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1985

PUBLIC HEARING
before
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HUNGER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC COMMENT
on
PROGRAMS TO COMBAT HUNGER

Held:
February 13, 1985
2:00 p.m. - City Hall
Atlantic City, New Jersey
and
6:30 p.m. - Westside Complex
Atlantic City, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMISSION PRESENT:

Terry Grove, Subcommittee Chairman
Assemblywoman Dolores Cooper, Second District
Donna Ross
Leslie M. Smith
Sheila Johnson
Margaret Heart

ALSO PRESENT:

John Barton
Aide to the Subcommittee
on Public Comment

New Jersey State Library

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TERRY GROVE (Chairman): We would like to welcome you to this public hearing being held by the New Jersey Commission on Hunger. We will be holding hearings throughout the State of New Jersey at approximately eight different locations over the next four months -- through the month of May -- to give people who are hungry, people who are providing food, and other folks an opportunity to provide information to the Commission. We have been instituted, and we have a life of at least until January, 1986, at which time we will be responsible for giving a report to the Governor and the Legislature. We want to gather this information early so we can then put the information together in order to compile a report and make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. We hope the report and recommendations will be adequate and will begin to meet the needs of the hungry in the State of New Jersey.

We ask that you come forth when you are called to present testimony. When you do, please seat yourself at the table in front of one of the two silver microphones, which are recording microphones. All testimony should be given within a 10-minute time span -- no longer, please. We are going to be very careful about that. The Commission will then have the opportunity to ask you clarifying questions. We will not make promises of any kind today; we will simply gather information. All of the information will be taped and will be available to the Commission. Even though we may not be taking notes, your comments will not be lost because the two women to my right are taping the entire hearing, and it will be transcribed and available to the Commission.

If you are here to give testimony, please give your name to the gentleman over there in the gray suit. His name is John Barton. John, will you please raise your hand?

We want to use 45 minutes of each hour, up until five o'clock, for people who called and made reservations to speak. We will use the last 15 minutes of each hour so that the people who did not call to have their names put on the witness list won't have to wait until the end of the hearing to speak. If you are not able to speak this afternoon and you would like to speak, we will be at the Westside

Complex for two hours this evening. The Westside Complex is located at the corner of Marmora and Illinois Avenues. If you will come to the Senior Citizens Room, we will be taking testimony for two more hours this evening.

When you come forward, please give us your name, spell your name so that we have an accurate record of who you are -- some names are not clear when heard on the tape -- and give the organization you represent, if it so applies. If you are here representing yourself, please state that. We will ask clarifying questions during or after your testimony.

Our first witness this afternoon is Diane Bechtold. Diane?

Before Diane begins, I would like to introduce the members of the Commission who are present. I will start from my left and let each member of the panel introduce herself.

MS. JOHNSON: I am Sheila Johnson from the Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition.

MS. HEART: I am Margaret Heart, representing Assemblyman David Schwartz's office.

MS. ROSS: I am Donna Ross, representing the Newark Preschool Council, Head Start.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: I am Assemblywoman Dolores Cooper, Second District, Atlantic County.

MR. GROVE: My name is Terry Grove, and I am the Chairman of this Subcommittee. I also represent an organization called Church World Service CROP.

Diane?

DIANE BECHTOLD: Okay. My name is Diane Bechtold -- B-E-C-H-T-O-L-D. I am here today representing the Ocean City Ecumenical Food Cupboard. I am the immediate past president of the Ocean City Ecumenical Council, and current treasurer of the Food Cupboard account.

Five years ago, I approached the minister of the Methodist Church in Ocean City to inquire about a food pantry that was being operated by the church. At that time, I learned there was hardly any request for this food, and that, in fact, canned items often had to be thrown out, because after sitting on the shelf for so long, it was

feared the contents might not be edible. As I say, that was five years ago.

Since 1981, however, the Cupboard has been stocked, staffed, publicized, and administered by Ocean City Ecumenical Council volunteers, with assistance from the Methodist Church staff. When the Council first assumed responsibility for the Cupboard, we relied solely on donated food items from member churches. In order to keep up with the demands on the Cupboard, in the last two years we have had to expand our supply resources to include special food drives, civic club donations, government surplus foods, the Woodbine Food Bank and the Philadelphia Food Bank, plus continued food and cash donations from the local churches within our community.

What we give out to people who need food are the basics: canned vegetables, fruit, meat and fish, powdered milk, pasta, dry cereal, rice, soup, coffee, and juice. We also have small denomination food certificates for the family's purchase of bread, eggs, special dietary foods, and fresh meat, as necessary. The Council has authorized that persons be given three days' worth of food at a time, and we will refuse food to no one on this basis.

Since August of 1983, records of the families we have served have been kept, in compliance with government regulations for the foods we received from this source. From August through December 1983, 63 families received food from the Cupboard. During the year 1984, 333 food requests were filled for 150 families. Eighty-seven of these families requested assistance only once; however, we did have people returning to the Cupboard for assistance on more than one occasion. When a person became a repetitious user of Cupboard resources, we felt there was probably some ongoing social problem, so those persons were referred to other agencies for follow-up. Last month we had 84 requests for food.

Prior to the elimination of a special county program -- First Call for Help -- we used this referring agency to help us screen out, or at least be aware of, people who "made the circuit" to receive handouts. However, in 1984, while 22% of the people coming to us for food were referred from another social service agency, including the

County Welfare Department, 70% of the families were walk-ins; the remaining 8% were being referred by a local church or minister.

Various reasons given by food recipients included: their food stamps ran out, were delayed, lost or stolen; or, food stamps and/or welfare had been applied for and approved, but had not yet been received. The latter situations are often verified because the Food Stamp office or Welfare office will call the Cupboard to let us know that a person had been sent to us because of the time delay between the application and the availability of assistance. When we first began taking referrals from these agencies, our provision of a three-day food supply was sufficient. Now these same agencies are asking us to provide a 7- to 10-day food supply for the clients they refer. We have not always been able to give out this much food to one family, and it has put a strain on our resources.

Throughout this presentation, I have referred to families receiving assistance, and, in fact, 95% of the food that goes out does go to a family, often with young children. One of the families we recently helped was a young mother, with two small children, who had been picked up for shoplifting in a local supermarket. She said she just didn't have any money and her children were hungry. The 1980 census figures bear out the fact that female-headed households accounted for almost all of the 505 family and non-family households in Ocean City whose income was below the poverty level. Of the 836 married couple families with children present, an additional 25% of that number are female householders with no husband present, but who have their own children present. There are an almost equal number of female-headed households with children present in both the white and black populations. The average 1979 income to a household from public assistance was \$2,834.00. This was averaged among 308 households receiving this type of assistance.

Besides the difficult economic situation which many families are struggling with, other problems cause people to go hungry in our community. Summer employment opportunities cause after-the-season unemployment. It is just harder to find a job during the off-season. The casinos lure the gambler, who blows his or her paycheck at the

tables. There is alcoholism -- I believe Cape May County has one of the highest alcoholism rates in the State. And, there is a failure to link with other social service agencies. All of these contribute to the problem. We find many people getting by on a shoestring, until they literally run out of food, before they will apply for some type of assistance. Then they need food from our Cupboard while they wait for other assistance.

There is no question in my mind that Ocean City has hungry people. I also think the Ecumenical Council Community Food Cupboard has provided a vital service to our community. However, without the assistance of various food banks and government surplus supplies, our services would have been sharply curtailed. We hope we can continue to meet the needs of people within our community who need food. While it is one of our most basic necessities, it seems people feel they must pay rent, electric, and heating bills before they go food shopping.

We are not so naive that we do not recognize that there are, and always will be, people who mismanage their incomes. However, we do not believe, in our experience, that the majority of the people who have come to us for help fall into this category. At the same time, we just cannot allow children or others dependent in a similar way to go hungry in a country that is so plentiful.

I hope that you, the members of the New Jersey Commission on Hunger, will be successful in your endeavors to document and alleviate the hunger that exists in our State. I thank you for this opportunity to speak about the situation in Ocean City, where even in America's greatest family resort, we have hungry families. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Diane. Are there any questions from members of the panel? (affirmative response)

I would like to introduce Leslie Smith, who has joined us. Leslie is from the Center for Food Action in Bergen County.

