

SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS—
RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENT

A REPORT
BY THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
UNITED STATES SENATE
TOGETHER WITH
MINORITY AND INDIVIDUAL VIEWS



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SERVICES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

SEPTEMBER 11, 1964.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. SMATHERS, from the Special Committee on Aging, submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY AND INDIVIDUAL VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

In addition to their need for the material necessities of life, senior citizens need a variety of services if their problems are to be solved and they are to live rich, complete lives during their later years.

As a basis for making recommendations on providing needed services for senior citizens, our Subcommittee on Federal, State, and Community Services held four hearings as follows:

January 16, 1964, Washington, D.C.

January 20, 1964, Boston, Mass.

January 21, 1964, Providence, R.I.

March 2, 1964, Saginaw, Mich.

Based upon the testimony at those hearings and other information which came to the subcommittee's attention, it issued a report to the committee. In his letter transmitting this report, Subcommittee Chairman Edward M. Kennedy said:

I have the honor of submitting to you the initial report of the Subcommittee on Federal, State, and Community Services for the Elderly.

This report summarizes the past year's activity of the subcommittee in conducting a series of investigations, both in Washington and elsewhere, into the need for establishing and expanding public and private services for our senior citizens. It also recommends legislative and other actions which, if implemented, would contribute measurably toward the enrichment of the lives of our older people, and will preserve their dignity—their sense of worth and belonging in the community.

By 1970, one-tenth of our Nation's population will be 65 years of age or over. As a nation, we must pledge ourselves

to the objective that the retirement years of our citizens shall be free from loneliness, anxiety, and want. In all the recommendations set forth in this report, local initiative and control are paramount. Therefore, this report suggests ways in which local and Federal governments can work together in the common interest of the senior citizens, whose future welfare we hold as our most important trust.

I wish to express my appreciation to you for your interest and cooperation, and for that of the members of the subcommittee and its excellent staff.

This report is identical to the subcommittee's report, with minor modifications.

RECOMMENDATION No. 1

The committee recommends enactment of an authorization to provide financial assistance for statewide and community planning and coordination of programs in the field of aging.

Comment: This recommendation would be implemented by enactment of part A of S. 1357, the "Senior Citizens Community Planning and Services Act of 1963" or of title III of S. 2000, the "Older Americans Act of 1963."

Under these provisions, \$5 million would be authorized for the first fiscal year, \$8 million for the second, and \$12,500,000 for each of the next three.

This is an administration proposal, having been recommended in President Kennedy's message to Congress of February 21, 1963, in which he said:

The heart of our program for the elderly must be opportunity for and actual service to our older citizens in their home communities * * *.

We must * * * stimulate or provide the full range of the various facilities and services which aged individuals need for comfortable and meaningful life.

One important use of such funds would be the payment of one-half the costs of State agencies on aging, as provided in section 1704, S. 1357 (sec. 304 of S. 2000). The estimated Federal share of such costs would range between \$15,000 per State and \$71,281.81 per State, as shown in a table on pages 8 and 9 of the Washington, D.C., hearing of January 16, 1963. The subcommittee's hearings revealed the vital role in the field of aging played by State commissions,¹ and these allotments, while small, would go far toward stimulating the establishment of State commissions where there are none and toward assisting existing commissions, many of which are underfinanced,² to be more active and effective.

Two witnesses at the subcommittee's Boston hearing gave excellent statements on the need for this authorization. Dean Charles I. Schottland of the Florence Heller Graduate School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare, Brandeis University, who was for 5 years Commissioner of Social Security during the Eisenhower administration, said:³

* * * most of the services for the aged are either operated by the State or are supported by the State or supervised by

NOTE.—Footnotes will be found at the end of the report.

the State * * *. Yet there is no effective State planning mechanism for the aged in most of our States.

* * * * *

Under S. 1357, we have a real opportunity to develop comprehensive planning for the aged on a statewide basis, because the bill provides for a single State agency to supervise and coordinate aging programs, and provides for consultation with, and utilization of, voluntary and other community agencies.

* * * * *

In conclusion, one of our greatest gaps in services to the aging is a State planning mechanism. This * * * is the most important part of the bill, in my opinion.

The other Boston witness, Father Joseph T. Alves, chairman, Massachusetts Council for the Aging, testified: ⁴

Passage of this kind of legislation at the Federal * * * level will give us the tools to forge the kind of effective partnership between local, State, and Federal governments that could make for a genuine alliance for action in aging.

RECOMMENDATION No. 2

The committee recommends that Congress enact legislation authorizing Federal grants to State and local governmental agencies, non-profit private organizations, and individuals to conduct research and development projects in the field of aging.

Comment: This recommendation would be implemented by enactment of part B of S. 1357 or of title IV of S. 2000, as recommended in President Kennedy's message. In the fact sheet on this recommendation which accompanied the message, it was said:

There are great gaps in our knowledge of the social and psychological processes of aging, of the preferences and patterns of older people as consumers, and of the extent and kinds of activity in which older people are interested and of which they are capable.⁵

The following are examples of information which could be obtained by means of these research projects:

The patterns of activity and adjustment of older people of different ages and socioeconomic backgrounds in both urban and rural areas.

