

Today's fund is not adequate to keep up with purchases of areas already authorized by Congress, let alone to finance additions.

If the Federal Government and the States are forced to wait until the moneys now going into the land and water conservation fund are sufficient, the ultimate cost to the taxpayers will be greatly increased. It will save millions of dollars in the years ahead if we invest as soon as possible. This problem has received careful study, and the most practical solution is to raise the moneys from the sources proposed in this bill.

Besides adding revenues to the fund, S. 1401 would give the land management agencies administrative weapons to fight rising land prices. One of these would permit department heads, under certain conditions, to contract for the land authorized for parks or recreation areas prior to actual appropriation of moneys from the land and water conservation fund. Another would set up a lease- and sell-back land management program for property bought for the National Park System. Amounts obtained from lease- and sell-back transactions would be credited to the fund, thus lessening the burden imposed by the initial purchase of property.

Mr. Chairman, the Federal portion of the land and water conservation fund is the primary financing source for all new acquisitions by the National Park Service and the Forest Service as well as for expansion of existing facilities. It is the financial base for expanding recreation programs of the States and their political subdivisions. Only added revenues will make it possible for these agencies to meet the park and recreation requirements of our citizens in the next decade. I support prompt approval of this bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Ribicoff of Connecticut has submitted a statement for inclusion in the hearing record. That statement in support of this legislation will be printed at this point.

(The statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. ABRAHAM RIBICOFF, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Mr. Chairman, almost three out of four Americans live in urban surroundings, and each year more land is swallowed up by our burgeoning metropolitan areas. New highways acquire landscape at the rate of 60 acres a mile and a single cloverleaf junction requires 50 acres. Vast shopping centers and industrial parks now dot the outskirts of our cities where once there were pastures and forests.

In my own State of Connecticut, today's population of nearly three million people will double in size by the year 2000. It took us more than 300 years to reach three million—the next three million will be added in little more than three decades.

With this trend toward urbanization has come a greater demand to protect lands in their natural state. As our people increasingly populate urban areas, so do they increasingly demand escape to more natural surroundings for respite, relaxation and recreation. Higher incomes, more leisure time and greater mobility all steer our people toward the outdoors.

By enacting the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Federal government took the lead in providing urgently needed land for open space and recreational opportunities for the American public. During the 89th Congress, we authorized 23 new federal recreation areas encompassing a quarter of a million acres. The present Congress is continuing the trend.

But, as presently constituted, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is unable to meet our obligations to the American people. It has neither adequate funding for the future, nor the ability to act quickly to hold down acquisition costs.