

3780 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967

CITY OF ROCHESTER, N.Y.,
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR,
August 8, 1967.

HON. CARL D. PERKINS,
Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PERKINS: I am very pleased that you have asked for my comments concerning amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act currently before your Committee. I know that recent events in Rochester might well be interpreted by opponents of the anti-poverty program as additional fuel to promote their case; I therefore welcome this opportunity to make it crystal clear that the anti-poverty program in Rochester is absolutely essential to this community's well-being.

Our local anti-poverty agency, Action for a Better Community, Inc., has been responsible for the development and implementation of dynamic and imaginative programs to aid the poor. Hundreds of the City's less fortunate have found jobs and training; comprehensive services have been brought directly to the poor neighborhoods; special and unique educational programs have provided new hope to those who formerly had no hope.

Though direct involvement of the poor in the administration of programs, we have been able to achieve a sense of community interest and commitment which has heretofore been unknown.

Certainly there is room for tremendous improvement in both the program and administration of our local anti-poverty efforts. It has not been easy to find competent staff, and there has been continuous uncertainty as to funding. My very frank judgment, however, is that national and local resources devoted to the anti-poverty effort must be greatly expanded . . . certainly not diminished.

I also feel very strongly that it would be a grave mistake to dismantle the present OEO organization. Its continuation and strengthening are essential if we are to properly concentrate on the problems of poverty which confront us.

I hope these brief comments will be of some assistance to you and your Committee as you consider this very urgent and essential national legislation.

Sincerely,

FRANK T. LAMB,
Mayor.

CITY OF BUFFALO, N.Y.,
August 8, 1967.

Re your request for a candid appraisal of anti-poverty efforts in this city.

HON. CARL D. PERKINS,
Committee on Education and Labor, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

DEAR CHAIRMAN PERKINS: The Police Department has been associated with the Neighborhood Youth Corps program. Over the period of the past two years a total of about 40 boys and girls from the Corps have worked in the Police Department. The majority have been Negroes from poor families. They have worked at a variety of tasks from laboring through secretarial activity. Several have left us to take positions in private business and commerce. We have noted the majority appear somewhat apprehensive and uncertain when they first report, but that their skills quickly develop and they soon adjust to meeting people. After the first payday, without exception, there is a noted improvement in their dress. With but one or two exceptions our experience with these boys and girls has been most pleasant. They have been an asset to us in the way they have performed the tasks required of them.

We are not aware of a single instance of participation of rumor of such involving any of these boys and girls in the period preceding the recent disturbance in our City, during the disturbance or subsequent to it.

They have been and are an asset to this community. I feel some of them may not have been without the opportunity for employment given them by the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

Sincerely,

FRANK N. FELICETTA,
Commissioner of Police.