Assemblywoman Cooper?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: The only comment I would like to make is, I have followed your program in the newspaper. Of course, you are from Cape May County. I think you made a very beautiful and heart-rending presentation. I hope more will come out of this, and I think the people from Ocean City should rally more to your support.

MS. BECHTOLD: Thank you. I have extra copies of my testimony if you would like them.

MR. GROVE: Will you please leave a copy with the ladies at the end of the table?

MS. BECHTOLD: Certainly.

MR. GROVE: I have a question, Diane. In the servicing you are doing, how much of it is to infant children -- formula, rather than food?

MS. BECHTOLD: We know there are families who have infants. We find that a lot of people do not use the money to buy baby food. They use table food and puree it, or whatever, to feed their babies. As far as the formula is concerned, that is where the food certificates are used. People use them to purchase formula in a grocery store.

MR. GROVE: Okay.

MS. SMITH: I have a question. What kind of statistics do you keep? I know you said you have some with you. The only reason I ask is that we try to collect statistics from all over the State. If we can get your name and address, we will send you a form which possibly you can fill out for us every two months or so.

Also on the baby issue, do you find, as we have found, that people with infants are trying to stretch formula further, watering it down, and things like that? That has been our experience with women with babies who are on formula.

MS. BECHTOLD: I can't say I have had any personal contact where a person has actually told me that. I would imagine that when people need to stretch things, they will do just about anything, but I can't say I definitely know of any such situation. The food information we have kept, as I say, is as of August, 1983. We ask the number of persons in the family, if they have cooking facilities, the ages of the children, whom they were referred by, and that sort of information. If they receive certificates, we ask what those certificates are for. I will be happy to fill out any paperwork you might find beneficial; however, we are a volunteer group, and we have people from the community packing the food, sorting the food, asking for the food, and donating the food, and it is kind of time-consuming. We will be happy to do whatever we can.

MS. SMITH: It is not a large amount of paperwork. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Okay.

MS. ROSS: I have just one question. In some of the statistics you gave us, you said that some of the people who were coming in for food were waiting for food stamps or welfare to be processed. Are these folks expecting to receive what is called "expedited service" -- that is, service on an emergency basis -- or is this just the usual application process? Do you have any idea?

MS. BECHTOLD: When we first started receiving referrals, it was explained to us that when a person comes in and fills out the paperwork, they can't just automatically give them food. Therefore, they wanted to use our resources. As I say, when we said, "Okay, we can supply them with three days' worth of food," they said, "Fine, they will have some assistance by the fourth day." Now they're saying seven to ten days. That is how long it will take them to get the assistance they are approved for.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Diane, thank you very much for being with us today.

MS. BECHTOLD: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: The next person to speak will be Mr. Rick VanVranken. Rick, will you please come up to the witness table? We would like to have the spelling of your name and the name of your organization.

RICK VanVRANKEN: I am Rick VanVranken -- V-a-n-V-R-A-N-K-E-N. I am with the Atlantic County Cooperative Extension Service of Rutgers University.

I work with commercial farmers throughout the County -- mostly vegetable farmers -- in an advisory and an educational role. Farmers throughout southern New Jersey grow a variety of fruits and vegetables. They like to boast at times that they grow over 80 different types of fruit and vegetable crops, supporting our Garden State heritage. Individual farmers rarely rely on only one crop for their income. Most of them will grow at least three or four crops;

some will grow 15 or 20 crops to hedge against unfavorable market conditions. Often, market conditions which are affected by external factors, such as the weather, will result in a situation where a farmer cannot sell part or all of his crop. Although he may save some crops for a day or two in order to find more favorable conditions, the market does not often fluctuate that quickly during the height of the season. Therefore, in these situations, we think that many of the farmers -- and, they asked me to speak on their behalf today -- would be willing to work with a food bank, donating some of their excess produce at those times.

There are farmers who are already working with groups which are going around gleaning excess produce in the fields, and there are other situations where food is donated. Some of the problems we see with this is that during the height of the harvest season, a farmer is very busy. He cannot often take the time to run an excess load of rejected fruits or vegetables to a central location. It is just plain logistics. He would be willing to donate that food, but how does he get it to the food bank?

Another item would be, if he has a truckload of peppers or string beans, can the food bank handle such excess quantities at one time? Would they be able to work with fresh fruits and vegetables at that time?

These are some of the concerns that the farm community has. I want to keep this short, so I will say only that they are interested in what is going on. They would like to work with you. There are groups and facilities in the western part of the County which may be able to be put to use in this situation. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Panelists, are there any questions for Rick?

MS. ROSS: I have two questions. First, in terms of the gleaning projects that farmers are working with, do you have a sense of who are actually participating in these projects? Is this through community agencies, or is it just folks who--

MR. VanVRANKEN: (interrupting) As far as I know, it is through a community agency. I just went into the gleaning program early this week myself.

MS. ROSS: Okay. I don't know whether you will be able to answer my other question or not, but I'm wondering if Atlantic County has an ethnic program. If so, can you tell us anything about it with regard to nutrition education to low-income families?

MR. VanVRANKEN: Yes, Atlantic County does have an ethnic program which is operated out of the same building, or the same program as I work with. Our Atlantic County nutrition education specialist, or agent, works with community volunteers. She trains them in basic nutrition and nutrition education practices. They then go out into the community to work with low-income families to educate them how to better use their food dollars and how to get the most for their money.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (negative response) Thank you, Rick.

MR. VanVRANKEN: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Is Thurston Gault here? (affirmative response) Would you please come forward? Thurston, we are asking the persons here to give testimony to, first, be seated, and then to give their name, to spell their name, and to identify the organization they are with. You have 10 minutes to make your presentation, and then we will ask some questions.

THURSTON GAULT: My name is Thurston Gault -- G-A-U-L-T. I am from the Golden Nugget. I came here today to give you an idea of the project I have been working on for approximately two years, and that is to establish a food bank here in South Jersey.

There have been a number of ad hoc groups which have periodically gotten involved with the project, and it now seems that we are getting close to realizing the goal of our efforts. I feel that once we establish a food bank, we will be able to work very closely with the idea that Dolores Cooper was talking about. We have already identified an area in Landisville that will be used as a storehouse for the food. We have the cooperation of a distributor. Presently, we are in the process of getting a nonprofit corporation put together. I am gathering members with more expertise than I have, to serve on an advisory council. We have established a relationship with the Salvation Army to administer the program on a day-to-day basis.

There are a lot of details that have to be worked out. That is why I am trying to get a cross section of individuals who can bring with them the expertise to help us get over some of the hurdles that still exist. But, I thought it was important for me to come here today to let you know what we are trying to do, and to possibly get to know some people here who may be willing to serve with us and help us to get this food bank started. From what I hear when talking to people in Atlantic County, I think this will be a very successful venture because there are a lot of people out there who are willing to lend their support. I think you are going to be surprised at what we accomplish with this endeavor.

MR. GROVE: Thurston, is this to be connected in any way to the group called "Second Harvest?"

MR. GAULT: We are going to be an affiliate of Second Harvest. We have had several meetings with Second Harvest in Newark. They are willing to lend their support and come down here in the early stages to help us with any problems we encounter.

MR. GROVE: So, you have been in touch with them about this?

MR. GAULT: Yes, I have.

MR. GROVE: Okay. Questions?

MS. SMITH: Yes.

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: For your information, there is another food bank being started in Camden by the Camden Feed Consortium. The woman who is going to be doing that is Ellen Ward. So, if you want to try to get in touch with her to see if you two can-- They are going to be working as an affiliate with the Philadelphia Food Bank. At least they are closer to you than Second Harvest is. Maybe the two of you might want to talk to see what you are doing.

MR. GAULT: That is the kind of help I am looking for. Thank you very much.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? Dolores?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Of course, I am very proud of the fact that of the 10 casinos, Golden Nugget is really the pioneer in facing this very crucial issue. Are any of the other casinos working with you, or is Golden Nugget working alone?

MR. GAULT: Well, the other casinos have expressed a desire to get involved. As soon as we get some of the preliminary things out of the way and we are ready to get started, I'm sure the other casinos will help us quite a bit. One of the members of the advisory council will be the Golden Nugget purchasing agent. The purchasing agents of all of the casinos meet on a monthly basis, and I'm sure we will get a lot of cooperation.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Any other questions? (negative response) Thank you for coming and sharing that piece of good news with us about what you are attempting to do. We are glad to have the information. Please be in touch with the Commission if you need names like the one Leslie gave you. We will be glad to respond in any way we can.

