

approval of Federal grants for planning programs in other areas (including an additional grant of \$50,000 to the Baltimore Regional Planning Council); it has met and discussed planning programs with local groups in many towns and counties of the State; it has encouraged and assisted, where possible, in formulating local programs, and is presently engaged in encouraging the grouping together into regions of communities and counties having common problems and objectives. In addition, through its membership on the Baltimore Regional Planning Council it has close liaison and association with planning and public officials in Baltimore City, and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties.

The Department of Health has been carrying on vital work to protect the health of the citizens of many communities, and in safeguarding the State's water resources, by assisting counties and municipalities in planning for public water supply and sewerages. One of the great handicaps encountered in caring for older people and others who need long-term medical care has been the lack of facilities to care for them near their homes. The development of additional nursing homes for this purpose has been an undertaking of this Department. I am pleased to report that the first and most difficult phase of this problem has been completed. At this session, I shall recommend to you several measures through which we hope to put this program on a sound basis at the earliest possible date.

The last two years have witnessed a healthy expansion of activities in the Department of Mental Hygiene. The care of patients in the mental hospital and Rosewood has continued to improve. Despite an increase in admissions, the total hospital population has continued to decline as a result of improved techniques and programs.

In the field of mental health, it is a pleasure to report that the Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene have reached agreement on a coordinated program for the promotion of mental health and the expansion of services for the mentally ill and the mentally retarded. In this connection, I have received a report on organization developed by the Committee on Medical Care of the State Planning Commission, and, at this session, I will ask you for legislation to carry out these recommendations.

I sincerely hope that you will see fit this year to adopt measures which will lead to a more equitable apportionment of the seats of the lower house of this General Assembly. I am well aware that tradition, community pride and other factors have created a wide cleavage of opinion among yourselves on this question. You will recall