I am today introducigng a major new initiative aimed at fostering a variety of regional economic benefits.

In order to take advantage of the greatest range of opportunities interstate access through the region now offers, I belive certain additional developments associated with this segment of I-64 are necessary.

My legislation authorizes the National Park Service to construct a visitor facility and scenic overlook in association with the Glade Creek Bridge which spans a section of the New River Gorge National River. It also directs the National Park Service to undertake planning and design activities for the northern terminus of the New River Parkway.

Due to its location the Glade Creek Bridge would be an excellent place for visitors to learn about the New River Gorge National River, state parks in the immediate vicinity such as Grandview and Little Beaver, the New River Parkway and other points of interest in Raleigh County and southern West Virginia in general. However, as presently designed there is no opportunity for travelers to stop after crossing the bridge.

This is an oversight which needs to be corrected. The Glade Creek Bridge is only slightly smaller than the awesome expanse of the New River Gorge Bridge on U.S. 19. This bridge has become a major tourist attraction in the region primarily because both it and the view of the gorge can be enjoyed from the National Park Service's Canyon Rim Visitor Center where travelers can relax and learn of what the park and surrounding area has to offer. The same opportunity should be made available at the Glade Creek Bridge.

It is also time to commence planning and design work for a northern terminus of the New River Parkway and I propose that Route 9 between the interchange on I-64 and Grandview State Park be upgraded to parkway standards.

The projects proposed by this legislation are not only aimed at maximizing the range of opportunities made possible by the completion of I-64 in Raleigh County. The stage will then be set for future revitalizing developments in the area.