

(The statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT OF LEONARD C. STASEY, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PA.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Leonard C. Staisey. I am chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. In addition, I have the honor of serving as Vice Chairman of the Air and Water Pollution Committee of the National Association of Counties and I am here today in behalf of the National Association of Counties, a non-profit organization representing the more than 3,000 counties of the United States.

I commend this Committee's concern over the preservation of lands and waters for outdoor recreation purposes. The National Association of Counties has, for a number of years, been involved in the promotion of local activity in the recreation field, emphasizing the preservation of open spaces and county participation in the planning and administration of statewide comprehensive recreation programs.

This is best highlighted in our *American County Platform*, from which I cite the following:

8-20. Outdoor Recreation. We endorse the basic findings of the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, as they apply to state and local governments, and strongly support the Commission's fundamental recommendation, which places the pivotal role in meeting public outdoor recreational needs with state and local governments. The National Association of Counties supports the Land and Water Conservation Fund's program of federal grants-in-aid to help states and local governments plan, acquire lands, and develop facilities for outdoor recreation along the lines recommended by ORRRC. We strongly recommend that this program direct its major outdoor recreation emphasis toward the state and local governments; provided that the local governments concerned shall be formally consulted before grant-in-aid funds may be used for land acquisition. We further urge county governments to take the steps necessary to enable them to assume the local leadership in furnishing adequate outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities for the people of their communities and the Nation.

The National Association of Counties has, for the past several years, been quite active in this area of concern. Within the last year, in cooperation with the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in the Department of the Interior, NACO has been involved in a project designed to encourage and facilitate local elected officials to initiate, expand, or improve outdoor recreation activities within their jurisdiction or where appropriate, in cooperation with other jurisdictions. This project has included the preparation of a document entitled, "Community Action Program for Outdoor Recreation," copies of which have been made available to the members of the Committee today. In conjunction with this publication we have sponsored a National Conference on Natural Beauty and Recreation, and are in the process of sponsoring thirty statewide institutes on the subject. This project has, of course, provided us with considerable exposure to various federal and state programs in this field.

The impact of the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been felt throughout the country. This program has begun to surge and our local government officials are beginning to look more and more to this Fund to meet needs in this area. In spite of the accomplishments of the Fund in stimulating Federal, state, and local efforts to meet the recreation needs of our country, it seems that these needs for recreation lands and waters for the next five (5) years far exceed the amount of revenues available under the present funding arrangement. In addition, projects already authorized or about to be authorized by Congress, i.e., the various National Park programs that we all hope will help preserve Americas precious natural heritage, will suffer.

But to talk on at lengths about the virtue of preserving our natural heritage without the programs and funds to achieve these goals inevitably get us nowhere.

We thought it would be helpful if I related the situation or the recreation needs of my own urban county, needs comparable to those being experienced by countless counties throughout the country. By taking the problem confronting my own county, and to realize it is merely one county out of 3,049, you can see the magnitude of the needs.