

How many States have now taken advantage of title XXIV of the Social Security Act? All the States will provide additional health services to the poor? Do you know?

Mr. CARTER. We have it here, Mr. Chairman. Twenty-eight States.

Chairman PERKINS. Twenty-eight States. I know my State of Kentucky has taken advantage, but still, even in the States where they take advantage of title XXIV, they take advantage of the community health services in addition to that, made available in 1961 by an act of Congress.

There is still a gap, and it is only through OEO that you are able to bridge this additional gap at the present time, through the Office of Economic Opportunity. Am I correct in that statement?

Mr. CARTER. I would say that the gap that OEO fills is the gap of delivery of services.

Chairman PERKINS. Through a community actions program.

Mr. CARTER. Yes, exactly. Through the comprehensive neighborhood health center.

Chairman PERKINS. Yes.

Mr. CARTER. This brings the services to where they can be made assessable and available to the people and provide the very important nucleus for sort of a conduit for title XXIV or other kinds of health programs to get to the people who need them most.

And that is one of the chief functions that the neighborhood health center does. It makes quality medical care available so that poor people can take advantage of it. And this is very important in rural areas as well as in the urban ghetto. Because in the rural areas, you know, there are many places where they just have not been able to get quality medical care, and it is through the exploration of this kind of device that the most hope is held out for that.

And it is in closing that gap between the availability of service from a financial point of view and the actual delivery of service to the person who needs the service, that the OEO health center plays a crucial role.

Chairman PERKINS. Go ahead.

Mr. CARTER. I was pointing out that Headstart has proved itself in a variety of settings, not only in schools but through other public agencies, in churches, and through nonprofit organizations as well.

If this year's budget request is met, nearly 750,000 poor children could benefit from Headstart. This is an outstanding goal.

Headstart has made very important contributions to the present well-being and future prospects of young children in poverty. Its programs have opened a new universe of experience that lie outside of the boundaries of poverty and its ghettos.

The Headstart experience has revealed to the community and its institutions that they can deal with the needs and problems of young children and their families with gratifying results.

The program has been a pioneer in early childhood development, and it continues to move into new areas. In this coming year for example, it is increasing the number of 3-year-old participants and exploring the effectiveness for even younger children.

Headstart has had profound impact on communities in their provision of child development services. It is influencing communities to