

**The original documents are located in Box 26, “3/22/76 - Remarks at a Congressional - City Conference on Revenue Sharing, the Washington Hilton Hotel” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

CONGRESSIONAL-CITY CONFERENCE

ON REVENUE SHARING

WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL

MONDAY, MARCH 22, 1976

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL-CITY CONFERENCE

- THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MAYOR LANDRIEU. (Mayor Moon Landrieu introduces you.)
- MAYOR TANZLER
- MEMBERS OF CONGRESS (Senator Brock and Rep. Fountain are expected to be on the platform.)
- DISTINGUISHED MAYORS
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

I AM HONORED BY YOUR INVITATION TO SPEAK

AT THIS VERY IMPORTANT CONFERENCE ON GENERAL REVENUE SHARING●

WE ARE JOINED TODAY IN A SINGLE CAUSE:

A CAUSE THAT IS AS OLD AS OUR REPUBLIC AND AS NEW

AS TODAY'S LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR●

THE CAUSE OF WHICH I SPEAK, AND TO WHICH  
WE ARE ALL FIRMLY COMMITTED, IS THE CAUSE OF RESPONSIBLE,  
RESPONSIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA.

YOUR PURPOSE IN COMING TO WASHINGTON --

A PURPOSE IN WHICH I HEARTILY CONCUR +

IS TO URGE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO DO WHAT

EXPERIENCE / AND COMMON SENSE / AND AMERICA'S MOST

FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF GOVERNMENT / DEMAND THAT IT DO:

EXTEND THE PROVEN GENERAL REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM

WHICH EXPIRES IN DECEMBER, 1976.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, \ LIKE THE CITIES  
YOU REPRESENT, \ WAS CHARTERED BY THE STATES.

THE FRAMERS OF THE CONSTITUTION DID NOT INTEND  
TO CREATE A MONOLITHIC, \ AUTOCRATIC, \ OMNIPOTENT  
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

INSTEAD, THEY CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED A SYSTEM  
IN WHICH AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
WERE TO BE SHARED BY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT,  
AS WELL AS BY THE THREE FEDERAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT.



THAT SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED

BY THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TWO CENTURIES AGO

CAN BE EFFECTIVELY REAFFIRMED BY THE 94TH CONGRESS THIS YEAR --

AND IT MUST BE•

FOR TOO LONG, THE REINS OF POWER IN THIS COUNTRY

HAVE BEEN GATHERED - TIGHTER AND TIGHTER -

INTO THE HANDS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

FOR TOO LONG, PROGRAMS OF NARROW CATEGORICAL AID

MULTIPLIED, AT GREAT AND GROWING EXPENSE TO THE FEDERAL BUDGET,

AND THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER.

BY 1972 THERE WERE WELL OVER A THOUSAND

OF THESE FEDERAL PROGRAMS -- EACH LIMITED IN SCOPE,

RESTRICTIVE IN OPERATION, AND EQUIPPED WITH ITS OWN

BUREAUCRACY -- CHIPPING STEADILY AWAY

AT THE FOUNDING FATHERS' SYSTEM OF SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

AND LOCAL CONTROL.

WITH THE ENACTMENT OF THE REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM

IN 1972, THE CONGRESS MADE AN IMPORTANT AND HISTORIC BREAK

WITH THIS UNWISE AND UNHEALTHY TREND. I WAS A LEADER

IN THIS EFFORT, AND I KNOW WHAT THE INTENT OF THE CONGRESS WAS.

IN THE FOUR YEARS SINCE THE REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM  
BEGAN, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE PROVED BEYOND DOUBT  
THE MERIT OF LOCAL CONTROL OVER LOCAL CONCERNS•

TO DATE, MORE THAN 23 BILLION 500 MILLION DOLLARS  
IN REVENUE SHARING FUNDS HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO THE 50 STATES  
AND SOME 39,000 LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT•

IN FISCAL YEAR 1975 ALONE,

MORE THAN 7 BILLION 100 MILLION DOLLARS WERE WELL SPENT

ON A WIDE RANGE OF VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

NEARLY 25 PERCENT OF THOSE FUNDS WERE SPENT

ON PUBLIC SAFETY.

