

these new programs. In fact, the reason I rearranged my schedule so I could be here this morning was because I thought it important to tell you in person that the State of Maryland is going to continue to work actively to make certain that all Maryland communities obtain every benefit they are entitled to under the new federal programs to assist economically distressed areas. As you know, assistance for communities with chronic economic difficulties is not a new idea with me. In April of 1960 the first meeting of the Appalachian Governors Conference was held in Annapolis at my invitation. The purpose of this conference was to discuss this region's common problems and to explore ways in which cooperative action by the states might be brought to bear on them. The Appalachian Governors Conference is now a permanent organization, and through it state and local level programs designed to strengthen the region's economy are being coordinated. The conference is also working on plans which will, we hope, lead to the elimination of some of the region's basic economic deficiencies—for example—it's lack of good highways, of effective water control systems, of adequate educational facilities and opportunities. In early May, the Appalachian Governors Conference met in Washington, and one of our sessions was held in the White House at the President's invitation.

President Kennedy assured us that the new Area Redevelopment Administration and other applicable federal programs would give top priority consideration to our plans for the economic rehabilitation of the Appalachian region. The Appalachian Governors Conference played a part in the creation of the Area Redevelopment Administration. At least two of the conference's staff members—Mr. Harry Boswell of Maryland and Mr. John Whisman of Kentucky—were active members of the task force which, under the leadership of Senator Douglas, drafted the Area Redevelopment Act.

Maryland is, to the best of my knowledge, one of the first states to take advantage of the provisions of the Area Redevelopment Act. Three of our communities—Cumberland, Hagerstown and Cambridge—are officially classified as eligible for benefits under the Act. Two of them, in cooperation with our Department of Economic Development, have already filed applications for assistance for specific projects. I understand that the Area Redevelopment Administration has these applications under consideration now, and I sincerely hope that their decision will be favorable, for in one instance the fate of some 600 new jobs hangs in the balance. One of these projects involves the development of the Port of Cambridge. The Maryland Port Authority, the Department of Economic Development, local officials from Cambridge and Dorchester