The relationships between different generations within the family and the contribution of older people to family life.

Budgetary requirements as affected by the size of the household and geographic place of residence.

The consumption patterns and preferences of older people and their role as consumers in the economy.⁶

Examples of demonstration projects which might be carried out under such an authorization:

Experiments in total community organization of services to older people, designed to make sure that older people know of the services to them.

Experimental activity, educational and recreational programs, concerted social services, and other services in senior housing projects to determine what services are most effective in maintaining independence, mental health, community participation, and good family relationships among older people.⁷

RECOMMENDATION No. 3

The committee recommends that Congress enact legislation authorizing Federal grants to State and local governmental agencies and nonprofit private organizations for the specialized training of persons employed in or preparing for employment in programs relating to the aging.

Comment: This recommendation would be implemented by enactment of part C of S. 1357 or of title V of S. 2000, as recommended in President Kennedy's message.⁸ In the fact sheet on this recommendation which accompanied the message, it was said:

* * * there is a serious shortage of professionally and technically trained personnel to work with older persons. Institutions of higher education have only begun to work toward fulfilling this need. Colleges, universities, and professional schools need teachers with knowledge of aging, and almost every profession and technical occupation involved in serving older people is acutely short of persons trained to work with them. There is a particular and immediate need for persons broadly trained in aging to work in State and community planning of programs for the aged.⁹

Witnesses at the subcommittee's Boston hearing testified that the shortage of trained personnel is indeed a serious handicap in establishing and carrying out community programs for the aging. Their comments are as follows:

Our council believes that many more well-trained local leaders are needed as directors of recreational activity in nursing homes, golden age clubs or drop-in centers, as enlists and coordinators of senior volunteers to help in many capacities, as counselors and teachers of adult classes who know the problems and interests of older persons. These leaders must be people with a sensitive awareness of the physical, mental, and emotional needs of those they are to serve and with a desire to help them maintain their dignity and integrity to the end.

If the State or Federal Government could help set up adequate training programs and financial assistance for providing such qualified personnel, this would be very helpful.—Mrs. Ruth K. Cain, chairman, Weymouth Council for the Aging.

* * * there is a shortage of this type of personnel in the country, and * * * more training must be given for people in this area.

* * * * *

Again, I reiterate that there is a lack of sufficiently trained personnel in all aging categories as well as difficulty in finding

part-time trained people.—Dr. Samuel Bachrach, president, Age Center of Worcester Area, Inc.

* * * the following difficulties were encountered:

* * * * *

(d) Trained staff, with experience in working with older adults, are almost nonexistent. Even with the support from the community, and additional resources, and the moneys needed to support the operation of the program, it is extremely doubtful that thoroughly qualified staff could be found.—Mr. Sherman G. Sass, chairman, Committee on Aging, United Community Services of Metropolitan Boston.

RECOMMENDATION No. 4

The committee recommends that Congress enact legislation authorizing grants for paying one-half of the costs of projects for the construction of public or nonprofit private centers providing recreational and other leisure-time activities and informational, counseling, and referral services for older persons and providing assistance to such persons in volunteering for community or civic services.

Comment: This recommendation would be implemented by enactment of part D of S. 1357, as recommended in President Kennedy's message. Part D would authorize \$2,500,000 for the first fiscal year, \$4 million for the second, and \$7,500,000 for each of the next 3 fiscal years.

In the fact sheet on this recommendation, which accompanied the message, it was said:

The senior activity center is essentially a community center especially designed for older people. New to the American scene, it is generally regarded as the most important facility that has come into existence in connection with community efforts to meet the needs of older people * * *.

Those who have studied senior activity centers—including a research team from Stanford University—are in unanimous agreement as to their value both to the individual older person and to the community.¹⁰

Studies have shown that participation in the activities of senior recreation centers improves both the mental and physical health of senior citizens. For example, a study of 300 members of the Sirovich and Hodson Centers, conducted by the New York City Welfare Department, resulted in a finding that after 6 months of membership in the center there was an 87.9-percent decline in attendance at medical clinics. There was an additional finding that there was only one admission to a mental hospital during the first 7 years of the Hodson Center's operation, while it was estimated that there would otherwise have been between 40 and 60.

Another indication of the benefits of recreational activities to the health of senior citizens was the experience of Ben Grossman, executive director of Drexel Home of the Aged in Chicago. He found a substantial reduction in sick call reports when activity programs were started in the Home.

Therefore, apart from the humanitarian reasons for stimulating the construction of senior recreation centers throughout the Nation, it makes good fiscal sense to use this comparatively modest authorization to decrease the financial load upon government programs for the mental and physical health of senior citizens.

Testimony at hearings of the subcommittee in various cities has shown that well-run senior activity center programs provide a wide range of activities to meet almost every individual leisure-time preference and taste.¹¹

Such senior centers need not be limited to providing recreation and leisure-time activities, as important as that objective is. They can also provide needed informational, counselling, and referral services, thus opening the door to a wide spectrum of services to solve many other senior citizen problems.