MR. GAULT: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Is Mr. Steve Bruner here?

STEPHEN J. BRUNER: Yes, I am. My name is Stephen J. Bruner -- B-R-U-N-E-R. I am the Department Head for the Atlantic County Department of Social Services. Today, I would like to give you a quick overview of what the County of Atlantic is doing, in conjunction with the City of Atlantic City and several private agencies, to address the homeless and hungry problem. Then, I would like to make two recommendations that I hope the Hunger Commission can possibly help us with.

You are going to hear today, I believe, from several individuals who are going to tell you the scope of Atlantic City/Atlantic County's problem. You are going to hear from the Rescue Mission; possibly from the Salvation Army; possibly from the Institute of Human Development; and, the City of Atlantic City, about the number of beds they have for the homeless and about the individuals for whom they provide food and shelter. These agencies are, of course, the lead agencies in Atlantic County for providing services to the homeless and hungry population.

I would like to tell you about Atlantic County's efforts in terms of the CEAS network. CEAS stands for the Comprehensive Emergency Assistance System which, of course, the Governor has asked each of the

21 counties to become involved in. The CEAS network is an outgrowth of all the county human services councils, and the County of Atlantic, through the Department of Social Services, has taken the lead with its Welfare Department in providing a voucher system for all of the homeless and hungry. I am going to continue to reference homeless and hungry because one of the things I am going to ask the Commission is, if we are going to address hunger, we have to address it from the point of view of both shelter and food problems, because they go hand-in-hand. In fact, one of the problems we are going to have today is putting a handle on exactly how many homeless there are in the community, in an urban center like Atlantic City.

To give you a one-day composite, during the recent cold snap we just had in January, if we looked at the number of people at the Rescue Mission, the number of people at the Salvation Army, the number of people at the Institute for Human Development, and at a temporary shelter which the City of Atlantic City set up in one of its All Wars Memorial Buildings, plus the number of people who were serviced by the CEAS network, we would see approximately 300 individuals on any given day during January. There are rough numbers, and I want you to understand that. I have had people say to me, "Well gee, individuals even get themselves arrested and incarcerated to get in out of the cold." I really don't have the exact number, but I am going to give you the number 300 as a handle.

I want to tell you more about the CEAS network because that is my role. When individuals go to one of these centers and identify themselves as being either homeless or hungry, if the beds are filled in all of these facilities, this is where the CEAS network takes over. This is a loose federation of all the public and private agencies in Atlantic County. We meet once a month. We have subcommittees which address certain problems of the homeless and the hungry. We have a subcommittee on the psychiatric or the mental patient, the ex-mental patient, the deinstitutionalized individual. We have individuals, of course, who are employment specialists. We have individuals who work in the fields of health, mental health, and those kinds of things. So, they lend their expertise by trying to take an individual who has

identified himself as homeless and working him or her through the system.

One thing the CEAS network can do is give a voucher for a certain amount of money, for a certain number of days, or for a certain number of meals per day, to an individual, regardless of fault. So, that network is in place here in Atlantic County.

Another network which is in place in Atlantic County is the nutrition program for the elderly. Atlantic County has 10 nutrition sites geographically located throughout Atlantic County. Three of them are located here in the urban center, Atlantic City. The City of Atlantic City runs a nutrition program itself, not utilizing county or Federal dollars. This program serves approximately 1,000 individuals 60 years of age or older. We also have, throughout Atlantic County, a home-delivered meal program. We serve approximately 300 individuals who are house-bound, for whatever reason. There are several other services the County government offers layered on top of one another. I heard someone identify himself as being related to the Home Extension Program out of Rutgers. Each of the 21 counties in the State of New Jersey has a home extension economist and a dietitian on staff who are available to help individuals in terms of budgeting problems, the preparation of meals for one, how to stretch a meal, and how to keep to a proper diet. All of those kinds of things are available for individuals.

Finally, I would just like to give you some statistics on the County Food Stamp Program before I give you my recommendations because I know there is going to be an awful lot of testimony about the problems that the Food Stamp Program encounters. For the month of January in Atlantic County, 14,029 individuals received food stamp assistance. These, of course, are AFDC recipients and, also, non-public assistance individuals, who are called NPA individuals. Under the NPA Program, there were 3,638 adults and 1,240 children, a total of 4,878. The gross receipts under the Food Stamp Program for the NPA Program were \$214,514. Under the AFDC Program, which was 3,005 adults and 6,146 children, or a total of 9,151 people, the gross receipts under the Food Stamp Program for January were \$427,477. The

Food Stamp Program, of course, is providing some kind of assistance for the hungry.

That brings me to one last program which the County of Atlantic is providing right now. We coordinate the Federal Commodities Distribution Program for the County. We conducted four separate distributions last year. These are the large surplus commodities of cheese, butter, and dry powdered milk. During the last distribution, 12,800 individuals in Atlantic County received five-pound bricks of butter. You can see that we have 12,800 people standing in line here in Atlantic County for these surplus commodities.

Two issues become relevant which I am going to ask you to look into in your endeavors. The first issue I mentioned to you was the whole issue of, how do you separate the hungry from the homeless? How do you address the issue? We here in Atlantic County -- the working professionals -- see shelter as a problem. Needless to say, you cannot receive food stamps without having a shelter. Well, that has changed recently, but those kinds of problems are-- We can't even separate and give you good numbers on who our hungry are versus who our homeless are. I happen to know there is a Homeless Task Force. This was set up by the Governor. That is one issue that needs to be addressed. How do we bring this together? There are so many other relevant issues. A homeless individual and a hungry individual might have a multitude of other problems.

I mentioned several municipal programs, several County programs, and several State programs. I have talked to all of these professionals in the last several weeks and tried to put a dollar figure on what they anticipate. As an example, if you live in the City of Atlantic City and you become homeless for some reason, you might be the responsibility of the Atlantic City Relocation Office. If you are an AFDC recipient and you become homeless, for whatever reason, you may become the responsibility of the Atlantic County Welfare Board; you may be eligible for services under my CEAS Program; or, you may just address your problem by going to one of the four or five private agencies I mentioned. Getting together with some of these gentlemen and just putting their dollar figures together, their funding streams

together, would be very helpful. Atlantic County may receive as much as \$600,000 to \$700,000 to address the homeless and hungry problem. That seems like an awful lot of money, but we cannot-- These funding streams are separate, and we cannot put this money together to address the problem in a major effort. We have to keep these dollars separate, and they have to address the populations that the State and Federal governments tell them they must address.

Here might be one way we could better coordinate a fragmented program: If the State of New Jersey would change some of its regulations and, of course, if the State of New Jersey would assist us, as the lead agency, in addressing some of the regulations that the Federal government sends us. Possibly that could be your major task, looking at the regulations which prohibit us.

MR. GROVE: That's 10 minutes. Are there any questions?

MS. ROSS: I have one question. Obviously, you have good information on the Food Stamp Program, what your current caseload is, etc. Do you have any sense of how many people in the County may have lost benefits for various reasons over the last couple of years, and how that might better help us assess who is hungry in the County, and then in the State?

MR. BRUNER: Off the top of my head right now, I do not. However, I can go back, since the Division of Welfare is one of the divisions within the Department of Social Services, and tell you the numbers who may have been denied over each month. This morning during testimony, several people talked about food stamps being exhausted by the end of the month. That is an issue; so is lost food stamps. There is no way I can tell you how many stop payments on checks we have put through at the Division of Welfare or how many additional food stamp benefits we have had over the last two, three, four, or five years, or however long you would want them. I can glean all of that information for you.

MS. ROSS: Okay. That information might be useful, as well as how changing eligibility requirements have affected people in Atlantic County.

MR. BRUNER: Fine, I can do that too, because there have been some major changes in the regulations, as you well know.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: May I give you some more homework?

MR. BRUNER: By all means. I heard you mention to the last speaker that you are going to send out a form, some kind of a questionnaire at the end of this hearing. I will give you my address.

MS. SMITH: I would like MSR effects, if possible. How many people are there who have had their payments either delayed or terminated because of problems with MSR?

MR. GROVE: Leslie, please tell us what MSR means.

