

1500 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

programs resulting in less concentration and less impact on the root causes of poverty?

Secretary FREEMAN. I think there would be less concentration and less effective mobilization of resources in the absence of one named agency with sharp and clearly defined responsibility to do the job.

Chairman PERKINS. I hope to see some time in the future a program where we can do more about the rural housing. Do you feel that the Farmers Home Administration now has ample authority assuming that the appropriations committee made funds available for small grants, for instance, of \$500 or \$1,000 to people living in real poverty in isolated rural areas could put plumbing into their small home, or put a roof over their heads.

Secretary FREEMAN. Funding of the current authority for grants for poverty housing would be a tremendous assist in meeting the problem. We did have some funding a few years back. I think it was effectively used and made a real contribution in some desperate circumstances.

We have not had funds for that purpose now for several years and they are very much needed.

Chairman PERKINS. In those instances where those grants are desperately needed, would you feel that under the Office of Economic Opportunity that you could better proceed toward making inroads on the individual communities through your own agency in cooperation with the Office of Economic Opportunity than under the Department alone?

Secretary FREEMAN. In this particular instance the main thing is that we have additional authority, I think, in funding this could be in the OEO and part of its program, in the case of housing where there is no repayment ability that is visible at the time.

Chairman PERKINS. You mentioned the fact that the loans were made to the real poor people to purchase fertilizer and purchase supplies for their small farm operations. Has this been more effective under the overall coordination given the Office of Economic Opportunity?

Secretary FREEMAN. Yes, I think it has. It has made possible, better coordination by one particular agency, in this case the OEO, than would have been if it had been directly assigned to the FHA by the Congress.

Chairman PERKINS. I personally feel that putting these youngsters in the conservation camps is not the practice of a lost art, as been charged by some.

I think they gain invaluable experience. I do not feel that the training that you are giving these youngsters is outmoded. I feel it is very constructive. What is the average per enrollee cost?

Secretary FREEMAN. I have forgotten the precise figure. It is coming down. I think it is around \$6,400. May I put that in the record?

Chairman PERKINS. Of course, without objection such information shall be supplied for the record at this point.

(The information referred to follows:)

The exact figure is \$6,410, which includes center operations, plus program overhead, building amortization and corpsmen allowances.