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Statement by Rep. Gerald R. Ford re: Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968

For Fifth District News Media

A greater opportunity to meet hospital construction needs has opened up for Kent and Ionia County communities as a result of legislation I sponsored in the 90th Congress.

A bill I introduced in April 1967 has been enacted as part of the 1968 Housing and Urban Development Act, just approved by Congress. This legislation makes FHA-type loans available for hospital construction by insuring the mortgages of nonprofit hospitals.

The federally-insured mortgage also may be used to cover the cost of major items of equipment needed to operate the hospital.

Community leaders in Grand Rapids tell me that hospital construction needs there will total an estimated \$35 million over the next 10 years. It was at their urging that I drafted and sponsored the FHA-loans hospital construction bill. I managed to keep it in the omnibus housing bill only by exerting every possible effort.

This new program of FHA-type loans for hospital construction will not supplant the familiar Hill-Burton program of federal grants for such projects. It will supplement Hill-Burton. It recognizes the fact that funds for hospital construction are in constantly short supply and that, nationwide, there is a minimum need for an estimated \$3.7 billion worth of hospital facilities.

My program fills an unmet need. Nonprofit hospitals have found mortgage lenders reluctant to provide construction loans on such terms that the loan could be paid back without an undue increase in hospital charges and fees. My program will make longterm mortgage financing possible for nonprofit hospitals.

I believe communities in Michigan and throughout the United States will benefit in improved health care as a result of this new program.

The new Housing Act also contains another provision of special interest in Kent and Ionia Counties. It establishes a national flood insurance program which will make flood insurance available to families and small businessmen in areas frequently troubled with flooding.

(more)

The people of Grandville may be among the first to become eligible for this new flood insurance because the Army Corps of Engineers has already completed a study of Grandville as a "flood-prone area."

The flood insurance coverage will be limited to one-to-four family residential properties and to smaller businesses such as the typical neighborhood family enterprise.

The insurance will be a joint venture between the Federal Government and the private insurance industry. The Government will make payments to the participating insurance companies in high flood-loss years, and the companies in turn will pay the Government a premium in low flood-loss years.

The Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 is landmark legislation. There are some features I do not like, but on balance the pluses outweigh the minuses.

The main thrust of the bill is a new Republican concept which enlists private resources to help provide decent homes for more than six million American families now living in slums or dilapidated rural dwellings.

The measure will establish the National Home Ownership Foundation which was conceived by Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., and supported by me. Eventually it should attract many billions in private funds into low-cost housing and rehabilitation.

There are 13 million American families with incomes under \$5,000 a year. They represent 28 per cent of all the families in the country. Not all of them live in unsatisfactory quarters, but the latest housing survey shows that 6,353,000 housing units in America are substandard. These units should be replaced or renovated.

I think we should help those who cannot decently house themselves, making certain that housing produced with Government assistance be devoted only to low-income families. And the major emphasis must be on federal guarantees, guidance and support rather than on big federal outlays.

But we must help slum dwellers and the rural poor obtain decent housing. We must act if we are to build a sound future for all Americans.

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# REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE

REP. JOHN J. RHODES, (R.-ARIZ.) CHAIRMAN • 1616 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING • TELEPHONE 225-6168

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93rd Congress  
First Session

September 10, 1973  
Statement No. 19

HOUSE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE STATEMENT ON S. 504,

THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS ACT OF 1973

The House Republican Policy Committee supports President Nixon's veto of S. 504, the Emergency Medical Services Systems Act of 1973.

President Nixon has endorsed the continuance of outpatient and dental services of all Public Health Service Hospitals. S. 504, however, mandates the continued operation of inpatient facilities of those PHS hospitals which are outmoded and serve a rapidly declining patient load. The transfer of patients into better and more convenient community hospitals on a contract basis is prohibited by the bill. S. 504 thus perpetuates antiquated and costly federal facilities at the expense of better medical care for those patients now served.

The House Republican Policy Committee decries this counter-productive and wasteful expenditure of federal funds.

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