MS. SMITH: That is the Monthly Status Reporting form.

MR. GROVE: Okay. That's a new one.

MS. SMITH: Alphabet soup; sorry. Also, I have a couple of questions. Are any of the nutrition programs for the elderly -- the feeding sites -- open on the weekends?

MR. BRUNER: Yes. There are several things about our program. We have one here in the urban center, Atlantic City, which is open seven days a week. This center feeds 100 individuals. We also have another site here in Atlantic City which is a kosher site. We feed approximately 135 ethnic individuals. So, yes, we have a seven-day-a-week program and an ethnic program.

MS. SMITH: Regarding the food stamp and AFDC figures you gave us, do you have any idea what percentage of eligibles those figures represent?

MR. BRUNER: Eligibles of what, individuals who have applied to the County?

MS. SMITH: Individuals in the County who would be eligible for food stamps who are on the program. Do you have any idea about that?

MR. BRUNER: No, that would have to be a projection, wouldn't it?

MS. SMITH: Yes, probably a projection.

MR. BRUNER: I don't know. I will go back to my food stamp experts and ask them that question.

MS. SMITH: Do you deal reasonably effectively with expedited food stamps and/or emergency welfare payments?

MR. BRUNER: You're talking about presumptive eligibility, and we would like to think we do. Upon receipt of the last report from the State government, I compared Atlantic County with the other 20 counties in the State of New Jersey, and we seem to have the exact same number of individuals on presumptive eligibility. Those are individuals who come in and declare themselves eligible, and we have not had the time to do all of the research, but we give them--

MS. SMITH: (interrupting) People who have had no income, right?

MR. BRUNER: I think you ought to go back to the State Division of Welfare and ask them that.

MS. SMITH: I guess the force of the question is, would someone be pre-screened for expedited service without them requesting the pre-screening?

MR. BRUNER: No, they would have to come in and request it. You mentioned one of the programs that might be doing some of the gleaning. I know this is an elderly program. The Green Thumb Program which operates here in Atlantic County does an awful lot of gleaning, and they take them to the nutrition sites. That is the reason I know they get some of the surplus.

MR. GROVE: Mr. Bruner, there is one more question from Donna.

MS. ROSS: You mentioned that you have recommendations on State regulations which may be thwarting some of your efforts, or keeping them from being as coordinated as they might be. At some later point, I hope you will spell out for us what those are.

MR. BRUNER: By all means, I will do that.

MS. ROSS: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much, Stephen.

MR. BRUNER: I'm sorry I took so long.

MR. GROVE: We will now move, for the remainder of this hour, to the folks who came in, to give them an opportunity to speak. The first person who came in and asked for the opportunity was Mary Haynie. Mary?

MARY E. HAYNIE: Thank you. I am happy that you have come to Atlantic City in Atlantic County. My name is Mary Haynie. I am a child advocate. Professionally, I am Director of Volunteer Services at Children's Seashore House, Atlantic City. Seashore House is a regional pediatric hospital for the treatment of chronic illness and disability, serving children from just months old to 18 years of age. I am also a member of the Association for Children in New Jersey, and I served on its Child Watch project in Atlantic County.

The pediatricians at Children's Seashore House observe malnutrition, debilitation, and failure to thrive within our young patient population, which, incidentally, is an inpatient population, plus 100 families in outpatient, which makes those very local families. Our inpatients could be from anywhere in New Jersey or Southeast Pennsylvania. In the 20 years of my work there, we have been constantly reminded of the importance of good nutrition and good nutritious food which contribute to the ultimate recovery of our children. Our services to families, when we need to have them assist with their children while they are hospitalized-- I would say we were the original "Ronald McDonald House," since we have been in business 112 years with these kinds of facilities. When we have them live in our residence they have complete use of our cafeteria, which is run by a dietitian, with special consideration given to explaining to them about good nutritious food. We teach the families and patients about nutrition and tell them why good food helps in healing, so that when children return to their homes, the proper food is purchased and prepared. Try to imagine a child you know having to go to bed one night without supper. For millions of children around the world, and in New Jersey, this is a daily fact of life. Going to bed hungry is not punishment -- it's poverty.

People have been denied the chance to break the cycle of poverty because of poor diet. Children born into poor families were often considered "slow." In fact, one in five of these children, in some states, suffered brain damage, a direct result of malnutrition. The cost of malnutrition is very easy to understand. The majority of brain cells in every person are developed during the first five months

of gestation in the mother's womb. Poverty, and sometimes the mistaken ideas of what makes up a good diet, result in many children not getting the nutrition they need, either in the mother's womb or in the critical early years. Born to a nation where all children are created equal, these children are starved into inadequacy. The result of bad nutrition is permanent impairment, even retardation. The simple truth is that a child who has suffered malnutrition is not likely to succeed in school, to care adequately for himself, to be readily employed, or to contribute to the community's economic health.

The case against hunger is apparent. Critics insisted that ensuring an adequate diet for the poor would be prohibitively expensive. However, they have forgotten another simple truth: A hungry child, growing up in a competitive society, may soon find that crime is an alternative to inadequacy. We should all have learned that lesson by now.

Back in the late 1960s, I wrote to our U.S. Representatives to support nutrition subsidies for women, infants, and children, a program that provides supplemental food to low-income and disadvantaged pregnant women, nursing mothers, and children up to the age of five. It recognizes that nutrition received by pregnant women, and their children, is critical to the intellectual and physical development of the child.

When the Federal program known as WIC was first instituted, I was serving as a County Freeholder and a member of the County Welfare Board, and the program was instituted in Atlantic County and Atlantic City. Over a decade after its creation, WIC has proved to be one of the most effective programs in government. A Harvard School of Public Health study found that poor, pregnant women not enrolled in WIC were far more likely to have low birth-weight babies. Low birth weight is closely associated with infant mortality, blindness, deafness, and mental retardation. In conclusion, the Harvard study argued that for every dollar the government spent on WIC, three dollars were saved in Medicaid costs. WIC was, is, and should be an investment in our children -- an investment in the future of America.

Despite this evidence of success, as well as the success of the School Lunch Program, some have tried to eliminate WIC and other nutrition programs from the Federal budget. These attempts, and their consequences, have been disastrous. You are here because of daily reports of people going hungry in our cities, while only a few can be helped. The problem has become so severe that the U.S. Mayors' Conference is presently trying to solve and respond to a new generation of hungry people. I agree with Stephen that hungry and homeless seem to go together.

It has been suggested that private industry can take care of something like hunger if it is worth doing. I do not share this view. Having been a child of the great depression, I remember and remind you of what Franklin Roosevelt once said, and this is a very good quote: "It is an unfortunate failing that a full pocketbook often groans more loudly than an empty stomach." We cannot afford malnourished citizens, because a strong state, and its economy, cannot stand on weakened shoulders. Investment by government against hunger is an investment in our vital resources -- the human infrastructure, which is a great word now used by the road committee more than by the human services community.

Finally, we in New Jersey have spent a lot of time and money on the issue of "thorough and efficient." But, unless a youngster is fed, you can forget education and the future's discussion of technology for New Jersey. Remember, children are people, and they certainly need all of you as their advocates. Thank you very much.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Mary. Are there any questions from the panel?

MS. SMITH: I just have a comment. The Child Watch study that was done was wonderful. I commend you for it.

MS. HAYNIE: Thank you.

MS. SMITH: It was really a fine document.

MS. HAYNIE: Yes. I think the Association of Children has some very good ideas and they have brought about some good things throughout the State. They will continue to do that because they are interested in our future, which is the children.

MS. ROSS: I have a question. I hope this isn't too technical a question, but I would like you, if you can, to define for all of us what exactly is meant by "failure to thrive." Once you have a child come to you who is in this situation, what are some of the avenues which can be taken?

MS. HAYNIE: Well, you have to realize I am not a physician. I am a lay person who functions in a hospital which is supersensitive to the poor and their needs. Failure to thrive is a condition in which a child is generally, at birth, very low in birth weight. Even with great attempts on the part of loving parents, and many times the children do have very loving parents, for some reason or another the child does not grow. I have seen children a month old who were so small. The reason they come to our hospital is that we have rocking chairs and R.N.s whose function is to give nothing but love and care to the children. They are not turning it over to someone else. It is a program of highly professional skills. The children may, through failure to thrive, need better nutrition. That may be one of the things, but there are other aspects of that particular disorder.