Of particular benefit to the community as a whole would be the function of its senior center as an agency for assisting senior citizens to volunteer for community and civic services.

RECOMMENDATION No. 5

The committee recommends that Congress enact a variety of measures to help alleviate the problems of senior citizens displaced from their homes by urban renewal, federally aided highway construction, and other public programs involving mandatory relocation.

Comment: Many elderly individuals live in old houses marked for razing in urban renewal, highway, and other eminent domain activities. Sometimes the senior citizen has lived in the same house all his life and has emotional and psychological attachments to it which makes it a traumatic experience at best to have to leave it. Sometimes he has such limited experience with moving that the details involved are overwhelming. Furthermore, his declining physical and psychological strength might be completely unequal to the task.¹² The government which thus uproots him and forces him to undergo the hardships of moving therefore owes it to him to help him "over the rough spots."

Measures recently enacted by Congress in the Housing Act of 1964 will provide needed assistance for senior citizens who are forced to move from their homes. The committee is pleased to note that section 305 of the Housing Act of 1964 extends the relocation requirements of the urban renewal statute to single elderly persons as well as families.

Section 310 of the new Housing Act provides authority for local public agencies to make rent supplementation payments to displaced families and elderly individuals who must be relocated because of urban renewal activity. Standard housing in the private market is ordinarily higher rent housing than that which is eliminated in an urban renewal area, and this provision should help alleviate financial hardship on many who are forced to move. However, the rent supplementation assistance is limited to the first 5 months after displacement or \$500 for the elderly displacees and younger families alike. While younger families may be able to make financial adjustments during the 5-month period of assistance, the elderly person living on social security or a fixed retirement pension will not be able to improve his rent-paying ability within the 5-month period for which the payments are authorized. The committee recommends, therefore, that

the Congress consider eliminating the 5-month limitation for elderly displacees.

Section 405 extends the relocation provisions of the urban renewal program to land takings for public housing. This is a forward step, but the committee believes that the humane and reasonable relocation provisions of the urban renewal program should be extended to all federally assisted projects which involve the acquisition of residential property.

Perhaps the major program causing residential displacement, other than urban renewal, is the federally aided highway program. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962 permits States to include relocation costs in highway construction costs. A bill to make this a mandatory requirement, H.R. 3991, has been introduced by Hon. Fernand St Germain, Representative from Rhode Island. Favorable consideration should be given this bill or a bill accomplishing this purpose.

RECOMMENDATION No. 6

The committee recommends that statutes authorizing distribution of surplus foods to charitable organizations be amended to clarify eligibility of senior activity centers and dining facilities in public or nonprofit low-rent housing projects for senior citizens to share in surplus food distribution.

Comment: In at least one instance, that relating to the Springfield, Mass. Hobby Club,¹³ a senior activity center has been found not to meet the technical requirements for sharing in surplus food. In that instance, the adverse finding was that the organization's activities were recreational and social in character, that it did not operate a regular nonprofit feeding program, and that it could not qualify as a charitable, tax-exempt institution serving needy persons.

There is a clear public interest in removing the technical impediments to receipt of surplus foods by senior activity centers. Partaking of an occasional hot meal improves the nutrition and thus benefits the health of a senior citizen. The opportunity to share in such meals at low cost attracts senior citizens to the recreational and other activities of senior centers. By thus enticing them out of their isolation into a program of participation in group activities, there is an additional beneficial effect upon their health, as pointed out above in connection with recommendation No. 4. In view of the heavy Federal commitment regarding the health of the elderly, it is wise from a fiscal standpoint to make maximum use of surplus foods to promote the health of senior citizens. Clarifying the eligibility of these centers for surplus foods would contribute to the maximum utilization of any senior activity centers which may be constructed with the assistance of Federal funds in accordance with our recommendation No. 4.

While it would be desirable to permit distribution of surplus foods for feeding senior citizens in such activities and facilities even if the preparation and serving of the food is carried out by a private organization or business, there should be contract safeguards to assure that the saving in food costs inure to the benefits of the senior citizens served rather than to the organization or business.

RECOMMENDATION No. 7

The committee recommends enactment of a statute providing specific statutory authorization of a food stamp program for those whose economic status is such as to be a substantial limiting factor in the attainment of a nutritionally adequate diet.

Comment: This is one of the recommendations in the President's message, in which he said:

Too many elderly people with small incomes skimp on food at a time when their health requires greater quantity, variety, and balance in their diets. The pilot food stamp program recommended in my farm message could improve their nutrition and health.

A bill to accomplish the purposes of this recommendation, H.R. 10222, passed the House on April 8, 1964, and passed the Senate amended on June 30, 1964. The House agreed to the Senate amendments on August 11, 1964, and the bill awaits the President's signature as this report is issued.¹⁴

Since May 1961 pilot food stamp programs have been in operation in selected local areas throughout the Nation. These programs were initiated by administrative action of the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to the general authority of section 32 of Public Law 320, 74th Congress. H.R. 10222 provides congressional direction and specific legal authority for a food stamp program of general nationwide application.

