

Our opposition to this legislation stems from these reasons:

1. If enacted, the legislation would cause conflict and confusion between Police operations and closely related services in crime control, including the functions of education, corrections, welfare, and traffic control.

2. It would result in a major reversal in the trend toward citizen participation and involvement in District Government affairs provided under Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1967.

3. The bills would create waste and inefficiency through requiring duplication of supporting services, such as personnel, purchasing, and computer equipment by setting up a costly overhead organization duplicating many existing support services in the D.C. Government.

4. Considerable coordination of the police operations (involving all five forces covered by the pending bills) with other related functions such as civil defense, fire protection corrections, the courts, and activities of the Attorney General is being developed through the recent establishment of a post of Director of Public Safety for the District.

In addition, one of the key elements in the efforts of our new District Government to roll back the city's appalling crime rate is improvement in police-community relations. An essential factor in strengthening this partnership against crime is a police force that is truly a part of the community it serves. To develop maximum mutual respect and cooperation in this area, the citizens must be able to think of the neighborhood policeman as their officer and the Department as their police force.

Gentlemen, a police department is an integral part of any municipal government. The operations and services of the police force are interwoven with those of the other city agencies.

This coordinated effort is essential to the well-being of our capital city—to the residents, the workers from the neighboring suburbs, the business community, and the visitors.

The pending bills, however, would divide responsibility, and thus weaken the city government's ability to provide comprehensive protection and services for the citizens.

Enactment of the legislation before this committee would, in our opinion, hamper—not help—the joint efforts by Congress, the President, and the new District Government to make this the best city in the world.

Therefore, for these reasons, I strongly recommend that this committee disapprove the pending bills.

May I again thank this committee for the opportunity to give our views on this vital question.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make two other comments. One is that I firmly believe, as does the Commissioner, that your new Government in the District of Columbia has adequately demonstrated to the citizens and to you in the last few months its ability to operate its Police Department, to coordinate its efforts and the very trying times we have had in the District of Columbia in the months of May and June.

I think the fact that we were able to take care of it as well as we did adequately demonstrates we have the total capability to operate these departments and coordinate with the other agencies.