

**The original documents are located in Box 119, folder “Hartford Ruling” of the Ron Nessen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Ron Nessen donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

HARTFORD RULING - NEW JERSEY

Q: A Federal judge in Hartford, Connecticut, recently ruled that Federal grants to parks and other community facilities in suburban areas should cease unless those areas were accessible to members of urban minorities. This seems to set a precedent. Do you agree with the decision and will you see that Federal agencies comply with it?

A: As I understand the Hartford case, it addressed the legality of the Community Development Block Grant applications of seven suburban communities around Hartford. The District Court ruled that the applications were illegal because they didn't address the housing needs of low-income people who work in the communities.

The District Court's decision, like the Supreme Court's decision in the Gautreaux case, provides remedies for the jurisdictions in question in terms of existing laws like the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

The 1974 Act does not compel a community to provide for low-income housing, but it does require that communities which accept Federal funds like Community Development Block Grants, address the housing needs of low-income people and fully comply with civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination.

I have stated before that I will enforce the law in this matter.

BACKGROUND

On January 28, 1976, a decision of the United States District Court found HUD's approval of block grant applications for seven suburbs of Hartford to be illegal. The City of Hartford brought suit against the suburbs for failure to provide a completed Housing Assistance Plan as part of their block grant application, under the terms of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

HUD had allowed the original applications because the suburbs in question had pleaded difficulties in the preparation of their Housing Assistance Plans for the first year of Community Development Block Grant allocations. Subsequently, HUD has altered its regulations for the second year of block grant applications - a revision which in the opinion of the agency moots the Hartford decision.

Of the seven suburbs involved in the case, one has opted not to re-apply for Community Development Block Grants, three are appealing the court's decision and the remainder apparently are attempting to develop block grant applications under the new guidelines.

FLM  
6/2/76