Under both the bill and the presently operating pilot projects, participants are not restricted to those on public assistance rolls. In fact, in some areas as many as 60 percent of the households participating in the pilot programs are not receiving public assistance.

The net cost of a congressionally authorized nationwide food stamp program is estimated at between \$80 million and \$175 million per annum. This takes into consideration the discontinuance of the cost of present methods of distributing surplus foods, but does not take into consideration such expected results as decreased demands for health services at public expense and added Federal income tax receipts from food producers and distributors, resulting from increased food sales.

Enactment of this measure helps to transform the Nation's surplus food from a bane to a blessing, especially insofar as it would improve the nutrition of both senior citizens receiving public assistance and those who are economically deprived but not enough so to qualify for public assistance.

RECOMMENDATION No. 8

The committee recommends enactment of legislation to create a National Senior Service Corps to enlist the interest and energies of middle aged and retired people in voluntary service to their communities.

Comment: This recommendation would call for congressional action similar to that proposed by S. 1321, the National Service Corps Act, except that Corps members would be recruited from the middle aged and older population instead of from the entire population of youths and adults.

Thousands of parents virtually complete their responsibilities toward their children in early middle age. Retirement from career occupations in late middle age is rapidly becoming an expectation for nearly all Americans. Thus, enormous amounts of uncommitted time are now available to older adults while physically and mentally they are in the prime of life.

As a society we are now beginning to realize that most of these middle aged and older people have interests and energies which they would like to contribute to their families and communities through activities which would give them a sense of usefulness and fulfillment. Many are doing so now. Simultaneously, it is being recognized that there are scores of services needed by communities which would make them better places to live and improve the well-being of many of their citizens of all ages. On the other hand, there are thousands of older people who are withering in idleness—often in mental hospitals and nursing homes—because society has failed to provide meaningful activities for them.

The committee believes that the establishment of a National Senior Service Corps would serve the needs of both older adults who would welcome opportunity for useful activity and their communities which need their services. The Corps would be federally administered but would conduct locally initiated projects.

The kinds of projects which could be conducted are legion. They could include such things as aides, receptionists, and visitors in hospitals and nursing homes, especially in those for the long-term ill; aides in health screening programs and to the aged and others returning to the community from mental hospitals; assistants in day care centers for children and for the aged; classroom assistants and tutors in schoolrooms, particularly to aid potential school dropouts; teachers of functionally illiterate adults; workers in central meal services for older people and in information-referral centers; companions and visitors to homebound elderly person; assistants in libraries extending their services to older people; and organizers and workers in community improvement programs.

These are a few examples of programs which have been conducted successfully in a number of places on a demonstration basis. The National Senior Service Corps program would make it possible to extend the benefits to people and communities throughout the country.

National Senior Service Corps personnel might be of two types: (1) those who are able to work full time in organizing and supervising programs and (2) those who are available on a part-time basis and who, therefore, would not be able to accept major responsibilities.

Recognizing the low-income level of most older people, the Corps program would provide for some payment to those who devote their time. Full-time senior corpsmen might be paid an honorarium and actual expenses, following the successful pattern of the Peace Corps; part-time workers might be paid small honoraria to cover such expenses as transportation, meals, and laundry. Payments would give the twofold benefit of adding to the incomes of retired people and of increasing their expenditures for goods and services in their communities.

The committee sees great advantages from a National Senior Service Corps program. Projects and the work performed would

be in areas in which regular programs and occupations are not well defined; hence, would be in addition to and not competitive with established programs and jobs. Older and retired people who feel they have been pushed aside by society would be brought back into its main stream. An enormous number of services would be provided to people of all ages who are in need of them. The committee believes that creation of a National Senior Service Corps represents one of the most effective ways in which the United States could attack some of the most complex problems arising out of the increasing numbers of older people who threaten to become detached from our automated society.

RECOMMENDATION No. 9

The committee recommends the enactment of legislation authorizing and directing Federal departments and agencies to provide their employees who are approaching retirement age an opportunity for preretirement counseling and training.

Comment: Successful retirement involves many personal, social, and psychological adjustments. Intelligent planning is needed to meet financial, health, and leisure-time problems. Employees who are approaching retirement age sometimes worry over these problems, and their morale and work may suffer. Sometimes they are in key positions, and the entire organization may be adversely affected by their preretirement worries.

To the extent that preretirement programs are generally adopted throughout the Nation, American senior citizens will be more adequately prepared to solve their problems on their own. Along this line, Mrs. Harold R. Sanderson, chairman of the Connecticut Commission on Services for Elderly Persons, said at our subcommittee's Boston hearing:

Preretirement counseling and education is requiring our attention as well, because here can be developed the beginnings of a new independence so important to the "young old."¹⁵

Some Federal agencies, such as the Social Security Administration, have developed preretirement programs for their employees, but most agencies have no program of this type. It is doubtful that some agencies have statutory authority to conduct such programs. Therefore, a statute is needed to give clear statutory authorization and direction for them.

