

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1967 3799

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KINGSFORT,
Kingsport, Tenn., July 11, 1967.

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

DEAR SIR: The League of Women Voters of Kingsport, Tennessee, is asking you to give your full support to the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1967. The Kingsport League of 135 members has come to consensus on the issue of poverty and its effect upon the human resources of our country, that is, its people. We are in favor of measures designed to make the nation's ideal of equal opportunity for all its citizens meaningful and real, especially in the areas of education and employment.

Nationally, the League feels this is not the proper time to "spin off" the functions of the OEO into various other governmental departments. One reason the OEO was established and the Community Action concept put into practice was that the established agencies had not been overly sensitive to the basic inequalities faced by the hard-core poor. A single agency to innovate, coordinate, and evaluate new programs is much more practical than a diffused responsibility.

The League is giving highest priority to the continuation of the Community Action Program. This represents, we think, a new and hopeful kind of tool for social progress in which the poor are encouraged to help themselves—something they have been constantly told to do, but which under the archaic social welfare laws of the thirties is in reality discouraged.

Locally, we are generally pleased with the work of the Jacob's Creek Job Corps Center and with our Head-Start programs. Our City Council has had enough confidence in the people and the programs to turn over the old Negro high school to the OEO as a center for the Upper East Tennessee Opportunity Association. Likewise our League has been invited to send a representative to sit upon the Executive Board.

The Kingsport League feels it would be highly wasteful to scrap OEO or CAP now. The programs have barely had time to become established. More time as well as money is needed to evaluate them and tailor them to local needs. The poor must be encouraged to help themselves.

Also Americans need to go forward together. It is dangerous as well as unchristian to leave the impoverished fifteen per cent behind. Their expectations have become aroused. Let us encourage the natural aspirations of our citizens by giving them avenues to their fulfillment.

Respectfully yours,

Mrs. JOSEPH T. JENKINS, *President,*
Mrs. GEORGE W. WHEELER,
Human Resources Chairman.

NEW CASTLE, IND.
July 1, 1967.

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

DEAR MR. PERKINS: The League of Women Voters of which I am a member, "Supports policies and programs in the United States to provide equality of opportunity for education and employment".

As of this moment, the programs under the Office of Economic Opportunity although not perfect are functioning. I am not in favor discarding this department and "spin off" other programs to other departments. Health, Education and Welfare is big enough, total authorization for funds would be \$1.7 billion, not enough to include all the programs under OEO in addition to the present responsibilities. I would not like to see the whole project destroyed by splintering.

For several months many people in New Castle have been making preparations for two Head Start programs under CAP. The people in the target areas, Belmont and Hospital Heights, under the guidance of Mr. Curtis Sanderson have done a commendable job. Even when the original grant ran out and it looked as if the program would not be funded, the people in the target area kept working. The residents of the Hospital Heights area have also been conducting a general clean-up. In one day 65 tons of trash was removed by them with the use