I feel so strongly for the twice-a-year inspection,  
14 if the problem is consumer problems, improper inspec-  
15 tions, ripoffs, whatever, I would rather see the state  
16 inspect the cars properly, not like New Jersey.  
17 Properly, according to the manual that we're living  
18 with now or, you know, a revised manual, if there are  
19 certain things that shouldn't be done, but I mean a  
20 good inspection with wheels pulled and things looked  
21 at, which New Jersey does not do. I'd rather see that  
22 than go to once-a-year inspection.

23 MR. DAVIES: Thank you. Any others?

24 MR. MICOZZIE: I think the state will



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

stay out of the business --

MR. INNIS: I'm just saying --

MR. MICOZZIE: I know what you're saying.

We don't need --

MR. INNIS: It eliminates the question-  
able areas, if that's what has to be --

MR. MICOZZIE: In fact, the state  
police ought to get out of it also, but I know what  
you're saying.

MR. INNIS: I'm not advocating the  
New Jersey system in any way.

MR. MICOZZIE: Any other way the people  
are not going to do it on their own; I agree with you  
there.

MR. INNIS: There was a survey done by  
a representative I believe in the Philadelphia suburbs;  
10,000 people, they sent out questionnaires -- I have  
the clipping here that said that people wrote back and  
said what percentage of them would have their car  
checked even if they didn't have to and --

MR. MICOZZIE: Probably Mr. --

MR. INNIS: I forget the name.

MR. MICOZZIE: He's in your area.

1  
2 MR. INNIS: But people admitted that they  
3 would not have their cars inspected. A certain group  
4 will, that are responsible.

5 MR. DAVIES: All right, sir. Thank you.

6 MR. WEISSBERG: I'd like to -- Joel  
7 Weissberg, representing Automotive Service Councils.

8 I just wanted to make one note on the  
9 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration letter  
10 which was passed out at the last hearing in Erie. I'm  
11 frankly not surprised that the Office of Budget Admin-  
12 istration had never been shown the letter, although  
13 PennDOT has had the letter for two years now, which  
14 uses the same information and more information, includ-  
15 ing, according to this, a Pennsylvania Turnpike study  
16 which -- and I have not seen the study myself, but  
17 according to this letter, there's a Pennsylvania Turn-  
18 pike study which shows a 13 percent defect, accident  
19 related. I'm not surprised that PennDOT never showed  
20 this to Budget Administration.

21 What does surprise me, gentlemen, is  
22 that a week after this letter and the contents thereof  
23 was made known to Budget Administration, they still  
24 claim never to have read it. They made no effort in

1  
2 this last week to check into what the letter said, to  
3 check into new, available figures, to check into new,  
4 available conclusions, and see if that changed their  
5 mind at all, though they said, "We've got everything;  
6 nobody else's information counts; we're not even going  
7 to look at this."

8 I'd like to close -- this being the  
9 last hearing -- I'm among those few who have stuck it  
10 out through all of them, been present through every  
11 minute of it, and I'd just say, as others have, thank  
12 you to the committee for your patience, for your  
13 understanding, for your consideration. I really felt  
14 good sitting through all of these and listening to what  
15 the committee has to say and the careful consideration  
16 that everybody's thoughts have been given, and we  
17 appreciate it very much. Thank you.

18 MR. DAVIES: Did we pick up Mr. Gene  
19 D'Andrea?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. DAVIES: Okay. We're going to hedge  
22 then and insert Mr. D'Andrea in between wherever we can  
23 make a catch-up then, because I guess we're still,  
24 what -- are we back within the timeframe or --

1  
2 MR. LANDIS: No. Well, with him we'll  
3 be within the timeframe.

4 MR. DAVIES: Okay. Mr. Roy W. Hanshaw,  
5 Director --

6 MR. LANDIS: No.

7 MR. DAVIES: I'm sorry. Mr. William J.  
8 Holsinger, President of Pennsylvania Automotive  
9 Wholesalers Association.

10 MR. HOLSINGER: I bid you good afternoon,  
11 ladies and gentlemen. I don't see too many ladies,  
12 but we have one. I thank you for the opportunity to  
13 appear and testify before your subcommittee on the  
14 vitally important issue of periodic motor vehicle  
15 safety inspections.

16 My name is William J. Holsinger and I  
17 am serving as President of the Pennsylvania Automotive  
18 Wholesalers Association, an industry group which speaks  
19 for more than 1,200 companies, large and small,  
20 throughout Pennsylvania, which sell a wide variety of  
21 auto parts and equipment at wholesale to service sta-  
22 tions, garages and repair shops and at retail across  
23 the counter to the do-it-yourselfers among the general  
24 public.

1  
2 I am also president of Easton Electrical  
3 Devices, Incorporated, which is located at 915 North-  
4 Hampton Street in Easton, Pennsylvania. I appear today  
5 to oppose passage into law of House Bill 562.

6 Thanks to our representative on Capitol  
7 Hill, Herb Packer, who has attended each and every one  
8 of the hearings you have held, mercifully I shall not  
9 repeat any of the objections you have heard about  
10 House Bill 562. Instead, I hope to concentrate my  
11 remarks on those aspects of this bill which heretofore  
12 have not been addressed.

13 It should come as no surprise to you  
14 that most automobile owners depend upon reliable  
15 mechanics to inspect their cars twice a year. It  
16 should also be no surprise to hear that preventive  
17 maintenance for safety's sake is far less expensive  
18 than benign neglect.

19 Obviously, it would be necessary to  
20 require considerably more tread on tires and a greater  
21 percentage of lining on brakes when safety inspections  
22 are conducted only a once yearly.

23 That fact raises an additional concern  
24 and a very important one: The availability of reliable,

1  
2 well-trained mechanics.

3           Because our industry has been used and  
4 abused by the media and other opportunists which do  
5 not understand its complications, well-qualified  
6 technicians are very, very scarce, and the ones who  
7 are still in business are disgusted with government  
8 interference without the opportunity to appeal  
9 unnecessary changes in the rules and regulations.

10           If House Bill 562 becomes law, I sin-  
11 cerely believe that we shall lose many of these already  
12 scarce good people.

13           I base my prediction on the following  
14 observations: First, the shops where motor vehicle  
15 safety inspections are conducted are not very busy  
16 these days. Second, six months or more of no safety  
17 inspections would follow implementation of the law.  
18 Third, layoffs would very quickly follow. Fourth, when  
19 the motoring public returns for the required annual  
20 inspection, we would have a tough time suddenly finding  
21 qualified people to do the inspections. Fifth, we need  
22 government to support, not condemn, this very important  
23 link in the safety program for our highways.

24           In conclusion, I'll readily admit that

1  
2 drivers, not PennDOT, are responsible for the mainten-  
3 ance of their vehicles, but we also need to keep our  
4 mechanics, whose competency and reliability have cost  
5 many thousands of dollars to train and continually  
6 maintain. We ought to be encouraging employment  
7 rather than unemployment.

8                   Please help us. Don't make it more  
9 difficult by enacting House Bill 562 into law.

10                   Again, my thanks for this opportunity  
11 to be heard. I'll be happy to answer any questions you  
12 may have.

13                   MR. DAVIES: Considering, not one way  
14 or the other, but what we have heard in the four hear-  
15 ings, standards on -- we've had both sides of, for  
16 example, tires and tire tread.

17                   You seem to think that the standards  
18 would have to be increased for that interim, regardless  
19 of the sophistication of the art today, with the --  
20 with what's happened -- what I call after Nader as prior  
21 to Nader -- that's not fair with tires, I know, but  
22 other improvements that we are in the decision stage on  
23 as far as brakes and things like that. You seem to  
24 think that those standards would have to definitely be

1  
2 higher.

3 MR. HOLSINGER: Brakes and tires spe-  
4 cifically would have to be higher standards. Front  
5 ends, the alignment of front ends, the ability of the  
6 front end to maintain roadability would have to be  
7 very rigid.

8 The question was raised a while ago  
9 about -- I believe the representative over there said  
10 why at one point was the brake lining at five thirty-  
11 seconds and then the next time six thirty-seconds  
12 (indicating). My -- if it was on the same wheel, I  
13 would have trouble with the question. If it was on  
14 a different wheel, I would have no problem.

15 MR. MARTINI: It was on the same wheel.

16 MR. HOLSINGER: Because usually the  
17 inspection stations are required to pull a different  
18 wheel every --

19 MR. MARTINI: It was two different  
20 inspection stations.

21 MR. HOLSINGER: So if what you're saying  
22 is true, that there have been improved standards, but  
23 there are certain things that there's a mortality rate  
24 which we can't change.



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

MR. MICOZZIE: No questions.

MR. PUNT: Just one question, sir: You questioned the need of availability of well-trained inspection mechanics.

MR. HOLSINGER: Yes, sir.

MR. PUNT: Is there a shortage?

MR. HOLSINGER: There definitely is a shortage of good mechanics.

MR. PUNT: Why? In your opinion, why?

MR. HOLSINGER: Okay. The industry has been very much abused by a lot of people who think that because it's a large industry, that it's also an industry that has a lot of unnecessary parts in it. This is not true in reality.

If you get into the nitty-gritty of the real world problems of repairing automobiles, you will find that it's very difficult to go into an area that you're a stranger and find, by going through a telephone directory or any other method you might use, to find a competent repair station. And the reason being is that we -- while the industry is working strongly at training competent people and they're working

1  
2 diligently at it, there are a lot of good causes to  
3 raise the level of competent mechanics.

4           But over the years, with the kind of  
5 badgering that's been going on, good people that were  
6 talented mechanics have found better pastures in other  
7 industries. And although there's a lot of people  
8 servicing cars, there's not a lot of competent  
9 mechanics. I would challenge you, if you have a  
10 serious problem with a car, just go in at random to a  
11 garage sometime and see what happens.

12           MR. PUNT: Okay.

13           MR. TIGUE: Mr. Holsinger, the comments  
14 you've made based on your observations that said,  
15 "The shops where motor vehicle inspections are conducted  
16 are not very busy these days," this seems to be in  
17 direct contrast to Mr. Innis' testimony that in fact  
18 people are keeping their cars longer.

19           MR. HOLSINGER: That's correct.

20           MR. TIGUE: How do you --

21           MR. HOLSINGER: We do not know the reason  
22 why people are not having their cars serviced, but they  
23 are not. We don't know why. We have our busy periods  
24 but we have an awful lot of slow periods. And the

1  
2 shops throughout the state generally are not busy.

3 Now, I might preface that by saying  
4 that if you find a shop who is excellent in their  
5 service and has a good reputation, yes, they are busy,  
6 but I would have to also say that a lot of the service  
7 stations do depend on the vehicle inspection for a  
8 great deal of their revenue.

9 MR. TIGUE: I appreciate your frankness  
10 in that, you know, you're looking at it as an economic  
11 problem more:so than safety; that's what you're saying.

12 MR. HOLSINGER: I can take the safety  
13 problem but I'm not --

14 MR. TIGUE: I understand that. As you  
15 say in your testimony, that was brought up before by  
16 Mr. Packer at previous hearings.

17 MR. HOLSINGER: Right.

18 MR. TIGUE: How would you go about  
19 rectifying the problem of scarcity of qualified  
20 mechanics?

21 MR. HOLSINGER: We need some strong  
22 support, which I think was said earlier by the Chair-  
23 man, that we need to educate the public as to the  
24 real needs of that piece of equipment that they're

1  
2 driving down the road. There needs to be some real  
3 education. The public is not aware of what a dangerous  
4 piece of equipment that they have under them and how  
5 much damage can be done when it goes out of control.

6 I have a daughter that drives and,  
7 believe me, I saw her drive with no brakes and I don't  
8 know how I could drive without brakes. So --

9 MR. TIGUE: I understand that, but I  
10 don't see how that's going to bring up the quality of  
11 the mechanics we have.

12 What I would say -- what I thought your  
13 answer may be would be that maybe we should make the  
14 standards increasingly more difficult to become a  
15 certified mechanic in an inspection station.

16 MR. HOLSINGER: I don't know exactly  
17 how -- I have a lot of ways I could answer that ques-  
18 tion, because we address it all the time in our  
19 industry. We're quite concerned about the lack of good  
20 technicians. And, understand, there are a lot of good  
21 technicians but not nearly enough.

22 How to correct it, we don't feel in the  
23 industry that government is the way to correct the  
24 standards of the mechanic. We feel that our industry

1  
2 has to clean itself up. We need help in doing this  
3 and we need the economics of the business to support  
4 it.

5           You know, in spite of what you might  
6 say, that you can't bring economics into it, no  
7 matter what kind of industry we're talking about,  
8 economics is a very important part about our society.  
9 And even though we try to say that, "Well, we're going  
10 to try to cut the costs to people," that's -- well,  
11 let's face it that it's not going to cut their costs.

12           I happen to live and work -- my business  
13 is in a city that's right next to the State of New  
14 Jersey, and in a very recent conversation I had a dis-  
15 cussion with a man from one of the manufacturers of  
16 drums and rotors. New Jersey sells almost twice the  
17 amount of drums and rotors that Pennsylvania sells.  
18 So the economics does enter into the situation, either  
19 way you want to talk about it.

20           We do a good job of maintaining our  
21 vehicles and we think we should even improve it, not  
22 take it apart.

23           MR. TIGUE: Thank you.

24           MR. STEIGHNER: Mr. Holsinger, previous

1  
2 people have testified before the committee, if I recall  
3 correctly, and they've told us that if we go to once-a-  
4 year inspection, this would be a financial boom to the  
5 industry, that there would be more work involved, more  
6 parts would be needed, the repairs would be of a more  
7 serious nature; therefore, the mechanics would be  
8 working longer and there's more parts purchased and so  
9 on and so forth.

10 What you're telling us, if I'm following  
11 you correctly, is directly opposite to that?

12 MR. HOLSINGER: No. No. I didn't mean  
13 to imply that. I'm talking that interim period, when  
14 the time comes to change it from twice a year, if you  
15 would change it to once a year, you're going to have  
16 an interim period where there's not going to be much  
17 in the way of safety inspections. And it's at this  
18 period of time that we're going to lose these people.

19 Now, coming back after you start the  
20 annual inspections, there's not going to be any economic  
21 loss. In fact, I could argue the point and say that  
22 the industry will benefit with once a year after the  
23 first period of time, but what I'm concerned about is  
24 that timeframe in between there when we lose these good

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

people. How do we get them back in it?

MR. STEIGHNER: What if we staggered inspections throughout the year?

MR. HOLSINGER: Essentially that's what you're talking about, I believe.

MR. STEIGHNER: Exactly.

MR. HOLSINGER: But -- and that will come about, but what are you going to do in that six months or more -- say I had my car inspected today and now I wouldn't have to have it inspected for a year, that would be one thing, but if I had it inspected six months ago and it was put in and I still have another six months additional, now, that six months, no matter when you had it done, would be a lapse period, is what I'm talking about.

MR. DAVIES: You're talking about the reduction, I guess, of 14 million to 7 million inspections, that lapse --

MR. HOLSINGER: For that period of time, yes.

MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. The layoffs you're referring to in your testimony then, they're not what you would see as long-term layoffs?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. HOLSINGER: No, sir.

MR. STEIGHNER: Secondly -- if I'm taking what you're saying out of context, just correct me. You're talking about the economics of the situation. Do you think it's our responsibility to promote a program, be it an unnecessary program -- and who's to determine what's necessary, and I guess that's really the basis of why we're here -- is it really government's responsibility to promulgate an unnecessary program -- God knows, we promulgate enough of them as it is -- but is it our responsibility to promote such a program in order that we keep an industry going, that we keep people working? I don't know if that's a fair question.

MR. HOLSINGER: Well, it's fair only that -- what do you mean promote? By changing it you're not promoting it. You're -- you know --

MR. STEIGHNER: Or we do not have to change it.

MR. HOLSINGER: Leaving it as it is you haven't promoted it; you've only left it as it is, status quo.

MR. STEIGHNER: Sure.

MR. HOLSINGER: But if you do this, now



1  
2 you've taken something away which -- any kind of an  
3 industry, regardless of what it is, a production  
4 industry builds a product because people buy it. And  
5 it might be an unnecessary item, but government wouldn't  
6 be about to destroy that industry and destroy the  
7 employment in it, even temporarily, would they?

8 MR. STEIGHNER: No, but I don't think  
9 it would be our responsibility, even if it is the  
10 status quo, to continue a situation that we are lending  
11 ourselves to or promoting the purchase of unnecessary  
12 products, to use your term.

13 MR. HOLSINGER: Well, I don't know. You  
14 see, I'm just saying that there are industries that  
15 promote products that most of us don't need, and they  
16 go on and government protects them. We are not asking  
17 for protection. We're just saying, don't take something  
18 away which we feel is vitally important.