Testimony at our subcommittee's Providence hearing indicated that a number of private businesses have preretirement programs, including RCA, IBM, Singer Manufacturing Co., and Peoples Natural Gas Co. of Pittsburgh.¹⁶ If the Federal Government sets a good example by giving all Federal employees approaching retirement age an opportunity for preretirement counseling and training, an impetus will be given the movement toward such programs, and many other private businesses can be expected to follow suit.

RECOMMENDATION No. 10

The committee recommends enactment of a 3-year program of Federal grants to the States for adult basic-education projects in the public schools or other facilities used by local educational agencies.

Comment: President Kennedy recommended this adult basic-education program in both his message on "The Elderly Citizens of Our Nation" and his message on education.

Middle aged and older persons are more likely to be in need of basic education, because the importance of education was not as generally recognized when they were young as during recent years. The fact sheet accompanying this recommendation points out¹⁷ that there are 900,000 Americans over 65 who are "functionally illiterate," and that about one-half of the nearly 23 million adults who have less than an eighth grade education are over 45. The fact sheet further points out:

Persons with low educational attainment have great difficulty in meeting their economic and social needs in modern society. For older people—frequently beset with problems of health, low income, and the necessity of adapting to a changing way of life—undereducation represents an overwhelming handicap.

Uneducated and undereducated adults are not only limited in their personal development but their communities are deprived of the contributions they could make as trained volunteer workers or wage earners if adequately equipped to perform elementary tasks requiring some degree of proficiency in language and arithmetic.¹⁸

The leisure time now available to senior citizens provides an excellent opportunity for them to obtain the basic education they missed during the crowded years of their youth. Such a Federal program could make it possible for them to utilize their leisure time to open new windows upon life and to increase their adequacy to deal with the problems of their later years.

There is a proposal to provide adult basic education of the type here recommended in part B, title II of S. 2642, the proposed "Economic Opportunity Act of 1964" which, as this report is submitted, has passed the Senate and House and is awaiting the President's signature.¹⁹

While the benefits of this program would be available to young adults as well as to their seniors, the latter would benefit most, since the need for basic education is greatest among them.

There were provisions in Public Law 88-214 (December 19, 1963) permitting basic education under the Manpower Development and Training Act. However, such training is available only for carrying out the purposes of that act and only to a restricted class of workers. The more general provision in S. 2642 is also needed.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 11

The committee recommends enactment of a 3-year program of Federal grants to State universities and land-grant colleges to help establish or expand publicly supported programs of general extension education at the college level or above.

Comment: President Kennedy recommended this university extension education program in both his message on "The Elderly Citizens of Our Nation" and his message on education. It is embodied in part A, title VI of S. 580, the proposed "National Education Improvement Act of 1963."

Federal grants would be made available to State universities and land-grant colleges to help establish or expand publicly supported programs of general extension education at the college level or above. The authorization for each of the 3 fiscal years of the program's operation would be \$9,040,000 to be matched on a 50-50 basis.

Under this proposal, universities could charge lower fees or no fees to older students. Funds would be provided to help develop experimental education programs particularly suited to the needs of older people, such as courses on retirement and retirement preparation.

Courses for senior citizens at the college level would be an intellectually stimulating means of filling their leisure time and would help them solve the problems of their later years.

RECOMMENDATION No. 12

The committee recommends that the Social Security Act be amended to permit States to make old-age assistance payments on behalf of a recipient to a third person who is found to be interested in or concerned with the welfare of the recipient, where he is determined to be unable to manage his money because of a physical or mental condition.

Comment: This was one of the recommendations in President Kennedy's message to Congress.²⁰ It would be implemented by enactment of section 6 of S. 1358, the proposed Senior Citizens Public Welfare Amendments of 1963.

In the fact sheet accompanying this recommendation it was said:²¹

Some aged persons with physical or mental handicaps, while not needing a formal guardianship, are in need of some help in spending their funds for their own benefits. Yet, under the present law, old-age assistance (OAA) payments must be made directly to the needy individual, his legal guardian, or his judicially appointed representative. This presents a hardship to many old-age assistance recipients who are more or less confined to their homes.

Speaking of this group of recipients, President Kennedy said in his message:

Among this group some lose their assistance payments through forgetfulness; others are defrauded by unscrupulous persons.²²

At present, there are two extreme alternatives with respect to such a recipient, neither of which is satisfactory. First, payments to him directly can be continued, despite his inability to manage his financial affairs. Second, an effort can be made to have him declared incompetent and a guardian appointed, despite the trauma resulting from the loss of status and legal capacity. This proposal would provide a middle alternative having the advantages of the two extreme alternatives with none of their disadvantages.

RECOMMENDATION No. 13

The committee recommends that State commissions or committees on aging be established in States and other jurisdictions where they do not now exist.

Comment: American jurisdictions having no active State agencies on aging are: Alaska, Arizona, Guam, Idaho, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Wyoming. While a Federal matching grant can encourage establishment of commissions or committees in these jurisdictions, the action establishing them must be taken by the States and territories themselves.

