

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DEMONSTRATION CITY LEGISLATION

American cities are in serious trouble. While the older sections of the inner city suffer from physical decay, social unrest, and economic difficulties, suburbs sprawl over the countryside draining human and financial resources while increasing demands for municipal services. The pattern of modern urban development is like an expanding wheel, the hub of which needs repair.

We are an urban civilization. Over three-quarters of all Americans live in our urban centers. The future of these cities will determine the future of our Nation. All levels of Government must fully comprehend this and cooperate in finding solutions to the problems besetting the city.

These problems are complex. With the exodus of business from the central city, blight and decay erode property values, disperse business and civic leadership, and rob the city of its vitality. The ugliness and absence of economic opportunity which this exodus leaves behind alienates the individual and oppresses the human spirit. Halfhearted efforts and patchwork cannot solve these problems. But major surgery and comprehensive physical, economic, and social redevelopment will renew the city.

The central city must be completely overhauled, slums eliminated, and human and physical blight arrested. Comprehensive future planning must be a part of this effort. Ease of access, human convenience, esthetic improvements, and expanded social, educational, and economic opportunity are some of the goals that must be achieved.

This job cannot be done by local government alone. This job cannot be done by private enterprise alone. But cooperation among levels of government and private enterprise can get the job done.

Intergovernmental cooperation in meeting the needs of urban society is nothing new. The concept of H.R. 12341 simply expands upon such cooperation to meet one of our most severe urban problems. The concept is sound and represents a challenge to the Nation to do those things now that will shape the future of our cities.

SCRANTON, PA., March 21, 1966.

HON. WILLIAM A. BARRETT,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Housing,
House Banking and Currency Committee,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SIR: On Tuesday, March 15, 1966, Mayor James J. Walsh and a committee of local citizens appeared before the Subcommittee on Housing of the House Banking and Currency Committee and testified in support of early enactment of the demonstration cities program now under study in Congress and expressed desire that Scranton might be included in the program.

At a meeting held on March 16, the city council of Scranton, Pa., concurred with the testimony of Mayor Walsh and his committee and gave full support and endorsement to the program.

We sincerely hope that if and when the program is approved that the city of Scranton will be given serious consideration for inclusion in the demonstration cities program.

Respectfully yours,

FRANK DESARRO, City Clerk.

[Telegram]

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 21, 1966.

HON. WILLIAM A. BARRETT,
Chairman, Housing Subcommittee,
Committee on Banking and Currency,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, D.C.:

This organization representing thousands of employees adversely affected by Department of Defense and other base closures respectfully urges your subcommittee to incorporate into H.R. 13064, provisions which will clarify the law to commit the Government to the orderly and expeditious acquisition of homes of such adversely affected employees as a cost element in the closing of such Federal installations.