

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

November 21, 1959

TO THE HONORABLE
THE HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Gentlemen:

In 1953, after it had completed its survey of Maryland records management problems, Records Engineering, Incorporated, recommended to Governor McKeldin that a record center containing approximately 12,000 square feet be provided for the storage of little-used non-current records. The Governor's Special Committee on Records Management rejected this recommendation in favor of equal space in the two new State office buildings which were then in the planning stage. The Committee felt that a separate building would be uneconomical if administered by so small an agency, and besides there was the practical difficulty of providing legislative authorization and funds for another building at a moment when the State was already committed to two new expensive office buildings. We asked for space in the basement of each building—perfectly proper areas for record storage and at the same time the least desirable for office use. Our request was granted, and although from time to time during the next five years we were almost elbowed out by other agencies, in the end both areas, totalling 13,000 square feet, were ours, beautifully equipped in every way, convenient and efficient.

The Annapolis center opened in September 1958, the Baltimore center, in June 1959. It is now possible for us for the first time to "manage" records through every stage from their creation to their final destruction or to permanent housing in the Hall of Records.

Unfortunately, the opening of the record centers, while giving the Records Management Division a proper home, did not in any way relieve the shortage of space which had been felt for some years by the Archives Division. The new State Office Building in Annapolis, by providing quarters for the Land Office, made it possible for us to use the space in our own building relinquished by that office. Our greatest gain was in the stack area. The Land Office had been assigned one-fourth of the total and that, the choicest part—the entire first deck and half of the second. Since there is no stack elevator, the storing of frequently-used records on higher levels was always inconvenient and wasteful in time and energy.