

[H. Doc. 279, 90th Cong., 2d sess.]

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, TRANSMITTING REORGANIZATION PLAN No. 4 OF 1968 ON URBAN RENEWAL, WHICH WOULD TRANSFER AUTHORITY TO APPOINT RLA BOARD MEMBERS FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COMMISSIONER AND GIVE HIM AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE RLA

To the Congress of the United States:

Urban Renewal is a vital weapon in the Nation's attack on urban blight and physical decay. In the firm hands of a local executive determined to improve the face of his city, it is a powerful tool of reform.

In the District of Columbia, urban renewal is managed by a Federal Agency, the District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency, headed by an independent five-man Board of Directors. Although the District government pays the entire local share of the costs of urban renewal and although the Commissioner of the District of Columbia appoints three of the five members of the RLA Board, the Agency need not follow the Commissioner's leadership or administrative direction. To strengthen the District of Columbia Commissioner's authority to initiate and guide the administration of urban renewal, I am today transmitting to the Congress Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1968. This plan:

Gives the District of Columbia Commissioner the authority to appoint all five members of the RLA Board, by transferring to him the appointment function now vested in the President;

Transfers to him the authority to prescribe the rules and regulations governing the conduct of business by RLA. This function is now vested in the Board of Directors.

Urban renewal involves slum clearance, demolition, the relocation of families, the provision of new housing, the stimulation of rehabilitation and new employment. Throughout the Nation, it is clear that authority and leadership by the local chief executive is essential to weld together the full range of municipal functions and community service programs to change conditions in city slums.

In our Capital City the hopes for a balanced new town and new housing development on the Fort Lincoln site in northeast Washington, the rebuilding of the Shaw neighborhood, and a successful model cities program hinge on the leadership of the District of Columbia Commissioner. Members of the Congress have repeatedly stressed the need to establish the Commissioner's effective control of all functions essential to local redevelopment. The attached plan takes a major step toward that objective.

The plan does not alter the corporate status of the Redevelopment Land Agency or any of the authorities now vested by law in the Agency.

The accompanying reorganization plan has been prepared in accordance with chapter 9 of title 5 of the United States Code. I have found, after investigation, that each reorganization included in the plan is necessary to accomplish one or more of the purposes set forth in section 901(a) of title 5 of the United States Code.

There are no direct savings deriving from this plan. However, it will improve the management of programs aimed at reviving the deteriorated social, economic and physical structure of this city, our National Capital. The benefits and savings from a more successful attack on these problems cannot be estimated in advance but their reality cannot be denied.

To achieve our goal of a model Capital, I therefore urge the Congress to permit this reorganization plan to take effect.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 13, 1968.

REORGANIZATION PLAN No. 4 OF 1968

(Prepared by the President and transmitted to the Senate and the House of Representatives in Congress assembled, March 13, 1968, pursuant to the provisions of chapter 9 of title 5 of the United States Code)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REDEVELOPMENT LAND AGENCY

Section 1. Appointments.—(a) The functions of the President of the United States with respect to appointing certain members of the Board of Directors of