

We have a decayed downtown with many empty stores and thus a decaying tax base in the central business district. We have large areas of substandard housing with narrow streets, leading to serious overcrowding and traffic congestion. We have poverty pockets, both Negro and Appalachian whites.

We have had considerable social unrest, especially among our Negro youth, and except for the very fine leadership of the Springfield Urban League, of our city manager and of the very fine police department that we have, we would have had violence during the past summer. We have averted this.

We are thus in some respects not in a good position to attract the business and industry we need. But we do not have the tax base that we need, although we are going to ask our citizens for increased taxes. Ohio tax laws and the Ohio constitution limit our bonded indebtedness and our taxing capacity. We want and need help. We need, in fact, a total renewal. We hope for a genuine Springfield renaissance. But to do this we need financial assistance of a volume that will do the job. We see in the proposed demonstration city legislation the kind of hope that we need that we can once again be the kind of city we once were.

I might point out that Springfield's past prosperity was based actually on Federal help. The national road authorized by the Congress of the United States, better than a century ago, contributed to our early prosperity. We hope that this present legislation will once again recapture our prosperity.

If the Congress of the United States wants to find a middle-sized city that was once preeminent, where it can demonstrate that such a city can come back to a position of leadership, we believe that Springfield is eminently qualified to be such a city.

We are eager, we are united, we are already planning and Mr. Caplinger, the city manager, will tell you of some of the plans we are making. We hope very strongly that the Congress will pass this far-reaching legislation for demonstration cities.

I thank the committee once again for this opportunity to appear here.

Mr. BARRETT. Mr. Norman, do you want to make a statement?

Mr. CAPLINGER. I will make the statement.

STATEMENT OF JAMES L. CAPLINGER, CITY MANAGER, SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

Honorable Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I am James L. Caplinger and I desire to make a statement with leave of the subcommittee.

I would like to point out that I have with me, in addition to the city commissioner, Dr. Karl Hertz, Mr. Harry Norman who is the urban renewal director of Springfield, Ohio.

As a preliminary remark I would like to echo the words of Dr. Hertz in thanking, and expressing our deep gratitude to, this subcommittee for making this opportunity available for us to testify.

We appreciate it very deeply.

Also, Congressman Sweeney's assistance in inviting us to Washington is appreciated.

Springfield, Ohio, is located equal distance between Dayton, Ohio, and Columbus, Ohio. Therefore, we are in a metropolitan area.