

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT,
July 14, 1967.

Hon. HERVEY G. MACHEN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MACHEN: This is in reply to your letter inquiring about an apparent inequity in the 1966 amendment to the District of Columbia Police and Firemen's Salary Act.

It is true that, as indicated in the material accompanying your letter, when the 1966 amendment to our salary schedule placed all police privates with 19 years service in longevity step 9 at an annual salary of \$9,420, it left some police sergeants, who also had 19 years service, in service step 2 of sergeant at an annual rate of \$9,315. Therefore, until those sergeants advance to service step 3 (which they do after two years in service step 2), police privates with approximately the same years of service as they have will be earning a slightly higher rate of pay. I would emphasize, however, that this disparity is temporary, as the police privates in the \$9,420 rate are at their maximum salary rate, whereas the sergeants can continue to higher service and longevity steps to a maximum rate of \$11,015.

In connection with this complaint which you have received, I think that you will be interested to know that H.R. 10761, which was introduced June 12, 1967, will accentuate this problem even further. That bill will reduce from 19 years to 16 years the time required for a private to reach his maximum longevity rate, which is set by that bill at \$10,220, and will move into that rate all privates with 16 years or more years service, while your complainant will continue in service step 2 of sergeant, set in that bill at \$10,115, until he has earned additional service and longevity step increases through time in grade as a sergeant.

Since 1953, when Congress first provided service and longevity step increases for policemen, we have experienced problems such as this, where, because of various attempts to adjust salary rates to correct old inequities, new inequities were created. One of the major problems with a service step and longevity step salary system is the not infrequent occurrence of a subordinate earning a higher salary rate than his superior, even though the superior may have more total government service. I firmly believe that this problem is going to be with us so long as we continue to have a salary schedule which provides service and longevity step increases based on a combination of time in service and time in grade; such inequities can be completely eradicated only by change to a salary schedule such as that provided by the military, where longevity step increases are based on total time in service without regard to time in grade.

I am enclosing a table which indicates, as you requested, the number of sergeants now on this department who would be affected by your proposed amendment to the salary schedule. As we read your proposed amendment, it would not have a direct effect on any of our privates.

I would personally recommend *against* a provision such as that proposed in the attachment to your letter as a correction of this inequity. It has been our experience that whenever an attempt has been made to correct old inequities by shifting selected groups about in the salary schedule, the net effect has been to generate new disparities. Instead, I would suggest to you that a simple solution, short of a change to a flat time-in-service longevity system, would be to increase all rates for the Class 4, Sub-class (a) Sergeant so that the maximum rate for private would not exceed the minimum rate for sergeant. This could be done without affecting the relationship between the basic rates for sergeants and the basic rates for lieutenants by simply combining Sub-class (a) for police sergeant, and Sub-class (b) for detective sergeant into a single sub-class, applying the present rates for detective sergeants to both grades. This change would not only eliminate any possible inequity between the rates for sergeants and privates, but would also accomplish the goal of this department to eliminate the existing, unjustified separation of salary rates between police sergeants and detective sergeants.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN B. LAYTON, *Chief of Police.*