STATEMENT BY SENATOR STROM THURMOND (D-SC) FOR WEEKLY RADIO BROADCAST, MARCH 27, 1958.

MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

One of the major pieces of legislation considered by the Senate this past week was the highway construction bill. The purpose of the bill is to speed up work on the long-range interstate highway program. It would provide a large increase in funds authorized for the fiscal year beginning next July 1, plus more funds for fiscal 1959 and 1960.

Several of the amendments which were discussed proved controversial. I would like to discuss one of these with you on this program, since it involves a matter that is of great concern to me and the people of South Carolina. I refer to the fight against Federal usurpation of powers that properly belong to State governments.

The process by which State governments are losing their sovereignty is a very slow and gradual one. I sometimes refer to it as erosion, because States' rights have been wearing away in the same fashion that a solid rock is eroded and broken up by the action of wind and water.

The highway bill offers an extra bonus of Federal money to those States that will submit to the Federal regulations for the regulation of billboards along the new interstate highways.

The purpose of this provision is laudable. The highways will be more beautiful if the erection of billboards along them is carefully limited and controlled. I think we should try to
make these new highways as scenic and beautiful as we can.

But is there any reason why this must be a duty of the national government? We have 48 State legislatures that have all the power they need/to make whatever billboard regulations are needed.

This may seem to be a small and insignificant matter, one in which the States could well afford to give up their authority/in exchange for a relatively small amount of Federal money. The great danger is precisely that. It does seem to be an easy and convenient way/for the States to get the money they will need/to insure the beauty of the new highways. It is a sugar-coated pill.

But while the pill may be easy to swallow, its effects are not changed. This is Federal usurpation by purchase, or, in plainer language, a bribe.

---

The Department of Agriculture has liberalized its regulations for the Rural Housing Program. Many South Carolina farmers/who were not previously eligible for housing loans under this program/can now obtain them, and I would like to urge those who are interested/to get full details at the nearest Farmers' Home Administration office.

Loans for construction and modernization of farm housing/may be obtained at 4 per cent interest, repayable up to a maximum of 33 years. The new regulations make these loans available to owners of farms/capable of an annual production of $400. This means that many part-time farmers/and those who
own only a few acres are now eligible for housing loans.

We have given a great deal of attention to the slum problem in our cities. Sometimes we tend to forget that the cities have no monopoly on inadequate housing. It is just as important to improve housing conditions in the rural areas.

Before I close, I have just one more brief remark for the farmers. Congress has put its final approval on the supplemental appropriation for the Soil Bank. The Department of Agriculture has assured me that it will have ample funds to contract for all of the cotton and tobacco acreage that has been offered for the Soil Bank, and that it is ready to proceed promptly. It is essential that it do so, because the cotton planting season is at hand.

I thank you for listening, and thank this station for granting me this time each week.

This is Strom Thurmond in Washington.