19 MR. STEIGHNER: That's all for now.

20 MR. TIGUE: But just based on what  
21 you've just said, following up on Joe's question,  
22 government doesn't -- it may protect industries but in  
23 this case we're talking about something that we are  
24 mandating the public to do.

1  
2           If a private concern makes a product  
3 which may not be necessary and they want to buy it,  
4 that's up to them. But what we're doing here is  
5 we're deciding whether or not we should make the  
6 people do something. They don't have a choice in  
7 this.

8           MR. HOLSINGER: There are things that  
9 when my safety on the highway depends on what somebody  
10 else has the privilege of being on the highway and my  
11 safety is dependent upon their safe vehicle, I think  
12 government does have a responsibility.

13           MR. TIGUE: I agree, but based on  
14 testimony -- and I think we can throw out all the  
15 statistics, because like Joe said earlier, red, blue,  
16 yellow, one, two, three, high income, low income --  
17 so it's a matter of choice right now amongst the  
18 legislatures to say this is going to have an effect  
19 or it's not.

20           Let me phrase a question to you: What  
21 would happen if we do go to once-a-year inspection  
22 and there's no increase in fatalities or accidents?

23           MR. HOLSINGER: I don't think --

24           MR. TIGUE: Does that make us right or

1  
2 wrong?

3 MR. HOLSINGER: May I bring you a related  
4 item. It's a matter of four to six years ago, perhaps,  
5 we were told that, by a group that may have went with  
6 all statistics, as to how good no-fault insurance was  
7 going to be for us. What has happened?

8 Now the only people that said it wouldn't  
9 work and it would cost the public a lot more were the  
10 insurance companies, but they were trapped because they  
11 said they had something to gain personally. They've  
12 gained more than they ever lost by no-fault insurance,  
13 and the public's paid through the nose. I know because  
14 I pay through the nose.

15 MR. TIGUE: I agree, but that is not  
16 what we're talking about here. We're talking about  
17 something that if we change, we don't know what's going  
18 to happen, from one side of the coin or the other side.

19 I tend to agree with Mr. Punt that con-  
20 sumers are probably not going to save any money in the  
21 long run. The only question I have personally concerning  
22 this bill right now is, in my own mind, whether or not  
23 it's necessary to bring the car in twice a year. That's  
24 the bottom line as we sit right now.

1  
2                   Economically it is going to affect  
3 garage owners. There's no question about it. That's  
4 another thing that concerns me. But like Mr. Steighner  
5 said, we cannot -- you know, it's not up to us as a  
6 public body to mandate people must buy something  
7 because it affects another group economically. If it in  
8 fact affects everyone, then we have a responsibility.

9                   MR. HOLSINGER: Economics do affect  
10 everybody. When it affects one segment, it affects  
11 all segments to some degree, maybe lesser. But, you  
12 know, is it necessary to have twice a year? In my  
13 opinion it is, from my experience, and I have served  
14 my years as a mechanic and I also have served as an  
15 inspection mechanic.

16                   So I'm not sitting here trying to  
17 represent something that I wouldn't be able to put my  
18 hands on and document it for you if we had to.

19                   MR. TIGUE: Thank you, sir.

20                   MR. MARTINI: Mr. Holsinger, in your  
21 testimony and then in an answer to a question from  
22 Representative Punt, you've led me to make an assump-  
23 tion. Your testimony said first the shops where  
24 motor vehicle safety inspections are conducted are not

1  
2 very busy these days, and then in the answer to  
3 Mr. Punt, you said that the shops with high, reliable  
4 reputations are busy.

5                   You're leading me to the assumption  
6 that the shops that do good work are going to continue  
7 to do a lot of business and the shops that don't are  
8 not going to be there.

9                   MR. HOLSINGER: I might also preface  
10 that by saying, in most cases those shops won't even  
11 do state inspections, that are the busy shops.

12                   MR. MARTINI: Well, in your statements  
13 you said -- oh, okay.

14                   MR. HOLSINGER: In other words, a busy  
15 shop usually has good mechanics. They probably don't  
16 need state inspection. It's probably more of a pain  
17 in the neck than it is a help to them.

18                   MR. MARTINI: Then you're leading me to  
19 another assumption. You're leading me to a second  
20 assumption that your state inspectors -- and I don't  
21 want anybody to take affront to this -- are not your  
22 top mechanics.

23                   MR. HOLSINGER: But let me add to this --  
24 I mean it's an excellent point and I know what you're

1  
2 driving at and that's fine -- but most of the shops  
3 that are dealing in state inspections are specialists  
4 in brake and front end and the safety parts of the  
5 car. They should be required to have good equipment  
6 in order to properly do this job. These are the  
7 places that are going to suffer the most and this is  
8 what I'm talking about.

9           Now, the fact that most shops are not  
10 busy, what has happened with the reduction in driving,  
11 there's just not as much car service, vehicle service  
12 available as there had been, and only the well-qualified  
13 mechanics are getting it. But the well-qualified  
14 mechanics are getting very disgusted with the kind of  
15 changes that are being forced upon them all the time.

16           MR. MARTINI: Which changes are those?

17           MR. HOLSINGER: Well, something like  
18 this has them all upset. Take you to the inspection  
19 meetings and they're all upset, very upset.

20           Frankly, if they hadn't been and I  
21 wouldn't have been asked by them to come and at least  
22 speak for them, I wouldn't have come.

23           MR. DAVIES: Anything else?

24           (No response.)

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: Thank you very much, sir.

I'd also like to note --

MR. HOLSINGER: Thank you for the privilege.

MR. DAVIES: Yes. I'd also like to note for the record that Pat Lawless, the administrative assistant to Representative Lewis, is here from Montgomery County, and she said if she had any questions at all or anything like that, why, for the representative, she'd put them forth.

Okay. Is Mr. D'Andrea -- did we -- not as yet?

Okay. Now, Mr. Roy W. Hanshaw, Director of Public Affairs at Keystone Automobile Club.

MR. WEBER: Mr. Chairman, I'm here representing Mr. Hanshaw. He's unable to be here. He's on jury duty today.

MR. DAVIES: All right, sir. If you would read your name for the record.

MR. WEBER: My name is Jack E. Weber, Jr. I'm director of automotive services for Keystone Automobile Club, Triple A Affiliate, operating in Philadelphia and surrounding counties.

1  
2 MR. WEBER: The Keystone Automobile  
3 Club, with a membership of 345,000 in the five county  
4 area, is an organization concerned with both traffic  
5 safety and legislation that directly affects the  
6 motoring public. Because of this, we address the  
7 issue of reducing the mandatory inspection of auto-  
8 mobiles to once a year. It is our belief that an  
9 annual inspection program will not increase the inci-  
10 dence of motor vehicle accidents.

11 The Pennsylvania AAA Federation Safety  
12 Committee has studied the inspection issue for several  
13 years and found no indication that the semi-annual  
14 inspection system played a role in reducing the number  
15 of accidents or fatalities. Studies which have been  
16 conducted by various organizations to determine the  
17 causes of accidents concluded that human error, not  
18 automobile failure, is the number one cause of acci-  
19 dents. The percentage of accidents due to auto failure  
20 was proven to be minimal.

21 In light of these results, we consider  
22 arguments against this legislation invalid. There are  
23 22 states that operate under the annual system. Five  
24 have random inspection and eighteen have no inspection



1  
2 system at all. If these systems were posing a serious  
3 safety threat, it is doubtful that they would be per-  
4 mitted to continue. Other states which have annual  
5 inspections do not have worse safety records than does  
6 Pennsylvania, and in some cases, their records are  
7 slightly better.

8           Keystone Automobile Club believes an  
9 annual inspection program will bring much needed  
10 financial relief to the automobile owner and strongly  
11 supports the testimony presented by the Pennsylvania  
12 AAA Federation to the House Transportation Committee  
13 favoring passage of HB-562.

14           Gentlemen, I'm open to questions.

15           MR. DAVIES: Mr. Weber, one of your clubs  
16 in Western Pennsylvania at the hearings in Monroeville  
17 did a survey. Did your club or any parts of your club  
18 ever do any kind of survey relative to what the member-  
19 ship --

20           MR. WEBER: We have performed surveys  
21 on state inspection issue. Unfortunately, I don't  
22 have the data as to the results of those surveys at  
23 my fingertips.

24           My recollection, however, is that they

1  
2 were overwhelmingly in favor of annual, as opposed to  
3 semi-annual.

4 MR. DAVIES: Now, do you feel, as being  
5 active in that particular business, that there is the  
6 need for extensive education of the public to preventive  
7 and improve the degree of maintenance regardless of  
8 what program we have or whether it's once a year or  
9 whether it would be random or assuming any particular  
10 changes, even in standards, as far as the state was  
11 concerned, about this, or what's the feeling of either  
12 your management or your membership on that score?

13 MR. WEBER: That's a very broad question.  
14 Permit me to answer it this way: It's our opinion and  
15 my personal opinion that the car-owning public does  
16 need education with respect to the proper mainten-  
17 ance of their automobile. I fail to see, however, the  
18 relationship between education and once-a-year and  
19 twice-a-year safety inspection.

20 The difficulty is, as I believe, the  
21 car owner does not perceive the complexity of the  
22 apparatus that he has at his fingertips. The modern  
23 automobile is a complex device, indeed, and we feel  
24 that ongoing educational programs are necessary to have

1  
2 the motoring public properly maintain that vehicle,  
3 not only from a safety standpoint but from a reliability  
4 standpoint as well.

5 MR. DAVIES: Oh, I realize it's a  
6 general question, but I get scared sometimes when we  
7 get all of the computer readouts on the dash and we  
8 get squeaking brakes and things like that, that we've  
9 had tested only to the effect that they have a ques-  
10 tionable reliability, whether or not there isn't a  
11 correlation between driver safety relative to that  
12 aspect of it that does come with inspection when it  
13 is found to have a faulty part and what they're doing  
14 with the automobile in the last decade, let's say.

15 MR. WEBER: Well, certainly the onboard  
16 diagnostic that the manufacturers are introducing are  
17 not going to impact the safety items of the vehicle  
18 very much because they don't deal with those systems,  
19 largely. In some instances they do, but as an example,  
20 steering misalignment. I know of no onboard diagnostics  
21 that provides any indicator there.

22 Exclusive of some research vehicles, I'm  
23 not aware of any manufacturer that has come up with a  
24 system that will tell me that my brakes are about to

1  
2 fail in terms of brake pads or whatever, brake lining.  
3 There are many components that are safety related that  
4 the only proper way to really determine if they're  
5 marginal is inspection. Okay.

6 In our judgment we think that the Pennsyl-  
7 vania program is a fine program. It's been ongoing for  
8 many, many, many years. I think what we fail to  
9 realize or the public fails to realize, perhaps, or  
10 those opponents of the annual inspection program fail  
11 to realize is the changes in technology in those ensuing  
12 years.

13 I believe safety inspection was intro-  
14 duced in Pennsylvania in 1929. I submit that in 1929  
15 if you got three or four thousand miles out of a tire,  
16 you were doing pretty well. As a matter of fact, by  
17 the time your car hit 20,000, it was ready for the  
18 junk yard.

19 Things have changed. We can drive  
20 40,000 miles on a set of tires with no difficulty  
21 today. Things are much more reliable. Components  
22 are much more reliable. Metallurgy is far improved.

23 The point being that I don't think we  
24 need to inspect things as frequently as we used to

1  
2 to maintain that safe level of safety preparedness.

3 MR. MICOZZIE: Mr. Weber, in the third  
4 paragraph it talks about the states that have it, the  
5 system, the annual system, the semi-annual and those  
6 that don't have it.

7 MR. WEBER: Yes.

8 MR. MICOZZIE: We were talking previous  
9 about the Federal mandate that states that every state  
10 should have some type of an inspection program.

11 Could you tell me why 22 states or  
12 whatever, whatever amount, five states or whatever  
13 doesn't have any kind of inspection if it's a Federal  
14 mandate?

15 MR. WEBER: No. No, sir, I cannot. I  
16 can't answer that question. I don't know why they do  
17 not.

18 MR. MICOZZIE: I have to find the answer  
19 to that because they're so bent on this auto emission  
20 mandate, you know, and there's a mandate that's  
21 probably been on the books for a long time and they  
22 have never enforced it.

23 MR. WEBER: I personally, not absolutely  
24 certain, that it's a mandate in the sense of compliance

1  
2 with the law. I know that the National Highway Traffic  
3 Safety Administration has long been an advocate of  
4 periodic motor vehicle inspection and have funded some  
5 research projects to develop programs which states that  
6 have no experience in safety inspection can adopt and  
7 implement, but in terms of Federal enforcement, I don't  
8 know why.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: I was just wondering, you  
10 know, being involved in the Keystone Automobile Club,  
11 that you might know the answer to that.

12 The other question on -- we've heard  
13 about reports and statistics and analyses and -- okay.  
14 Can you briefly tell me how you made your -- how you  
15 reached the bottom line to state that annual inspections  
16 -- semi-annual inspections are not needed? In other  
17 words, what products -- did you just take the Federal  
18 OBA report; did your club take that report and just  
19 said that the conclusion is that we have to do away  
20 with inspections twice a year?

21 MR. WEBER: No. I think that our  
22 position is largely the result of careful study of  
23 all of the data available. There would be those that  
24 would persuade folks that safety inspections are

1  
2 unneeded and unnecessary and I cannot buy that philoso-  
3 phy personally.

4 I feel that we do have a need for a  
5 periodic vehicle inspection. Our organization feels  
6 that way. I think the reliability of components, I  
7 think the adequacy of existing programs that are annual  
8 programs in comparison to our twice-a-year program that  
9 we conduct in Pennsylvania speaks for itself, and I  
10 think underscores the need for serious consideration  
11 to convert to an annual inspection as opposed to semi-  
12 annual inspection.

13 I might say that we've had some first  
14 hand experience in looking at vehicles at our automo-  
15 tive diagnostic facility in Broomall, and in the  
16 course of the last 14 or so months, we've looked at  
17 the systems of perhaps 8,000 automobiles. These are  
18 automobiles that come in off the street.

19 While the primary purpose of that  
20 facility is not safety inspection, we do cover all  
21 points required in the safety inspection program, and  
22 we get a pretty good handle on what kind of job the  
23 industry is doing in keeping those cars safe.

24 MR. MICOZZIE: If someone's going to

1  
2 make a scientific analysis of inspections in Pennsyl-  
3 vania -- no, throughout the states -- they would  
4 basically go through it in the same manner. I mean --  
5 I'm talking about scientific statistics. I'm not  
6 talking about a random sampling and all that business,  
7 which evidently the Federal government has done and  
8 the OBA has done and your club, which you just said,  
9 has done the same thing.

10 To do it scientifically, you're probably  
11 within the same parameters and guidelines of that  
12 study, okay, but your conclusion is that -- well, I  
13 take it you're speaking for your organization.

14 MR. WEBER: Yes, sir.

15 MR. MICOZZIE: Your conclusion is that  
16 we don't need twice-a-year inspections. Now, we're  
17 looking at the same data now, your computer reports --

18 MR. WEBER: Yes, sir.

19 MR. MICOZZIE: -- you don't need twice-  
20 a-year inspection but we need once-a-year inspection.

21 With the same type of study, the con-  
22 clusion has come from the charts that we've seen a  
23 little while ago, we don't need any kind of inspection  
24 because it has no bearing on the fatalities and the



1  
2 injuries of cars. You know, it just seems to me that  
3 these studies that we keep talking about have to be  
4 studied by somebody, some firm that has no ax to  
5 grind in this whole situation and study the statistics  
6 and give us a clear-cut answer as to what really is  
7 involved in this situation.

8           It just seems to me we got -- I was in  
9 Harrisburg and I was here. These are the only two  
10 meetings. And I already heard about four or five  
11 studies that have been made by your organization, OBA,  
12 and whatever. It just seems to me that the analysis  
13 may not be a scientific analysis that's being stepped  
14 through.

15           MR. WEBER: It's a very complex issue,  
16 sir. I submit that there are so many variables, that  
17 it would be very difficult to come up with a good,  
18 objective conclusion that provides all of the input  
19 and all of the various studies. There are regional  
20 variations that -- as an example, in the northeast  
21 part of this country, we experience a great deal of  
22 damage to the automobile by virtue of the salt we put  
23 on the highways to melt the snow and the ice. In  
24 the southwest they don't have those difficulties. In

1  
2 the northeast we have extremes of heat and cold that  
3 they don't experience again in the southwest in terms  
4 of extreme heat and cold, anyway. So there are some  
5 very, very significant variations that I think would  
6 confuse us even more than ever.

