

LES AuCOIN
1ST DISTRICT, OREGON



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

July 3, 1985

Jerrylyn Ness, Director
Washington County Community Action Organization
245 SE 2nd Street
Hillsboro, OR 97123

Dear Jerrylyn:

Thank you for expressing your concern regarding the continuation of the Community Service Block Grant program.

I appreciate the information you and others involved with this program have shared with me. I am aware of the value of services provided through CSBG and have enclosed for your interest a statement I made recently regarding this issue. I encourage you to continue your efforts on behalf of community action programs.

Again, thank you for contacting me about the CSBG. If I can be of further assistance in this or any other matters of concern, please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be the initials 'LES' in a stylized, cursive script.

LES AuCOIN
Member of Congress

LA:ds



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 99th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 131

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 1985

No. 68

House of Representatives

● **Mr. AuCOIN.** Mr. Chairman, today we'll begin working on a budget resolution to set spending targets over the next 3 years. Without a doubt, this debate will be one of the most important, and difficult, Congress will have this session.

Clearly, we can't afford to continue down the road of \$200 billion annual budget deficits. For that reason, I'm supporting an across-the-board budget freeze with additional cuts.

However, where we make these cuts is as important as the bottom line on our budget ledger. While 1960's social spending is clearly not the wave of the future or the answer to all our problems, certain programs that have paid their way should be spared the budget ax. One of these is the community service block grant.

The community services block grant provides funding to States to provide essential social services such as child care, emergency shelter, and feeding programs. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to see firsthand how this program works in Oregon, and how well.

There are close to 3,000 homeless people sleeping on the streets or in dilapidated skid row housing in Portland, OR—the heart of my congressional district. Close to 50 percent of these people suffer from alcoholism. Nearly 1,400 are women and children fleeing situations of domestic violence.

According to a recent study by Multnomah County, OR, most of these individuals do not qualify for public assistance. Most are hungry—for decent

food, housing, and an opportunity to work.

The State of Oregon is working to meet the needs of the homeless in innovative new ways, such as a Housing Voucher Program. Local governments are struggling to meet increased demands. Despite these efforts, there is still a gap in support services. A gap that has been partially filled thanks to the community services block grant.

The Portland Community Action Agency, which administers CSBG funds in Portland, has used this money to start a health care clinic for uninsured low-income residents. Community services block grant funds account for only 10 percent of the total operating budget of this clinic. However, these dollars have leveraged \$80,000 in independent contributions and \$15,000 in donated medical services and supplies.

In Yamhill County, OR, where unemployment is still far too high, CSBG funds are used to collect and distribute 150,000 pounds of salvageable food from local merchants every year.

In The Dalles, OR, where unemployment is between 16 and 19 percent, the Mid-Columbia Community Action Council is the only provider of social services in the entire community.

The community services block grant more than pays its own way in Oregon. The \$2.7 million the State receives is used to leverage \$50 million in services to the poor.

The Community Services Block Grant Program saves society countless dollars—not to mention the indignity of poverty—by solving economic problems before they get worse. Continued support of this program is a demonstration of prudence as well as compassion.●