ALMOST 22 PERCENT WAS SPENT ON EDUCATION,

13 PERCENT ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION,

MORE THAN 7 PERCENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION,

AND ABOUT THE SAME PERCENTAGE ON HEALTH SERVICES.

THESE ARE PROGRAMS THAT HELP PEOPLE,

AND IN CASE AFTER CASE, THEY ARE PROGRAMS

YOU SIMPLY COULD NOT HAVE AFFORDED,

HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR REVENUE SHARING•



WHEN YOU WERE PUT IN CHARGE, YOU PROVED \--

AS I KNEW YOU WOULD \-- THAT YOU KNOW A LOT MORE ABOUT

WHAT YOUR CITIES NEED THAN THE WASHINGTON BUREAUCRACY DOES.

THAT BUREAUCRACY HAS BEEN HELD AT AN ABSOLUTE  
MINIMUM IN THE OPERATION OF REVENUE SHARING.

ONLY ABOUT TWELVE-HUNDREDTHS OF ONE PERCENT  
OF THE FUNDS AUTHORIZED FOR GENERAL REVENUE SHARING  
IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS HAVE BEEN SPENT ON WASHINGTON'S  
HANDLING OF THE PROGRAM.

THAT'S AN AMAZING STATISTIC,

AND IT'S A VERY ENCOURAGING SIGN THAT BUREAUCRATIC OVERHEAD

NEED NOT ROB THE TAXPAYER BLIND,

NOR BIND YOUR CITIES AND STATES IN A MAZE OF RED TAPE,

IN ORDER FOR A FEDERALLY-FUNDED PROGRAM TO SUCCEED●

IN THOUSANDS OF CITIES AND COUNTIES,

IN ALL 50 STATES, REVENUE SHARING HAS SPELLED SUCCESS•

IF THERE WAS EVER A PROGRAM THAT HAS EARNED ITS KEEP,

REVENUE SHARING IS THAT PROGRAM•

LAST APRIL, I PROPOSED A FIVE YEAR AND NINE MONTH  
EXTENSION OF THE GENERAL REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM.

THIS PROPOSAL REPRESENTED AN INCREASE IN FUNDING

OF ALMOST ONE BILLION DOLLARS, FOR A TOTAL

OF 39 BILLION 850 MILLION DOLLARS, AND CALLED FOR CHANGES

TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM.

ELEVEN MONTHS AGO, I URGED THE CONGRESS TO TAKE PROMPT ACTION  
ON THIS PROPOSAL.

I DID NOT ASK THE CONGRESS FOR "RUBBER STAMP"

APPROVAL OF THIS IMPORTANT AND SUBSTANTIAL PROGRAM.

IT DESERVED CAREFUL STUDY, BUT IT ALSO DESERVED

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.

THE CONGRESS OBVIOUSLY DID NOT SHARE MY SENSE

OF URGENCY• IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY APPARENT

THAT THE CONGRESS FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE

OF THIS PROGRAM TO THE PEOPLE OF THE CITIES AND COUNTIES

AND STATES OF OUR NATION•

AFTER ELEVEN MONTHS, A HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE  
HAS JUST BEGUN TO MARK-UP A REVENUE SHARING RENEWAL BILL●  
WHILE I AM GLAD TO SEE SOME MOVEMENT, I AM CONCERNED  
WITH THEIR INITIAL DECISIONS REGARDING THE LEVEL OF FUNDING  
AND PROSPECTIVE FORMULA CHANGES●



BEHIND ALL THE RHETORIC ASSOCIATED

WITH THE GROWING CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE OVER RENEWAL

OF THIS PROGRAM IS A VERY FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE:

WHETHER OR NOT TO CONTINUE PROVIDING CITIES, COUNTIES

AND STATES WITH THE EFFECTIVE FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

NOW AUTHORIZED BY THIS PROGRAM.

IT IS JUST TOO IMPORTANT TO YOUR CITIES.

IT IS JUST TOO IMPORTANT TO YOUR STATES.