7 MR. MICOZZIE: I have one more comment,  
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 It just seems to me you're in the same  
10 boat as we are. You're representing the membership  
11 of your organization who's -- evidently you must have  
12 taken a poll and probably the same polls that we have,  
13 that I've done with my constituency, that 95 percent  
14 of them don't really care about the safety or whatever;  
15 all they're thinking about, they're going to have a  
16 decrease, they think, in the amount of money they  
17 spend at that station. And I think we're getting the  
18 same thing, and I commend you for representing that  
19 membership. Thank you.

20 MR. MURPHY: I assume, Mr. Weber, like  
21 West Penn, that you issue insurance for your members  
22 or have insurance programs?

23 MR. WEBER: We have an insurance sub-  
24 sidiary.

1  
2 MR. MURPHY: Would you be willing  
3 unequivocally to say that if we went to once-a-year  
4 inspection, that the insurance rates would not go up?

5 MR. WEBER: No, I could not say that.  
6 Frankly, I couldn't say that there would be any rela-  
7 tionship.

8 MR. MURPHY: There would be no relation-  
9 ship, is what I'm saying. What I'm saying is the  
10 insurance rates would not go up if we went to once-a-  
11 year inspections.

12 MR. WEBER: It would be my opinion that  
13 the once-a-year inspection would not impact the actuar-  
14 ial experience that the insurance industry realizes.  
15 That would be my opinion, I think.

16 MR. MURPHY: Does your insurance compon-  
17 ent of your company have any experience with that in  
18 other states?

19 MR. WEBER: No, we do not, not that I  
20 can speak about, with certainty.

21 MR. MURPHY: Thank you.

22 MR. PUNT: Mr. Weber, I agree with much  
23 of your written testimony and with some of your com-  
24 ments. In particular, I agree with you when you say

1  
2 on page 1 that human error is the number one cause of  
3 accidents and not automobile failure.

4 MR. WEBER: Yes, sir.

5 MR. PUNT: I agree wholeheartedly with  
6 that. I believe that must be considered, as far as  
7 the safety maintenance inspection program's concerned  
8 in Pennsylvania.

9 On page 2, however, I do question  
10 something, and it goes back to an area I've been ques-  
11 tioning all along. On page 2 you say, an annual  
12 inspection program will bring about much needed  
13 financial relief to the automobile owner. Now, that's  
14 the part that I question.

15 In view of all the testimony and all  
16 the comments and pros and cons from both mechanics and  
17 everybody involved, I believe the financial relief that  
18 would be realized would be a result of people, if the  
19 bill became law, if the public brought their car in  
20 periodically for preventive maintenance. Okay. Now,  
21 that's how I see financial relief coming about.

22 If that motorist does not bring their  
23 car in, with the exception of the time of their inspec-  
24 tion, annual inspection would be due, conceivably it's

1  
2 going to cost them more money for the replacement of  
3 parts and labor charges and so forth.

4 Is that your definition of financial  
5 relief?

6 MR. WEBER: No, it is not. Let's assume,  
7 for argument's sake, that a tire is going to wear in a  
8 given number of miles, regardless of whether you look  
9 at it once a year, twice a year or twelve times a year;  
10 it's still going to wear at approximately the same rate.

11 The savings that the motorist will  
12 realize may be indirect, in effect, because he will  
13 not have to transport his vehicle to an inspection  
14 station; he will not have to tie it up for a day or  
15 two days or whatever, and he won't use the time from  
16 his place of employment and so forth. That savings,  
17 per se, is going to be substantial, multiplied by the  
18 number of millions of motorists that we have in the  
19 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

20 Suffice it to say that the parts that  
21 will require replacing are going to require replacing  
22 at approximately the same rate. Now, it may be that  
23 standards may have to be changed so that wearout will  
24 not occur prior to that twelve-month interval. We

1  
2 concede that.

3 We think, however, that the opportunity  
4 for replacing the shock absorbers that don't need  
5 replacing and replacing of other components that don't  
6 need replacing is in fact going to be reduced.

7 MR. PUNT: It's obvious we have a  
8 difference in savings, in definition of savings.

9 MR. WEBER: Yes, indeed. It's interest-  
10 ing to note that when the safety inspection was  
11 changed to an annual basis for certain classes of motor  
12 vehicles, almost without exception the inspection fees  
13 charged by the industry doubled. So was there any  
14 savings there? There was still a savings.

15 MR. PUNT: The administration is stating  
16 \$61 million savings because we're going to reduce one  
17 of the inspection periods, and I strongly disagree  
18 with that, because I see nothing but an increase in  
19 inspection fees, unless we legislate otherwise.

20 MR. WEBER: (Indicates affirmative.)

21 MR. PUNT: That's all.

22 MR. STEIGHNER: Mr. Weber, in other  
23 words, your organization supports House Bill 562;  
24 correct?

1  
2 MR. WEBER: That's correct.

3 MR. STEIGHNER: Along with that  
4 support and to get back to what Representative Punt  
5 just touched on, when you mentioned about much needed  
6 financial relief, you would also support doubling the  
7 cost per inspection from one to two dollars?

8 MR. WEBER: Doubling the cost of the  
9 sticker?

10 MR. STEIGHNER: Yes, per inspection.

11 MR. WEBER: Yes, we would support that.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: Okay. I very strongly  
13 try, want and hope to believe that we are making  
14 better parts and we're making them better today.

15 My Chevette sits out in this parking  
16 lot today with a third fanbelt since Sunday evening  
17 in it, and it's difficult for me -- you had mentioned  
18 something about tire mounts.

19 MR. WEBER: Yes. I submit you don't  
20 have a problem with fanbelts. You've got a problem  
21 with the automobile. Okay. The probability of  
22 three fanbelts failing in that period of time without  
23 some other contributing factor is extremely remote.

24 MR. STEIGHNER: That would still go back

1  
2 to my concern because the car only has 6,000 miles on  
3 it.

4 MR. WEBER: Yes.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: You had mentioned about  
6 40,000 miles per tire or hopefully a person would get  
7 40,000 miles.

8 MR. WEBER: I'm saying that it is not  
9 unreasonable that a person could expect to get 40,000  
10 miles out of a tire; that's correct.

11 MR. STEIGHNER: I don't know if anyone  
12 gets 40,000 miles.

13 MR. WEBER: Top-quality radial tire?

14 MR. STEIGHNER: Top-quality radial tire.

15 MR. WEBER: I can show you several that  
16 have been removed from a GM product, mid-size, and  
17 have 56,000 on it and still pass safety inspection.

18 MR. STEIGHNER: You had mentioned that  
19 your organization supported the bill. Did you do a  
20 mailing survey or a phone survey or how many responses  
21 did you get?

22 MR. WEBER: No. The survey that was  
23 done was done in Keystone Motorist, which is our  
24 monthly newspaper, and again, unfortunately, I don't



1  
2 have the statistical results of that. There were a  
3 number of questions asked in the course of that.

4 MR. STEIGHNER: It was overwhelming  
5 support?

6 MR. WEBER: Support, yes, sir.

7 MR. STEIGHNER: Do you recall how many  
8 responses there were?

9 MR. WEBER: I don't have those statis-  
10 tics. I did not personally see them. My public  
11 affairs director did.

12 MR. STEIGHNER: That's okay.

13 MR. WEBER: There was support for the  
14 annual inspection as compared to bi-annual.

15 MR. STEIGHNER: That's all.

16 MR. DAVIES: George?

17 MR. SAURMAN: I have no questions.

18 MR. MICOZZIE: Run that by me again,  
19 Jack, what you said about the only savings that you  
20 see for the motorist is the savings that he wouldn't  
21 have to bring his car to the station?

22 MR. WEBER: I said that that is a  
23 savings, but, unfortunately, that sometimes is an  
24 indirect expense. It's like sitting in a traffic jam

1  
2 for two hours. What cost to the industry is that? And  
3 we're dealing with a similar kind of situation.

4 The expense, the fuel consumed getting  
5 from the person's home to the inspection station, the  
6 time that the car is there, the transportation difficulty  
7 back and forth is one indirect cost that could be  
8 saved.

9 MR. MICOZZIE: Very insignificant though,  
10 don't you think?

11 MR. WEBER: (No response.)

12 MR. MICOZZIE: I mean, you know, you're  
13 talking about -- I don't want to belabor the point but  
14 I think --

15 MR. DAVIES: You're talking about seven  
16 million vehicles.

17 MR. MICOZZIE: I don't know.

18 MR. WEBER: Okay. The second area --

19 VOICE: If you're not getting any  
20 maintenance. If you're getting maintenance, that takes  
21 time too, doesn't it?

22 MR. WEBER: That's right.

23 MR. DAVIES: Any other questions?

24 (No response.)

1  
2 MR. DAVIES: All right. Mr. Bart  
3 Casiello, executive director, Pennsylvania and Delaware  
4 Service Station Dealers Association.

5 MR. CASIELLO: Mr. Chairman, and  
6 Committee Members, my name is Bart Casiello. I am the  
7 executive director for the Pennsylvania and Delaware  
8 Service Station Dealers Association.

9 Our organization cannot support the  
10 administration's position on annual auto inspection.

11 We believe that the Pennsylvania auto  
12 inspection program, as it stands, is the finest in the  
13 country. It does need improvement and refinement.

14 At the hearing in Harrisburg we heard  
15 testimony and comments to the effect that too many  
16 stickers have been stolen in the mails; no fewer acci-  
17 dents in Pennsylvania due to mechanical failure than  
18 in states without mandatory or limited vehicle inspec-  
19 tions; senior citizens objected to paying for two  
20 inspections; the rip-off scenario and that new cars  
21 need not be inspected during the first year.

22 Service to the motorist has been the key  
23 to our success in our segment of the industry. Compe-  
24 tition has geared our members to perform the various

1  
2 services necessary to maintain a vehicle, at a minimum  
3 cost, in a safe and trustworthy condition.

4 It has been our experience that the  
5 more often we see a vehicle, the better are the chances  
6 of detecting a minor problem before it becomes a major  
7 one, resulting in considerable savings to the motorist.

8 As a result of semi-annual inspection  
9 and the diligence employed by the inspection mechanics,  
10 the motorist had the benefit of his expertise which  
11 enabled him to travel troublefree together with his  
12 family throughout this grand nation of ours, providing  
13 economic benefits wherever they went.

14 Through the years the motorist has  
15 come to rely upon our integrity and diligence to look  
16 after his best interests in relation to maintenance  
17 costs and the highway safety of his family.

18 It is with this purpose in mind that I  
19 testify here today. I have been an automobile mechanic  
20 for the past 28 years of which the last 16 years I  
21 have been a licensed state inspection mechanic. The  
22 Roger Penske Leasing Company testified in Harrisburg,  
23 regardless of what the state does insofar as the state  
24 inspection program, they will continue to inspect their

1  
2 vehicles at least twice a year. They have determined  
3 that preventive maintenance saved the company consider-  
4 able sums of money, well in excess of the labor costs  
5 involved. We concur with their rationale because our  
6 experience has borne this out.

7 Highway conditions after a hard winter  
8 bear a heavy toll on the auto. You cannot measure  
9 wear and safety factors solely on miles driven without  
10 regard to the type of driving and the road surface  
11 conditions.

12 Pothole or washboard road surfaces  
13 greatly accelerate the wear and life of shocks, tires,  
14 suspension and brake systems.

15 The administration's proposal of no  
16 inspection on new cars for the first year is shocking.  
17 It is difficult for me to believe that such was con-  
18 sidered in view of the fact that the new car manufac-  
19 turers have made numerous recalls to correct safety  
20 defects in recent times.

21 When I inspected a new car for the first  
22 time, it worried me greatly because I felt Murphy's  
23 Rule would apply.

24 It did apply rather drastically one

1  
2 evening a few years ago. A brand new auto with less  
3 than 3,000 miles on it was rejected by an employee of  
4 mine because it had four bad tires on it. The plies  
5 had separated. This incident occurred one year prior  
6 to it becoming public knowledge that a major tire  
7 manufacturer had produced and distributed a defective  
8 tire line. The car owner thought we were crazy.  
9 However, when she was shown the condition of the tires,  
10 she was most grateful for our diligence. That car  
11 was an accident on the way to happen. Statistically  
12 it will never appear. Fortunately we were able to  
13 prevent a drastic event. In this instance the ounce of  
14 prevention was worth the pound of cure. I would like  
15 to believe that the tire recall by this particular  
16 manufacturer stemmed from the early warning by way of  
17 the Pennsylvania inspection program and serves as an  
18 outcrop of the program. Premature wear on suspension  
19 system components on new cars and the advisement to  
20 motorists of the car manufacturer's warranty coverages  
21 is also a plus to the system and a direct saving to  
22 them.

23 My blood virtually boils when I hear  
24 the phrase rip-off. Especially so when it is used to

1  
2 cast ugly meaning onto the station operators and  
3 mechanics, who are honest, reliable people who have  
4 been performing a noble service to the public. We may  
5 have a few, a very few unscrupulous operators, and how  
6 they have survived is a puzzle to me.

7           No motorist is obligated to have repairs  
8 done to his car by the inspecting mechanic. He is  
9 only obligated to pay the inspection fee. Consequently,  
10 I cannot understand how anyone can honestly claim to  
11 have been ripped off.

12           I suggest therefore that the regulations  
13 insist upon prior customer approval must be obtained  
14 before any repairs are made. This affords the automo-  
15 bile owner the opportunity to say no and to get a  
16 second opinion.

17           I have insisted upon this procedure by  
18 my employees and have found that it eliminates a consid-  
19 erable amount of controversy. The better business man  
20 operates in such a fashion and we have quite a few in  
21 our organization.

22           I cannot agree with the senior citizen  
23 who wishes to forego one inspection for economic rea-  
24 sons. At an advanced age, their reflexes being slowed,

1  
2 should be all the more reason for operating an automomo-  
3 bile with maximum safety checks and precautions.

4           It is my opinion that every motorist  
5 to whom the state issues a driver's license is being  
6 licensed to commit manslaughter each time he sits in  
7 the driver's seat.

8           Consequently, I deem it the obligation  
9 and duty of the members of the legislature to provide  
10 its people with the assurance that all that is possible  
11 is being done to provide maximum safety on its highways  
12 and neighborhood thoroughfares to pedestrians as well  
13 as fellow motorists.

14           Is the state going to adopt the Ford  
15 Pinto attitude that it is cheaper to pay some claims  
16 than to correct the fault?

17           Which of you is willing to accept the  
18 dubious honor of telling a maimed child or one who  
19 lost his father, mother or kin that the injuries or  
20 loss of loved ones is strictly statistical? Who's  
21 going to pay? Would you spend \$10 or so to protect  
22 your family? I would. Thank you.

23           MR. DAVIES: Do I get the inference that  
24 the second opinion is supposed to substantiate the



1  
2 minimum cost, your claim to the minimum cost?

3 MR. CASIELLO: Well, it's been stated  
4 that the motorist would save approximately \$10 by  
5 elimination of one inspection fee. That's what I'm  
6 addressing back to.

7 MR. DAVIES: Oh, okay. All right. And  
8 the troublefree, you're speaking in generalities there  
9 again as far as your saying that the relative matter  
10 of incident of repair or something like that is rela-  
11 tively troublefree --

12 MR. CASIELLO: I think you had to take  
13 into the nature of our location of our businesses. A  
14 minimum of 85 percent are neighborhood garages and  
15 service stations and they tend to the needs of the  
16 neighborhood. So that these people get to know the  
17 motorist; they get to know the automobile and they're  
18 in a lot better position doing a semi-annual type of  
19 inspection to ascertain what potential problems the  
20 customer may have.

21 We used to see people travel coast to  
22 coast by automobile with their family. Well, they  
23 trusted the dealer to check the automobile thoroughly  
24 so that they would not have a problem, because just

1  
2 imagine getting stuck in Arizona.

3 In 1974 I took my family on a tour of  
4 the mid-west and it took me three days to find a man  
5 that had the tools to adjust my power steering belt,  
6 and then I had to tell him how to do it. So what we're  
7 looking at here, where people -- the automobile -- this  
8 country runs on the automobile, and they travel  
9 throughout the country, seeing this great land of ours,  
10 and it's an educational factor for the children to  
11 get an idea of what their country is like, and you  
12 can't afford to have somebody hung up out in the middle  
13 of the desert somewhere because of something that  
14 wasn't -- or was neglected. And the cost involved  
15 there would far exceed maybe the cost of repairing the  
16 item in the first place.

17 So, you know, we have a multitude of  
18 safety items here that have to be considered. The  
19 public doesn't understand it so --

20 MR. DAVIES: There's no question like  
21 that, just like -- if anyone's to be quoted as far as  
22 what Penske said, wherever somebody else is using a  
23 vehicle in rental, short time lease or anything like  
24 that or where you're using a vehicle in shift, commer-

1  
2 cially, and you get in that vehicle and you don't go  
3 down a check list or something like that, you're a  
4 damn fool for getting into it or driving it or not hav-  
5 ing that feel of the vehicle, whether it's a family car  
6 or what it is.

