

to each of you here this evening a warm welcome to the State of Maryland. We are, of course, delighted that you selected Baltimore as the site of this year's conference, and it is my sincere hope that you will return often in the future.

Of course, since becoming Governor of Maryland six years ago, I haven't had many opportunities to squeeze in a round of golf but, nevertheless, I have retained my great affection for this wonderful game. I consider it not only a great physical conditioner and a tremendous aid in providing relaxation (despite what the cartoonists say), but also a valuable asset in the State's program of economic development. The Baltimore-Washington area happens to be one of the three fastest growing science-based industry regions in the country. This type of industry attracts professional people who, more often than not, list golfing as their major source of recreation.

Thus, I think it is essential from several points of view that golf be given major consideration in any present and future discussion of outdoor recreational activities. And one of the great challenges facing state and local governments today is solving the problem of providing sufficient facilities for outdoor recreation. As great advances continue to be made in industry, more and more of our citizens have increased amounts of leisure time available to them. But, at the same time, new housing units, roads and other developments continue to occupy vast stretches of our open spaces, denying to present and future generations of our citizens a vital source of outdoor recreation.

Last year, the Congress, recognizing the immediacy of this problem, enacted the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. This Act is, indeed, a milestone in public outdoor recreation for it provides for matching funds on a 50-50 basis with the states for the planning, acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. At my request, the Maryland Planning Department is preparing a statewide open space and outdoor recreation plan and the Department of Forests and Parks has been designated by me to administer the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act for Maryland.

In July, 1964, the Maryland Department of Forests and Parks assisted the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in coordinating and conducting a statewide outdoor recreation facility inventory. This survey catalogs all state, county and municipally owned outdoor recreation facilities in the State. The Department of Forests and Parks has completed the draft of a master plan for State parks and recreation areas and this master plan is now being reviewed by various State agencies.