Of course, nutrition is something that would have happened perhaps later on, but the children seem to be very small and very young. We find, too, that the other end-- Perhaps you are thinking of a very small, sickly child, but the very obese child is not eating the proper foods and is suffering with possible heart damage and possibly damage to other organs of his or her body because he or she has been eating improperly and is just going up to a ton, rather than suffering from malnutrition. Tied in with all of this is an excellent program by our auxiliary for having people look good and feel good. We have clothing for the children, plus nutrition training, skin care, and all of the things that a young person needs to live a better quality of life.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much, Mary.

MS. HAYNIE: You're very welcome.

MR. GROVE: Would you please give a copy of your testimony to our reporters?

MS. HAYNIE: Yes, sure.

MR. GROVE: As a point of privilege, Assemblywoman Cooper would like to make an introduction.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Mayor James Usry was here this morning to welcome and greet those testifying on the Hunger Bowl Commission. The Mayor was called out of town this afternoon. However, at this time I would like to welcome Councilman Harold Mosee of the First District of Atlantic City. May I proudly say that Councilman Mosee was the first Councilman to pledge his support, not only to the Hunger Bowl, but to the work of this Commission. Councilman Mosee.

MR. GROVE: Would you please stand, sir? (Councilman Mosee stands to acknowledge introduction.)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Thank you. I am happy you found time to join us.

MR. GROVE: In order for the Commission to remain fresh in what it is doing, I am going to take a two- or three-minute recess just to give us a chance to get up and move around. We will be right back.

(RECESS)

AFTER RECESS

MR. GROVE: We are ready to reconvene. Because of the nature of these hearings and the time we are allowing for people to speak, there are going to be folks who are not going to be heard. If you want to have input into what we are doing, whether you are a recipient or a representative of a recipient, or whatever, please mark down this name and address, and send written material to us. We will be glad to put it into the process. The person you should write to is Terry Grove, that's me. Please send it to Box 214, Rocky Hill, New Jersey, 08553.

We are going to work to get as many of you on as we can, but if that does not happen, please make sure that you get in touch with us through this address: Terry Grove, Box 214, Rocky Hill, New Jersey, 08553.

Again, for those of you who have come late, the procedure we are using is up to 10 minutes to speak. Then you will have questions asked of you by the panel. If you are not able to do something this afternoon, we will be at the Westside Complex this evening in the Senior Citizens Room, between 6:30 and 8:30, and you are welcome to be there at that time.

MR. GROVE: The next person we would like to ask to come forward is Marie Guenther. Marie?

As each speaker comes forward, please say your name, spell your name for us, tell us the name of the organization you represent, or if you are speaking as an individual, and then speak on.

MARIE GUENTHER: My name is Marie Guenther -- G-U-E-N-T-H-E-R. Before I was on food stamps, I was not eating properly. I lost nine pounds. I went for two days without a meal. When I informed my sister of this -- she works at White Tower -- she started to buy me one meal per day. She kept this up because I wasn't eating. Even with the one meal a day, I lost nine pounds. Then I inquired about food stamps.

I am now on food stamps and I am eating properly.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions?

MS. SMITH: Yes. Do the food stamps you get for a month last the entire month?

MS. GUENTHER: No.

MS. SMITH: About what time of the month do your food stamps run out?

MS. GUENTHER: About two and a half weeks into the month.

MS. SMITH: What kind of an allotment do you get in food stamps, if you don't mind me asking?

MS. GUENTHER: I get \$79.00 a month.

MS. SMITH: Is that for just you alone?

MS. GUENTHER: Yes, just myself.

MS. SMITH: That \$79.00 is for an entire month?

MS. GUENTHER: Yes.

MS. SMITH: Have you been referred to any emergency food pantries or centers where you might be able to get food to help you at the end of the month?

MS. GUENTHER: No.

MS. SMITH: Do you live in Atlantic City?

MS. GUENTHER: Yes.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (negative response) Okay, thank you very much. Is James Holcomb here? (no response) Apparently James is not here. May we have Mr. Augustus Feather? It's good to see you, Gus.

AUGUSTUS FEATHER: Hello Terry. My name is Gus Feather -- F-E-A-T-H-E-R. In a weak moment, actually two weak moments, I agreed to chair the Atlantic County Mental Health Advisory Board, and then later on, the Atlantic County Human Services Advisory Council. I am also a Presbyterian minister, and I am active in the CROP program, which Terry directs in the State of New Jersey. So, we are old friends.

What I would like to say to start out my remarks are some words of appreciation, number one, for the leadership shown by the Legislature in appropriating moneys to replace the moneys that the Feds did not come up with, which I think is fine; second, for the very positive kind of leadership shown by our Governor in terms of not only appointing a Commission like this and the one on the homeless, but also in terms of-- It seems to me that about a year ago, word came down to the people who were operating the different agencies that they should assume eligibility for people. "You will assume eligibility for these services." I think that has changed in many ways; at least the attitudes of the people delivering the services have changed. I know that churches have been asked less frequently in that interim for emergency aid. So, I see this positive kind of leadership.

I also find that the State, in terms of the Governor and the Commissioner of Human Services, is quite open to feedback from the community and, in fact, the Human Services Councils at both the county and State levels are attempts to supply this kind of give and take feedback. This is very good, very helpful. In fact, in an age when all we hear about is giving services to only the most deserving, I find that with the leadership in the State of New Jersey there is a little bit of imagination and there are not only positive noises, but positive signs of interest in terms of human services. So, I appreciate that.

What I have been noticing in terms of the local community is that in recent years there has been more of a pulling together of the different groups -- the State, the counties, and the private agencies. The United Way is an umbrella for many of these. This is helpful to the community. When Steve Bruner testified, you could see the kinds of things he is attempting to coordinate from his office in the County in terms of a program for hungry and homeless people.

The Rescue Mission, in terms of people on the street, does a marvelous job. If you go over there during these cold months, you see a tremendous amount of people being helped. It seems to me, as Steve pointed out, that the relationship between the hungry and the homeless is a crucial one. The kind of thing which is ultimately going to be needed in Atlantic County is some kind of what you would call a generic shelter. That is the kind of thing that everyone says is nice, but which no one wants in their back yard. Even though there is a building in the County that could perhaps be used quite well -- a building I could throw a stone from my church to -- politically, the reality is that that could not come about. That building could not be a shelter for the homeless. I don't know what expense would be involved, but I think this would allow us to take the next step.

The Rescue Mission has a dream for perhaps providing something like this. They probably have the most concrete dream. Maybe you can pursue that with them and find out where they are in this when they testify. As I say, they are one of the major lead agencies in terms of having some dreams and, also, delivering services.

I am afraid, again, just having seen some materials about projected cutbacks in Federal dollars, that instead of moving ahead and then being able to dream and imagine funding new programs, maybe it is just going to be a struggle to keep what we have. A couple of things that I see as absolutely crucial-- You heard about the nutrition sites for 1,000 people. At those nutrition sites, you have to remember that that is not only food for the body, but from a mental health perspective, the kind of fellowship that goes on is absolutely crucial for many of these people. For the 300-plus people who receive Meals on Wheels, again, that is not only a decent meal for some of those folks

who perhaps are unable to do any cooking for themselves, or a very minimal amount of cooking, but sometimes that is the only contact they have -- that friendly contact for a few moments at the door with the person who brings the meal. These are people who live very private, quiet lives.

From both a mental health and a nutritional perspective, I see these services as crucial. I know the County was able to add a new truck recently for Meals on Wheels, but I know in Pleasantville, at one point, the limitation on the services was so bad, and the need so great, that one of my parishioners who was a shut-in-- We used to take people out once a month for lunch, whether they were in wheelchairs, used walkers, or were carried to the car. If you go out other than for a doctor's appointment, you are not eligible to get Meals on Wheels because the assumption is that you can attend a site. That is how tight funding is in terms of all of these programs, but I think they are absolutely crucial to the lives of those people and they need to be continued.