Congress, as the legislative body for the District of Columbia, should enact legislation establishing an independent District of Columbia Commission on Aging. The Commissioners of the District of Columbia have administratively established an interdepartmental committee on aging, but the Commissioners have taken the position that a full-fledged commission on aging cannot be administratively established, because of the statutory prohibition against the creation and establishment of new departments in the District of Columbia government without prior congressional approval.

RECOMMENDATION No. 14

The committee recommends that State and local commissions on aging confer with the businesses concerned on the possibility of lower rates for senior citizens on transportation facilities and lower admission prices to motion-picture theaters, theaters, sporting events, and other recreational facilities, where such appears to be good business practice, and where such reductions can be made voluntarily, without undue pressure.

Comment: Witnesses at hearings of the subcommittee testified that the cost of transportation contributes to the isolation of seniors and seriously discourages them from availing themselves of senior centers and other facilities maintained for their benefit.²³ Local transit companies in Detroit, Cleveland, and Los Angeles have established lower rates for seniors during offpeak hours. State and local commissions on aging can help the spread of such policies throughout the Nation by calling this possibility to the attention of their respective local transit systems and seeking their voluntary cooperation. Many transit systems may come to the conclusion that special senior rates during offpeak hours, when vehicles run almost empty, will help stimulate greater use of facilities at these times and will thus be to their financial benefit.

In the same way, special senior citizen admission charges for motion-picture theaters, theaters, sporting events, and other recreational facilities during offpeak days and hours might be sound business, and it may be possible to obtain the voluntary cooperation of those concerned, based upon their enlightened self-interest.

A motion-picture theater manager who testified at the subcommittee's Boston hearing stated unequivocally that his theater's discount for senior citizens has been successful. He said:

We feel it is a worthwhile program. I am sure * * * if the other theaters had an idea of the amount of money that is realized from this, they would go along with the same type of program.²⁴

The Milwaukee Braves Baseball Club has announced that those over 60 will be charged reduced admission for 11 midweek games beginning with the game played Thursday, April 30 and ending with the one scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 1964. The Washington

Senators had a "Senior Citizens Day" on Sunday, May 17, in connection with the President's proclamation of May as Senior Citizens Month, on which day those 60 years of age and over were admitted at half the regular admission charge.

Businesses receptive to the idea of special rates for senior citizens but uncertain of its feasibility as applied to their specific businesses might be induced to experiment during Senior Citizens Month.

For simplicity of administration, in some communities the identification card issued for one type of discount is used for other types also. For example, arrangements were made by the Detroit Department of Street Railways for holders of its senior citizen reduced fare card to be admitted to certain theaters at reduced rates every day until 5 p.m., upon showing their cards at the box office.

An example of a local aging council which has left no stones unturned in arranging special discounts for senior citizens is the Brookline, Mass., Council for Aging, which has distributed over 3,000 identification cards to Brookline's senior citizens. These cards entitle bearers to discounts at motion-picture theaters, fairs, baseball games, circus and ice capades, and for group travel.²⁵

RECOMMENDATION NO. 15

The committee recommends that State and local aging commissions, friendly visitor services, and other organizations which deal with senior citizens who are lonely and isolated seek to interest high school students and other young people in "adopting grandparents."

Comment: The Rhode Island State Division on Aging has recently initiated an "adopted grandparent" program, as explained at our Providence hearing.²⁶ It interested hundreds of teenage girls who are members of Future Nurses, Future Teachers, and Community Services clubs in each "adopting a grandparent" from among senior citizens who are lonely, isolated, and in need of sustained contact with a younger person. According to the testimony, this service has been as rewarding to the teenagers as to the "adopted grandparents,"²⁷ and the teenagers have, on their own initiative, provided needed services which were not originally contemplated.²⁸

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Washington hearing, pp. 14, 15, and 16.
- ² Washington hearing, p. 30.
- ³ Boston hearing, pp. 101 and 102.
- ⁴ Boston hearing, p. 90.
- ⁵ P. 15 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ⁶ P. 46 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ⁷ P. 47 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ⁸ P. 15 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ⁹ P. 46 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ¹⁰ P. 48 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ¹¹ Washington hearing pp. 48 and 53 (Mrs. Kraft); Boston hearing, p. 142 (Mr. Mack); Saginaw hearing, p. 350 (report of Flint, Mich., Recreation and Park Board).
- ¹² Boston hearing, p. 175 (Mr. Karpeles).
- ¹³ Boston hearing, p. 143 (Mr. Mack).
- ¹⁴ The Food Stamp Act of 1964 was signed by the President on Aug. 31, 1964.
- ¹⁵ Boston hearing, p. 92.
- ¹⁶ Providence hearing, pp. 252 and 254 (Mr. Creaghead).
- ¹⁷ P. 51 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ¹⁸ P. 51 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ¹⁹ The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was signed by the President on Aug. 20, 1964.
- ²⁰ P. 10 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ²¹ Pp. 34 and 35 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ²² P. 10 of "Compilation of Materials Relevant to the Message of the President."
- ²³ Washington hearing, pp. 49 and 50 (Mrs. Kraft); Boston hearing, p. 143 (Mr. Mack) and p. 215 (Mr. Soule).
- ²⁴ Boston hearing p. 104 (Mr. Basel).
- ²⁵ Boston hearing, pp. 213 and 214 (Mr. Soule).
- ²⁶ Providence hearing, pp. 226, 237, 238, and 245.
- ²⁷ Providence hearing, p. 238 (Mrs. DeSaint).
- ²⁸ Providence hearing, p. 245 (Mrs. DeSaint).

