

strongly opposed to a similar provision which was considered by the Congress in August 1964 for Deputy Chiefs and subsequently enacted into law as a provision of P.L. 88-575, approved September 2, 1964, because of the inequities which it created and because of its conflict with the concept of longevity pay for compensatory recognition of long service in the same class or grade. Also, since the basic salary rate is used for retirement pay purposes, this provision which allows attainment of the top rate in a class or subclass after thirty years service might encourage early retirement of those officers and members who had not yet reached the mandatory retirement age.

And with our present problems, I might say parenthetically, with recruitment, we certainly want to keep the officers who have reached this kind of service.

Otherwise such officers and members might continue their employment and the Police and Fire Departments would benefit from their long experience and knowledge. Additionally, no other salary system in the District Government permits an employee to automatically jump to his top rate because of a long period of service.

Although I recognize there is an urgent need for an increase in the salaries of police and firemen, and for some of the benefits as provided by these bills, I cannot support the pay schedule provided therein nor the 30-year service advancement that I have just discussed. In addition to those provisions of these bills with which I concur with certain modifications, there is also need to include recruitment incentives similar to those provided in H.R. 13981. At this time I would like to comment on the need for legislation as well as the District's proposed bill which is recommended to be substituted for the provisions of these bills.

NEED FOR LEGISLATION—VACANCIES

The need for this proposed legislation is critical because of the difficulties being encountered in the filling of vacancies particularly in the Metropolitan Police force. The President has charged the District Government with responsibility for making the streets of Washington free of crime. In order to meet this responsibility, it is essential that the police force be at full strength and manned with the best qualified personnel available. As of January 18, 1968, the Metropolitan Police Force had 308 vacancies as compared to 307 vacancies on January 1, 1967. Also, the D.C. Fire Department has averaged 33 vacancies since January 1, 1967, with 39 vacancies as of January 18, 1968. While the vacancy problem in the Fire Department is not as acute as it is in the Metropolitan Police Force, there is still a critical need to fully man both forces to carry out these vital services in the District of Columbia. It is therefore essential that effective action be taken with respect to pay and recruiting benefits and techniques so as to enable the District Government to fully staff these forces.

The District's proposed bill is designed to meet this need by including a pay adjustment and recruitment incentives, as well as other benefits to increase the quality and effectiveness of the Police and Fire Departments.

In addition to the vacancies, statistics show that major crime in the District of Columbia increased 34.3 percent during period from January through September 1967 as compared to same period during 1966, with the national trend increase being 16 percent during same period.