

Mr. KNOTT. We would be happy to. (See letter below.)

Chairman PROXMIRE. Fine. I think that would be very helpful. We will take it up with the committee and very possibly put it in.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, D.C., December 6, 1967.

HON. WILLIAM PROXMIRE,
Chairman, Joint Economic Committee,
Congress of the United States,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: You will recall that during the course of my testimony before your subcommittee on November 29 you asked, in effect, whether we regarded the authority vested in General Services Administration with respect to ADP by the so-called Brooks bill (P.L. 89-306) as adequate to enable us effectively to discharge our general responsibilities under the bill.

In response I indicated that the limitations on our authority contained in the last provision of the bill (Section 111(g) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended) detracted from what otherwise would have been a clearer mandate vested by preceding provisions, namely Section 111 (a) and (b).

However, in response to your further question as to whether I would favor repeal of the Section 111(g) limitations on GSA's authority, I indicated preference for amendment of the limiting provisions so as to clarify the respective roles of GSA and the agencies using ADPE with respect to determination of requirements for and selection of equipment on the one hand and the actual procurement of such equipment on the other hand, and so as to more explicitly place the burden of proof on using agencies in any instances where they object to proposed determinations by GSA "specifically affecting them or the automatic data processing equipment or components used by them".

You will recall, also, my testimony to the effect that, generally speaking, we were receiving good cooperation from using agencies in the general field of automatic data processing as a result of which substantial progress had been made in implementing the Brooks bill and significant savings have been realized. This has been made possible, despite the statutory limitations, through consultation and cooperation with other agencies, persuasion, and through indirect controls available to us, such as limiting the amount and location of space we will assign in public buildings for ADPE installations.

I pointed out, also, that a very recent decision by the Comptroller General of the United States (B-151204/B-157587 dated November 21, 1967) holding, in effect, that the Brooks bill vested in GSA exclusive authority to procure all general-purpose ADPE and related supplies and equipment for use by other Federal agencies will importantly strengthen our effectiveness. (NOTE. See p. 556.)

During my testimony, in response to your request, I agreed to prepare and submit to the subcommittee amendatory legislation along the lines indicated above.

Upon further reflection, however, I have concluded that, all factors considered, amendatory legislation at this time would be inadvisable. The overall ADP management improvement task is stupendous and, as recognized during the legislative process on the Brooks bill, must be brought about on a progressive basis.

Regardless of the precise wording of the statute, our success, as the agency charged with central responsibility, will be impacted to a major extent by the degree of cooperation we are successful in generating on the part of the using agencies. In view of the cooperation currently being received from using agencies, the magnitude of the task, accomplishments to date under the existing law, the fact that the law is relatively new and unproven, and the recent Comptroller General's decision, I believe it would be the better part of wisdom to defer any effort to amend the present law to allow us more time to evaluate our potential for its full implementation as presently worded. We will be prepared to report further in this regard to your subcommittee during hearings next year and to make recommendations at that time concerning the need for amendment of the law in the light of experience gained by that date.

Sincerely yours,

LAWSON B. KNOTT, Jr., Administrator.