

FROM: Urban Affairs Council
A. Ludlow Kramer, Secretary of State, Chairman
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For Release at 10:00 a.m. December 5, 1968

"Urban Washington: Apathy or Action?", based on a year's study by the volunteer Urban Affairs Council, was released today. The report is a package of almost 200 recommendations, 34 of which already are being incorporated in measures to be submitted to the 1969 Legislature.

Secretary of State A. Ludlow Kramer, Council chairman, called the report "a basic formula of livability and an action program" intended to ease the state's growing pains during the next 16 years when this area is expected to jump from its present population of 3,276,000 to 5,000,000.

This report specifically covered changes affecting education, job training, health, housing, the physical environment, and rural areas. Not included in this report is the study on the Cause and Prevention of Civil Disorder, also a project of the Urban Affairs Council, which will be released next month.

Recommendations generally are of three types: specific suggestions for legislative action on constitutional or statutory changes; proposed programs to be undertaken within the present

governmental framework; and studies to be carried on in the next biennium with the intent of possible future changes. Notable among these is the request for a Commission on Modernization of Local Government.

Urban Affairs Council legislation will ask for state powers to do the following:

Offer incentives to industry for more on-the-job training, either through tax credits or outright payment.

Give grants to county and municipal governments to create programs for employment and training of the disadvantaged.

Prohibit garnishment of wages prior to entry of judgment and liberalize wage exemptions to enable debtors to maintain an adequate standard of living if wages are attached.

Establish a revolving fund to be used to provide bonds for workers whose records prevent their being bonded through private bonding houses.

Rigidly enforce anti-discrimination regulations in private firms dealing with State government.

Create a State housing agency with authority to provide loans, grants, and revolving fund moneys to encourage low-income housing, conduct research and training, develop new communities and assist local governments in obtaining federal low-income housing grants by providing portions of the non-federal funding requirements.

Adopt a uniform state building and housing codes and standards act.

Offer financial aid to improve housing which fails to meet Federal Housing Administration standards. L

Aid low-income families to become home owners through a State Home Ownership Act. L

Provide for grants and loans for home repairs for senior citizens. L

Enact a State Open Housing Law.

Fluoridate all domestic water.

Give "careful consideration" to the Washington State Medical Society's proposed legislation on abortion laws. (This would make criminal abortion laws inapplicable to physicians and their patients and require that a termination of pregnancy be performed in an accredited medical facility.)

Offer state funded scholarships to students attending both public and private colleges.

Create educational parks to combat de facto segregation. L

Study school management systems with particular regard to revenue and revenue distribution.

Institute tax reforms to permit the bulk of school financing to be met by the state government with special levies to be called for only programs beyond normal requirements.

Create a State Department of Transportation.

Establish an Environmental Quality Agency to control such things as water and air pollution, solid wastes, motor vehicle exhaust inspection, oil spillage and "visual pollution".

Encourage consolidation and expansion of incorporated areas through a positive annexation policy.

Establish a Commission on the Modernization of Local Government.

Preserve historical sites and buildings through tax relief. —

Set statutory professional standards for the office of county assessor.

Create an Awards Commission to recognize persons or communities making significant contributions toward improving the environment.

Lower the voting age to 18 years. —

Allow for tax allocation financing of urban development projects.

Amend the Constitution to allow a simple majority of those voting to determine the passage or failure of special levies and bonding issues.

Create a Citizens Advisory Council on Rural Affairs and a Committee to study rural transportation.

Study the relationship between state and local health departments with the possibility of withholding funds from local departments not performing adequately or permitting the state to assume full responsibility for health services in these areas.

Provide assistance to persons displaced by construction of freeways.

The Urban Affairs Council is a 43-member volunteer group created last fall by Governor Daniel J. Evans. Its findings

add 4 UAC release 10 a.m. Dec. 5

are based on public hearings held statewide, closed sessions with private citizens, and consultation with state agency representatives and specialists in each field. The group also worked closely with Legislative interim committees assigned to related studies.

The report is illustrated with photographs of this state's successes and failures in urban development. The preface takes its theme from a speech by Governor Evans warning, "Our time is up."

The Governor warned, "We no longer can ignore the fact that our towns have become cities and that our cities have become regional urban sprawls. We face a future of unimaginable wonders and accomplishments... It is crucial that we begin now to plan for this future, to build the kind of cities that do not crush man's spirit, but rather expand his horizons and enrich his life."

