

level of care of patients, to improve our hospital facilities and to stimulate research in the hospitals.

Throughout the first year of my term, I have laid heavy stress upon our obligation—mine as the chief executive and yours as the law-makers of the State—to employ our time and our talents to a reduction of the terrible toll in deaths and injuries from highway accidents. No one has discovered a panacea for this evil, but in my opinion a rigorous enforcement of the laws, improved engineering of our highways and a continuous campaign of safety education are the best remedies that have been offered thus far. Preparations are being made for the institution next January 1 of the point system which you approved at the session last year. Chemical tests for drunken driving already are in effect, with highly satisfactory results. The program for better highways will be accelerated by the legislation I mentioned previously. The Executive Department will continue to lend its support and encouragement to stringent law enforcement and the education of drivers.

On the topic of public health, more will be said in my comments on the budget. I should like to point out here, however, that in view of the continuing concern for full mileage from the taxpayers' dollar, the State Department of Health, under my direction, has instituted a new system of controls over its most costly operation—the hospital in-patient program. Instead of twenty-six days of hospitalization prior to administrative review, approval must be obtained now for any hospitalization in excess of three days. It is hoped that these controls will result in shorter periods of hospital stay, while still providing the needed care for patients. As a further step toward a more economical operation, the State Health Department is cooperating with Blue Cross, the Hospital Council and the State Insurance Commissioner in establishing a single authority for auditing hospital-cost statements for all groups.

All of you are aware of the studies of various State problems which have been conducted by different groups—committees of the Legislative Council and commissions appointed by me, either on my own initiative or through your authorization—since you adjourned here last April. Most of the reports and recommendations of these groups are available to you now. Others you will have before the expiration of this session.

Your first concern at this short session is, of course, the budget for the 1961 fiscal year. But some of the legislation that has been recommended by these committees and commissions is of such im-