

General Assembly authorized the construction of community mental health centers as the best means to relieve congestion in our mental hospitals, provide extensive services and prevent unnecessary, self-defeating institutionalization for the mentally ill. Due to the lack of sufficient funding, this has been largely a paper program.

I shall propose legislation designed to bring the community mental health concept to life; a self-financing plan to develop these facilities throughout Maryland without delay. Insufficient funds have caused insufficient services to Maryland's mentally ill and for the one out of every 37 citizens who is afflicted by chronic alcoholism. Through a moderate increase in the amount charged subdivisions for indigent resident care in State mental hospitals, and a minimal across-the-board increase in the State's alcoholic beverage tax rates, we can finance effective community mental health programs. By combining a model alcoholism treatment and control program with the intensified community mental health effort, we may furnish enough revenue to provide sufficient services.

Across the nation, the overriding domestic problem of today is the problem of our cities. In Maryland, urban problems are not totally confined to Baltimore City. We have seen the symptoms of discontent flare up in Cambridge and we know much needs to be done in other communities throughout our State. However, when we talk of hard-core impaction and poverty, of traffic congestion and air pollution, we are talking about Baltimore. During the 1968 session of the General Assembly, Baltimore's urgent problems will be ever before us.

Urban problems can be broadly delineated as structural and social. Structural problems such as traffic congestion, blight and insufficient revenue for vital capital expenditures are the easier to resolve since technical solutions do exist and the major obstacle is economic ability or feasibility.

Prominent among the administration's proposals to alleviate structural problems in Baltimore City is the request for legislative approval of a Regional Mass Transit Authority to plan, construct, finance and operate a rapid rail system. It is also my hope that agreement can be reached on the State's acquisition of Friendship Airport. Capitalization to construct the airport placed a tremendous burden on the City, and Baltimore's current fiscal problems make necessary rapid expansion to compete for the superjets impossible. State acquisition can simultaneously relieve the City's capital burden and assure vital airport development.