

Gentlemen, I am Edward Potthoff, city manager of Saginaw, Mich., serving in that position since 1961. Before that time, I served as city manager of Niagara Falls, N.Y. I have had over 18 years' experience working with local government or serving it directly. As a career local government executive, I truly appreciate the opportunity and invitation to testify this morning.

You are going to note a very definite similarity between the remarks I have to make and those fine remarks of Mayor Briley of Nashville-Davidson. I guess it merely points out that the problems and the attitude toward the grant-in-aid programs are quite similar in cities many hundred miles removed from one another.

Your committee over the past several years has heard statements about the problems of intergovernmental relations. There is no doubt that the problems of our urban society will not be solved without all levels of government working together. This is a truism to anyone who has given thought to these problems.

As a professional city manager, I can testify for the need to establish reasonable, and as much as possible, flexible policies to facilitate the relationships between and among levels of government in order that the work of strengthening our American democracy can continue. This is why I am particularly pleased to support the provisions of Senate bills 698 and 2981, because they do set such policy.

Ten years ago, perhaps even five, the professional city manager did not spend much of his time on intergovernmental relations. Today, in conjunction with Saginaw's mayor, council and city employees, the problems of intergovernmental relations directly and indirectly occupy considerable time.

Senator Muskie, your efforts, and those of other committee members are to be commended for your interest and efforts to facilitate the work of local government, State government, and the Federal Government by previously obtaining passage by the Senate of many of the provisions of S. 698. It is hoped that the provisions of S. 698 and S. 2981 can be contained in a bill that does become law.

As a professional city manager, I am concerned that programs developed at all levels of government are not only good policy, but that their implementation results in achieving their objectives. The city manager's expertise is in the area of not only problem analysis, but in the processes of getting things accomplished.

Saginaw has a number of Federal grants, including being a model city. We have these programs because we want to make our city a better place to live for all citizens, no matter what their problems, economic status, or race may be. These bills are aimed at improving implementation of much-needed Federal programs and hopefully reducing the time between application and completion.

Virtually, all Federal-city programs suffer from excessive time delay from inception to completion. I would consider the time factor to be the single greatest problem existing in our Federal-city relationship. Excessive delay frequently results in changes in membership of our city councils; it results in accusations of promises not kept; it results in extraordinary costs; it completely disrupts local fiscal planning; it makes the allocation and assignment of local staff to programs virtually impossible and generally results in frustration and waste.