Vice-chairman of the Council is The Very Reverend John A. Fitterer, president of Seattle University. Committee chairmen are: Job Training and Opportunities, Arthur A. Fletcher, Pasco City Councilman; Housing, Professor David M. Scott of Washington State University; Health Care, Merle W. Haffner, Spokane food broker; Education, Robert C. Anderson, mayor-elect of Everett; the Physical Environment, Langdon S. Simons, Jr., Seattle businessman; and the Non-Urban Sector, Philip E. Wainscott, Waterville rancher.

Highlights of each committee's report are as follows:

Employment charges that legal restrictions such as garnishment and bonding, subtle racial problems usually involving the lack of racial-cultural sensitivity and rapport, culturally biased testing, and the lack of capitalistic skills are keeping many Negroes, American Indians, Mexican-Americans, and poor whites from either holding a job or gaining a job that allows for upward mobility.

Housing is termed the "most neglected part of the economy." Lack of low-income residence units is cited.

Health Care points to the lack of dental care for low income families and points to the need for far more para-professional personnel (technicians and assistants) to augment professional services in medical and dental care. The report asks for better education on drug addiction and alcoholism.

Education questions the relevancy of public education curriculum, finding it, for example, over strong in college preparatory areas and weak in vocational training. It calls for consolidation of urban-suburban school districts and development of educational parks.

Physical Environment emphasizes the need for urban planning and flexible tax structure to encourage development. This section also points out the state's growing problems in pollution and calls for a design team approach to freeway planning that will consider the affect on individuals and disruption of communities.

Non-Urban Sector finds rural areas suffering a loss of youth

add 6 UAC release 10 a.m. Dec. 5

and rise in retirement population. Prime needs are for employment, better health care, services to migrants and better trained law enforcement agents. It refers to Indians as the most disadvantaged group in Washington state saying that Indian reservations are often worse places to live in than urban ghettos.

Several of the committees asked for the creation of "think tanks" or "think factories" patterned on the Battelle Institute where creative ideas in government might be explored.

The report is available to the public upon request directed to the Secretary of State's office.

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The request was part of a 21-point outline for rehabilitating the state's rural areas and was included in the Council's report "Urban Washington: Apathy or Action?" released today by the Council chairman A. Ludlow Kramer, Secretary of State.

The Council's non-urban sector committee also asked that the governor appoint a Citizens Advisory Council on Rural Affairs and a committee to study problems of public and private transportation in rural areas.

The 43-member Council, a volunteer group, has spent more than a year studying problems resulting from this state's growth as an urban center. The non-urban sector committee, headed by Philip E. Waincott of Waterville, held public hearings in Chehalis, Colville, Sequim, Mount Vernon, Waterville, and Yakima. Their report pictures Washington's small rural communities as losing youth, small farms, businesses, local schools, and churches while the remaining population of elderly and retired persons must travel to nearby cities for trade and cultural activities.

add UAC release Dec. 5

Other suggestions for revitalizing the rural areas included:

Offering Manpower Development and Training Act programs which meet rural needs.

Extending Farm Housing Authority programs to individual farmers to finance farm labor housing.

Employing bilingual aids in public agencies serving non-English speaking migrants and offering state-financed summer schools for migrant children.

Opening occupational skills centers to augment the limited vocational education available in rural schools.

Relaxing college entrance requirements to accept students who have taken a largely vocational secondary education.

Consolidation of school districts or development of educational parks with local communities taking part in decision making in these changes.

Giving the State Department of Health more power over local health departments which fail to do an effective job.

Offering state training for local law enforcement agencies.

Grouping all governmental services in centralized multi-service centers in rural areas.

Offering state funds to help communities raise matching funds necessary to obtain federal grants.

Investigating health needs of Indians, particularly as to dental care.

add 2 UAC release Dec. 5

The committee also went on record as favoring dropping the voting age to 18 and amending the state constitution to allow special levies and bonding issues to pass by simple majority of those casting a ballot.

Serving with Wainscott on the non-urban sector committee were: William B. Bonnett of Olympia, Stanton W. Nystrom of Camas, Mrs. Lenore Lambert of Yakima, Donald W. Moos, director of the ~~State Department of Agriculture~~ State Department of Agriculture, and John Finley of the State Office of Economic Opportunity.

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