I have just one final comment. I heard you talking about the food stamps and the like. With the welfare grants that are made to people in Atlantic County, I don't see how there is any way they can live through the month. A year ago, I heard the Welfare Department speaking at one of the CEAS meetings Steve was talking about. They were speaking about rents and placing people and, if I remember correctly, the minimum rent was something like \$400 or \$425 a month. Grants are not much more than that for, say, a family of three or four persons, except for the food stamps. You are really talking about a system that is set up to help people, but like so many of our systems, you just give enough aid to make the system fail to do what you want it to do. The mood of the public seems to be that people are getting so much more than they deserve, when in point of fact, they are not quite getting enough to make it. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Gus. Are there any questions from the panel? (negative response) Thank you, Gus, for coming over to join us. Mr. James Holcomb? Jim, will you please give us your name, the spelling of your name, and let us know what agency you represent, or if you are just on your own?

JAMES HOLCOMB: Thank you. My name is James Holcomb -- H-O-L-C-O-M-B. I represent the Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County. I don't work for them, but they have helped me in the past, and they are still helping me.

I have been living here in Atlantic City for about two years now and I have seen a lot of hunger on the streets. I do a considerable amount of walking every day and I like to observe people. I'm talking about the hungry in particular. I believe something should be done about it. I'm glad that I came here today to hear people speaking up about this problem. They are sharing their feelings, and that is good. I see it every day, and I don't like it. As a child I suffered from malnutrition and I almost died from it. I come from a very poor family. I had no father. My mother had 10 children, so I know what it is to be hungry. I was hungry before the Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County came along and started to help me. They brought me food and I was glad to see that box of food.

In the past, I would go home, having not eaten all day, after walking the streets. Thank God I had a place to stay. I was just glad to have a can of baked beans. I never knew baked beans could taste so good. So, I knew what it was to be hungry previous to the last few months.

I don't have a whole lot to say about this. I could talk for a long time if I really wanted to get into it, but I believe that the less said the better. I'm glad that something is being done about it. I am not here to tell anyone what to do, but I suggest that-- In Wilmington, Delaware, where I come from, where I was born and raised, in the past they had open soup kitchens on the west side and on the east side of town. The word would get around. People would go there for lunch; they would go there for supper. I know that when you got hungry enough, you would walk up there and get a sandwich. Even when you are hungry, a sandwich will keep you alive, or a bowl of soup. I have been around. I have traveled a little bit on my own, and it is good to know where to go to get something to eat.

I have worked in a couple of Rescue Missions. I have seen a lot of hungry people come in. I used to dip out soup for the hungry.

I was like that before. I used to be on the road. Right now, I think the main issue is the hungry here in Atlantic City. We should get some people together who have money they don't need. You know, I see people in restaurants who leave food every day. I never leave food on my plate because that is the way I was raised. I was hungry; I know what hunger is. It doesn't make me sick, but it makes me think about the children. I have been overseas; I served in Vietnam. I was in the Marine Corps. I have seen hungry people; I have seen thousands of hungry and starving children. I believe the most important concern should be the children of Atlantic County, Atlantic City, and Cape May County. They should be taken care of first. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Mr. Holcomb. Are there any questions?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Mr. Holcomb, are you presently employed?

MR. HOLCOMB: No, I live on disability payments.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Do you receive food stamps or any other subsidy?

MR. HOLCOMB: No, I don't. I think my income is just a little above, not that much, but it is a little bit above where you are eligible to receive that kind of assistance.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Are you able to manage on your disability benefits?

MR. HOLCOMB: Well, with the help of my mother, yes. If it were not for my mother's help, I wouldn't be here in Atlantic City.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: May I ask how you tied up with the Jewish Family Service?

MR. HOLCOMB: That was due to a past mental disorder from the service and to a couple of bad habits I picked up. However, I have overcome those habits now and I am not worried about them anymore. But, I have been there; I know what it is to be hungry.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Have you ever applied for an increase in your benefits, or do you feel that perhaps a change in the qualifications for your benefits would maybe ease your hunger situation any?

MR. HOLCOMB: Of the \$400 I receive, I use half to pay my rent. I definitely believe that I should receive at least \$100 worth of food stamps a month. That would help me; it would make me feel a lot better.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Mr. Holcomb.

MS. JOHNSON: How did you hear about the hearings today?

MR. HOLCOMB: I feel they are good because people are getting up off their asses and finally doing something about it.

MR. GROVE: James, how did you hear about the hearings?

MR. HOLCOMB: Oh, I'm sorry. My social worker from the Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County came to the house and asked me if I wanted to come, and I said "Yes."

MS. SMITH: If you didn't have help from the food box from the Jewish Family Service and some help which, as you said, you receive from your mother, would you be able to eat everyday of the month?

MR. HOLCOMB: As I said, some days I was lucky if I had a can of soup. I lived on soup everyday for a month, just soup and water. I got tired of it, and I was very glad to get that box. My mother is a poor woman; she works, so if it were not for the Jewish Family Service of Atlantic County, I would have been a hell of a lot hungrier and I would have lost a lot more weight.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much, James.

MR. HOLCOMB: Thank you very much, too.

MR. GROVE: You're welcome. Our next speaker will be Mr. William Southrey. William, before you begin, again for those people who are here, I just want to keep reminding you that we are asking people to come to the microphone who called us ahead of time or made appointments during the first part of the hour. Then we are asking for those who have just come to us during the last part of the hour. If you have been wondering why you are still sitting here, it is because we are still working with the agenda of people who called ahead of time. We will continue to work on that split, if that is okay. William?

WILLIAM SOUTHREY: My name is William Southrey -- S-O-U-T-H-R-E-Y. I am the Chaplain at the Atlantic City Rescue Mission.

What I would like to share with you this afternoon are some figures that will show you the magnitude of the problem in this area, as well as show you our vision in trying to administer to the needs of these people who are homeless and hungry.

The organization I represent has been in the area now for 20 years. The primary goal of this ministry is to reach out to the people who have needs -- food, shelter, clothing, family service. We also have a rehab program; it is a 90-day program. We try to work with these men. At one time, we also had a women's program called the Haven of Hope, where we worked with women to try to correct some of the problems in their lives, to enable them to function and not be homeless and without food.

Last year, we served 106,756 meals. We administered to the needs of 600 families, providing, depending on their situations, three to five days' worth of food, three meals a day. That brought us up to around 125,000 meals we served last year.

We housed approximately-- I have a figure of 45,680 nights' lodgings. Okay? That represents approximately 4,000 separate individuals over the course of the year. Last month alone, we had 394 separate individuals whom we provided food and shelter for.

I think from these figures alone you can see the tremendous need in this area. That is just what we are talking about, Atlantic City and the surrounding areas in Atlantic County. We are also beginning to receive referrals from other counties which have nothing. Cumberland County, Ocean County, and Cape May County are referring their indigent, their transient, and their emergency situations into this area, into our facility, because I think we are one of three shelter facilities. The Salvation Army has a women's shelter; we have a men's shelter; and, the Institute for Human Development has just recently opened a shelter with 15 beds.

Right now, we are averaging 90 men a night in a facility that was originally designed to house 30 men. It is ever increasing. It is going to continue to increase just by virtue of the area and the natural draw of Atlantic City. We are definitely drawing people from other major cities -- New York, Newark, Philadelphia, and Camden.

People are coming in. Their indigent, their homeless are coming to this area also. So, it is an ever-growing problem.

We are involved with most of the County agencies. We have a good networking situation with them. We are involved with CEAS, which you heard Steve Bruner talk about. That has been a tremendous program. It has enabled us to do a lot of things, things which before put us into the red as we tried to provide these services, such as housing for women and women with children, or families with no place to go. That is being done even to this day in hotels and motels in the area, at approximately \$40.00 a night.

You will have to look at the full scope of what you are talking about. When you talk about the homeless and about people who are hungry, I am of the same mind as Gus Feather and Steve Bruner that they are inseparable. If you are homeless, you are going to be hungry. You are going to have a rough time getting a meal; you are going to be trying to survive. Beyond that, you are going to see that there are many, many problems with each one of these individuals. More often than not, there is some life-dominating problem that has caused them to be in the situation they are in. Those problems need to be approached; they need to be dealt with, or these people are just going to have continuous circles in their lives. They are just going to continue to be homeless and hungry. You have to break that habitual pattern. That is why we have the new Life in Christ Program and the Haven of Hope Program, so we can begin to work with these people.

The other things we provide on an emergency basis for the men and women who come to our facility are medical treatment, through the volunteer services of a doctor, and rental assistance, which we do with CEAS funds. If we don't have CEAS funds, we do it with our own funds. If that wasn't done, you would have more homeless people. That is becoming an ever-increasing problem. People who do not pay rent, or people who are unable to pay rent, get put out; they are displaced. In this County there are very few places to put anyone, especially if he or she is a bad pay. There is no way you are going to get that type of a person in. You are going to have a rough time.

We do boarding home placement; we do job search and placement for people; we have a drug and alcohol rehab program; we provide clothing and furniture on an emergency basis; we provide travelers' assistance, either with our own funds, or through the Salvation Army; we provide in-house food of three meals a day; and, we have a food pantry which is a family service in emergency situations for people who have needs. Last month, we serviced 48 families. We also have a defective payee program. We advocate for a person; we will work with him. This is another problem area. People have problems managing their money. So, one of us will take the time to work with these people in order to see that their money is spent correctly. We also provide marital and family counseling.

That is the Rescue Mission in a nutshell. That is what we have been doing for 20 years. I hope the things you hear today in testimony really produce results. Our vision is to build a new facility in this area down on Arkansas Avenue. It is a 30,000-square foot facility that will enable us to house approximately 300 people -- men, women, and families. We are in need of \$3 million to do this, but that is our vision and our goal. We feel that if that were to happen, networking with the agencies which are already in existence, we would be able to meet the need adequately in Atlantic County. However, if the problem increases in other counties where things are not happening, they are going to flood this area. So, I hope there is some vision in the State's mind to go beyond talking and begin to acknowledge the problem.

I don't know how much impact you will have on this, but higher up-- It seems that a lot of times -- and I can just tell you this from the CEAS network, and it has been a frustration for us who are involved, as well as Steve and Luann -- a program will run for a while, the funding sources stop, and you can't provide, or you provide the best you can, which is not adequate at all. I just hope you will have some input there and can stress that there is a tremendous need, not just in Atlantic County, but throughout the State.

I invite all of you to come down to the Rescue Mission so you can see what it is all about. You can be on the ground level and just

see how great the need is. Invite the boys from the top; tell them to come, too.

MR. GROVE: What is your address, please?

MR. SOUTHREY: The address is 2009 Bacharach Boulevard. We will provide transportation. Okay? (laughter)

MR. GROVE: In fact, you have a van outside waiting for us, right?

MR. SOUTHREY: Yes.

MR. GROVE: Bill, if you had any sense that you could get what you wanted here in the Atlantic County area and the other counties around you were also to receive it, would there still be such a network coming out of New York and Philadelphia? If you were able to provide all your resources here, would you still be trying to resource people from Pennsylvania and New York? Are we talking about people traveling many miles to get to wherever they can obtain the services they need, and is the pipeline network among people who receive every bit as good as the pipeline network among us who give?

MR. SOUTHREY: Yes.

MR. GROVE: So, if we were to really turn it around in New Jersey and our sister states did not do it, we would be just as likely to have them all sitting here.

MR. SOUTHREY: That is what you would have. You know, I am convinced that it would become a draw, and that we would become a dumping ground for the other states. I think you need to encourage them as much as this State to develop something.

MR. GROVE: Is the network a pretty strong network among people who are recipients? Do you find that the word gets out?

MR. SOUTHREY: I would say a percentage of the population -- probably 30%, or maybe 40%, and this is just off the top of my head, a guesstimate -- are people who are wanderers, who are indigent, and who are transient. They network. You know, I can call the Lakeland, Florida, Rescue Mission and I can compare lists. Sometimes during the course of a year I will have some of the names up here. If I call Washington, D.C., to the Union Gospel Mission, it's the same thing, or Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions from the panel?
Margaret?

MS. HEART: What are the major life problems you see that you feel are contributing to the problem of the hungry and homeless?

MR. SOUTHREY: Well, I'll tell you, I just comprised a list of what I see the populations are, and perhaps others could add to it. I see a definite problem with people who are on fixed incomes, senior citizens, who just do not get enough, whether they are getting Social Security or Social Security Disability. They do not have enough to survive, especially in this area. On \$400 or \$500 a month, it's tough to find rentals here. It's tough to find apartments. In Atlantic City, a room in one of the sleaziest places you could find is \$60 a week, 60 bucks a week. There are no cooking facilities. That is with no bathroom; you have to use a community bath and toilet facility. So, it's really hard in this area because the cost of living is so high. You have problems with senior citizens when Social Security messes up their checks. The next thing you know, you have a 60- to 90-day wait before they get things squared away. On two occasions, I have had men die in my facility waiting for their Social Security checks.

The problems are comprised of other populations, such as mental health clients. There are the compulsive gamblers in this area and, also, just the not-so-good gamblers who lose everything. There are the chronic alcoholics. There are those who are throwaway children who have come of age now. They have just been wandering the streets for three or four years. They are now 19 or 20 years old and they wander into the facility. They have no families to speak of, or no identification with their families. There are the wanderers, the drifters, the chronic unemployables. There are also the unemployed, those who are looking for employment. In this area, you know, if you see the commercials out of State or out of town, Atlantic City looks as if it is paved with gold and you can just come in and hook up with a job like that. You will get it squared away; your life is going to be wonderful; and, you are going to make at least \$20,000 a year. That is just not the way it is.

In Cleveland and Detroit, when they had all those shutdowns, I had a number of men who just left their families and said, "I am going to go to Atlantic City and get a job, and then I will relocate my family," because they were on assistance programs there and it just wasn't enough for them to survive.

So, those are some of the populations right there. Also, I forgot the people in the criminal justice system, you know, those who have just been let out of prison, those who have either served their time or have been paroled. Now they are out there with a poor track record, it is hard for them to find employment, and they need a place to go.

MR. GROVE: Thank you.

MS. JOHNSON: Do you find that periodically you are serving and seeing the same people over a six-month period?

MR. SOUTHREY: There are repeaters, yes, especially the local people. The local people are the repeaters. Then there is a small percentage who repeat-- I would say a good turnover would probably be about six or eight months, and you will see them again. Definitely, there is repetition. I could produce those figures for you if you need them so you could get an idea. We also have it through the CEAS network. We have duplicated and unduplicated services for a client. CEAS has a computer printout you could get on that.

MR. GROVE: Leslie?

MS. SMITH: Yes, I have a comment and then two real short questions. I am glad you were able to identify that there are people coming to the shelter other than the traditional stereotype like the derelict, the mental health person, or the alcoholic. There are other people who are just in bad straits, who can't find their way through the system, or whatever.

I would like to know, what is the level of shelter problems for families? I know that shelters are being erected for single people, but is there a real problem with sheltering homeless families?

MR. SOUTHREY: In this County there is definitely a problem, because there are no shelters for families that I know of. If there are, will someone please tell me so I can refer people to them?

MS. SMITH: You said you use your funds, and you use CEAS, and you go through the Salvation Army. How are you funded?

MR. SOUTHREY: We are funded by private individuals and churches. This year we became a United Way grant recipient. We are not an agency yet.

MS. SMITH: So, that is not a large part of your budget?

MR. SOUTHREY: No, it is a small part of our budget. Our funding is mostly from private individuals and churches. We have somewhere around 7,000 people who provide in some way, shape, or form, either time, money, or clothing.

MS. SMITH: So this is basically a private nonprofit organization that is doing a lot of the work?

MR. SOUTHREY: Yes.

MS. SMITH: Okay, thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much for being with us, Bill.

MR. SOUTHREY: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: I would like Cynthia Wilks to come up now, and, Captain Lionel Chapman, you are on deck next.

CYNTHIA WILKS: I am Cynthia Wilks -- W-I-L-K-S; I am a Registered Dietitian. I am representing Project Head Start, located in Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester Counties. I am also representing the Southern New Jersey Nutrition Council as a dietitian.

Mary Haynie didn't know I was coming today, and I didn't know she was coming, but my testimony will be in support of hers. It will be very similar, and I think that is a compliment that we are really thinking along the same lines, Mary being an advocate for children.

"You are what you eat" is a widely-used expression and the scientific validity and public health implication of that are increasingly recognized by world nutritionists and medical doctors.

Children who do not get enough to eat and who are malnourished tend to be smaller and sick more often. They are also less able to learn. To the extent that malnutrition occurs in the United States, children will not be able to achieve their full potential and realize a healthy and satisfying adult life. I think we should define malnutrition -- we have talked about it today -- and I would like to do that.

