

REMARKS TO THE PUBLIC LAND LAW REVIEW
COMMISSION, NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 12, 1968

Although you have been in session for two days, I would like to extend to you a welcome — although belated — to this area and to Washington. I feel I am justified in exercising this official prerogative — not only as Governor of Maryland, but by the fact that this building stands upon land once belonging to Maryland.

May I assure you that, as Governor of Maryland, I have a profound interest in the objectives of this Commission and a keen appreciation of the complex problems which confront you.

Maryland, forty-second in size among the states, covers a total area of 12,303 square miles: 9,874 square miles of land, and 2,429 square miles of water. Included in this water is the Potomac River, from its origin at the West Virginia border to its confluence with the Chesapeake Bay, and the major portion of Chesapeake Bay with a shoreline of 3,190 miles. Maryland's total land surface is only 6 million acres.

While Maryland is a small state, it ranks fifth in the nation on the basis of population density per square mile. Approximately 86 percent of our citizens live in urban areas. The population of the Baltimore metropolitan region alone exceeds the population of nine of the eleven western states — the exceptions being California and Washington. More people live in Maryland's Montgomery County, immediately northwest of the District Line, than reside in any of the States of Nevada, Wyoming, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, or Hawaii.

Maryland, like the other states you have visited, has many problems. But, unlike the many states you have heard from, population density is a major contributing factor. Some of these problems fall under the sphere of influence of the Public Land Law Review Commission, but many do not. Among the most perplexing problems facing the State of Maryland are the proper management of its limited natural resources — especially land; the disposal and treatment of solid and liquid waste; and the elimination or at least reduction of water and air pollution.

Since Maryland was one of the thirteen original states, no public domain exists within Maryland. Nevertheless, the nearly 4 million Maryland citizens have a vested interest in our public lands just as