

**STATEMENT OF MAURICE D. BEMENT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
KENTUCKY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

Mr. BEMENT. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Members of the committee, I am Maurice Bement, the executive director of the Kentucky School Boards Association.

We would like to say that we really express our appreciation to you for giving us this opportunity, and also we want to express to the Congress through you the appreciation of the Kentucky School Boards Association and its 200 local school district facilities for the renewed interest and concern of the Congress in public education in this country.

We feel that recent Federal support programs are helping Kentucky local school districts to provide new and improved educational opportunities to the children and youth of our State.

Our association, through Kentucky Members of the Congress, supported Public Law 89-10. We did so with the understanding that the Federal Government would not exercise unreasonable or arbitrary controls. We did so after reviewing section 604 of the 89-10 act—and, Madam Chairman, you have already quoted it this morning—which states:

Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution or school system, or over the selection of library resources or printed or published instructional materials by any educational institution or school system.

After a review of experiences of our State education agency and our local school districts in the administration of programs under Public Law 89-10, we raise a question as to whether all departments, agencies, officers, and employees of the United States have acted in compliance with section 604 of the act.

This association has accepted the philosophy as reflected in this statement:

American education—a local function, a State responsibility, and a Federal concern.

Acceptance has also been given to the junior partner role of the Federal Government in the development of education programs under appropriate Federal-State-local relations.

In considering the three partners, it must be understood and accepted that the Federal Government is farthest removed from the classroom where teaching and learning take place. The Federal Government is least able to plan and provide for the specific needs of certain communities, schools, and children.

If we are to strengthen State and local education agencies and if we are to plan for specific education programs to meet the needs of specific schools and children, then we must reassess the Federal grant programs which employ a fiscal mechanism of control and administration.

In order to make the best use of the Federal, State, and local tax dollar, to efficiently coordinate all education programs where teaching and learning occur, and to preserve State and local control of education, we respectfully present, for the consideration of the Congress, the following criteria: