

Federal departments and agencies and their State and local counterparts, makes this objective all the more essential.

The National Housing Conference strongly supported for many years the establishment of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The legislation which led to the establishment of this Department in 1965 was recommended to the Senate by the Committee on Governmental Operations in that year. As the members of the subcommittee well know, section 3(b) of the act establishing this Department set forth the following charter for the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from the standpoint of coordination of Federal programs and activities relating to housing and urban development:

The Secretary shall, among his responsibilities, advise the President with respect to Federal programs and activities relating to housing and urban development; develop and recommend to the President policies for fostering the orderly growth and development of the Nation's urban areas; exercise leadership at the direction of the President in coordinating Federal activities affecting housing and urban development; provide technical assistance and information, including a clearinghouse service to aid State, county, town, village, or other local governments in developing solutions to community and metropolitan development problems; consult and cooperate with State Governors and State agencies, including, when appropriate, holding informal public hearings, with respect to Federal and State programs for assisting communities in developing solutions to community and metropolitan development problems and for encouraging effective regional cooperation in the planning and conduct of community and metropolitan development programs and projects; encourage comprehensive planning by the State and local governments with a view to coordinating Federal, State, and local urban and community development activities . . .

I cite this existing statutory authority, not from the standpoint of disagreeing with the general objectives of the above titles of S. 698, but rather to raise the question as to whether additional statutory authority is necessary in order to accomplish these objectives.

From the standpoint of the experience of our membership with local programs, the main deficiency in carrying out the above charter for the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development has been the inability to secure funding for the clearinghouse service for State and local governments in utilizing efficiently and effectively the multiplicity of Federal aid programs which are available. As the subcommittee knows, appropriations for this function have not been approved by the Congress.

The National Housing Conference strongly supports the provisions of title VIII of S. 698 with respect to uniform relocation assistance for families, individuals, and businesses displaced by direct or federally assisted public action. Our organization has long supported the establishment of programs for financial assistance and standards for such relocation assistance comparable to that existing for the urban renewal program and more recently for the federally assisted low-rent housing program. The provisions of title VIII would liberalize somewhat the existing provisions under the urban renewal program and the low-rent housing program and we support this liberalization. In our opinion, the most urgent aspect of this problem is to apply these mandatory requirements to the federally aided highway program which is currently the largest source of the family and business displacement.

We also support the provisions of title IX of S. 698 to establish a uniform land acquisition policy both for direct Federal programs and