

As helpful as this service has proved to be, it still does not resolve the many problems involved when a small community, for example, seeks to put together a "package" of Federal assistance drawn from several sources. Such an applicant must go through the laborious process of filling out widely differing, sometimes complex, application forms and must meet the diverse procedural and other special requirements of the 25 Federal agencies administering grant-in-aid programs. We believe that the simplification of procedures for grant application, administration and financial accounting provided for in this bill would go far toward alleviating these problems and should be enacted into law. It should be noted, in this connection, that the Congress has previously approved the use of joint funding in its enactment of the Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1967. The Amendments add a new section 612 to the Economic Opportunity Act authorizing joint Federal agency funding of programs whereby any one Federal agency may be designated to act for all in administering funds advanced to a community action or other agency assisted under the Act.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the submission of this report and that enactment of S. 2981 would be in accord with the program of the President.

Sincerely,

BERTRAND M. HARDING
(For Sargent Shriver, Director).

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY,
Washington, D.C., March 26, 1968.

Hon. JOHN L. McCLELLAN,
Chairman, Committee on Government Operations,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Reference is made to your request to the Secretary of Defense for the views of the Department of Defense with respect to S. 2981, 90th Congress, a bill "To provide temporary authority to expedite procedures for consideration and approval of projects drawing upon more than one Federal assistance program, to simplify requirements for the operation of those projects, and for other purposes". The Secretary of Defense has delegated to the Department of the Army the responsibility for expressing the views of the Department of Defense on this bill.

The purpose of the bill is to set up procedures under which more effective use of funds may be made by States, local governments, and other public or private agencies receiving Federal assistance for a project from more than one Federal program, or one or more Federal and one or more State programs. It is designed to encourage Federal-State arrangements under which local governments and other public or private agencies may more effectively combine State and Federal resources in support of projects of common interest to the agencies concerned. Under the bill each Federal agency head would be required to review its programs and identify those appropriate for joint support, as well as establishing guidelines, model projects, and forms to assist in developing such joint projects. Federal agency actions would be designed to assure expeditious handling of reviews and approvals, dealing with a minimum number of Federal representatives, consideration of timing problems affecting feasibility of a joint project, and prompt notification of decisions.

The bill would require the establishment of uniform technical or administrative requirements for federally assisted projects, to eliminate unnecessary burdens on local agencies as to accounting, reporting, auditing, contracting, personnel systems, and accountability for property and structures. To permit better administration of funds drawn from more than one Federal program or appropriation, the bill would authorize establishment of joint management funds into which would be deposited the amounts from various sources financing the project, with payments to grantees being made from the management fund. Proper provision would be made for disposition of excess amounts in such funds, and the keeping of appropriate records by recipients, with audit powers vested in the Comptroller General. Appropriations available for technical assistance or training of personnel would be made available for such purposes in projects approved for joint or common funding, and detailing of Federal personnel to other agencies to administer the programs would be authorized. The bill would permit the completion of agreements with States or State agencies to extend the provisions of the bill to projects involving assistance from one or more Federal agencies and one or more State agencies.