

Office of Education to contract with organizations other than the State department of education with comprehensive planning?

Dr. MATTHEIS. That is right.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Would it be fair to say you think this is the job of the State departments and not some outside organization?

Dr. MATTHEIS. I would, sir.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Relating to title IV, regional labs, with your feeling about State departments of education, do you think it is wholly consistent to support the regional lab concept and also be in favor of strengthening State departments of education?

Let me just give you this one example. The State of Pennsylvania, for example, is served by three different regional labs. Do you think this is maintaining the strength much less improving the strength of the department of education in the State of Pennsylvania?

Dr. MATTHEIS. I could not speak to the State of Pennsylvania, but I could speak generally with regard to title IV. I had some experience about it originally and I think I accepted ultimately the philosophy that there was going to be in existence title IV and regional labs and therefore I had better get involved in them on behalf of the State to protect our interests and I think many of us have done this.

I see some great problems in title IV and its relationships to State departments of education in particular and perhaps ultimately even local school districts.

So far, they have been organized with great participation by State departments and I think we look at this as an opportunity then to direct it so that this does not weaken State departments but I still have concern about it and I think you have identified them very well.

Mr. ERLNBORN. If I get the impression from your prepared statement that you are in wholehearted support of the regional lab concept, that impression is wrong. You do have some reservations?

Dr. MATTHEIS. Yes, sir.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Do you see any conflict in the fact that the regional labs are established as nonprofit organizations free from tax limitations, spending limitations, of the State and Federal Government?

Do you see any conflict there with your State departments of education and let me also add to this question the salary structure within the regional labs?

Dr. MATTHEIS. I would not see any conflict, Mr. Congressman, with the first question. We have seen a few problems in the second one and this relates to a comment Congresswoman Green made earlier in regard to the professional personnel in the school districts, leaving and so on.

One of the situations certainly that has caused frustration and problems for school districts and State departments of education has been the new Federal programs and the fact that they have hired many of our programs away.

Regional labs are in the same position where they have hired many of our very fine people away from the public school districts and State departments have to staff them and salaries have not been the problem with them that it has been with us.