IT IS JUST TOO IMPORTANT TO AMERICA'S FUTURE.

THE GENERAL REVENUE SHARING BILL MUST PASS THIS YEAR.

YOU KNOW THAT FAILURE TO RENEW THIS PROGRAM

WOULD WEAKEN THE FISCAL STABILITY OF YOUR CITIES.

YOU KNOW THAT EXPIRATION OF THIS PROGRAM, \ OR A REDUCTION

OF THE PAYMENTS YOU NOW RECEIVE, WOULD MEAN CUTBACKS

IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES, \ INCREASED PUBLIC AND RELATED

PRIVATE SECTOR UNEMPLOYMENT, \ OR THE IMPOSITION OF MORE TAXES.

MAYBE ~~THIS~~ IS WHAT SOME PARTISANS WANT.

BUT I DON'T.

I SHARE YOUR CONCERNS,

AND I STAND FIRM IN MY COMMITMENT TO SECURE AN EXTENSION

OF GENERAL REVENUE SHARING, WHICH SHOULD NO LONGER BE

A PARTISAN POLITICAL ISSUE.

IF YOU WILL WORK WITH ME, WE CAN MEET

THAT COMMON COMMITMENT, AND WE CAN DO EVEN MORE GOOD

WITH REVENUE SHARING IN THE FUTURE.

ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE MATTER OF URGENT IMPORTANCE IS

THE PASSAGE OF A ONE BILLION 700 MILLION DOLLAR SUPPLEMENTAL  
APPROPRIATION BILL TO CONTINUE FUNDING OF PUBLIC SERVICE JOBS

UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACT.

MANY OF YOUR CITIES FACE THE IMMINENT PROSPECT

OF FIRING THOUSANDS OF WORKERS BECAUSE THE CONGRESS

HAS NOT PROVIDED THE FUNDS YOU NEED TO PAY THEM.

I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU WANTED MORE THAN

THIS ONE BILLION 700 MILLION DOLLAR PROGRAM.

I KNOW THAT A SIX BILLION DOLLAR PUBLIC WORKS BILL SOUNDS GOOD --

ESPECIALLY IF YOU DON'T HAVE TO BORROW THE MONEY TO PAY FOR IT.



I RESPECT YOUR POSITION,

EVEN WHILE RESPECTFULLY DISAGREEING WITH IT.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SIMPLY COULD NOT AFFORD

THAT PROGRAM. EVEN IF IT COULD,

IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN MONTHS TO PUT THE PROGRAM IN PLACE.

BY THAT TIME, GIVEN THE PACE AND THE STRENGTH  
OF OUR CURRENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY, THAT SIX BILLION DOLLAR  
BILL WOULD VERY LIKELY HAVE DONE MORE TO FEED INFLATION /  
THAN TO FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT.

BUT ONE THING IS CLEAR: / IF THE CONGRESS

WAS PREPARED TO SPEND SIX BILLION DOLLARS TO INITIATE

A PROGRAM OF DUBIOUS VALUE, / IT SHOULD BE WILLING

TO SPEND ONE BILLION 700 MILLION DOLLARS TO CONTINUE

THE CETA PUBLIC SERVICE JOBS PROGRAM ALREADY UNDERWAY.

I PROMISE TO DO ALL THAT I CAN TO SECURE THE  
PASSAGE OF THIS BILL AND GET YOU THE MONEY YOU NEED TO  
OPERATE THIS PROGRAM.

ANOTHER PROGRAM OF PROVEN VALUE TO YOUR CITIES

IS THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

WE BEGAN LAST YEAR.

SUCCESS STORIES ABOUND.

IN MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN, THE CITY COMBINED

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS WITH LOCAL FUNDS

TO FINALLY COMPLETE A DOWNTOWN URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

THAT HAD BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SEVEN YEARS.

IN SALT LAKE CITY, LOCAL OFFICIALS USED

BLOCK GRANT FUNDS TO MATCH OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS AND

ESTABLISH A PARK IN A LOW-INCOME AREA OF THE CITY.

USING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS,

THE CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA,

IS STIMULATING RENOVATION OF OLD NEIGHBORHOODS

BY OFFERING A CASH PAYMENT OF 2,000 DOLLARS TO PEOPLE WILLING

TO MOVE INTO THE AREAS AND RENOVATE THE HOMES.



THERE HAVE BEEN MANY, MANY OTHER EXAMPLES  
OF INNOVATION AND PROGRESS IN CITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN SO MUCH SUCCESS  
WITH THIS PROGRAM, I HAVE PROPOSED A 446 MILLION DOLLAR  
INCREASE FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN MY FISCAL 1977 BUDGET,  
BRINGING THE TOTAL TO THREE BILLION 200 MILLION DOLLARS.

ONE OF THE BEST SUCCESS STORIES OF ALL

IN THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FIELD IS THIS:

FEDERAL INTERVENTION AND CONTROL HAS BEEN DRASTICALLY REDUCED,

WITH FAVORABLE RESULTS.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS GOVERNING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

HAVE BEEN REDUCED, ON MY ORDERS, FROM THE 2,600 PAGES REQUIRED  
FOR CATEGORICAL AID TO 25 PAGES FOR THE BLOCK GRANT APPROACH.

A COMMUNITY HAS TO FILE ONLY ONE APPLICATION,

CONSISTING OF 50 PAGES, RATHER THAN THE PREVIOUS AVERAGE

OF FIVE APPLICATIONS CONSISTING OF 1,400 PAGES.

PROCESSING AND APPROVAL OF A COMMUNITY

DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AVERAGES 49 DAYS.

UNDER THE CATEGORICAL URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAM,

PROCESSING TOOK MORE THAN TWO YEARS.

THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM, LIKE THE SUCCESS OF REVENUE SHARING,

POINTS TO ONE CENTRAL FACT:

YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO TO IMPROVE YOUR CITIES,

AND YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IT -- AND WITH THE PROPER TOOLS

AND THE NECESSARY RESOURCES, YOU CAN DO THE JOB THAT

NEEDS TO BE DONE.

BUT TODAY, NO SINGLE MAN, NO SINGLE LEVEL

OF GOVERNMENT CAN BE EXPECTED TO TRANSFORM AMERICA'S CITIES

OVERNIGHT OR ALL ALONE•

THE COOPERATION OF FEDERAL, STATE AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS -- OF PRESIDENTS AND CONGRESSMEN,

OF GOVERNORS AND MAYORS AND COUNCILMEN --

IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS LONG-TERM EFFORT.

OUR GOAL IS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE

IN AMERICA'S CITIES.

THE MONUMENTS WE HOPE TO RAISE

ARE MONUMENTS NOT OF STONE AND STEEL, BUT OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT.



WE CAN MAKE AMERICA'S CITIES THE THRIVING,

FORWARD-LOOKING CENTERS OF COMMERCE AND CULTURE

THEY OUGHT TO BE.

WE CAN MAKE THE STREETS SAFER,

AND THE TRAFFIC FLOW BETTER, AND THE AIR AND WATER CLEANER.

WE CAN REVITALIZE CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

AND IMPROVE CITY SCHOOLS AND OTHER SERVICES•

MY ADMINISTRATION IS FULLY PREPARED TO JOIN

WITH YOU IN THESE GREAT ENTERPRISES AND MORE•

IN FACT, WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN•

THIS CONFERENCE CAN HELP ENSURE THE CONTINUED SUCCESS

OF ONE PROGRAM, ONE SIGN OF HOPE AND PROGRESS,

WE HAVE ALREADY STRUGGLED FOR AND WON.

LET'S GET REVENUE SHARING EXTENDED,

AND GO ON FROM THERE, AND MAKE OUR CITIES GLEAM AGAIN

WITH THE GLOW OF NEW LIFE AND IN THE BRILLIANCE

OF A HOPEFUL FUTURE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT

ONLY ABOUT TWELVE-HUNDREDTHS OF ONE PERCENT

AUTHORIZED FOR GENERAL REVENUE SHARING IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS

HAVE BEEN SPENT ON WASHINGTON'S HANDLING OF THE PROGRAM.