

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967 2833

STATE OF KANSAS,
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR,
Topeka, July 7, 1967.

HON. CARL PERKINS,
Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor,
U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERKINS: The Economic Opportunity Program which has been underway since 1964, had had a modest implementation in the State of Kansas. We feel that we have moved cautiously and judiciously in taking advantage of this program. We do feel that the implementation of the program in the State of Kansas has been directly related to the real and actual needs of the people of our State.

Listed below is a summary of the active OEO programs for the State of Kansas as of June 16, 1967.

Program	Amount
Headstart, summer 1966	\$1,812.00
Headstart, summer 1967	609,755.00
Community action programs	3,043,911.00
Neighborhood Youth Corps	2,070,770.00
Work experience projects	157,382.00
Rural loans program	118,980.00
Total, all programs	6,002,610.00

As the Governor of the State, I am concerned about the matter of greater involvement in relationship to both federal and local programs. This administration has taken the position that we should think in terms of more responsibility being placed with state government. For example, we have improved and strengthened our Water Quality Control Act; we have established air pollution control legislation; and we have greatly expanded our efforts in the area of elementary and secondary education.

We do not want to increase the red tape that is involved in the development of projects. However, in that the Governor's Office is often the first port-of-call whenever a program goes wrong, it seems to us that it is important to keep the Governor's Office fully advised as to what is going on in the OEO program. I hope that there might develop an increasingly cooperative relationship between the Technical Assistance Office and the Regional Office as they try to work out programs for the communities in Kansas. I can see the Technical Assistance Office providing assistance to smaller communities with the Regional Office coming in and doing the final wrap-up as far as a particular project is concerned.

If the Economic Opportunity Program is to be an effective program throughout this State, it seems to us that the Technical Assistance Office must be at cabinet level in order that it might be actively involved in any decision-making process related to health, welfare, civil rights, and employment. This is the manner in which we have operated the Technical Assistance Office in the State of Kansas under my administration. The coordinator of the office serves as my liaison person to the State Board of Health and to the State Board of Social Welfare. He has also served as the chairman of the State-wide Manpower Coordinating Committee responsible for drawing up the Cooperative Area Manpower Planning System for the next fiscal year.

The coordinator, Dr Robert C. Harder, has been actively involved in our legislative program relative to matters of health, welfare, civil rights, and employment. It is my thinking that unless we have a great deal more money than is presently available, the most successful way that we can fight and win a war on poverty, is through the changing of policy at the state level and then getting this word down to the local level. Our experience in government at this point, indicates that often times while agencies are in the hands of good-hearted people, they get locked into procedures which may be oblivious to the needs of the people of the state. The Technical Assistance Office serves as a watch dog to make sure that the agencies remain open to all of the citizens of the State of Kansas.

The coordinator is also in a position to interpret to boards and agencies, the problems of low-income people so that as policies are being shaped, there can be the inclusion of those ideas which lend themselves to a greater number of services for the poor. I hope that this kind of policy making, cabinet support to the Governor could be further enhanced.