

DEMONSTRATION CITIES ACT

Mr. Chairman, we endorse the administration's concept of a locally prepared and scheduled program for rebuilding or restoring entire sections and neighborhoods of slum and blighted areas. The magnitude of poverty, crime, unemployment, and deterioration in parts of our great central cities requires a major commitment from the American people and from the Federal Government.

It is also undeniable that Federal programs have not heretofore been sufficiently coordinated for maximum impact on the urban problems we face, nor has local leadership and private initiative, as the President's message of January 26 so well states, been sufficiently mobilized. We look for new ideas from the proposed demonstration cities program.

Our primary concern is the dichotomy between parts of this legislation—and this is symbolized by their titles—Demonstration Cities and Urban Development Acts. It is as if the administration were proposing two separate types of programs for two different constituencies, the older central cities and the growing suburbs.

We object to this false demarcation, and the President's message put the real situation quite succinctly:

The goals of major Federal programs have often lacked cohesiveness. Some work for the revitalization of the central city. Some accelerate suburban growth. Some unite urban communities. Some disrupt them.

In other words, the metropolitan region is a single economic entity and the boundaries between city, county, and suburb are becoming less real and less important.

We are suggesting that a "demonstration cities program" for the central city alone will be inadequate. A metropolitan area must be viewed as a whole—central city and suburb. These are interdependent parts.

When your distinguished subcommittee, and that of the Senate, develop a coordinated omnibus bill, we hope the artificial distinction will be removed.

We do have several specific comments to make on the legislation before us. One of the requirements provides that eligible city demonstration programs be "consistent with comprehensive planning for the entire urban or metropolitan area" (sec. 4(c)(5)). We think this is a weak statement. Certainly it is important that projects must not only be consistent with the plan, but also and even more importantly, the program must be developed as part of the comprehensive planning process for the entire metropolitan area. There is a difference. As a concrete example, city officials who must deal with the State highway department on location of highways realize that it is not sufficient to have the State highways consistent with the city plan. This is because highways are such an important determinant of urban form and of the future of our city that the highway must be taken into consideration from the very beginning in developing the plan. This is certainly true equally for urban renewal and anti-poverty programs. The comprehensive metropolitan plan itself would be a hollow shell without the contribution of these major determinants of the future urban environment.

Section 4(c)(5) would, in our opinion, better be phrased, "the program is consistent with, and developed as part of, the compre-