

THE OLD TOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, Va., June 19, 1968.

HON. ROBERT E. JONES,
Chairman, Natural Resources and Power Subcommittee,
Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR SIR: As president of the Old Town Civic Association of Alexandria, Va., I must register this organization's strong protest against the proposed Hunting Creek land fill.

This fill and the resultant high-rise apartments will destroy one of the few remaining Potomac waterfront feeding areas, a scenic easement from Jones Point and take public river bottom land for private profit. One must raise the question as to who is the beneficiary of this wanton taking. The people and the city of Alexandria? No. In addition to the obvious losses there are the burdens of increased need for school space and increased traffic generated by the high-density apartments.

I sincerely hope that this proposal will be voted down.

Very truly yours,

SEYMOUR R. YOUNG, *President.*

ALEXANDRIA, VA., June 20, 1968.

Subject: Hearing on proposed land fill at Hunting Creek, Alexandria, Va.,
on June 24, 1968.

HON. ROBERT E. JONES,
Chairman, Natural Resources and Power Subcommittee, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. JONES: For an average of several hours each week throughout the year and for each year since 1950 I have "bird-watched" at Hunting Creek. From 1950 through 1958 I lived in New Alexandria, just a few blocks from Hunting Creek Bay and found the bay a haven for many varieties of waterfowl. After moving to Waynewood, near Mount Vernon (some 4.5 miles south of Hunting Creek) I nevertheless visit Hunting Creek for at least an hour of bird watching each week throughout the year. So I am sure that I am as familiar as anyone with the attractiveness of Hunting Creek Bay to bird life.

I have led many field trips to the Hunting Creek area for the Audubon Naturalist Society, the Virginia Society of Ornithology, visiting foreign ornithologists, and for local Scout dens and packs, and have kept careful records of the birds seen there on each trip.

I watched with dismay the gradual filling in of the extensive fresh-water marsh which covered some 250 acres on the west side of U.S. Route 1, just west of Hunting Creek Bay—which had to go to make way for the Capital Beltway. I also watched, with mixed emotions, the filling in of the mudflat between U.S. 1 and the George Washington Memorial Parkway for golf course fairways immediately west of Hunting Creek Bay. During spring and fall migration this mudflat teemed with hundreds of shorebirds, herons, terns, gulls and certain species of ducks; in the winter the flat was a feeding and resting place for many species of ducks. But we still had Hunting Creek Bay itself which was, and still is, a magnet for thousands of ducks of some 20 species during migration and is the winter feeding and resting area (depending on the tide) for a winter population of 2,000 to 8,000 ducks of at least 8 species.

The abundance of bird life in Hunting Creek Bay fluctuates with the season and with the tide. The period when it is most devoid of waterbird life is May-June, after the majority of wintering ducks have moved north and before the big summer influx of gulls and terns from breeding colonies in the Chesapeake Bay. The period July-October brings hundreds of gulls (of five species) and terns (of four species) into the bay, dozens of shorebirds of 22 species and two species of egrets and two of herons as post-breeding wanderers. Two other species of herons live around the bay all year. By November the ducks have started filling up the bay and by Christmas a wintering population of 2,000 to 8,000 can be seen on any day when the tide is right and the bay isn't iced over. Most of the ducks in winter are ruddies and lesser scaup but a casual scanning with binoculars usually finds up to 50 bufflehead, 40-50 pintail, 20-60 green-winged teal, 30-40 blacks, 10-20 mallards, 5-30 shovellers, a few ring-necks among the scaup, and quite often a few canvasback and redheads (sometimes as many as 30 of each). As often as not in winter (November through March) you can find a few common goldeneyes, old squaw and common and red-breasted mer-