

(The statement referred to follows:)

STATEMENT BY HON. OTTO KERNER, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate this opportunity to present to you and your Committee my views on S. 1401, your Bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. As has been so aptly pointed out in other statements before this Committee, the Nation is fast approaching a crisis in the matter of financing the acquisition of needed recreational areas. Our growing population and expanding urbanization are creating the need for additional space for outdoor recreation, while at the same time this very growth is making the needed space harder to find and more costly for public bodies to acquire. As the demand for new recreational land increases and the supply of such areas dwindles, local, State and Federal governments are forced to endure the increasingly costly burden of acquiring the needed lands and facilities for outdoor recreation. It has been estimated that the Nation's needs for recreational land acquisition and development will exceed the resources of the land and water conservation fund by \$2.7 billion by 1977. Obviously, something must be done now to expand the resource base of this fund.

Mr. Chairman, the States have been significantly assisted in their efforts to provide for the recreational needs of their people as a result of the establishment of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act. The matching grants provided to the States under this act have been a vital force in aiding and promoting the planning, acquisition and development of land and water recreational areas and the construction of facilities. The States have been stimulated to develop comprehensive recreational plans such as we in Illinois have recently completed. If our own plans for recreational development in the State of Illinois are to go forward with due regard for the interests of our people, we will need even greater support from the Federal Government.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the bill which you and your distinguished colleagues have introduced is the kind of legislation which is vitally desirable if we are to continue to act responsibly in providing for the health, welfare, and enjoyment of our people. I would like the committee to know that I am fully in accord with the provisions of S. 1401 which would earmark additional Federal revenue for the land and water conservation fund. I believe also that there is great utility in providing for additional contract authority which will help make the planning and acquisition of new Federal recreational areas more economical and more expeditious. Lastly, Mr. Chairman, let me say that as a Governor who is doing everything possible to meet the recreational needs of his State, I fully support the provisions of S. 1401 which would preserve the language of the original act calling for a 40% Federal, 60% State split, unless otherwise dictated by the appropriations of any particular year. I am convinced, Mr. Chairman, that in order to avert a crisis in the acquisition of needed recreational lands and facilities, we must act now both to increase the resources available to the Federal Government for this purpose, and continue to make the same percentage of these increased resources available to the States by means of 60% Federal matching grants to the States through the land and water conservation fund.

The CHAIRMAN. I have received a letter from Gov. Paul Laxalt of Nevada, and also a letter from Elmo J. DeRicco, director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources of the State of Nevada, for inclusion in the hearing record at this point.

(The letters referred to follow:)

THE STATE OF NEVADA,
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Carson City, Nev., January 26, 1968.

HON. HENRY M. JACKSON,
Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR JACKSON: I have called a Special Session of the Nevada Legislature on February 5, 1968. As much as I would like to, it will be impossible for me to leave Carson City to attend your important committee hearing February 5-6, 1968, on Senate Bill 1401.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund, since its inception, has encouraged more than any other program, interest in outdoor recreation throughout Nevada and the nation. In Nevada, state and local governments are relying on this program to acquire needed recreation lands and to develop facilities.