

The proposed legislation is designed to help simplify and coordinate Federal assistance programs, jointly funded by two or more agencies, in support of projects conducted by local governments and other public or private organizations and agencies. For this purpose, Federal agencies would be authorized to take various appropriate measures through internal orders or interagency agreements.

AEC has had considerable experience with jointly funded projects, a noteworthy example of which is our current joint program with the Office of Saline Water of the Department of Interior for participation in a large nuclear-desalting project to be carried out by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and private and public utility entities in Southern California. To the full extent of applicable law, we have had occasion usefully to employ various measures similar to those provided for in S. 2981.

Accordingly, the Commission is in favor of legislation such as S. 2981 which could serve to provide additional authority to facilitate useful joint measures to aid in the administration of jointly funded projects.

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

Sincerely yours,

R. E. HOLLINGSWORTH,
General Manager.

COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, D.C., May 4, 1968.

HON. JOHN L. MCCLELLAN,
*Chairman, Committee on Government Operations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in reference to your request of February 19, 1968, for our views on S. 2981, the proposed "Joint Funding Simplification Act of 1968."

We fully support the general objective of simplifying and improving the administration of related grant-in-aid programs. Today's large number of individual grant-in-aid programs, each with its own set of complex special requirements, separate authorizations and appropriations, cost sharing ratios, allocation formulas, and financial procedures, makes it increasingly difficult to manage and administer those programs in a comprehensive or efficient manner.

It is our opinion that there is presently much, in the way of coordinating and standardizing current Federal grant-in-aid programs, which could be done on an administrative level without additional legislation. But, if administering grant programs on a consolidated basis is desirable, we believe that the real key to significantly improved administration lies in the legislative consolidation of programs into broader categories of assistance, and the placement of like programs in a single agency, rather than establishing an administrative apparatus to deal with continuing proliferation of single narrow purpose programs. The bill S. 2981, although limited to three years, would permit the inauguration of the program on a Government-wide basis without provision for going through an experimental and testing period. We would prefer first having a limited application to eliminate any problem areas prior to full-scale implementation.

If legislation is enacted we believe that it should be carefully and gradually implemented under the required Presidential guidelines with provision for thorough evaluations of results achieved, and that a specific provision should be included in the legislation for limiting its application to geographical areas or perhaps to programs. Our concern is that there could exist pressures which might force too rapid an adoption of untested concepts and procedures, and make difficult the reversal of procedures found to be unworkable.

We understand also that it is contemplated that further recommendations will be made by the Executive Branch with respect to the consolidation of existing categorical grants. A determination as to the extent to which this could be accomplished, with appropriate recommendations, should be made in advance of any extension of the legislation.

We would indorse legislation limited in its application as indicated above. This would not only serve to more specifically delineate the advisability of full implementation of the proposals, but would also provide valuable information relating to programs which might be more efficiently administered if consolidated