

## "Mass Firings Discounted By Transportation Chief"

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# Mass Firings Discounted By Transportation Chief

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NASHVILLE, June 18. — (UPI) — State Transportation Commissioner Eddie Shaw said Wednesday there will not be any massive firings in his department because of the current budget crisis or for political reasons.

Shaw also said that while no final decision has been made on whether to conduct a study on the construction of a tunnel beneath Overton Park, the state "will likely go with a feasibility study on the slurry system."

Many state legislators had expressed concern that Shaw would fire hundreds of the department's 7,000 employees once the session ended.

Shaw said, "I for one, in this department, will not be doing any mass firing."

However, Shaw said traditionally there was a large turnover of employees in the transportation department.

He added that he would not fire anyone "as long as they are doing a justifiable job."

Shaw said Tennessee will receive \$93.3 million in federal highway funds as its share of the \$8 billion released in impounded funds.

The money, Shaw said, will go a long way toward carrying out and

fulfilling projects now being prepared for bids.

He said a veto by Gov. Ray Blanton of a \$35-million bond issue would require a complete revamping of his department's budget.

He said the current economic crunch had forced him to trim \$7 million from the department's original funding request for the coming fiscal year.

He said the cuts would be achieved by postponing projects that bid above the anticipated cost or that have an adverse environmental impact.

The Transportation Department will have a budget of \$357.6 million for fiscal 1975-76, up from \$354 million for the current fiscal year.

On the tunnel, he said the slurry system in question is used primarily in Europe and costs about half what a tunnel would cost. He said it involves sinking walls on either side of the expressway then using a water-like solution to wash a path through the designated area.

Shaw said that a feasibility study would take until April or May of next year and will cost about \$2 million. He said the federal government will pay most of the expenses.