MINORITY VIEWS OF MESSRS. DIRKSEN, GOLDWATER, CARLSON, PROUTY, KEATING, AND MECHEM

Every element in society, at Federal, State, and local levels, should be used to eliminate age-oriented barriers experienced by older people in satisfaction of human needs and aspirations.

Both government and private resources, as appropriate, at each level, should recognize their responsibilities in assuring first class, independent citizenship for those past 65.

The one denominator found most commonly among older people is the desire to participate fully in family and community life with dignity and independence.

For the majority of older people this desire is, within the limits imposed on all humans, reasonably well satisfied.

Older Americans in general are not—as they have been characterized by some—sick, impoverished, and incapable of managing their own affairs. On the contrary, as individuals and within their families, most are capable of taking care of themselves.

For many, however, there are special impediments to achievement of fully satisfying lives. These are often related to age as such. We are dedicated to the proposition that when and where such impediments exist, they should be removed.

The impediments most frequently encountered by older people, and most amenable to Government action, are basically economic in character.

Older Americans on fixed income are confronted with loss of purchasing power through inflation. There is a need for simultaneous assault on the major cause of inflation—excessive Federal spending—and on improvement in income for those who have already grievously suffered its dollar-eroding effects.

Special economic impediments include those which relate to problems in obtaining employment. Many persons past 65 have expressed their desire for full or part time work, an opportunity often denied solely because of age. They include those encountered in meeting expenses incurred through illness. Too often they include problems confronted in providing basic necessities of life—food, clothing, and shelter.

The highest priority should be given to these essentially economic problems through effective action, as appropriate to each, by both private organizations and Government at National, State, and local levels.

Recognition should also be given to social adjustment and psychological problems which may be encountered by persons of all ages. It appears that these are most responsive to family level and community action.

Churches, fraternal orders, and other nongovernmental elements in society have long done effective work in these areas. For it they are especially well equipped. Governmental agencies have supple-

mented these activities on a wide front. Older persons, themselves, have often provided leadership in meeting such needs for people of all ages. Such efforts should be encouraged.

Among older people in general, however, psychological and social adjustment problems appear to be less common than among other age groups. Studies such as those made by the Age Center of New England support this view.

Older people, once their economic needs have been met, apparently are more able to adjust to life's mental vicissitudes than the young and middle aged. Presumably this springs from the wisdom acquired through years of meeting all types of problems.

It is small wonder then, that older people, themselves, have emphasized that Federal and State action should be directed first at economic-oriented needs.

At hearings of the committee, older Americans have repeatedly objected to unnecessary creation of new bureaucracies which, while conceivably well motivated, can themselves tend to set older people apart from other age groups.

Older witnesses voiced recognition of the fact that proposals which require substantial funds from Congress or State legislatures must inevitably compete with proposals for other purposes. They have expressed fears that excessive appropriations for secondary purposes may divert money from the primary economic needs which they cite as most serious among the aged.

We must concur. Every proposed new program must be fully justified on its individual merits by thorough examination of the facts. The facts available in the field of aging underscore the necessity of giving first priority to meeting economic problems of older persons. This effort should be pursued most vigorously with all the resources at society's command.

EVERETT MCKINLEY DIRKSEN.
BARRY GOLDWATER.
FRANK CARLSON.
WINSTON L. PROUTY.
KENNETH B. KEATING.
E. L. MECHEM.

INDIVIDUAL VIEWS OF MR. FONG

A HELPING HAND FOR OLDER AMERICANS

Today there are about 18 million Americans past age 65. By 1970, it is estimated there will be 20 million Americans 65 or older and by 1985, 25 million.

It is a fact of our national life that more Americans are living longer, with better health, and imbued with higher standards of acceptable living conditions.

For the future, this means increasing numbers of older Americans ready, willing, and able to work and lead active lives and demanding more than mere subsistence-level existence.

Among some primitive tribes, the customary way to deal with the aged was to banish them into exile from the community, leaving them to the perils of the jungle and to certain death in the wilderness.

Civilized people are more humanitarian. We in America want to stretch out a helping hand to aged persons. For we believe our elder citizens, like those of all other ages, should enjoy independence, opportunity, and security, free from economic fear and want and with hope for a worthwhile and rewarding future.

Twentieth century America has made tremendous strides in scientific and technological fields. But the scientific and technological revolution that makes us a land of plenty, that permits more people to have more things than ever before in history, that gives us labor-saving devices, that allows us more leisure, that adds years to our lifespan, has paradoxically resulted in human problems that strain our ingenuity, our imagination, and our very best efforts to solve.

