

While the Public Housing Administration does not report rates of turnover of length of stay by age or characteristics of household, it is the experienced opinion of many local housing administrators that the smallest turnover occurs among elderly households who are at the end of the family cycle and have no potential for increasing their incomes.

The reasons for moveout again are varied but strongly related to stage in the family cycle of the individual family, type of employment, and access to housing opportunities. In public housing, reasons for moveout are not only varied, but directly related to the particular purposes of the program, including the fact that families are low income. Thus, in addition to such factors as changes in family composition and circumstance, there are such contributing factors as evictions for overincome, and for nonpayment of rent as well as for a variety of economic and social motivations including the ebb and flow of employment and housing opportunities in the community.

On the average, some 10 to 20 percent of public housing families move every year to purchase their own homes; these are largely young families in the first stage of the family cycle whose income has risen while in public housing occupancy.

Mr. WIDNALL. What is the average length of stay of a tenant in public housing?

Mr. FAY. About 4½ years. That again is our own experience.

Mr. WIDNALL. Are the reasons for leaving basically a change in the income or other reasons?

Mr. FAY. There are many reasons. We have been attempting to follow the progress of public housing tenants from the standpoint of income and their own elevation in society. And we have been very pleased to notice over the past 20 years that about 10 percent of the families that go through our public housing projects move out to buy homes of their own. To be sure, these homes are not fully paid for, but at least they have progressed from the point of requiring public assistance to get a roof over their heads to a point where they will be becoming in effect taxpaying citizens and responsible members of the community.

Mr. WIDNALL. Are those who are receiving public assistance the ones who normally stay in public housing the longest?

Mr. FAY. I think the ones who stay longest are the broken families, and the elderly woman whose husband perhaps has died and whose children have moved away, and who now has the illnesses of age, and on that account there is no prospect of her improving her situation.

Mr. WIDNALL. Thank you for a constructive statement.

Mr. BARRETT. Mrs. Sullivan?

Mrs. SULLIVAN. I have just one question I would like to ask Mr. Fay.

It was suggested last week by one witness that there would be so many difficulties in selecting the demonstration cities that we should encourage all cities to make their plans and then put all the names of those offering fully qualified plans in a fish bowl and select the cities by chance. From your testimony you don't feel this is the way to do it.

Mr. FAY. I think it might be the quick and easy way to do it. But I am not sure that it would be the most satisfactory in the long run.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. But you do feel—I think you mentioned in your testimony that you feel—that 60 or 70 of these cities would be needed to participate in order to have a fair evaluation of whether the demonstration cities program is successful?

Mr. FAY. Yes, madam. In order to provide a complete cross section of the various local conditions in various population brackets that have been described by the Secretary. That does not give a very