

200 miles of highway per year. In fact, during the past three and one-half years the Commission has constructed or modernized approximately 640 miles of road in a program that has touched every region of the State. This is an impressive record — a record of which all of us can be proud and an example of government living up to its responsibility to provide roadways on which the need of the people for mobility can be realized. We want to keep up this work. We want to continue to discharge our responsibilities to the people of Maryland.

To meet the demands for highways—the demands of today and tomorrow—the General Assembly must take action at this session. Without such action, the highway construction program, as we know it today, cannot continue. Without it, Maryland will be limited to only that construction which qualifies for Federal aid. I am sure the people of Maryland want no halt in the program of road construction. A detailed plan for the continuation of the highway program will be presented to you at this session. Among other things, it will provide funds for building \$421,283,000 worth of highways over the next six years. It calls for an increase in the gasoline and titling taxes to aid in financing this six-year program. Later in the session, the State Roads Commission will submit to you a plan showing on what projects these funds would be used. With the knowledge that we must keep up with the changing times, in road building as elsewhere, I urge you to give this plan your most careful consideration with the view to action at this session.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

The highway traffic problem touches every man, woman and child in the State. Its many facets contribute to its complexity. And we can be sure that it is a problem that will remain with us for a long time to come. For the second year in a row, Maryland experienced in 1963 more than 590 highway deaths. This is 10 per cent above the previous ten-year average. The number of accidents and injuries likewise have increased. With a continuously increasing population, motor vehicle registration, road-mileage and traffic volume, it appears that the problems associated with the automobile are growing faster than our capability to deal with them. Over the past four years the population has increased 15 per cent. Registrations are up 18 per cent and vehicle miles up 25 per cent. I am certain that until there is an all-out effort on the part of all agencies having a responsibility in this matter, coupled with a public awareness of the problem and