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## Baker Pledges to Push For Overton Interstate

By WENDELL POTTER

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WASHINGTON. — Sen. Howard Baker, R-Tenn., said today he will contact Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams soon to request quick approval of plans to complete Interstate 40 through Overton Park in Memphis.

Baker, the Senate minority leader, said he will stress to Adams "with all the urgency I can command" that the proposed expressway through the park be finished.

Baker said he was encouraged that Adams, a former congressman from Washington state, earlier this week announced support for construction of an interstate in northern Virginia that, like the proposed expressway link in Memphis, has been halted by opposition from environmentalists.

Baker said he believes Adams' statement on the Virginia highway completion is an indication that he will be sympathetic to requests from Memphis and Tennessee officials, who have tried for more than 20 years to complete I-40 through Overton Park.

Three previous transportation secretaries have failed to decide the issues of design and route on the I-40 link, despite urging by state and city officials.

Environmentalists have opposed all routes through the park, claiming the park route to be illegal under the Environmental Protection Act. Government officials, however, claim the park route to be the only reasonable link for the interstate and have proposed designs to minimize environmental damage.

A decision to build through the park would be met by lawsuits, environmentalists have vowed, that would leave ultimate rulings up to the courts.

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