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## **Press Release - Muskie Cites Administration Failure**

Edmund S. Muskie

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# MUSKIE

Maine

FOR RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 25, 1972

## MUSKIE CITES ADMINISTRATION FAILURE

WASHINGTON--Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me.) charged today that the Nixon Administration had failed to implement a law he wrote to aid more than 100,000 families displaced every year by government construction projects, such as highways, housing and urban renewal programs.

The Maine Democrat announced the start of a General Accounting Office investigation into delays and administrative laxity in providing affected families, businesses and farms with the benefits guaranteed by his Uniform Relocation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646).

In his formal request to Comptroller General Eimer B. Staats, asking for a full GAO inquiry to be delivered to the Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, Senator Muskie, the subcommittee chairman, said there was "disturbing evidence" that Federal agencies had "taken only the most tentative and preliminary steps to implement" his legislation. "Many families forced to move from their homes are still not receiving full benefits," the Senator added.

Announcing the investigation's start, Senator Muskie said, "The bureaucratic approach to this important program has been so dispirited, the issuance of regulations so long delayed, and the provision of relief so uneven that it is imperative an independent and comprehensive investigation begin.

"Many states received no official word of all their obligations under the act until this February, 13 months after the law's enactment. Agencies have published essential Federal regulations only at a snail's pace.

"Meanwhile hundreds of thousands of Americans--forced out of their homes, their businesses or their farms by highway construction,

Housing and Urban Development programs, Army Corps of Engineers water projects and hosts of other schemes--are often denied the relocation benefits of the act.

"The study being undertaken by the General Accounting Office will reveal for the public record the performance of the executive branch in carrying out the mandate of the act over the last year. The study will also include investigations in several states to see whether the act has had any impact on people forced to move from their homes."

Muskie's Uniform Relocation Act established, for the first time, a single national policy governing the relocation of people displaced by Federal or federally assisted programs. Muskie last month cosponsored amendments, introduced by Senators Baker and Brock, which passed the Senate April 12, to provide additional Federal funds and expand the coverage of the act.

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