



RICHARD C. LEE
MAYOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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JUN 23 1966

June 17, 1966

Dear Bob:

President Johnson's Demonstration Cities proposal offers a real opportunity to carry out totally comprehensive programs of urban renewal and improvement on a scale we have begun to approach here in New Haven -- but only if the Demonstration Cities program is adequately funded. Without adequate funding for carrying out the program -- and I do not mean merely planning funds -- the proposal will create great expectations with the hazard of frustration and turmoil.

I understand that the Housing Subcommittees in both the House and the Senate will be voting on the Demonstration Cities bill in the near future and that they will consider providing money for Demonstration Cities planning only. This is not enough, and in this case too little is worse than nothing.

Whether or not the Demonstration Cities proposal passes this year, it is absolutely essential that additional urban renewal authorizations are provided in an amount sufficient to fund the backlog of existing applications plus all those which will come in during the next fiscal year. I understand on good authority that \$600 million in applications are being held up in Washington, and that another \$600 million are pending in the regional offices throughout the country at this very moment for a total of \$1.2 billion. It can be expected that almost this amount of new applications will come in during the next fiscal year, which indicates a need for about \$2 billion of additional urban renewal capital grants authorization at this time.

This is not just desirable -- it is essential. And one should not think for a minute that the Demonstration Cities program can substitute for continuation of the existing urban renewal program. Even if the Demonstration Cities bill is adequately funded -- as it should be -- it will take several years before our cities can develop plans that can be carried into execution to fulfill the objectives of the program. In the interim, we are going to have to rely upon the tried and tested urban renewal program which has been the basis for rebuilding New Haven and countless cities all across the land.

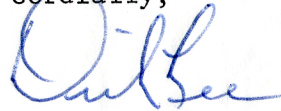
I don't see any reason why the fate of our cities and their people -- and that is what is at stake here -- should play second fiddle to any other national legislative proposals. America can afford -- and Connecticut needs -- the broadest and most extensive program to fully attack all the physical and human problems which we face and which we can solve if the Federal Government gives us the tools and the money.

I urge you to do everything you can to assure that the Housing Subcommittee, the Banking and Currency Committee, and the full House of Representatives vote to provide an adequate level of funding for carrying out the Demonstration Cities program and sufficient funds for carrying forward the urban renewal program without curtailment.

May I count on you for this?

My personal best wishes, as always.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Bee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".