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## HEARING

BEFORE THE

### COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

### UNITED STATES SENATE

NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

WILLIAM W. ALLISON, OF GEORGIA, TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

JUNE 24, 1977

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(II)



## NOMINATION

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 1977

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,  
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m., in room 4232, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Edward M. Kennedy presiding pro tempore.

Present: Senators Williams (Chairman), Kennedy, Randolph, Schweiker, and Javits.

Staff present: Don Zimmerman, minority counsel.

Senator KENNEDY. We will come to order.

William W. Allison, is nominated to be Deputy Director of the Community Services Administration.

We want to welcome you, Mr. Allison, to the committee.

The whole program on the OEO is worked out of this committee. The members of the committee have followed it very closely. I have been enormously interested in the program and have given our strong support in the program. We have gone through an effort of many years to dismantle the program, as you are aware. We were facing individuals who had that idea.

Hopefully, now, there will be a new breath of life brought to it, and I understand you are just the man to do it. I want to congratulate you and wish you well, and indicate that I am looking forward to working closely with you in seeing that the program is successful.

We have a statement here on behalf of the chairman of the committee, Senator Williams, and I will make it a part of the record at this time.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARRISON A. WILLIAMS, JR., CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Allison comes before the committee with both academic and practical experience in the areas of community and human development. His previous experience has enabled him to utilize his academic training in urban development and renewal as he served very recently as executive administrator of Economic Opportunity, Inc. in Atlanta, Ga. I can think of no better experience or training for the job for which he has been nominated than the recent activities of the agency he directed as it dealt with outreach and community organization in health, education, employment, and housing problems of the poor.

In addition to his management responsibilities in the poverty program on a local level, he has also had experience with program development and methodology.

To Mr. Allison's credits are not only a number of honors and awards including the Outstanding Business Individual of the Year of 1975 by the Interracial Council of Business Opportunity but numerous publications which explore domestic and international concepts of community development and poverty.

Senator KENNEDY. Mr. Allison, I understand that you have a brief statement, and I would ask you to proceed.

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM W. ALLISON, OF GEORGIA, NOMINEE  
TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION**

Mr. ALLISON. Thank you very much, Senator Kennedy.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor and a pleasure to appear before you today. Let me thank you again for scheduling my hearing in such a timely fashion.

I am grateful for the opportunity to present my views on the Community Services Administration as the Deputy Director-designate of the President.

When I was approached about this position, it never occurred to me that I should do anything but accept the offer. I have spent most of my adult and professional life working with and for the poor in this country and abroad. I consider the opportunity of helping to resurrect the "war on poverty" as being the most challenging position in Government today.

The Community Services Administration, formerly the Office of Economic Opportunity, is the last bulwark we have specifically designed to advocate and serve the interests of the poor. Not that the entire Federal bureaucracy is not also involved in this task, but in all of that bureaucracy's often competing and conflicting concerns, the only Agency which is dedicated solely to the interests of the poor is the Community Services Administration.

Over the last 8 years, much of the momentum mobilized in the previous 5 years has been dissipated. Yet, in spite of this depressing period, the Agency survived, principally through the efforts of community action agencies, the courts, and Congress.

Our main function continues to be the provision of direct services for the poor in a variety of areas, including outreach and organization, advocacy, program innovation, and specialized services.

In the short time since the current Director was confirmed, reorganization has been initiated. New staff have been identified, and a renewed sense of dedication to the task ahead has evolved.

Now, with a new administration, we have another chance to get on with the job of ridding this land of poverty. We have learned some very important lessons over the past 13 years. As a result, our programs, our priorities, and our people are better prepared for the future.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator KENNEDY. You have a very impressive biography and I am sure you will do a good job.

Perhaps you could tell us what the state of the OEO or the Community Service Agency is at the present time, and what do you think that—what do you intend to achieve in that?

Mr. ALLISON. Senator, we have initiated immediate plans for reorganizing the Agency.

As has been noted, we have come through a depressing period. Clearly one of our objectives is to revitalize the Agency. The Director has moved toward this by identifying a group of people who we believe have the competence, the ability to come in and give direction in important areas.

I would mention just two for your information.

We have always had in the Agency ostensibly a policy role, but in recent years we have slackened our efforts. So we now have an Office of Policy, Planning and Evaluation. We have identified an individual for that position, and we hope that in many of these areas where there are major concerns, such as ones that we just heard in the testimony of Dr. Richmond, health, welfare, jobs, and so on, CSA should bring its own experience, its own contributions to bear in those policy formulations.

Another area which I think is critical to the success of our Agency is the area of interagency affairs. We are a small Agency which does not have a lot of money, but there are other agencies, Federal agencies, which have a good deal of money. And it seems to us if we can leverage our resources with the Labor Department, with housing and with other departments, we will be more successful in bringing about positive changes for the poor.

So, in those two areas alone, I think we have an opportunity to make significant headway, and we are hopeful of doing it very soon.

Senator KENNEDY. Do you have the strong support of the administration in this area?

