

We welcome all of you this morning. I presume that Mr. Carter will prefer to read his statement.

Do you prefer to read your statement?

STATEMENT OF HON. LISLE C. CARTER, JR., ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SERVICES, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE, ACCOMPANIED BY DONALD SLATER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; MRS. BARBARA COUGHLAN, ACTING ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE; AND DR. NOLAN ESTES, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION; AND ANDREW TRUELSON

Mr. CARTER. Yes, sir.

Chairman PERKINS. Go ahead, Mr. Carter.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am pleased to appear before your committee to discuss H.R. 8311, the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1967.

The Economic Opportunity Program stands out as one of the major achievements of this administration. In three brief years, with a congressional mandate, the Office of Economic Opportunity has compiled a record of significant achievement on behalf of people and communities who do not share in the Nation's general affluence. This committee has been instrumental in shaping its capabilities and accomplishments during this time and can fully appreciate its contributions, both with respect to expanded resources and newly developed techniques in domestic programs.

The Office of Economic Opportunity has initiated and stimulated action on social problems and issues in communities across the country. I think it is abundantly clear that support of such innovations as community action agencies, neighborhood centers for health and social services, Headstart programs, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, VISTA, and the like have dramatically improved the quality and character of community life. These are new and invaluable tools that we could not depend upon in the past simply because they did not exist.

Some of these measures are especially significant for their contribution to educating people as to their rights and responsibilities.

VISTA, for example, has demonstrated what dedicated volunteers can do in such diverse settings as isolated migrant camps and inner-city slums. Volunteers show people how to take advantage of new or newly discovered opportunities. Aside from the poor—the most important beneficiaries of VISTA—many programs in social services, education, employment, and health have also been enriched by the competence and dedication of volunteers' work.

OEO is also responsible for the spread of legal services for the poor, services they badly need and cannot ordinarily afford. These services have helped poor people deal with public agencies and the society around them with new knowledge, confidence, and dignity.

The poverty program has helped to shape the course this Nation has chosen to follow in dealing with some of our toughest problems—