7           And I still maintain that we have never,  
8 ever scratched the surface on our concern about safety  
9 there. We've never educated the public to it, and that  
10 for somebody being in education -- I'm not saying that  
11 some of the safety programs or the driver ed programs  
12 haven't endeavored to do that, but I think we're failing  
13 there and we always have failed there.

14           And as far as our own maintenance of  
15 their own vehicle, other people reiterated the same  
16 thing here today. You know, I think we've missed the  
17 boat there, not just from the aspect of the family  
18 driving the car. I think that for my own concern about  
19 either commercial, school vehicle, whether it be the  
20 bus or it be the other vehicle, whenever you put some-  
21 body else -- or a company car and there are more than  
22 two or three drivers to that car, or maybe even a second  
23 driver, automatically you get into a different ballgame  
24 now.

1  
2                   That's my personal feeling about it. And  
3 I was trying to get a correlation or some kind of rela-  
4 tionship between what you're saying about the family  
5 aspect of it and the matter of it's troublefree. I just  
6 had maybe problems with the terminology. I don't know.

7                   I understand what you're saying. Overall  
8 use as far as somebody depending upon a local neighbor-  
9 hood person that they have had a bond of business with  
10 over a period of time is essentially the way I inter-  
11 pret what you're saying, relative to troublefree motor-  
12 ing.

13                   MR. CASIELLO: Yes. The trouble would  
14 be definitely minimized because -- but if there were  
15 broken glass or metal on the highway and they drove  
16 over it, that wouldn't be the fault of the station  
17 operator. That just happened to be a road condition.

18                   I think what we're finding here is that  
19 the man that's most conscious insofar as his maintenance  
20 of the automobile is concerned, is one that has matured.  
21 We have a great deal of teenage children that sit  
22 behind an automobile and even a brand new car with  
23 everything to its maximum safety limits on it, and  
24 is a hazard on the road. You put this same child behind

1  
2 the wheel of an automobile that only has to go for an  
3 inspection period of one year, you've got problems.

4 MR. MICOZZIE: Well, Bart -- his organiz-  
5 ation is within my legislative district in Yeadon, and  
6 I have been talking to the members. So I have no  
7 questions. We'll be talking much more as time goes  
8 on.

9 MR. MURPHY: No.

10 MR. PUNT: Why not.

11 Mr. Casiello, Do I pronounce that right?

12 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

13 MR. PUNT: Much of your testimony orients  
14 towards preventive maintenance; am I correct in that?

15 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

16 MR. PUNT: I didn't have a copy. I was  
17 listening to you as you were going through it. Am I  
18 correct in that?

19 MR. CASIELLO: Preventive maintenance,  
20 yes, and also from the motorist's standpoint. I think  
21 the motorist really hasn't been represented here, I  
22 don't believe, in the true sense of the word.

23 MR. PUNT: On the early part of your  
24 testimony -- here on page 1 I see it -- you used --

1  
2 mentioned a Roger Penske --

3 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

4 MR. PUNT: -- Leasing Company. Regard-  
5 less of this bill becoming law or not, they're going  
6 to continue to inspect their vehicles, their fleet,  
7 twice a year.

8 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

9 MR. PUNT: Which is good, you know, as  
10 part of the preventive maintenance to continue with  
11 that.

12 Can we not still have -- now, forgetting  
13 -- forget about the public's attitude, education or  
14 awareness -- could we not have adequate safety-  
15 oriented vehicles on our highways if people chose to  
16 bring their cars in periodically?

17 MR. CASIELLO: Extremely small percentage  
18 would do it.

19 MR. PUNT: No. I'm not asking that. If  
20 the people did that, we could still accomplish what we  
21 are accomplishing now through a twice-a-year inspection,  
22 could we not?

23 MR. CASIELLO: I think it's like hoping  
24 that --

1  
2 MR. PUNT: Could we not do that? Could  
3 we not accomplish that if people brought their cars in  
4 on their own initiative?

5 MR. CASIELLO: Well, yes, if they did,  
6 diligently, yes.

7 MR. PUNT: Now, realistically, a lot of  
8 people won't.

9 MR. CASIELLO: That's true.

10 MR. PUNT: At the present time, anyhow.

11 If this bill became law, how would you  
12 recommend that we could educate the public as far as  
13 making them aware, educate them in the importance of  
14 bringing that car in? How could we get -- say if we  
15 did this and the department or the legislature or  
16 your association or somebody, the AAA Club, decided  
17 to undertake an effort to educate the people to continue  
18 bringing that car in on a periodic basis, how could we  
19 approach that?

20 MR. CASIELLO: I doubt if you'll ever  
21 be successful in it, because if you take the last  
22 two weeks, maybe the last week of any given inspection  
23 period, and you go around and visit the inspection  
24 stations, you'll see the results of the lack of

1  
2 initiative on the part of the motorist to do what he  
3 should do when he's got 90 days or six months in which  
4 to get a vehicle inspected and he waits till the last  
5 week. It just won't happen.

6 MR. PUNT: I don't know; do you have a  
7 garage; do you inspect --

8 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

9 MR. PUNT: -- yourself? Do you have a  
10 certain, regular clientele of customers?

11 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

12 MR. PUNT: You have a certain regular  
13 amount of those people that bring their car in regular-  
14 ly?

15 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

16 MR. PUNT: You don't have to remind  
17 them that their inspection period is due?

18 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

19 MR. PUNT: How many do not? How many  
20 do you have to remind?

21 MR. CASIELLO: Well, I'd say --

22 MR. PUNT: Just a percentage, an idea.

23 MR. CASIELLO: You'd have to -- at  
24 least 50 percent.



1  
2 MR. PUNT: 50 percent of your customers,  
3 your clientele, take it upon themselves to bring their  
4 car in to have it inspected --

5 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

6 MR. PUNT: -- rather than waiting till  
7 the last week or the last three days or whatever.

8 MR. CASIELLO: Only because -- you have  
9 to justify this by saying that it is a neighborhood  
10 station. It's not conducive to transient traffic. So,  
11 consequently, it's based in the neighborhood and serves  
12 the neighborhood. I'd say 98 percent of it is the  
13 neighborhood trade.

14 MR. PUNT: I think that would be the case  
15 with most of your inspection stations. Most of the  
16 people will take it to a station within their neighbor-  
17 hood or their town to have it inspected. They're not  
18 going to take it 50 miles to some other town or on a  
19 trip.

20 MR. CASIELLO: No. That shouldn't  
21 necessarily hold true, because a man takes his car to  
22 where he works, an area where he works. That's not  
23 neighborhood.

24 MR. PUNT: Okay. That's all.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: You say about 90 percent?

MR. CASIELLO: 90 percent of what?

MR. DAVIES: Of your business is that type?

MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

MR. DAVIES: And do you have any figures from your industry that --

MR. CASIELLO: I couldn't justify any kind of response for anyone else other than myself in this particular question.

MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

MR. TIGUE: Mr. Casiello, let me ask you, what type of system does the State of Delaware have?

MR. CASIELLO: I'm not sure, but I don't believe it's mandatory.

MR. TIGUE: Just out of curiosity, in your organization, that is the State of Delaware, not Delaware County?

MR. CASIELLO: Delaware. State of Delaware.

MR. TIGUE: Does there seem to be any concern from the mechanics within your association in the State of Delaware to institute a semi-annual inspec-

1  
2 tion?

3 MR. CASIELLO: No.

4 MR. TIGUE: According to the figures  
5 given to us by the Department of Traffic Safety, 36  
6 percent of the cars which come into your garage,  
7 according to the study they've done from the '431's,  
8 has needed repairs. That includes all repairs from a  
9 lightbulb to major repairs.

10 In your experience is this high, low, or  
11 about the same, or would you say more cars that you  
12 inspect need repairs or --

13 MR. CASIELLO: I believe those -- well,  
14 that figure probably included automobiles that were  
15 a year or less old.

16 MR. TIGUE: You're right. I don't know  
17 if you were here, but I think when Mr. Pachuta testi-  
18 fied, I think that 36 percent included all vehicles  
19 that were inspected, whether they were new, old, but  
20 they're saying 36 percent needed some type of repair  
21 when they were inspected before they could pass inspec-  
22 tion.

23 Would you agree with those figures or  
24 would you dispute them?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. CASIELLO: That would seem --

MR. TIGUE: Based on your experience.

MR. CASIELLO: That would seem rather low.

MR. TIGUE: What would you say would be in the ballpark figure? I know that you can't answer that exactly.

MR. CASIELLO: If you got into the minor things, like replacement of bulbs and the light, you can get up as high as 75 percent. You say, well, what's a bulb? But it's a repair. Or headlight aim.

MR. TIGUE: Is there anything in the state regulations which in your opinion should not be included in the safety inspection? And the second part of that would be, on the other hand, is there anything that is not included that you personally think should be included?

MR. CASIELLO: Well, you do have some body requirements in the state regulations that really have no significant nature. Three-quarter inch rust-out spots somewhere on the body, if it were on a roof or on the trunk deck or the upper portion of the fender, where would it impose a safety hazard? Unless

1  
2 you were to deliberately go and run your finger across  
3 the body of the automobile and insert it in the hole.

4 I don't think there are too many items  
5 in which -- that was really safety related that you  
6 could eliminate from the inspection program.

7 As was testified earlier, you had a  
8 statement where maybe an accident was caused because  
9 the sunlight hit the windshield at a certain time and  
10 the windshield was dirty. Well, did the man use common  
11 sense and, say, put on his windshield washers to clean  
12 his windshield and be sure his windshield was clean  
13 and clear? So you can't eliminate -- you say, well,  
14 what's a windshield washer mean in relation to safety  
15 of an automobile? Well, an incident -- it's not going  
16 to cause you to stop any faster or the like, but at  
17 least it will give you a better view of the road.

18 MR. TIGUE: Have you or members of your  
19 organization considered any changes in standards for  
20 inspection if in fact this is adopted, the annual?

21 For instance, right now there's one-  
22 thirty-second brake lining, required in semi-annual  
23 inspection. If we would go to annual, have you con-  
24 sidered changing that one-thirty-second?

1  
2 MR. CASIELLO: Well, we'd be only too  
3 glad to sit down and get a committee together and sit  
4 down with the inspection division and go over the pro-  
5 gram to put our input into it.

6 MR. TIGUE: One last comment: I feel  
7 exactly like you do, that people will -- most people  
8 will bring them in when it's -- it's just like your  
9 furnace. No one calls the plumber until you don't  
10 have any heat. And I think most people -- it's a  
11 natural tendency to wait till the last minute to get  
12 repairs done.

13 I would imagine -- and maybe you will  
14 agree with this -- that people who do bring their cars  
15 in to you do so not to get them checked but to get some-  
16 thing fixed. Now, I'm not talking for inspection.

17 MR. CASIELLO: Well, we find the younger  
18 element has a tendency of bringing the car in and they  
19 want to know what's wrong with it and they want to do  
20 it themselves, and they bring it back for reinspection,  
21 and 80 percent of the time there's something wrong  
22 with the type of workmanship that was performed.

23 MR. TIGUE: Okay. But I'm not speaking  
24 right now about inspection. What you said prior or a

1  
2 little while ago was that you had -- a large part of  
3 your clientele brings their car in periodically.

4 MR. CASIELLO: Yes.

5 MR. TIGUE: What I'm saying -- would you  
6 agree with me that when I say that most of them out of  
7 that group, that 50 percent that comes in constantly,  
8 don't come in and ask you to check to see if there's  
9 something wrong; they come in because there is something  
10 wrong?

11 MR. CASIELLO: That's hard to classify  
12 in that fashion. They may know that there is a problem.

13 MR. TIGUE: They know there's a problem  
14 but they may not know what's wrong.

15 They don't come in unless they have a  
16 problem; how about if I phrase it that way?

17 MR. CASIELLO: Well, maybe through a  
18 discussion they may say that it seems to be something  
19 wrong with the car, whether it's safety related or not,  
20 and then you check it out for them. But those are the  
21 people that are safety-maintenance conscious.

22 MR. TIGUE: Right. Okay. Thank you,  
23 sir.

24 MR. STEIGHNER: Nothing.

1  
2 MR. DAVIES: Any other questions?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. DAVIES: Thank you very much.

5 Mr. Stuart Peifer, Metropolitan Lancaster  
6 Automotive Association.

7 MR. PEIFER: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman  
8 and Members of the House Transportation Committee's  
9 Subcommittee for Highway Safety. My name is Stuart C.  
10 Peifer, President of the Metropolitan Lancaster Autom-  
11 tive Association, and with me I have two of our directors,  
12 Mr. Ray Harnish and Mr. Ray Martin. Both are licensed  
13 inspection mechanics and owners of their own businesses.  
14 So if there's any technical questions, we have people  
15 who know the answers.

16 Our membership consists of new and used  
17 car and truck dealers, independent repair shops and  
18 wholesalers in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

19 We wish to take this opportunity to ex-  
20 press our appreciation to testify and explain our  
21 thoughts relative to House Bill No. 562.

22 We are concerned with both safety and  
23 costs as related to our Pennsylvania motorists. First  
24 of all is safety, and we wish to stress the fact of



1  
2 maintaining the twice-a-year state inspection aids in  
3 discovering deteriorated exhaust systems and car  
4 bodies before deadly exhaust fumes may enter the  
5 passenger compartment.

6 Present inspections also reveal premature  
7 wear to braking surfaces and systems to prevent dan-  
8 gerous problems.

9 So simply put, the longer a vehicle goes  
10 without an inspection, the greater possibilities exist  
11 that a failure will occur before being detected. Hence,  
12 a car that is checked twice a year has a better chance  
13 of having a dangerous condition being found and corrected  
14 in a repair shop rather than in an emergency situation  
15 as opposed to a car being inspected only once a year.

16 Second is cost to the owner. The present  
17 state inspection system specifies reasonable standards  
18 to be sure a vehicle will be able to go from one  
19 inspection period to another with a good chance of not  
20 having a failure.

21 Once-a-year inspection will require  
22 additional standards such as deeper tire tread, an  
23 increase in minimum brake lining to permit a vehicle to  
24 be operated for the extended period.

1  
2                   In order to insure safety for the  
3 higher mileage drivers, inspection standards would have  
4 to be increased. If standards are increased, it would  
5 be necessary to replace parts such as brake lining  
6 and tires before they are actually worn out.

7                   This, needless to say, will increase  
8 the cost to the average vehicle owner.

9                   Should the inspection standards be  
10 maintained while increasing the inspection to an annual  
11 basis, parts will wear out before the end of the inspec-  
12 tion period and further damage will occur to the vehicle.  
13 For example, not only could brake linings wear out, but  
14 this could cause damage to major components such as  
15 brake rotors and brake drums, requiring replacement of  
16 these expensive items.

17                   Therefore, should the once-a-year inspec-  
18 tion as proposed become law, whether the standards  
19 remain the same or set higher, the expense to the average  
20 vehicle owner will increase.

21                   We wholeheartedly suggest the present  
22 twice-a-year inspection program be maintained.

23                   Our last suggestion is to permit super-  
24 vision of the inspection program to remain with the

1  
2 Pennsylvania State Police. Presently this program is  
3 well policed and, for an example, an inspection station  
4 can lose its license and/or the involved mechanic could  
5 have his driver's license affected by doing improper  
6 reporting or faulty work.

7 In closing, we sincerely request serious  
8 consideration should be given to our suggestions and  
9 points of view in determining the future course of our  
10 present twice-a-year program, the best and model program  
11 of all the 50 United States.

12 I have with me qualified inspection  
13 mechanics and dealers and we hope to satisfactorily  
14 answer your questions.

15 MR. DAVIES: Well, you put one on the  
16 state police that they don't want really. That's just  
17 a matter of testimony that we've had.

18 The differential between the figures  
19 again on this is not old hat, but that 36 percent as  
20 compared to trying to weed out what you find in your  
21 experience, in your experience, in your experience  
22 and your experience (indicating), what do you think  
23 is the figure that -- or do you have any figures that  
24 do change that figure dramatically?

1  
2 MR. PEIFER: May I refer to the two  
3 gentlemen on my left. I'm in the parts business. I'm  
4 a motor parts wholesaler and I'm not in the garage  
5 repair business, per se. These gentlemen are and they  
6 can give us an answer to that question.

7 MR. DAVIES: So what are you -- do you  
8 usually -- what figure would you expect as to the  
9 frequency of repairs as compared to that figure that  
10 we've been questioning for a long session.

11 MR. MARTIN: They're including minor  
12 repairs, in other words, any repairs --

13 MR. DAVIES: I guess we'd have to say --  
14 you'd have to comment on where you think the percentage  
15 is and what is included in that percentage.

16 MR. MARTIN: I would say mine runs  
17 about probably 75 percent.

18 MR. DAVIES: And that's everything?

19 MR. MARTIN: That's an estimate. Yes.

20 MR. DAVIES: Of the priority items,  
21 what percent, those that are there on the must list for  
22 inspection?

23 MR. MARTIN: You're saying such as  
24 brakes and this kind of thing?

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: Yes.

MR. MARTIN: You might be talking more like steering and brakes and this kind of thing, 25 percent, maybe, in the major -- well, including exhaust, which would be another -- you might be -- there you might be talking more near that 36 percent.

MR. DAVIES: Around that 36 percent.

In your experience?

MR. HARNISH: I agree with that.

MR. DAVIES: You agree with that. How do you compare your figures with the 2,700, that figure per year? Are you in that ball park or -- that we had in prior testimony?

MR. MARTIN: I don't believe I heard that testimony.

MR. PEIFER: We might not have been here, sir.

MR. DAVIES: We had testimony I think this morning that someone did about 2,700 a year, I believe it was; is that correct?

VOICE: If you're referring to mine, 1,700 a year.

MR. DAVIES: I'm sorry. I thought it

1  
2 was 2,700. I stand corrected.

3 What are your figures compared to that  
4 in inspections per year in your business, in your --

5 MR. MARTIN: Mine are right near 800.

6 MR. HARNISH: I range about 700, 750.

7 MR. DAVIES: I don't know; I see a  
8 trend then, a similarity in percentile between those  
9 that are the items that are -- that those what we're  
10 calling safety related -- not that the others are not --  
11 major safety related. Maybe I'm safer with that than  
12 using -- they're all safety -- they could all be con-  
13 strued as safety because of the lighting and so forth  
14 and so on, even the bulbs.

15 Well, the other one is I guess too much  
16 conjecture. I'll pass with that because of the figures.

17 MR. MURPHY: No.

18 MR. DAVIES: Tom?

19 MR. TIGUE: Just a comment really, and  
20 it's based on the state police. I think, sir, you were  
21 the first one, including the state police, who have --  
22 who has testified that, one, they are doing the necessary  
23 job in enforcing regulations, and that's kind of sur-  
24 prising.

1  
2 MR. PEIFER: Well, may I say this to  
3 you: We in Lancaster County, our organization, we  
4 annually hold a meeting for our inspection stations in  
5 the county, provided that two troopers review the  
6 state inspection code with the mechanics, and we hold  
7 this over at the Ephrata Legion. You get a hall  
8 large enough to keep all the mechanics in there. We  
9 have in the vicinity of four or six hundred people that  
10 show up.

11 And we have a good equation and we  
12 really feel that we have two excellent officers in  
13 Lancaster County. They're fair. In fact, fall of  
14 last year one of the officers made a remark pertaining  
15 to a school bus fleet that -- and it bounced around,  
16 and I guess, you know, what happened this spring, and  
17 he was on top of it. He knew about it. They're  
18 excellent people and we have a good equation with  
19 them. And to my knowledge they have never said that  
20 they wanted -- they'd rather go on road patrol rather  
21 than inspection.

22 And they have a good equation with the  
23 garagemen too. The garagemen know they're tough. In  
24 fact, I have one of my very good customers who lost

1  
2 his inspection station license because of a faulty  
3 inspection, and he had to admit the officer was right,  
4 you know, and it took him -- I don't know what -- is it  
5 four months or something till he could get it back.

6           But they're fair and I mean I'm not here  
7 to go pat people on the back, but those two gentlemen  
8 do an excellent job in Lancaster County. We have a good  
9 relationship with them. They put on a good program for  
10 us and we educate the garagemen at the new program.  
11 Usually October and November is when we'll have the  
12 next session, usually in the fall of the year.

13           MR. TIGUE: Just getting back to major  
14 items, if it's agreed -- and there may be opposition  
15 to 36 percent -- but just sitting here, thinking about  
16 that, that means that if the same cars are not dealt  
17 with during an inspection period, they can actually --  
18 30 percent of the cars, almost 30 percent in one year  
19 of two inspections have no repairs; is that correct?

20           MR. HARNISH: Sir, in reference to that,  
21 in many cases today we find, because of our cost of  
22 material, parts and labor, you know, a lot of people tend  
23 to fix their own car and then bring it back to you for  
24 a state inspection. There's --



1  
2 MR. TIGUE: I agree with that.

3 MR. HARNISH: Pardon?

4 MR. TIGUE: I definitely would agree  
5 with that. And, unfortunately, someone -- I think  
6 Mr. Casiello brought it up before -- some people who  
7 are doing it really do not have the knowledge or  
8 ability to do it properly.

9 MR. HARNISH: Plus the fact also they're  
10 using generic parts on brand -- you know, and a lot of  
11 times those parts under stress and stuff are not holding  
12 out. I mean I find it in my repair shop very much,  
13 things like a ball joint or something, you know, and  
14 they come back to you and say, "I have a funny noise.  
15 Here, you check it out, and here's a ball joint they  
16 put in six, eight weeks ago."

17 MR. STEIGHNER: Mr. Peifer, how often  
18 do the state police who are assigned to Lancaster  
19 County show up with an unannounced visit to an inspec-  
20 tion station?

21 MR. PEIFER: That I can't answer. They --  
22 these gentlemen -- I do not have --

23 MR. HARNISH: Twice a year.

24 MR. STEIGHNER: They're there twice a

1  
2 year?

3 MR. HARNISH: They come in, check your  
4 records, walk around your shop.

5 MR. STEIGHNER: Unannounced?

6 MR. HARNISH: Yes. You don't know it  
7 until you see them drive in.

8 I think that should be probably the  
9 procedure throughout the state. I don't know, but  
10 that's --

11 MR. STEIGHNER: I'm not so sure that  
12 it's that often. I think we heard earlier back in  
13 Pittsburgh where it may be only once a year.

14 That's all I have.

15 MR. DAVIES: It was intimated in Pitts-  
16 burgh that it may be less than that, depending upon  
17 load, which is something that everyone has to take  
18 into consideration as well.

19 Any other questions?

20 MR. SAURMAN: Did I understand that  
21 generic parts can fail within six to eight weeks after  
22 installation? Once or twice-a-year inspection, then,  
23 would not prevent the use of such materials from  
24 causing failure, and it would seem that something, some

1  
2 regulation should be considered at least for those  
3 kinds of parts if this is in fact something that's  
4 happened.

5 MR. PEIFER: May I say one thing in  
6 reply: The Federal government had a parts-return  
7 program, and they had mailed us a big bag and so forth  
8 to send back defective parts that, per se, are  
9 chronically a problem. Our manufacturers have always  
10 worked with me as far as my business goes. We get  
11 replacements; there's no problem. Everything can have  
12 a problem. I don't care what -- even a doctor can  
13 diagnose a patient improperly. But when we have  
14 something mechanically fail, we get an adjustment on  
15 that.

16 But they just terminated that program  
17 because they just had, within the last month, requested  
18 that we return the bag to Washington. No longer are  
19 they going to keep that program up. Apparently it  
20 wasn't too productive, for all the expense involved.

21 There's only one thing I'll mention,  
22 gentlemen, in closing, and that is I have three points  
23 that, in the short time I've been here, listening to  
24 the conversation and testimony: There's one little

1  
2 thing we must remember: I don't believe in jamming  
3 things down people's throats, but people will not  
4 willingly and voluntarily take their automobile in to  
5 be inspected just for an inspection. I'm speaking of  
6 preventive maintenance. They know there's an inspec-  
7 tion period and, as was testified before, they wait  
8 till the last week or two.

9           The last week of an inspection period  
10 my store goes bananas. I could have three or four  
11 trucks shooting parts out to all sections of Lancaster  
12 where right now we're in the slow period. You see what  
13 I mean? Okay.

14           The other thing is, the automobile club  
15 when I first joined in 1948 had a program whereby if  
16 you had a failure, you could call on them for help.  
17 They would come out and help you. Recently -- well, in  
18 recent years -- I can't tell you just exactly how far  
19 back it goes -- they now stipulate that unwarranted  
20 calls -- so apparently they're realizing too and  
21 finding the basic facts of life, that there's more  
22 failures in vehicles; they're getting more complaint  
23 calls and the same one, two, and three people are going  
24 to call for a half a dozen tow jobs and no longer are

1  
2 they going to be responsible for this. But they put it  
3 in their literature that the unreasonable numbers of  
4 calls will no longer be paid for. Okay?

5           There's one other little thing I'd like  
6 to mention, and that is, the car fleet in Pennsylvania.  
7 As you know, new car sales are not what they should  
8 be, this nationwide. And nationwide the car fleet is  
9 getting older. Okay. But with Pennsylvania state  
10 inspection, when out of state used car dealers need  
11 cars for their lots, they come into Pennsylvania to  
12 buy from our dealers because our cars are premium, in  
13 most cases, premium used cars. We don't find automo-  
14 biles going down the highway with the fender all  
15 rotted out and flapping like the wings of a big bird  
16 going down the highway.

17           I have been over in Long Island recently  
18 and when you see the vehicles abandoned along the road  
19 and you see what's in some of the other states and then  
20 you see some of Ohio's and so forth, I'm saying, "Boy,  
21 I'm glad I'm back in Pennsylvania."

22           You know, we have the best program of  
23 all of our 50 states, and somebody always has to go  
24 shooting at us. If they could just let it alone and

1  
2 let us go, we've got a good program; we have a good,  
3 well-maintained car fleet.

4 A car is the individual's second most  
5 expensive investment in his lifetime. He's taking  
6 care of it better in Pennsylvania than other states,  
7 and as a result when it comes trade-in time, he gets  
8 more value for it than if it's a rusted out, old hulk  
9 someplace else.

10 We thank you, gentlemen, for your time.  
11 If there's any other questions --

12 MR. DAVIES: No. The only comment I  
13 have is that I'm responsible and I'm not taking shots  
14 at anybody. I'm sincerely interested in trying to  
15 make a determination of where --

16 MR. PEIFER: Oh, sure.

17 MR. DAVIES: -- it's at, and that's the  
18 reason we're having the hearings.

19 MR. PEIFER: We appreciate the opportu-  
20 nity of being permitted to testify, sir.

21 MR. TIGUE: I just have one comment. I  
22 think it's a general understanding from everyone that  
23 the tendency is to always wait. I just have one quick  
24 question: If you owe the state money, when do you file

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

your income tax?

MR. PEIFER: Do I owe the state money?

MR. TIGUE: If you owed money in your income tax, when would you file it?

MR. PEIFER: Well --

MR. TIGUE: You don't have to answer that.

MR. PEIFER: No, no. I'm going to tell you this, really. I'm not pulling any punches. I rely on an accountant for my -- to take care of my taxes, and when he tells me what it is, we write the check out and he even mails it for me. It's as simple as that.

MR. STEIGHNER: We appreciate that you don't wait as long as the state does to reimburse you.

MR. PEIFER: Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

Really -- this is off the record discussion really -- it has nothing in relation -- but what you brought up there, there would be more competition in bidding and better prices for the state in some respects if they brought their payments up to schedule. We who must pay suppliers in the tenth prox,

1  
2 we can't wait 90, and 120 days for our money. If some-  
3 body up there would go and get their heads together  
4 and get the little bit of the thing squared away, they  
5 could probably get a lot more competitive bidding if  
6 we who supply them were paid immediately or within 30  
7 days.

8 Thank you, gentlemen --

9 MR. DAVIES: Another comment.

10 MR. MARTIN: If I may make one more  
11 comment, I'm sure a lot of people feel the reason we  
12 from the auto association are here is because of our  
13 business, afraid of losing business. Generally, at  
14 least in our area, I've talked to a lot of garage  
15 people in my area, and, as for the business, I see  
16 the once a year as a plus for us people.

17 We are concerned about safety and  
18 customer costs, and this is really the main reason  
19 we're testifying. If it was for, I was only concerned  
20 about my business, I wouldn't have taken the time to  
21 come down here today, because I can see it as a plus  
22 in our business, plus the staggered system we would  
23 love. But we're here for the concern of the customer,  
24 as far as everybody's safety and expense to the



1  
2 consumers. The way the economy is, they have a hard  
3 enough time paying their bills as it is and we hate to  
4 see them get much higher.

5 MR. DAVIES: Thank you. Any others?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. DAVIES: Mr. Stan Stephenson,  
8 Editor-in-Chief, Chilton's Motor Age Magazine, Radnor,  
9 Pa.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: I appreciate the  
11 opportunity to be here today, and since we're running  
12 about 15 minutes ahead of schedule, I don't feel quite  
13 as embarrassed about the fact that I have a 20 page  
14 presentation. I'll read fairly quickly for you.

15 My name is Stan Stephenson. I am the  
16 Editor-in-Chief of Chilton's Motor Age Magazine. Our  
17 editorial and publishing offices are located in Radnor,  
18 Pa. We are a national magazine written and distributed  
19 for the automobile service businessmen-mechanics of  
20 the nation. Our monthly national circulation is  
21 approximately 135,000, and of that number approximate-  
22 ly 10,500 or so copies are distributed to automotive  
23 service business operations in the state.

24 In making this testimony presentation on

1  
2 the subject of the Pennsylvania periodic motor vehicle  
3 inspection program, I would like to state at the outset  
4 that neither Motor Age nor I personally hold a partic-  
5 ular brief for either a once-a-year program or for a  
6 twice-a-year program. I would, however, like to make  
7 a few comments and observations about the philosophy,  
8 and perhaps even some realities, of PMVI as they might  
9 relate to the situation in our state.

10 The concept of checking vehicles for  
11 unsafe operating or component condition as these might  
12 relate to or affect vehicle safety, I'm sure most would  
13 agree, is a sound one. That is, it appears to be  
14 sound by the very nature of why we would want to detect  
15 unsafe or potentially dangerous cars on our highways.  
16 The problem with measuring the effectiveness of the  
17 Pennsylvania PMVI program, however, lies in the fact  
18 that we really cannot tell if PMVI is significantly  
19 reducing accidents due to elimination of motor vehicle  
20 or component defects. And that's unfortunate, because  
21 in the absence of such measurable evidence, it is  
22 easy, almost logical, to jump to the conclusion, absent  
23 such evidence, that PMVI is not improving the safe  
24 condition of motoring for all of our citizens. The

1  
2 fact that the now well-known so-called Crain Study,  
3 by W. Mark Crain, and released last year by the  
4 American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Re-  
5 search, argues that motor vehicle safety inspection  
6 programs have no discernible effect on improving  
7 highway safety, does not put to rest the question:  
8 Is Pennsylvania's PMVI program effective?

9                   While an eminent work of statistical  
10 analysis, the Crain Study is basically a mathematical  
11 modeling digest of other material from many other  
12 sources that only proves the point that statistical  
13 data can be made to say almost anything, in this case,  
14 that PMVI programs are not effective in that they do  
15 not categorically deliver safer highways for maximum  
16 consumer benefit.

17                   Perhaps what we should be trying to  
18 answer with the Pennsylvania PMVI program is the  
19 question: Does our PMVI effort ensure the operation  
20 of safer cars on the state's highways? And the answer  
21 to this is double-barrelled: Yes, when the program  
22 is properly operated according to the regulations and  
23 when the vehicle inspections are done by the book,  
24 Pennsylvania's PMVI program can and does ensure that

1  
2 better operating condition cars are returned to the  
3 highways. Whether they are safe or not, or safer or  
4 not, is a matter that is open to so many variables that  
5 it is almost impossible to measure, and we cannot  
6 answer this second point with either a yes or a no.

7           Driver competence, driver attitude,  
8 road conditions, weather conditions, time of the year,  
9 all are outside factors that impinge on the question  
10 of safety. In fact, the very term safe is ambiguous  
11 at best and not in any finite sense something that is  
12 guaranteed as being absolutely achievable, because a  
13 safe operating practice to one person may be a totally  
14 unsafe operating practice to another.

15           A major and obvious omission in the  
16 Crain findings, I submit, is the fact that there does  
17 not now exist any nationally standard and uniform  
18 method for evaluating and analyzing the actual cause  
19 and effect of highway accidents. The very methodology  
20 of accident analysis is essentially forensic in nature  
21 and cries out for standardization. Yet this is one way  
22 in which evidence might be gathered, according to a  
23 standard, to clearly indicate what causes accidents and  
24 why.

1  
2           Accident investigation is so varied in  
3 its conduct from community to community, from county  
4 to county and even from state to state, that that part  
5 of the Crain Study which relies on accident investiga-  
6 tion data analysis for part of its conclusion, I  
7 suggest, should be dismissed, dismissed because of the  
8 absence of a nationally uniform method of equating all  
9 of the factors that might or might not have caused  
10 an accident, especially when PMVI's effect should be  
11 to render less hazardous vehicle conditions because  
12 of improved component condition as a direct result of  
13 detecting and correcting faulty or marginal components  
14 that might lead to unsafe operating conditions for that  
15 vehicle.

