

The substance of Title V of this bill, relating to periodic Congressional review of grants-in-aid programs, is also treated in S. 458 and S. 735. We have sent a separate letter on those bills and those comments constitute our comments on Title V of S. 698.

Title XIII of S. 698 relates to relocation assistance to displacees of Federal and federally-assisted programs. We want to make a special plea for enactment of legislation to provide this assistance. We have in the past been unable to adequately and meaningfully assure that persons displaced by our highway programs are treated justly. The truth is that inadequate provision of relocation assistance has worked a severe hardship on many families and businesses displaced, particularly on the poor. Our detailed views on Title XIII have been submitted in testimony.

Subject to the above views, the Department of Transportation favors enactment of this legislation.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that from the standpoint of the Administration's program, there is no objection to the submission of this report for the consideration of the Committee.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. SWEENEY,
Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, D.C. June 14, 1968.

HON. EDMUND S. MUSKIE,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, Committee on Government Operations, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MUSKIE: Your letter of February 28, 1967, requested the views of the General Services Administration on S. 698, 90th Congress, the short title of which is the "Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1967."

The bill is subdivided into nine titles. GSA's comments are confined to the provisions of titles VII, VIII, and IX, which relate to the acquisition, use, and disposal of land by Federal agencies, as these are the only portions of the bill which would appreciably affect the responsibilities of GSA. We are in accord with the over-all purposes of these titles.

Title VII amends the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, 63 Stat. 377, as amended, by adding at the end thereof a new title VIII which would require the Administrator of General Services to give advance notice to local governments prior to offering for sale any Federal real property located within an urban area. The Administrator also would be required to provide available zoning information to prospective purchasers. In connection with the acquisition or change in use of real property, the Administrator would be required to comply to the extent practicable with local zoning requirements, give advance notice of plans to acquire additional property, and to consider objections by local governments to proposed Federal acquisition or use of real property in urban areas. The primary objectives of title VII are consistent with GSA's policy to give advance consideration of local comprehensive planning and land-use regulations in formulating specific acquisition and disposal plans.

We would recommend, however, that the last sentence of the proposed section 804(a) of the Property Act, which begins on line 7 and ends on line 12, page 30 of S. 698, be deleted. The sentence implies that potential adverse impact resulting from advance notice of proposed land acquisitions is the exception rather than the rule. Our experience shows that this is not the case, but that advance public notice of proposed acquisitions of real property by the Federal Government more often than not precipitates land speculation and inflationary real estate prices in the vicinity. With this recommended change, GSA would have no objection to the enactment of title VII.

The purpose of title VIII is to establish a uniform policy for the fair and equitable treatment of owners, tenants, and other persons displaced by the acquisition of real property in Federal and federally assisted programs. This policy is to be as uniform as practicable as to (1) relocation payments, (2) advisory assistance, (3) assurance of availability of standard housing, and (4) Federal reimbursements for relocation payments under federally assisted programs.

GSA has long recognized the need for uniform and equitable practices in the treatment of persons displaced by the acquisition of real property by the Federal