

REMARKS AT DEDICATION OF  
ASSATEAGUE ISLAND BRIDGE

ASSATEAGUE ISLAND

September 25, 1964

It is good to be with my good neighbors of Worcester County who are marking an accomplishment made possible by a splendid example of cooperation between State and county government.

It always has been the philosophy of this Administration that a strong county helps make a strong State. In this instance, the Assateague Island Bridge, desired for many years by Worcester County as a means of strengthening the county, was built with State and county planning, with State and county administration and with State and county funds. So, today we mark this accomplishment with pride in what has been done and hope for what remains to be done.

Assateague Island is perhaps one of the finest ocean beaches in our nation. It offers tremendous opportunity for seashore recreation and living. In an effort to see how important this island is to the State of Maryland, I would ask you to look at population figures. The Maryland-District of Columbia complex is growing rapidly as are most urban regions throughout the country. These urban regions have the jobs. The beach and rural areas have the space for recreation, the recreation that these millions seek.

Right now, Maryland has only eight miles of accessible ocean beach front. Scarcely enough for the thousands upon thousands who seek ocean recreation now and for the many more thousands upon thousands who will seek it in the future. With Assateague Island adding about 22 additional miles to our accessible beachfront, we are taking full advantage of our potential. But, this island does little without accessibility. In the past, it was possible to count the number of people who came here on a summer's day on your fingers. Mile upon mile of golden sand and furrowing surf was inaccessible to our people. Today, that has changed. This 1,640-foot bridge now makes Assateague a part of Maryland.

To whatever use it is put, this island adds immeasurably to the recreational potential of Maryland. It is an additional drawing card for tourists, and with more and more leisure time available to the workers in the urban regions, tourism is becoming a bigger and bigger business. Maryland will be able to accommodate those thousands upon thousands of future generations.