Perhaps you could tell us a little bit about your own perception and commitment of the situation.

Mr. ALLISON. My perception of the commitment, Senator, is that we do enjoy that support and rely clearly on continuing commitment to the interest in concerns of poor people in this country.

I believe—in fact, I hope the record speaks for itself on that matter.

Senator KENNEDY. Well, I think that is important because we have seen over the period in the past that that has not been the case.

Are you familiar with the special impact program?

Mr. ALLISON. Yes; I am, sir.

Senator KENNEDY. That was initially developed by Senator Robert Kennedy with Senator Javits, and I think works extremely effectively in the area which I know most about, and that is in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area.

Are you familiar just generally with the program and, by any chance, do you know about the Bedford-Stuyvesant program?

Mr. ALLISON. I have had a chance to visit the area. I would hope that we could not only maintain it but also encourage its development.

I think in terms of the pragmatism, as well as the philosophy—this whole approach of community development cooperations may be the best approach.

Senator KENNEDY. I would certainly agree. I have followed that very closely and will be staying in touch with you on it because if you travel down the Bed-Stuy area and see what it has meant in terms of opportunity and hope and real meaningful progress of what they have been able to achieve, it has been absolutely extraordinary. And

I think it is just a further indicator that when the programs are effectively fashioned, shaped, and administered at the local level and Federal level, it can make a significant difference in terms of people's lives in this area.

I, just would conclude with indicating my own strong support for the program. You are into a wide variety of different areas which I think are absolutely essential.

I would hope that the Agency itself would develop a sort of advocacy aspect in terms of these efforts, and they are a risky business. But it seems to me that that is an extremely important act that we see, as you well know, that the groups that they are attempting to serve for the most part are left out of various programs.

And unless we are going to have that type of effective articulation to both needs and the value of this in terms of human beings, it will, I think, fail to meet its central purpose.

Let me just ask you more of a philosophical question.

What do you think is happening in our society, why the needs of the poor and needy people have not the sense of both awareness by the public generally, a strong sense of support exists at another time?

What is your feeling about some of the national mood on just poverty programs anywhere?

I would just say, in regard to this, the Congress, as a whole, and in terms of the national debate and discussion, headed down through the Presidential campaign, this really has not got the proper commitment that it had at other times, and how do you—what is your sense about that—

Mr. ALLISON. My sense, Senator—

Senator KENNEDY. Am I wrong about that?

I would like to hear that I am wrong about it.

Maybe we have not been hearing the message right, but what is happening out there?

Mr. ALLISON. My sense is that there is a commitment, as I indicated earlier. I think that there is a time change, between 1965 and 1977, when this program was initiated. There was a great deal of newness about it in terms of our concern and necessarily it created a good deal of interest. Today it is not possible, so to speak, to talk about an Office of Economic Opportunity as a new effort.

It is indeed possible to talk about all of the interests that the Office of Economic Opportunity pointed to 12 or 13 years ago, and to see the implications coming through the entire Federal bureaucracy today.

In a sense, the Agency, it seems to me, has succeeded in the sense that the Labor Department, HEW, and a good many of the other areas of Government are directing their attention to the concerns that OEO highlighted 12 or 13 years ago, it gives me hope that this Agency today can go on identifying, as you said very well, and advocating for the interests of the poor.

We continue to have new problems such as energy, as an example. We were not talking about that 13 years ago. The implications of energy today for the poor, are immense. So that I read what is happening as being, in a sense, a confirmation of what we started 13, 14 years ago, but with a clear mandate to identify the new areas, the problems that we do not know, the problems that we are not planning for or thinking about, and the mission for this Agency is to do that.

Senator KENNEDY. It has been by far the most innovative Agency of Government over time. The food program, meals on wheels, I think in many respects has been enormously successful.

Two million meals on wheels to elderly people in my State of Massachusetts, and what it means, both in terms of its effectiveness, low administrative cost, no matter what criteria you use in terms of valuation, it has been very successful.

The neighborhood health center program, I remember the evaluation was done in the previous administration to try and give a black eye to those who had the—then dominated by consumers, and how that study came through, showed that in so many instances they were the most effectively run and efficient of these programs.

So this whole movement has, I think, enormous importance.

I just am wondering, how, we can be even up here more effective and, giving you strength and support on it. I suppose it is in the results of the program, but I just am a strong believer in the program.

Mr. ALLISON. It does my heart good to hear you rip those off in that fashion because I think that is the success of the program, because these have been institutionalized already.

We have been able to see them spin them off to Labor and HEW and so forth, and that is what my comment has been directed to, since we have succeeded—you do not pay them that much attention.

Senator KENNEDY. Do not send that revitalization program off yet.

Mr. ALLISON. We want to keep a balanced view on this. There are some things we believe we can do better than other agencies, and we are giving thought to perhaps some of those which have been spun off too quickly and need to come home.

Senator KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

I wish you well and look forward to supporting your nomination. And I look forward to working closely with you.