16           If twice a year PMVI checks are not  
17 desirable because it cannot be proved that inspected  
18 cars are kept up to better operating conditions  
19 thereby, compared with a less frequent periodicity,  
20 then one must ask oneself why, in an arena of vital  
21 consumer safety, such as commercial aviation, does  
22 the aviation industry not reduce its safety operating  
23 costs by cutting in half the number of safety inspec-  
24 tions it performs on passenger-carrying aircraft? The

1  
2 savings to traveling passengers, and certainly to the  
3 airlines, would probably be in the billions of dollars,  
4 taking as a whole over an operating year. But would  
5 aviation be safer? I doubt it.

6           So then, if we can agree that the concept  
7 of checking motor vehicles for defect conditions, as  
8 these might affect public safety, is a sound one, let  
9 us move to another criticism of our state's PMVI pro-  
10 gram. And that next topic might be fraud, or to use  
11 the current jargon, rip-off.

12           Does the Pennsylvania PMVI program sub-  
13 ject car owners to fraud and rip-off? And has that  
14 ever been measured and analyzed in any significant way?  
15 Unfortunately the answer is no. I will not dignify  
16 newspaper and TV actions in the area of doping a car  
17 with defects and reported on how that vehicle got  
18 through the inspection process or how so many different  
19 cost levels of repair estimates came to be offered.  
20 This is spectacular journalism that makes for good  
21 audience reaction, mostly negative in favor of the  
22 implication of fraud, by whoever's definition that is,  
23 but it is far removed from significantly measuring  
24 automotive repair or PMVI quality.

1  
2           Is the public so dissatisfied with  
3 automotive service that it constitutes a large area  
4 of fraud and rip-off on the car-owning public? Appar-  
5 ently not, if we look at a study completed by the Federal  
6 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration within  
7 the past 18 months. Released late last year, NHTSA  
8 found that when asked to rate satisfaction with recent  
9 automotive service purchases on a basis of one through  
10 ten, ten being the highest favorable measurement, some  
11 63.6 percent of all surveyed stated that they rated  
12 recent automotive service purchased as a ten. And  
13 in the same study 90.2 percent of all car owners rated  
14 recent automotive service purchases at a level of  
15 seven or better.

16           This is hardly a condemnation of automo-  
17 tive service as perceived by the consumers who have  
18 bought it recently. This, however, does not totally  
19 respond to the subject of fraud within the Pennsylvania  
20 PMVI program. Perhaps we might all agree that the most  
21 flagrant fraud in Pennsylvania's PMVI effort would be  
22 the illegal sale of counterfeit or stolen stickers,  
23 which does go on from time to time, despite the best  
24 and most honest efforts to control this kind of criminal

1  
2 activity.

3           Of course, steps may surely be taken  
4 to stop this kind of thing, but I would suggest that  
5 no system is absolutely perfect and someone is sure to  
6 try to find a way to subvert any control system.

7           Then the next level of PMVI fraud might  
8 be the practice of selling a sticker to someone who  
9 needs one in order to continue driving a car which they  
10 know can't make it through another inspection period.  
11 At least with the current twice-a-year program, we are  
12 making it more of a double exposure for those who sell  
13 such stickers than we would be doing by moving to a  
14 once-a-year check. You can be sure that practice of  
15 the sticker selling will continue. We would, however,  
16 only make it easier for such participants if we were  
17 to adopt a once-a-year effort, and those cars which  
18 get such stickers would obviously become even more  
19 neglected in terms of their operating condition, and  
20 who knows what increased level of hazard we would be  
21 subjected to by making it easy this way.

22           Another aspect of the fraud or rip-off  
23 challenge to the present PMVI program lies in the area  
24 of car owner redress in the event of complaint. In a



1  
2 recent check of Pennsylvania drivers, I personally found  
3 that of 25 asked, only six knew how to register a com-  
4 plaint with the program or its executors. That could be  
5 interpreted as barely more than 20 percent of our  
6 state's car-owning consumers understand or know the  
7 way they can have PMVI complaints resolved. I submit  
8 that the state itself has been negligent in the extreme  
9 by creating a means of satisfaction that has not been  
10 adequately notified to the motoring public.

11           It would be a major step forward if the  
12 PMVI regulations would include a provision that all  
13 inspection centers be required to post a prominent  
14 sign in both the shop area and in the customer waiting  
15 area of any professional service facility, that would  
16 clearly in large letters spell out the means that could  
17 be employed to register a PMVI-related complaint, down  
18 to including any appropriate address or even an 800  
19 toll-free number for consumer use.

20           No shop which performs PMVI checks that  
21 I am aware of would resist such public notification.  
22 This kind of mandatory notice posting would be in  
23 everyone's interest, and any PMVI facilities or shop  
24 owners who would resist such a requirement, then these

1  
2 might very well be the kinds of operations which we  
3 could do without in the program as it exists today.

4           On the matter of improving what we have  
5 rather than modifying it in any significant way, it  
6 might be well to consider another major area of over-  
7 sight that has gone on for many years. That is the  
8 safety systems of cars that are involved in repairable  
9 accidents. We should, I believe, have a provision in  
10 the law that would mandatorily put a car out of inspec-  
11 tion compliance if any of its PMVI affected systems  
12 or components are damaged in a reportable accident.  
13 This would then call for them to be repaired and rein-  
14 spected prior to returning the car to service, for  
15 maximum assurance that vehicle safety needs are being  
16 attended to.

17           We must also educate the public to the  
18 values of the PMVI program, something that is little  
19 attended to today. If we have safety PMVI in Pennsyl-  
20 vania for reasons of consumer benefit or protection,  
21 then we should be informing them through public service  
22 media messages in print, radio and TV, of why the pro-  
23 gram is good for them and one they should support.

24           One other area of improvement that

1  
2 should be attended to, because it has been ignored in  
3 major measure, lies in the records that are gathered  
4 from the inspection stations as to reason for vehicle  
5 rejection. This is probably a gold mine treasure trove  
6 of material that well could point to ways of improving  
7 the program. The problem with this record gathering,  
8 as I have been led to believe, is that it is sent up  
9 to Harrisburg and nothing, or rather relatively little,  
10 is done with it. In all of this I ask that we attempt  
11 to improve what we have with the data and techniques  
12 available to us.

13           As with sticker anti-counterfeiting  
14 measures we might take, no system or program will ever  
15 be perfect, but let us strive to make what we have  
16 better, step by step, for the greater public good.

17           In the area of technical competence,  
18 the present program of inspection mechanic meetings  
19 seems to be quite effective. However, with the advent  
20 of much more specialized technology in all automobiles  
21 over the past six or seven years, it might be advisable  
22 to include one more step to ensure that only technical-  
23 ly competent service mechanics be allowed to work on  
24 motor vehicles operated in the state. This would be

1  
2 to require, in addition to inspection mechanic meeting  
3 attendances and related credentialing, to also require  
4 that PMVI mechanics be certified in at least two of the  
5 safety component areas of National Institute for  
6 Automotive Service Excellence Mechanic Certification.  
7 These would be in brakes and also front end.

8           Attachments to this presentation outline  
9 the NIASE Program, and the two training booklets my  
10 company produces for self-study might further clarify  
11 this point for you. The requirement that NIASE certi-  
12 fied mechanics in brakes and front end areas of service  
13 work be considered will only further enhance the compe-  
14 tence levels of Pennsylvania's thousands of inspection  
15 mechanics for the greater motoring and general public's  
16 good.

17           So far we have not considered the cost  
18 of any program modification. This must be a significant  
19 area of concern and consideration. With approximately  
20 seven million cars registered in our state, the present  
21 twice-a-year program has the appearance of a \$140  
22 million price tag to consumers, assuming the average  
23 inspection fee at an inspecting shop to be \$10.

24           If this is cut to a once-a-year program,

1  
2 our Governor has already projected consumer savings of  
3 some \$61 million -- I guess that should have been  
4 changed. That is not -- this, I suggest to you, is a  
5 deception, pure and simple. The costs, up front and  
6 hidden, to our state's car owners will likely be consid-  
7 erably more because there is no cost benefit in allowing  
8 vital mechanical systems to deteriorate because of  
9 reduced mandatory inspections.

10           Then, too, I understand that the inspec-  
11 tion sticker fee is proposed to rise from its present  
12 \$1 to \$2, just so that the state can maintain its cash  
13 flow at a \$14 million level. Also a typo there, I  
14 regret. I also understand that it is likely that the  
15 vehicle registration fee will also no doubt go up to  
16 cover some aspect of PMVI administration or to make up  
17 a cash flow shortfall. Even if this registration fee  
18 hike is only \$1 -- and that is a modest figure in the  
19 extreme -- that's another \$7 million revenue increase  
20 and clearly outside the purview of the Governor's pro-  
21 jection of a \$61 million reduction to the consumer.

22           The fiscal fandango over this issue alone  
23 will most likely be of considerable proportions, and  
24 all the consumer now seems to be headed for is more cost

1  
2 for what, in real terms, will be less delivered if we  
3 do go to a once-a-year program. It certainly looks as  
4 though we may well be served a bureaucratic and political  
5 rip-off of considerable proportions. After all, if we  
6 end up getting less, it is unreasonable that we should  
7 be expected to pay more for it, especially since a  
8 PMVI inspection program is not a finite resource that  
9 has a known stockpile limit to it, as is certainly the  
10 case with crude oil.

11           It has also been suggested that our  
12 state's senior citizens would be hit by the added ex-  
13 pense of program changes, should they occur. If this  
14 is a serious consideration, and it may very well be,  
15 then perhaps you should be looking at providing relief  
16 for these people from the entire price of the sticker.  
17 I would not suggest they be relieved, however, of the  
18 need to pay for the shop's inspection labor or any  
19 needed repairs found in order to have their vehicles  
20 pass. These are normal costs that should be borne by  
21 them as owners of cars.

22           In the absence of seeing the new  
23 inspection procedures handbook, I cannot foresee any  
24 need to expect an increase in the price of shop labor,

1  
2 except for adjustments in that price that would arise  
3 from the operations of a business in overhead, energy  
4 and so on. If the inspection calls for similar com-  
5 ponent checks as now prevail, then the time to do a  
6 once-a-year check should not take, say, twice as long  
7 as a twice-a-year check. So that portion of the  
8 inspection fee probably will not change much, if at  
9 all.

10                   Therefore, all of the proposed once-a-  
11 year inspection fee price hikes may be expected to  
12 come from the increased price of the sticker and  
13 whatever additional price might be applied to the  
14 vehicle registration fee, should that be introduced  
15 under separate legislation. The state therefore seems  
16 to be getting all of the price increase, and I ask,  
17 why does it need it when all the state's car owners  
18 are getting is less?

19                   However, to go back to the initial focus  
20 of what your concerns are in this matter, should the  
21 state continue the twice-a-year PMVI program or should  
22 the state cut PMVI back to a once-a-year effort, we  
23 have not considered the matter of cost benefit to the  
24 motorist. It is a fact of maintenance life, whether

1  
2 we are inspecting a motor vehicle or whether we are  
3 examining a food packaging piece of equipment or a  
4 sewing machine, the more frequently we check any  
5 mechanical device's operating condition, the more  
6 readily we will be able to catch defects when they  
7 are small and less costly to correct than if we  
8 allowed periodic checks to be so spread out that minor  
9 defects become catastrophic or only more costly.

10           In the latter case cost benefits to the  
11 consumer are reduced in benefit and most often greatly  
12 increased in cost. It is an established fact that in  
13 general automotive service today, there is an estimated  
14 \$12 to \$15 billion in undone but needed service driving  
15 around in passenger cars and light trucks. This has  
16 come about because of the growth of self-serve gasoline  
17 outlets and the decline in numbers of full-service  
18 outlets. Car owners are filling up as they always have  
19 done but they are not now checking or having checked  
20 under the hood, oil levels, drive belts, hoses, battery  
21 cables, battery water, transmission fluid and the like  
22 as frequently or as conscientiously as they have done  
23 in the past.

24           That estimate on undone automotive ser-



1  
2 vice comes from the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers  
3 Association, a respected market analysis organization  
4 active within the automotive service aftermarket.

5           This development, benign neglect on the  
6 part of the car owner and an insensitivity to his motor  
7 vehicle's need for service, is indicative, I believe,  
8 of what would happen if we went to a once-a-year pro-  
9 gram of PMVI. You see, while the motor car represents  
10 a sizeable expenditure on the part of every car owner,  
11 his familiarity with it and apparent contempt for its  
12 service need is a result of years of conditioning to  
13 the fact that a car is an indispensable and necessary  
14 adjunct of daily life. We can hardly live without  
15 them because they are the only mass transit system in  
16 the nation that truly works. Cars are what we depend  
17 on to take us from where we are to where we need to  
18 be. And while making them do that by driving them,  
19 America's motorists have forgotten about their cars'  
20 service needs, by and large.

21           I believe a move to a once-a-year PMVI  
22 program will only compound that kind of neglect. One  
23 only has to look at the typical vehicles that find  
24 their way to an inspection station in the last ten days

1  
2 of any inspection period. These are generally the  
3 vehicles their owners have neglected to the point of  
4 despair. One only has to consider the effect of an  
5 extended program that would allow such cars to continue  
6 operating for another six months while being subject to  
7 another six months of benign neglect.

8           On the matter of cost benefit to the car  
9 owner, neglected service items only become more expen-  
10 sive service items. And on that matter it is beyond  
11 me why the professional service industry does not  
12 support any and every move to switch to a once-a-year  
13 program of PMVI. There is no doubt in my mind that  
14 all state inspection operations will sell a lot more  
15 service, and a lot more expensive service, if we adopt  
16 the once-a-year proposal. They will enjoy this added  
17 business volume because that benign neglect will be  
18 making their market for them. Cars and components will  
19 be allowed to run to greater levels of repair need, and  
20 the \$400 brake job and the \$300 exhaust system job  
21 will be commonplace, because rather than catching prob-  
22 lems when they are small and correctable at minimum  
23 expense, they will be allowed to become major defects,  
24 ultimately repairable at major cost. No cost benefit

1  
2 in that for any motorist. But the state's service  
3 dealers should be on their knees begging you to approve  
4 the once-a-year program, because I believe they will  
5 profit by it significantly.

6 As with so many other topics today, the  
7 consumer and our political representatives are looking  
8 for ways to get government off our collective backs.  
9 A laudable goal as long as the baby is not thrown out  
10 with the bath water. It is my distinct feeling that  
11 the subject of Pennsylvania's PMVI program is one such  
12 potential throw-out.

13 Vehicle safety is an important issue,  
14 otherwise why would the Federal government have estab-  
15 lished the U. S. Department of Transportation, have  
16 established the National Highway Traffic Safety Adminis-  
17 tration and have promulgated the Federal Motor Vehicle  
18 Safety Standards that have led to design and construc-  
19 tion of safer cars for all of us?

20 And then for this state to water down  
21 that combined effectiveness of effort by reducing a  
22 proven program for some imagined improvement in the  
23 consumer welfare from a valuable and cost benefit  
24 efficient twice-a-year periodicity to a once-a-year

1  
2 level? It simply does not make sense and is most  
3 unlikely to maintain whatever level of safeness there  
4 is in the cars that now operate on our state's roads.

5           While not part of your concerns in this  
6 matter, there is also the impending arrival in 16  
7 counties of exhaust emission checks through an estab-  
8 lished I&M, inspection and maintenance program,  
9 scheduled to be held on a once-a-year basis. This  
10 must seem excitingly appealing to many legislators  
11 who believe that PMVI can and should be dropped in  
12 its frequency to match and mesh with the once-a-year  
13 I&M proposition.

14           I would submit that for maximum fuel  
15 conservation, reduced fuel costs and air quality  
16 effectiveness, what you should be striving for is a  
17 retention of the present twice-a-year PMVI program onto  
18 which should be added in those 16 counties a twice-a-  
19 year I&M check. Because if we check exhaust emissions  
20 once every six months, we do two things: We maintain  
21 better control of ambient air quality for the public  
22 health and we deliver cost benefits to our motorists  
23 who buy and consume gasoline, because we will then be  
24 able to alert them to declining fuel efficiency from

1  
2 their cars' engines, thus saving the consumer money as  
3 well as conserve gasoline for national and state energy  
4 policy implementation.

5           As a consumer I can live with a once-a-  
6 year PMVI program, but you can be sure I will be  
7 checking those needed service items because I am tuned  
8 in and I fully understand the implications and costs  
9 to my wallet of benign service neglect. Unfortunately,  
10 not many of our state's car-owning citizens are as  
11 sensitized, and they, like you, must believe they are  
12 about to be relieved of a massive inconvenience in  
13 which they seem to have little confidence. That, in  
14 the final analysis, may be the ultimate condemnation  
15 of the politicization of this important public safety  
16 issue.

