

We are pleased, indeed, to see that this proposal has the support of the city the OAS, the White House, the State Department. In other words, the bill, H.R. 16175, has united support of all segments. It certainly is far less costly than any previous proposal which has been considered by your Subcommittee. It will not displace people, jobs, businesses, and taxes. It will, instead, solve the problems which the foreign governments have for chancery space, and it meets the requirement stated by President Johnson that it be "consistent with the legitimate interests of District citizens."

We request the adoption of H.R. 16175 at the earliest possible moment, and we are very grateful, indeed, that you are backing such a progressive and public spirited proposal. We feel that it is due to your leadership that the earlier proposal at Washington Circle was so thoughtfully considered by your Committee. The hearings which you held were eminently fair to everyone concerned. We commend you for this.

Respectfully yours,

PHILIP J. BROWN.
CATHERINE MCCARRON.

THE 18TH AND COLUMBIA ROAD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, D.C., May 12, 1968.

Hon. KENNETH J. GRAY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Buildings and Grounds, Committee on Public Works, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN GRAY: We are writing to advise you of our strong support for H.R. 16175, and to urge that it be adopted by your Subcommittee in order that it may be favorably considered by the full Public Works Committee at the earliest possible date. It is our hope that this significant legislative measure will be brought to the floor of the House early enough in this Session so that the Senate may concur and President Johnson can sign it into law.

The provision of adequate space for chanceries of foreign governments has long been a matter of major concern to President Johnson, and it would be a fine thing if H.R. 16175, which meets this need in a straight-forward and public-spirited way, were enacted into law in time for him to sign it into law. If he is to sign it into law, H.R. 16175 will have to be adopted by the Congress during this Session. Proof of President Johnson's interest in meeting the space needs of Foreign governments for chancery purposes is this statement which is part of his Message to the Congress on February 27, 1967:

"For the District to serve its purpose as the Nation's Capital, it must provide for the representatives of foreign governments and international organizations. Increasingly, the unavailability of space for the legitimate needs of foreign governments is becoming a matter of concern.

"Many new countries require but have been unable to secure adequate space for their chanceries. Many older countries which are seeking larger quarters are having similar difficulties. The problem has become an unnecessary irritant in our international relationships."

As the *Washington Post* pointed out in a report on H.R. 16175, and on the hearings you have been conducting, "Chancery space has been an issue here since the early 1960s, when Congress restricted new chancery construction in residential areas."

The *Washington Post* article made these further points in its report of May 9 1968:

"The city, the State Department and the National Capital Planning Commission all warmly endorsed a bill yesterday to reserve part of the old Bureau of Standards site on Connecticut Avenue for diplomatic use.

"The legislation, under review by a House Public Works sub-Committee, would set aside the 34 acres between Tilden and Van Ness Streets nw. on the west side of Connecticut Avenue.

"Eight of these acres would be given to the Organization of American States for a new headquarters. Sixteen acres would be sold or leased to foreign governments for chanceries.

"The rest would be held as park land, according to present plans.

"Leonard C. Meeker, legal adviser to the State Department, told the subcommittee yesterday that 16 countries have expressed interest in buying or leasing chancery sites on the Connecticut Avenue site. He said all could be accommodated in the 16 acres.