Mr. ALLISON. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN (presiding). I commend the observations made by Senator Kennedy and your observations, and I look forward to confirming you for this position.

One of the problems that occurs to all of us is the problem of whether or not the program is getting to the people. We hear in a superficial way that much of the resources and effort is administrative, and it just does not get down to where it is meeting the human need for which it was designed.

How do you shape managerial accountability to determine whether the program effort is reaching the people for which it was intended?

Mr. ALLISON. I have two responses, Mr. Chairman.

I have just come from being a CAP Director, and it is from direct experience that I can speak to in terms of the impact of this program in a community. But, the Agency, it seems to me, has not had the capability to provide the kind of data and information that clearly tells our story.

I think that the majority of the community action agencies and other programs that serve the poor are, in fact, doing the job for which they were organized.

One of the things that the Director and I with the new staff hope to be able to do through the Office of Planning is give you the kind of information that pinpoints quite clearly the services that are being

rendered, the impact of those services, and the implications on the economy.

We in our own Agency have been able to generate and support our overhead costs easily, less than 5 percent of the total budget that we were operating. I think in terms of cost-effectiveness there is a good case to be made for what community action is doing throughout the country as compared to other Federal agencies.

But, at this point, that case has not been well documented.

I look forward in my administration to provide that kind of information to you and others.

The CHAIRMAN. The picture, however, is spotty as it appears to me.

There could be within one State one excellent program and you also could find just the contrast in another program.

Mr. ALLISON. I think it is generally true when there is a bad apple, it gets a good deal more attention than the good apples, and I am not prepared to say that there are not some bad apples. I would hope that our administration would go in and clear those up.

After a relatively short time in Washington, I am of the opinion that the majority of the CAA people are doing a good job. The system may not be producing that information, but they are providing the services.

I only wish that we could do a better job in telling the public what we are doing.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, now, I am guessing that you are right, that the job is being done.

But you do not have an efficient and effective way of describing the programs accomplishments.

Mr. ALLISON. I think this is the concern, that we have to find, we have to develop a system that provides information, and we have to develop the public programs that describe it to the public in a better way.

Of course, we have been through a period, Senator, when there was not the intent to prove our story. So that we have a background that has not always been supportive.

The CHAIRMAN. You have been in this, in the Agency, through some of the darker periods, have you not?

Mr. ALLISON. Yes, sir.

But I was very fortunate.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I have a good feeling that you will be able to be helpful in this area, too.

On the national level, you could be of assistance to make evaluations of programs as there could be some early warnings.

Mr. ALLISON. Clearly.

The CHAIRMAN. Corrective action could take place immediately in a minor way.

Mr. ALLISON. That is how we did it in Atlanta. It was to develop the system so that we could identify the problem before we got to the point to close up an agency or what have you.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the relationship between national and regional offices in CSA?

Is this an area where the roles are changing as it is in some of the other regional and national areas?

Mr. ALLISON. Yes.

As you may know, at the present time, the grant making responsibilities are centralized and we would hope to make some changes so that this would be decentralized for a more effective operation. Clearly we need to have our people closer to the problems in the communities, in the regions, and in order to accomplish this, the legislation would seek to give that—to return that authority to the regional positions once they are clearly accountable to the Director.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator JAVITS.

Senator JAVITS. Yes. I shall be very brief, as we are in a vote now. I just have two questions.

I am satisfied with your background and great confidence.

First, do you believe in the concept of the community economic development in financing these integrated community developments like Bedford-Stuyvesant, which, of course, the late Robert Kennedy had a great deal to do with funding?

Mr. ALLISON. Yes, Senator Javits.

Prior to your coming in, I responded to Senator Kennedy's question in the same manner.

My own feeling is that the community development programs provide one of the more hopeful signs that we can turn something as complex as poverty around. That is not saying that there are not problems associated with that process, but I believe that kind of comprehensive economic and social approach holds more potential for doing the job that we are here to do.

By the same token, it gives rise to a great deal more difficulties, and I am sure you are aware of those.

Senator JAVITS. I am aware of the history, of course, of our own project and the many others that follow in the country.

But you are committed to that concept?

Mr. ALLISON. Clearly.

Senator JAVITS. Second, are you also committed to the concept of the cooperation between private enterprise and community development, so that the business sector has a role and is determined to facilitate?

Mr. ALLISON. Yes, sir, Senator, I would like to speak briefly on that.

I think we have an opportunity with the private sector to do some very exciting kinds of things, and one of the positions that Dr. Olevarez has indicated, and we agree on, is an Office of Interagency Affairs where, in addition to leveraging what we have with other Federal agencies, we look to the private sector to involve them in a variety of ways. We did it effectively in Atlanta where we had on loan an executive from IBM at no cost.

If we can do it in Atlanta, we could do it throughout the whole country.

Senator JAVITS. Thank you very much, and I am satisfied with your selection of confirmation.

Mr. ALLISON. Thank you very much, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 1:18 p.m., the committee adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.]