17           I urge you to consider what you are about  
18 to do and to ask yourselves if perhaps we should not  
19 avoid trying to adopt a once-a-year program of PMVI in  
20 terms of reducing automotive accidents and instead be  
21 trying to respond to the issue of whether or not a  
22 twice-a-year PMVI program does not ensure better cost  
23 benefits to all of our state's car owners as well as  
24 ensure that safety is maintained through the proven

1  
2 principle of more frequent and effective vehicle in-  
3 spections such as we now enjoy with the existing pro-  
4 gram.

5 I appreciate your attention. Thank  
6 you. I'm ready to answer any questions.

7 (Brief pause.)

8 MR. DAVIES: I thought it was 14 counties,  
9 not 16 counties.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: I beg your pardon. I  
11 may be in error.

12 MR. LANDIS: They dropped two.

13 MR. DAVIES: They dropped two.

14 MR. LANDIS: Up in the northern area.

15 MR. DAVIES: You were going so rapidly  
16 I didn't even get it marked down.

17 MR. STEPHENSON: I beg your pardon.

18 MR. DAVIES: That's all right. I  
19 should have put -- oh. The level of need and the  
20 \$400 brake job and the \$300 exhaust, again the matter  
21 of, I guess, percentile, what are you saying -- would  
22 you make a projection as to or a guesstimate, or do  
23 you have any facts or figures from other states that  
24 have gone from what they had to this system that would

1  
2 give any validity to those increased costs?

3 MR. STEPHENSON: Not directly, sir, but  
4 I would answer that question in this way: The Pennsyl-  
5 vania program, as far as the points it covers in the  
6 examination of the vehicle, is really very thorough  
7 and it's probably the best by far of any state in the  
8 nation. In fact, I'm sure it will stand the test of  
9 time and examination against any other state's proced-  
10 ure.

11 Therefore, if other states are not  
12 inspecting cars to the level of effectiveness that we  
13 are now doing, they are probably not finding or  
14 measuring to detect outages that we are doing here.  
15 And my only comment about projecting the \$400 brake  
16 job is that aspect of benign neglect. What we're  
17 dealing with here is the human element, just as you  
18 are involved in the deliberations on this issue.

19 And in all of the judgment factors that  
20 have to be employed by the inspecting mechanic in  
21 deciding, is that a marginal item; is it going to sur-  
22 vive for another six months or another year, these are  
23 all things that you have to make judgment calls on.  
24 And, yes, I think benign neglect is a serious, serious

1  
2 matter. That \$12 to \$15 billion figure in undone  
3 service I think is indicative of the public's attitude  
4 of letting it go, not really taking care of it as you  
5 need it. The perception is, I'm going to be driving  
6 less; I'm not going to go on vacation this year; the  
7 cost of gas is so high so I don't think I really need  
8 to take the car and get this done; I'm not going to  
9 drive it that much. But the wear goes on and the  
10 hazards or rather the accelerated wear of the items  
11 continues.

12 MR. DAVIES: The reason I asked that is  
13 -- and I can go from personal experience, and I've done  
14 that just with a lease, mobile office in which I faced  
15 one of those expenses, and I said to the gentleman,  
16 how could you give me the unit if it had been inspected  
17 properly and had been put out on the street with proper  
18 inspection, that I was safe that within a very small  
19 period of time, driving and mileage as well, both time  
20 and mileage, and I of course insulted his integrity  
21 when I raised the question and I raised his fur, but  
22 nevertheless, I still don't have an answer to that  
23 particular problem that I had with a unit that I use  
24 as a mobile office.



1  
2                   And then when we start talking about  
3 percentages, then I have a question as to how we relate  
4 those percentages to that rate of incidence, and then  
5 we start getting projections as far as you say are  
6 reliable in your industry of \$12 to \$15 million by  
7 people not looking under the hood.

8                   I get some of the same inner stirrings  
9 as I do when people don't answer those questions when  
10 I put them to them about current problems of maintenance,  
11 because just -- or another factor, that I may well take  
12 that thing in at 10,000 miles an hour in that ten-day  
13 period that they're talking about, because -- and I  
14 become a statistic, but I'm not going to gripe about  
15 that statistic because I take it in at that particular  
16 time, because I feel as if I know what I'm doing, even  
17 though I can't get an agreement that time or mileage  
18 is a factor; see?

19                   And then I have trouble with that other  
20 -- you know, with the statistics that you used there  
21 with that 12 to 15 million projection, you know,  
22 question marks.

23                   MR. STEPHENSON: If I may just --

24                   MR. DAVIES: If I don't look at the

1  
2 study and I don't see that study, I have some problems  
3 with that kind of projection.

4 MR. STEPHENSON: As a matter of fact,  
5 it's not 12 to 15 million.

6 MR. DAVIES: Billion. I'm sorry.  
7 Billion.

8 MR. STEPHENSON: I would just say one  
9 thing about the time and mileage thing that you brought  
10 up earlier, and I was surprised that nobody else had  
11 addressed that particular question to a much greater  
12 degree, the level of expertise we have from the indus-  
13 try here.

14 The most serious and aggravated wear  
15 takes place on cars that travel short trips. The long,  
16 20,000 mile a year, 25,000 mile a year driving is  
17 easiest, finest and best guarantee of longevity. The  
18 short-trip driving is what kills cars.

19 And since mileage is dropping off and  
20 people are not going on long trips, the industry is  
21 now beginning to infer from that there is more short-  
22 trip driving going on. And that's the hazard of  
23 accelerated deterioration.

24 MR. DAVIES: I'm not going to dispute

1  
2 that bit about the short driving because I think there  
3 is a factor to that, a very serious factor.

4 MR. STEPHENSON: Yes.

5 MR. DAVIES: And again I don't think  
6 the public realizes that, among other things. Okay.

7 MR. MURPHY: (Indicates negative.)

8 MR. TIGUE: I don't have anything.

9 MR. STEIGHNER: Mr. Stephenson, very  
10 briefly and hopefully very calmly. You weren't doing  
11 too badly with me until we got up to page 18.

12 MR. STEPHENSON: That's pretty good for  
13 you.

14 MR. STEIGHNER: To suggest that my con-  
15 stituents undergo a twice-a-year automobile inspection  
16 accompanied with a twice-a-year auto emissions inspec-  
17 tion is probably the most unjust, unfair, unwarranted  
18 proposal I've heard in the four hearings we've had.

19 MR. STEPHENSON: You will remember me  
20 then, sir.

21 MR. STEIGHNER: I was shocked about  
22 that.

23 I could only say that I'm glad this is  
24 the last in the series of our hearings, because if

1  
2 this is where we're going, I'm glad this is the end of  
3 it, believe me.

4 MR. STEPHENSON: Do you wish me to com-  
5 ment on that?

6 MR. STEIGHNER: Surely.

7 MR. STEPHENSON: The problem with  
8 inspection maintenance as it affects the exhaust emis-  
9 sion control system of the car is that even with the  
10 present state of the art in engine design and emission  
11 control technology and to a minor degree the service  
12 technology, we cannot yet expect an engine and an  
13 emission system to be turned out of Detroit to continue  
14 in its mandated level of emission performance for  
15 12 months. We just cannot expect that. That is why  
16 Detroit is going so quickly to electronic controls in  
17 engines, but again, when you introduce a new hardware  
18 technology like electronics, you're bringing in a whole  
19 different set of problems that are going to plague the  
20 consumer and plague the car owner, and I only point to  
21 General Motors current headaches with the V-864 system  
22 on some Cadillac engines and also Ford's experience  
23 over the last three or four years with their various  
24 emission control, electronic emission control system

1  
2 packages.

3           There is no way that the car, as we can  
4 make it today, can maintain its clean tailpipe condi-  
5 tion as mandated by the Clean Air Act standards and  
6 modifications of 1977. It is physically impossible.  
7 No machine will run continuously, suffering the various  
8 degrees of either neglect, misuse or abuse that the  
9 American car owner puts his car through and deliver  
10 clean emission condition.

11           It is also a fact that because of all  
12 of the systems and because of the complexity of emis-  
13 sion control, that when one slight thing goes out, an  
14 air-fuel ratio adjustment goes on, you start using gas  
15 at a much more rapid rate than also is mandated by the  
16 corporate average fuel economy standards, and that  
17 hits the car owner in the pocket.

18           Therefore, I believe that we would be  
19 doing the motorist a service, all motorists a service,  
20 that have cars that have to come in under the I&M pro-  
21 gram to be checked twice. There are studies by  
22 Champion Spark Plug and by Shell Oil Company of recent  
23 vintage, within the last 15 or 16 months, that show  
24 quantitatively the amount of gasoline we conserve by

1  
2 doing more frequent checks on the emission control sys-  
3 tem of the car. It's that simple.

4 I'm sorry; you might not like the idea  
5 of having to check it more often, twice a year, but if  
6 we're going to save gas and we're going to have clean  
7 air and these things are judged to be national goals,  
8 then we have to think about how we're going to achieve  
9 them, I think.

10 MR. STEIGHNER: Assuming what you're  
11 saying is correct, I come from a beautiful, rural, clean  
12 air field in Butler County that was included in this  
13 program simply and merely by random and because of our  
14 geographic location to Allegheny County.

15 Never were there ever any studies done  
16 in that program that dictated that the areas included  
17 in that program should be included for auto emission  
18 check. And, in fact, quite to the contrary, when the  
19 tests were first started to be performed, within the  
20 last six to eight months, by the Department of Environ-  
21 mental Resources, the information that those people  
22 compiled was just the opposite, that many of the areas  
23 included in this program should not be included. And  
24 they've made their recommendation to the Environmental

1  
2 Protection Agency too.

3 MR. STEPHENSON: That may well be.

4 MR. STEIGNER: To profess that area --  
5 to profess that, one, to begin with, that the program  
6 is correct I think is the wrong position and, two, to  
7 single out 14 or 16 counties in the Commonwealth in  
8 an area as large as Pennsylvania and to assume that  
9 these counties should be included where the one next  
10 door stops and our bad air stops at this county line  
11 and doesn't go any further, I think it's absolutely  
12 absurd.

13 MR. STEPHENSON: Mr. Steighner, I agree  
14 with you. Your fight is not with me, sir. It is with  
15 the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, who is  
16 trying to hang all of this on those 29 states and  
17 all those affected air quality operating areas with  
18 those peripheral adjuncts that you're talking about.

19 If national clean air is a desirable  
20 goal, and it's unfortunately coupled to the cafe  
21 standards for mileage achievement by cars, then we  
22 have to find a way to make people responsive to this  
23 and understand what's going on.

24 If you feel that there are counties

1  
2 that really should not be involved in the program, as  
3 you see it, then by all means I would support you, sir,  
4 to do everything you can to get those counties off the  
5 list. But I don't think that you can deny that there  
6 are certain areas in all parts of the country, in this  
7 state too, where there are air quality problems and  
8 automobiles are still judged to be part of the problem.

9           And now the automobile is a very easy  
10 target. It has no one to defend it. It has all these  
11 millions and millions of car owners but they are not  
12 organized, and the only four people that the Federal  
13 government can bang on and have been banging on are  
14 the car makers. This is not to say that I hold them  
15 blameless. They're not. But it's easy to start  
16 tagging the car with all these regulations and restric-  
17 tive conditions to the point where once we've got it  
18 as a Federal standard, don't you think we better do  
19 something at the local level, since all this is deferred  
20 down to the states to implement to make sure the  
21 national goals are achieved?

22           MR. STEIGHNER: Obviously I think it  
23 should be up to the state to carry out the responsibil-  
24 ity. My fight is not only with the EPA but with the



1  
2 program itself. I do not believe that this program,  
3 based on the studies that have been done by the EPA  
4 itself and also our own DER, that if this program should  
5 even go into effect, it's going to have minimal if any  
6 change in the air quality. My fight is with them and  
7 also any organization or editor-in-chiefs who support  
8 this program.

9 That's all.

10 MR. STEPHENSON: The hardware, I think  
11 you should maintain it or let's get rid of the hardware.  
12 Let's get rid of it. Let's call for a standard that  
13 would call for not the addition of emission systems  
14 but complete combustion in the combustion chamber.

15 Now we're getting to a whole different  
16 area, and I really don't wish to take anybody's time  
17 up here, but I'll be happy to discuss it with you  
18 after the meeting, because you're on a very, very  
19 interesting, to me, subject.

20 MR. STEIGNER: Very interesting to me,  
21 also.

22 That's all I have.

23 MR. DAVIES: The only comment I would  
24 add to that is, their figures on those counties are

1  
2 about as reliable as their flood plain figures were --

3 MR. STEPHENSON: I agree.

4 MR. DAVIES: -- when they came to us  
5 for insurance.

6 Any other questions? Any other  
7 questions?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. DAVIES: If not --

10 MR. STEPHENSON: Thank you.

11 MR. DAVIES: Thank you, sir. Did we  
12 pick up Mr. D'Andrea?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. DAVIES: Okay. Now, we did not, so,  
15 therefore, we're open to testimony from the floor.

16 Yes.

17 MR. LUCAS: Honorable Chairman, Members  
18 of the Committee, I'm Charles E. Lucas, Jr. I am  
19 manager of the Automobile Club of Chester County, but  
20 since the consumer hasn't been represented here, you  
21 haven't heard from his viewpoint, may I honestly pre-  
22 sent the viewpoint of the customer for your considera-  
23 tion.

24 MR. DAVIES: Would you sit down, sir, and

1  
2 use the mike. They can't hear and also so the young  
3 lady can.

4 MR. LUCAS: I am opposed to two inspec-  
5 tions because I believe, like many of my forebearers,  
6 that it is a matter of bureaucratic discipline that  
7 probably two of them are not necessary for the mainten-  
8 ance of my car.

9 I happen to be one of those persons who  
10 goes through the inspection period without getting a  
11 great big bill that I can rant and rave at. I usually  
12 come under the minimum.

13 Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, the  
14 problems that I have with my car show up between those  
15 periods of time and I go to my garage and I have it  
16 repaired. There are many people who do not travel over  
17 2,000 miles probably between inspections, and they too  
18 object to taking their car at the inspection period and  
19 when they know that they haven't traveled very far and  
20 that the wear and tear isn't very great.

21 The other point that bothers me very much  
22 about it too is that if I forget about that inspection  
23 period, I become subject to a violation and I get fined,  
24 and I find in our area that many people do find them-

1  
2 selves in that difficulty. They forget the inspection  
3 period. That in itself is something else.

4           When it comes to getting an inspection,  
5 I find that I have to go to the garage and I have to  
6 make an appointment for when they can inspect, and many  
7 times it's two weeks away, and if I feel that my brakes  
8 are low and the inspection will catch up with that, I  
9 have to deal with that inspection problem until they  
10 can inspect my car. And, of course, I know of one case  
11 where it did result in a very serious accident because  
12 the brakes were not immediately inspected.

13           Now, I do not mean to imply that if the  
14 garage had been aware of that situation, that they  
15 would not have taken care of it as an emergency, but  
16 what I do wish to point out is that most of the emergen-  
17 cies come up, and they are point emergencies, and they  
18 occur apparently between the inspection period of time.  
19 I could have my car inspected today and tomorrow I can  
20 go out and I can find a water pump gone or I can find  
21 that my tire has blown. And if any of you have used  
22 radials and you find that they have excellent tread on  
23 them, but sometimes that steel plate comes through those  
24 radial tires and you on the road have a tire that is

1  
2 flat and you're lucky, of course, if you can save it  
3 from having an accident.

4           In other words, many of these points  
5 happen, and I believe that people generally have a good  
6 concern for their garage operator who takes care of the  
7 cars. I know there are several old ladies that, only  
8 Johnnie Bowles can take care of my car, and I think  
9 more and more that people go and they want to have it,  
10 Johnnie's going to take care of my car; they rely on  
11 the garage owners to tell them what's wrong.

12           Like Mr. Casiello I can't understand  
13 why he, a mechanic, would go away on a trip and not  
14 know about those belts. Anytime I go on a trip, I go  
15 to the garage and I ask them, is my car in good shape,  
16 and I have it gone over, and if anything isn't right,  
17 I expect them to take care of it, but that doesn't  
18 guarantee that I'm not going to have trouble on the  
19 trip. It happens. And that's one of the things that  
20 inspection never quite gets into the picture.

21           This thing we heard today, and I find  
22 it very interesting -- and, incidentally, Your Honor,  
23 I find that everyone has the same common interest.  
24 We're interested in the best interest for the consumer

1  
2 and for the men and women who drive these automobiles,  
3 for the concern that they're in good condition, that  
4 you know they're in good condition when they're on the  
5 highway. But this marginal thing has come into being.  
6 Again, when it's a margin, I can't think of any garage  
7 operator who wouldn't say to his customer, "Jim, if  
8 you're going on a trip, you better take care of those  
9 tires. Jim, you better take care of those brakes."

