

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM M. LIGHTSEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY, AND MEM-
BER, VIRGINIA HOUSE OF DELEGATES, VIRGINIA GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

Mr. LIGHTSEY. Thank you, sir. I will skip over some parts of the prepared statement, because it will merely reemphasize statements that have already been made by representatives from other States.

My purpose in being here is to urge the committee's approval of S. 1401. I am director of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, and I am also taking a little time off from other responsibility as a member of the Virginia General House of Delegates of the Virginia General Assembly.

During the 1966 general assembly session, both Senator Bemiss, who spoke earlier this afternoon, and I, worked hard to marshal the legislative support needed to implement the Virginia outdoors plan. This initiated the first comprehensive statewide plan for a program to acquire and preserve the natural resources of Virginia, and to make them available for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of Virginia and of the Nation, and frankly, the success of putting that plan through the Virginia General Assembly probably would not have been achieved had it not been for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act having been passed in 1965.

Senator CHURCH. Prior to the enactment of this program, did you have in Virginia a sizable outdoor recreation program?

Mr. LIGHTSEY. We had a division of State parks, part of our department of conservation and economic development, which constituted the only effort in this field, and unfortunately, it had lain almost dormant for 30 years.

Senator CHURCH. So the fund actually enabled you to initiate a very new and important program.

Mr. LIGHTSEY. Yes, sir. It was a fortunate coincidence that the 1964 general assembly session authorized a 2-year study by an outdoor recreation commission, headed by Senator Bemiss, and when that commission made its report to the 1966 session of the general assembly, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act was there for us to lean on, and lean on heavily.

Senator CHURCH. I see.

Mr. LIGHTSEY. I have discussed the provisions of Senate bill 1401 with both our Virginia senators, Senator Harry Byrd and Senator William Spong, and the statements which Senator Bemiss has made here today and the statement that I am making carry their support, and they asked me to so advise.

Members of your commission, I am sure, are also acquainted with Dr. Ira Gabrielson, who happens to be chairman of our Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, as a resident of Fairfax County, as is also vice chairman of the State commission so we have an interest all the way along the line, and a hard-working interest.

Action is so important today, because at this moment the general assembly is holding hearings on Governor Godwin's proposed budget for the next 2 years. The appropriation of State funds in that budget for the 1968-70 biennial for the Virginia Outdoor Recreation Commission is smaller than the appropriation actually made for the cur-