AGING PROBLEMS VARIED AND COMPLEX

The problems of the aging, to which this report is devoted, are complex and far reaching, for we are dealing not with a homogeneous group but with a heterogeneous population.

Older persons are individuals. Their problems vary. Their circumstances vary. Their needs vary. Their goals in their golden years vary. Some want to continue to work. Some want to retire. Some are in good health. Others are ailing.

Even the most casual observer soon comprehends there are no simple formulas to resolve the infinitely complex and interrelated aspects of our aging Americans.

This is clearly shown in the Report of the White House Conference on the Aging. It has been reaffirmed by other reports and by the hearings and studies of the Senate Special Committee on the Aging.

Because the problems of the aging are complex, solutions require enlightened and progressive efforts of all elements of our society, governmental and voluntary, including church, labor, business, and other groups.

IMPROVING THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF OLDER PERSONS

Foremost among the problems of the aging is the need to improve their economic status. This requires a multipronged approach, including but certainly not limited to the following:

1. Steps to raise the income of persons past 65 and of those who will attain such age in the future. The bill (H.R. 11865) pending before the Senate to increase social security benefits and broaden coverage is a move in the right direction and I support it.

2. Public policies that make war on inflation to stop the cost-price squeeze on those with fixed incomes as so many older citizens are.

3. Better employment opportunities for older persons. For those persons over 65 who desire and are able to work, national policy should aim at helping them to stay on their jobs or to find new jobs.

Human resources are our Nation's most valuable resources. We must intelligently cultivate, wisely conserve, and fully utilize these resources, not alone for our Nation's immediate benefit, but for the benefit of future America.

In a world where Americans comprise only 6 percent of the world's total population, we necessarily must make up in quality what we lack in quantity if we are going to retain our freedom and international leadership.

It would not only be inhumane, but it would be national folly to turn our backs on the maturity, the wisdom, the skills, the experience of that ever-growing portion of our people who are senior citizens.

I have, therefore, joined a number of my colleagues on the Senate Committee on Aging in sponsoring the Older Workers Employment Act of 1964 (S. 3107) as an effort toward improving job opportunities for older persons.

The bill carries out three recommendations of the committee's Subcommittee on Employment and Retirement Incomes of the Elderly: (1) a program of grants for experimental and demonstration projects to stimulate needed employment opportunities for older Americans; (2) authorization for a modest annual appropriation for the U.S. Bureau of Employment Security to help with the expenses of volunteer community efforts to find employment for older workers; and (3) a means of focusing attention on this problem by Presidential proclamation designating the first week in May as "National Employ the Older Worker Week."

In addition, the present \$1,200 earnings limitation, beyond which social security recipients are penalized through reduced social security benefits, should be raised. An amendment to accomplish this, which I have cosponsored, has been offered to H.R. 11865, now pending in the Senate. The amendment would allow earnings up to \$2,400 with no social security benefit reduction.

Also, Congress should consider giving a tax credit to employers of older persons as proposed in Senate bill 552, which I cosponsor.

PROTECTION AGAINST COSTLY ILLNESS

Another important problem of older persons is that of providing protection against costly illness.

In my individual views issued in July this year on hearings held by the Subcommittee on Health of the Elderly, I stated in part:

The hearings showed that there are presently available for older persons policies offering comprehensive hospital, surgical, and other major medical benefits on a guaranteed renewable basis. The premiums naturally reflect the comprehensive benefits.

From the hearings it is clear that those who can afford and who are willing to pay the premiums for such coverage can obtain it.

It is also clear from the hearing record that some—how many no one knows—of those 65 and older cannot afford to pay the premiums for the best policies available.

The central problem in providing health insurance protection is financing.

Available statistics on the financial status of our aged population are very sketchy, too incomplete to derive an accurate picture. It is reasonable to say, however, that a good many older persons lack the wherewithal to buy comprehensive health insurance.

I believe additional Federal legislation is needed to assist older persons to finance comprehensive health protection, with the Federal share paid out of general revenues of the Treasury. This is the equitable way to distribute the cost of such a program.

As in the past, this year I am cosponsoring a measure to provide assistance to the aged in obtaining comprehensive health insurance protection.

AMERICA MUST DO BETTER

Our Nation has made considerable progress over the past 30 years in meeting the employment, medical, housing, and other needs of our growing aged population. But we must do better in the future.

I urge acceleration by all appropriate levels of government and by nongovernment enterprises to help older persons attain a livable income, financial independence, a decent home, a job if desired, adequate medical care without fear of impoverishment, and an important place in our national life.

It is essential to keep older persons in the mainstream of American life. As a nation, we need their counsel, skills, talents, energies, and experience in building a better America for all.

The problems of the aging concern us all, for the community, the State, and the Nation with its 192 million persons are affected directly or indirectly. Let us jointly help them to live their later years in dignity and self-fulfillment.

HIRAM L. FONG.

