

STATEMENT ON ENACTMENT OF TAX PROGRAM

March 24, 1967

The Maryland Legislature's enactment of the tax reform program, by substantial margins in both houses, was in the finest tradition of fiscal responsibility and statesmanship. An overwhelming number of the people's representatives have shown that they clearly recognize the need for this long overdue revision of our tax structure, even though it may not have been politically expedient for them to favor it. I commend them for their courage to meet the State's problems forthrightly, and I am firmly convinced that the logic of their position will be justified in the days ahead.

The enactment of this program, by a margin of 109-17 in its final House vote after clearing the Senate 35-8, will move Maryland toward a sound, progressive tax structure in which income will be taxed with respect to a person's ability to pay, and property owners will at last obtain some relief in meeting burdens of local government. At the same time the State and local governments will obtain the increased revenues they need to meet mounting problems.

The business tax structure, so urgently in need of revision, will be studied between sessions of the Legislature and it is my hope that a comprehensive reform in this field can be presented and acted on at the next session with the same degree of bipartisan support.

My congratulations to the leadership of the House and the Senate, and particularly to Chairmen Harry R. Hughes and William Houck of the fiscal committees, for a job well done.

NEWS CONFERENCE

March 27, 1967

Gentlemen, I don't have any statement, I just want to hear your questions and try to bring you to date.

Q. With the bridge bill passed to empower the State Roads Commission to set orders of priority for construction of a Harbor crossing or the Bay Bridge, which crossing would you personally prefer to see built first?