10 And I have told you I am not doing this  
11 as an expert. You've heard all the experts. You've  
12 heard all the statistics and everything about it. But  
13 I'm concerned about this five-thirty-seconds of a  
14 thing. Just how much is a brake lining? How wide is  
15 a brake lining? Five-thirty-seconds is the thing you  
16 say -- well, that's a serious point. And how long is  
17 it going to last?

18 But as I understand it -- and, of course,  
19 now, you gentlemen are experts here; you can refute me  
20 on that -- it's about a quarter of an inch I imagine.  
21 What are we talking about, three-thirty-seconds of an  
22 inch of wear, someplace along the line?

23 And certainly I think that anybody who  
24 knows, any garage man, he knows his people and that

1  
2 he's going to tell them exactly what to do and  
3 whether they're going on a trip, that they shouldn't  
4 do it; they should have these repairs made.

5 I can see that the one-year inspection,  
6 of course, will save many people a great deal of money.  
7 As to the costs of repair, I don't think it makes any  
8 difference whether they tell me my water pump's going  
9 at the time that I have the inspection or when I have  
10 the water pump repaired, when it actually gives out to  
11 me on the road. It's a matter of bringing a breakdown  
12 under those situations.

13 I believe in this system in Pennsylvania.  
14 I believe we have a good system. I wouldn't want the  
15 garage operators to be traded for any state operated  
16 stations where they merely have an inspection and they  
17 go someplace else for repairs. I do not believe that  
18 would be in the best interest, and economically I don't  
19 believe that would be in the best interests of the  
20 operators.

21 As a consumer you can't very well sell  
22 me on the point that just because I haven't gone to an  
23 inspection, that it's going to cost me more later on.  
24 The labor and the rates are all done by Chilton anyhow

1  
2 so you get those points whatever you have done. We  
3 have that information.

4 I was interested some time ago, I did --  
5 Chilton of course is one of the authorities on this,  
6 and I thought he gave a very able presentation, and I  
7 think it's certainly going to give you considerable  
8 thought. But from my standpoint as an operator of an  
9 automobile, I think that we can do just as much with  
10 an annual inspection as we can with two inspections,  
11 and I expect it's going to save me at least 12 bucks,  
12 but more importantly it's going to save me that incon-  
13 venience of making sure that I get that car there on  
14 time, don't get fined, and that I'm going to be able  
15 to fit into his schedule; I'm not going to go home and  
16 have my wife pick up a car because the car wasn't done  
17 or something like that. It's a matter of convenience,  
18 and I think that once a year is sufficient to make the  
19 necessary inspection of the vehicle that is safe on the  
20 road.

21 Thank you very much, gentlemen, for  
22 your time.

23 MR. DAVIES: Thank you. The only -- my  
24 concern is, again, you are addressing it in particular



1  
2 from your style --

3 MR. LUCAS: The consumer.

4 MR. DAVIES: -- yes, you as a consumer,  
5 and I happen to do it myself as a consumer and thinking  
6 my consumers thoughts as you applied your consumers  
7 thoughts.

8 What about the other guy? What about  
9 the guy that takes the chance on the \$3.95 special --  
10 and I won't say lick 'em, stick 'em or any of that --  
11 and he takes his chance on that and doesn't go to the  
12 guy, Johnnie, that you know, or one of those, do you  
13 think he's going to take -- is he going to have the  
14 same total results as you would realize from it?

15 MR. LUCAS: I don't believe, but he has  
16 that choice, and as far as inspecting the tires,  
17 inspecting the brakes and doing some of the other  
18 things as far as inspection is concerned, how far does  
19 it take, in this great technology that we're talking  
20 about -- sure, to tear down an engine, you've got to  
21 have it; you must understand it, but what does it take  
22 in the way of pulling a wheel and inspecting that brake?

23 I know years ago I got an inspection and  
24 I came back and the mechanic had left the brake drum

1  
2 apart. I wondered what this rattling was here. And  
3 when they took it off, here were the bolts from the  
4 brake. Actually the brake wasn't functioning at all.  
5 That can happen any time. I don't cite that as being  
6 indicative of any inefficiency on the part of the  
7 thing. It just happened that an employee did it.

8 The garage is only as good as the  
9 employee, of course, all the way through, but certainly  
10 you have brought up a point, a matter of education,  
11 that a person gets only what he pays for, and that's  
12 something, of course, that every consumer should  
13 realize.

14 MR. STEIGHNER: I don't have anything.

15 MR. DAVIES: Thank you very much, sir.

16 MR. LUCAS: Thank you.

17 MR. DAVIES: Additional testimony?

18 Yes, sir.

19 MR. COSTELLO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman,  
20 Committee. I'm sorry I don't have a prepared state-  
21 ment, but I would like to make a couple comments on  
22 some of the things that were said, and I hope that I  
23 can add some validity to them.

24 My name is Anthony Costello. I am the

1  
2 operations manager of the Penske Chevrolet located here  
3 in King of Prussia. I have been an inspection mechanic  
4 also since 1963 and we do approximately 4,800 inspections  
5 annually.

6 I feel I'm in favor of defeating Bill  
7 562 and retaining the six-month inspection period. I  
8 feel that if anything, at times the six-month period or  
9 the six-month interval can be excessive, much less going  
10 to an annual program. There's many factors that prevail,  
11 such as mileage, the area where the car's driven, et  
12 cetera. There's minimum standards that are regulated  
13 by mileage, but even more so, the time, and the time does  
14 relate directly to mileage.

15 There were some comparisons made earlier  
16 to the 36 percent failure rate on the TS Form 431, the  
17 inspection records submitted to Harrisburg. One thing  
18 that I don't think was considered there either are new  
19 cars that are inspected on each campaign. Many cars  
20 are inspected as many as three times before they leave  
21 the new car dealer's lot. We do probably at least 1,000  
22 inspections annually on new cars. Each period that the  
23 car comes up for inspection, it's redone, whether it's  
24 sold or not.

1  
2 Another question that was brought up:  
3 Can the owners be responsible to have their cars checked  
4 for safety? I contend that the answer is no. Owners  
5 will come in only when the law mandates it. This is  
6 shown clearly I think by the last-minute rush which  
7 you have every inspection period. Also something we  
8 see in the dealership level are the safety campaigns  
9 that manufacturers bring out. Chevrolet or whoever  
10 the manufacturer is can have a safety recall, which is  
11 in direct relation to the owner's safety, the driver's  
12 safety, and no matter what you do, you cannot get the  
13 people in to have the modification performed. It's a  
14 no-charge item; it's something that the dealers often  
15 go out of their way to have done, but you just can't  
16 get the customer to give you the car for a day or give  
17 you the car for an hour.

18 It's as the gentleman said before, as  
19 much of a cost factor as it's the inconvenience. I  
20 think it's something that, unless we deal directly with  
21 it, we're just not going to get the vehicles in. We  
22 can't leave it up to the public to bring it in when  
23 they want.

24 Another fact, the cost involved, I

1  
2 agree that the expenses would go up because of the  
3 nature and the severity of the repairs when they're  
4 left go for a year. Brake pads that were replaced are  
5 going to wind up being brake rotors and pads, things  
6 of this sort.

7           Also I feel that the inspection stations  
8 are going to increase the price, the same as the state.  
9 One of the first things I guess they looked at was  
10 keeping that revenue where it was. I'm sure the sta-  
11 tions are going to do likewise.

12           We talked a little while ago about an  
13 hour being sufficient time to inspect a vehicle, which  
14 is certainly true. I don't think anyone can get their  
15 television repaired or anything else done that's going  
16 to take the technician an hour to do it, for ten or  
17 eleven dollars. Again, not saying that it should go  
18 up -- I don't agree that it should -- but I think people  
19 are getting a bargain for their ten or eleven dollars.

20           Inspection technicians also I feel would  
21 be more critical when they're looking at items, which  
22 was something brought up also. Something that is a  
23 marginal item, if you know people are going to drive  
24 it for a year; you don't know how many miles it's going

1  
2 to take, that's going to occur, you're going to be much  
3 more critical when you look at it, and, consequently,  
4 the price will go up again.

5 In conclusion, I feel that the ten or  
6 eleven dollar inspection charge that there now is semi-  
7 annually is the cheapest insurance the motorist can  
8 purchase, and it does benefit the entire Commonwealth.  
9 Thank you.

10 MR. DAVIES: One point of clarification.  
11 I didn't get the reference to the 1,000 done on the new  
12 cars. Does that mean --

13 MR. COSTELLO: Well, just --

14 MR. DAVIES: -- your operation does 1,000?

15 MR. COSTELLO: Well, any new car dealer,  
16 even a lot of used car dealers, will have inspections  
17 where cars have not gotten any mileage at all. Conse-  
18 quently, what you're looking at or what they're looking  
19 at under the state records of 36 percent, our station  
20 alone has 25 percent of our inspections that the  
21 vehicles haven't gone anywhere.

22 MR. DAVIES: Oh.

23 MR. COSTELLO: There has been no addi-  
24 tional mileage accrued.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

MR. DAVIES: I understand.

MR. COSTELLO: So it will, you know, affect that in the long run.

MR. DAVIES: I was confused by that number. I didn't get the correlation. Now I understand.

Do you have any facts or figures that relate to percentages dividing out either the lease business on the short-term lease as to the long-term lease, as to those that you retail? Do you have any breakdown --

MR. COSTELLO: We don't do leasing. I think you're comparing us to the Roger Penske Leasing that was mentioned earlier. They have nothing to do with us. It's a brother.

MR. DAVIES: Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were the same outfit.

MR. COSTELLO: No. We're brothers. This is a Chevrolet dealership located here in King of Prussia.

MR. DAVIES: I assumed you were from the wrong outfit. I apologize. I thought you were talking about the fact that you sold, leased, short-term and

1  
2 long-term.

3 MR. COSTELLO: We deal with most of the  
4 factors, the -- are basically 75 percent retail cus-  
5 tomers, they are coming in for service, the other 25  
6 percent would be our own new vehicles being inspected  
7 prior to sale.

8 MR. DAVIES: What facts and figures --  
9 how do your facts and figures compare with some of  
10 those that you heard here today, with the 36 percent  
11 on the safety inspection-related items as compared to  
12 the 70 percent figure or -- and down, on those -- on  
13 the total number of --

14 MR. COSTELLO: I would say ours pretty  
15 well agree with it. Again, the new cars are affecting  
16 that -- again, I think you would see it increase  
17 greatly if it went to an annual inspection.

18 MR. DAVIES: Thank you.

19 MR. TIGUE: Mr. Costello, I know it's  
20 been a long day for everyone.

21 You mentioned that you would expect, if  
22 we go to an annual inspection system, that the price  
23 would go up.

24 MR. COSTELLO: Yes, I do.



1  
2 MR. TIGUE: Why? Just to retain revenues  
3 at their current level?

4 MR. COSTELLO: I would think --

5 MR. TIGUE: You infer that the state is  
6 doing it, which I agree with you.

7 MR. COSTELLO: I think that would be the  
8 first impression that most of the station owners and  
9 operators would have, yes. I feel that the revenues  
10 overall would increase just by the repairs in time, but  
11 I don't think the station operators will wait for that  
12 to happen. I think they would secure their revenues  
13 as the state is doing.

14 MR. TIGUE: Sitting here after a number  
15 of hearings -- and it's getting late in the day again --  
16 the people I have spoken to seem to indicate they have --  
17 I have heard very few complaints about rip-offs regard-  
18 ing repairs done to automobiles. What they do not like  
19 is the fact that the state has mandated to them that  
20 they must take their car in to be inspected whether or  
21 not there is something wrong with it, and the common  
22 complaint I have received is that, I take my car in for  
23 inspection; there's nothing wrong with it, so, there-  
24 fore, I have an outlay of \$10, or whatever the cost may

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

be for the inspection, for no reason.

The reason why I'm bringing that up, we've gotten to the point where we were talking about safety, economics for service stations, the consumer, et cetera, and Mr. Punt, I agree with him when he said before that -- and I agree basically with what you're saying -- I don't think the consumer's going to save money.

MR. COSTELLO: I'm sure they won't. I think the fact that 64 percent of the vehicles are found without defects is again proof that people are not being ripped off; they're not -- inspection stations in general are not looking for a problem. They're looking for a safety problem but they're not looking for something just to make money. The old days of someone coming in and having headlights adjusted every six months and brakes adjusted, things of this sort, are pretty much past.

You know, to answer your question, just the peace of mind that it would give me to know that my family's driving in a car that I know is safe I think is certainly worth the \$11 and the inconvenience of two hours or four hours without the car, whatever the

1  
2 situation might be.

3           Again, I'm sure that you would find, if  
4 you go to annual inspection, this 36 percent is going  
5 to double or even more so and the severity of the prob-  
6 lems are going to increase.

7           MR. STEPHENSON: I would like to ask  
8 Mr. Costello a question, if I may, Mr. Chairman.

9           The situation that you pose, that you  
10 believe the inspection stations are probably going to  
11 raise their prices to make up for reduced cash flow  
12 from the inspection process, has this been discussed  
13 in any way at Penske Chevrolet? Is this possibly --  
14 are you voicing a policy here?

15           MR. COSTELLO: No. I'm voicing my own  
16 particular opinion. I do feel that to me the state  
17 inspection in itself may not be an extremely profitable  
18 situation, but again it does get my customer into the  
19 shop two times a year. When they come in, they will get  
20 other things done. It happens the same with the safety  
21 campaign. Once you've got the customer to bring the  
22 car to you, anything they know that's wrong or they  
23 think that should be done, they're going to do it.

24           But the inconvenience of getting the car

1  
2 in is the key, and it's to say it's not the fact of  
3 getting the price up, because his tune-up done or  
4 he's going to have his transmission serviced, or what-  
5 ever the case might be, once he's left it for the day.  
6 It is profitable but it is indirectly profitable.

7 MR. DAVIES: We have another comment.

8 MR. HOLSINGER: I'd like to ask a ques-  
9 tion in regards to the cost of inspection. Some three  
10 or four years ago there was a bill up for once-a-year  
11 inspection, and in that bill they had the price of the  
12 sticker. We hear nothing about the price of the sticker,  
13 is this in the bill. But will they hold still for that?

14 My feeling is that the Department of  
15 Transportation, who is basically behind this bill, is  
16 looking for more money than that.

17 MR. TIGUE: Well, according to the bill  
18 it says \$2. That's what they're talking about charging  
19 the same. No one can guarantee that they're going to  
20 raise the -- they've increased the cost per inspection.

21 MR. DAVIES: We'll have one at a time  
22 now rather than try to get into that.

23 MR. PACHUTA: The fees for operating  
24 motor vehicles on the highways of Pennsylvania include

1  
2 a registration fee, which is \$24 a year, and \$2 a year  
3 for inspection stickers. So it's a total of \$26. The  
4 bill is proposed which would be \$24 registration fee,  
5 plus \$2 for inspection for the year for a total of  
6 \$26. The total remains the same, \$26.

7 MR. DAVIES: We have a -- I thought we  
8 were going to get into this again. I just knew it.

9 MR. STEIGHNER: It was not my intent,  
10 but since the gentleman raised the question, in June  
11 of 1980 the cost for the Commonwealth was 25 cents  
12 for a sticker. That was raised to a dollar per in-  
13 spection. Today that cost is a dollar per inspection.

14 Under the bill, the cost would go to  
15 \$2 per inspection.

16 MR. PACHUTA: That's absolutely correct.

17 MR. STEIGHNER: That's all I want to  
18 say.

19 MR. DAVIES: With that we'll adjourn.  
20 Thank you very much.

21 - - -

22 (Hearing concluded at 4:15 p.m.)

23 - - -  
24

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

I N D E X

SPEAKERS

PAGE

Mr. John Pachuta	3
Mr. Gene Beeman	57
Captain Russell Rickert	88
Mr. John Innis, Jr.	121
Mr. William Holsinger	150
Mr. Jack E. Weber	169
Mr. Bart Casiello	189
Mr. Stuart Peifer	210
Mr. Ray Martin	213
Mr. Ray Harnish	214
Mr. Stan Stephenson	226
Mr. Charles Lucas, Jr.	259
Mr. Anthony Costello	267

- - -

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the stenographic notes taken by me upon the foregoing matter on August 27, 1981 and that this is a correct transcript of the same.

Donna Laquintano  
DONNA LAQUINTANO  
Registered Professional Reporter

(The foregoing certification of this transcript does not apply to any reproduction of the same by any means unless under the direct supervision and/or control of the certifying reporter.)