Malnutrition is a state in which a prolonged lack of one or more nutrients retards physical development or causes specific clinical conditions to appear. Marasmus and Kwashiorkor are two diseases that we have been seeing on television in Ethiopia lately, but they are very rare here. But, I have to tell you that chronic undernutrition and iron deficiency are common. For instance, almost 20% of the children under six consumed less than the recommended daily intake of calories. For low-income families, this figure jumps to 30%. Children from poor black families and Hispanic-American children are even more likely to have insufficient calorie intakes.

An even more accurate criterion of whether a child is receiving sufficient nutrients is the child's growth record. Nationwide surveys have found a larger than expected percentage of children with very low height and weight for age, especially children from low socioeconomic classes. In addition, more than one-half of the children in the United States aged one to five years may have inadequate iron intakes. In other words, they may be anemic -- over half. Malnutrition then further impairs the body's ability to fight disease.

Another factor affecting childhood learning and behavior characteristics is prenatal nutrition and nutrition during the first six months of life. The human brain approaches its adult size, weight, and cell number by age two. From about the second trimester of pregnancy to about six months of age, there is a "brain growth spurt" when the brain cells are multiplying and growing. To a lesser extent, this period of rapid brain growth continues until 18 to 24 months of age. The fetal brain is most likely to be affected in women whose body stores of nutrients are reduced due to a lifetime of undernutrition and an inadequate diet during pregnancy. The region of the brain that needs nutrients most is that which is growing at that particular time during the pregnancy. It is that region which is most affected when nutrients are missing. Since each region is involved in a certain brain and behavioral function, a deficit in one region caused by malnutrition will produce specific behavioral abnormalities that we can actually document.

Investigators have suggested that any malnutrition severe enough to require hospitalization due to growth failure -- failure to thrive as was mentioned -- before two years of age will have irreversible adverse results. Malnutrition has a potent effect on all aspects of intelligence. There is a permanent effect on motivation, attention span, and arousal. Children who are severely malnourished early in life seem to have very short attention spans and consistently perform poorly on ability tests. Malnourished babies tend to develop into children with motor insufficiencies owing to a lack of fine motor control. In addition, there is some retardation in sensory integration, which is just the matter of connecting the visual word with the sound of the word. They know what it is saying, but they don't know what it is. To sum it up, malnutrition in infancy followed by childhood undernutrition produces irreversible effects which, in turn, impairs a child's ability to learn.

Iron deficiency is the most prevalent nutritional problem in the United States. Attentiveness and persistence are decreased in anemic children, while irritability is increased. If a child withdraws from his environment as a result of iron deficiency, he fails to learn. By missing one step in the learning process, he is less equipped to go on to the next.

Hunger and malnutrition are not identical; we cannot say that. Hunger can be relieved by food, but recovering from malnutrition requires extended rehabilitation. Hunger is nearly impossible to quantify. We have heard people try to do that this afternoon. It is hard for us to put a number on it. Nevertheless, the consensus of the studies is that hunger affects behavior. It increases a child's nervousness, irritability, and disinterest in a learning situation. It potentially disrupts the learning process. A hungry child's disinterest and inability to concentrate tend to isolate him and when others respond negatively to his behavior, his isolation is heightened, creating that vicious circle that we heard some of the other people testify to this afternoon.

Malnourished children are most frequently from families that are poor, have many children closely spaced in age, and do not fully

participate in public health programs. They are more likely to come from one-parent households. Parents of malnourished children generally have low-status, unskilled types of jobs, reflecting their lack of education. In short, malnutrition is usually found where there is poverty.

Although all the research has not yet been completed on malnutrition, hunger, and learning, corrective policies must be started now. These must include ensuring preventive health care beginning with the pregnant mother and extending through childhood, assuring nutritionally adequate food supplies over the same period.

It must finally be recognized that nutrition, health, and family planning programs must be closely interrelated in order to mobilize family, community, and our national policy makers.

I would just like to make one more brief comment. This is part of a presentation which was given to the Governor for his Governor's Council on the Prevention of Mental Retardation. We took our place here feeling that it was important to relate it again to this Commission.

MR. GROVE: Thank you, Cynthia. Are there any questions?

MS. ROSS: I'll just go right ahead. First of all, thank you for the crash course in nutrition. It is very helpful. I have two quick questions. One, I gather that some of the statistics you gave in the beginning about reduced calorie intakes and iron deficiency are nationwide.

MS. WILKS: Yes.

MS. ROSS: I'm wondering if you have any sense, from working with the Head Start Program-- I know that calories are hard to assess, but do you have any information on the iron status of the children attending your program?

MS. WILKS: I can gather that for you, but it varies from year to year and from location to location for some reason. It has been as high as 90% within our Program, and it has been around 50%. It has never been lower than 50% within our Project Head Start population with scope in the last 15 years.

MS. ROSS: Thank you. The second question is, I'm wondering if your Head Start Program serves breakfast. Whether or not it does, can you tell us how many children come to school every morning without having had breakfast at home?

MS. WILKS: I wish we knew. I don't know whether we will ever be able to find that out. Our Head Start Program does provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack. It is a full-day program or a half-day program. In either case they are provided breakfast and lunch. In answer to your question, I really wish we knew. For some of the children who come to our center, this is the first time they have experienced breakfast in their lives. It might be the last.

MS. SMITH: I have a question. We run an emergency food center up in the affluent community of Bergen County. You and I have met before. We see a lot of overweight poor children. As you mentioned before, when we see the bloated bellies of Ethiopia, that is a real classic example of malnutrition. How does the overweight listless child -- that syndrome you see in low-income families -- relate to his or her lack of nutritional intake?

MS. WILKS: Okay. It is a combination of things. There are two kinds of malnutrition, one is undernutrition and one is overnutrition. You are talking about the child who is suffering from overnutrition. In that situation, the family has probably not been choosing foods wisely. They have been using more economical foods which are higher in calories, but which have less nutrient density. As a result, a child may have very low blood values or have other nutrient analysis values which are very low, but be obese. That is still a form of malnutrition. The WIC Program has just done a survey and they noted that obesity is the second most prevalent health problem among preschool children.

MS. SMITH: Okay, thank you.

MS. ROSS: Is that the WIC Program on a national basis?

MS. WILKS: No, in New Jersey. Underweight children were number one.

MR. GROVE: Are there any other questions? (negative response) Cynthia, would you please give us your written testimony?

MS. WILKS: Okay.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. I am going to give personal privilege again to Assemblywoman Dolores Cooper.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: At this time I would like to welcome to this Commission hearing, Councilman-at-Large James Wheelan of Atlantic City. Jim, I am glad you are here with us.

COUNCILMAN WHEELAN: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Jim, it is good to have you here. I am going to invite Captain Lionel Chapman to come up. Following his presentation, there will be a break. The first person after the break will be Mr. James Gormley, and then Louise Basile, if Louise is here. If there is anyone here who wishes to speak during the last hour we are together, please make sure that you are in touch with John Barton. John, please raise your hand. John is our gatekeeper. We will take the testimony of Captain Chapman, take a short break as we did before to clear the cobwebs, and then we will come back. James Gormley will be the first speaker after our break.

CAPTAIN LIONEL CHAPMAN: I am Captain Lionel Chapman -- C-H-A-P-M-A-N; I am the commanding officer of the Salvation Army of Atlantic City. I also have with me Miss Barbara Green, who is our Social Services Coordinator. You might want to speak to her about the transient population we find in Atlantic City.

In 1984, we observed that the majority of our clients who requested food assistance were new applicants to the Food Stamp Program. The processing for this Program takes from five to ten days. Second were those clients who had exhausted their food stamps prior to the next month's allotment. Third, there were clients who experienced problems with food stamps not arriving from Trenton due to computer breakdowns, errors, or misprogramming. The remaining clients were those who were unemployed, underemployed, or victims of natural disasters.

We supply food for families. We have a scale by which we try to give them enough food to last them for at least three or four days. For a family of one, we give 12 meals. For two, we give 18 meals, and on up to a family of eight. We give them enough food for 72 meals. For each additional family member, we add nine meals. We find that

most of the clients who come to us through referral from the public and private sectors indicate their need for food for the reasons I stated earlier.

At one point, we issued vouchers for food, whereby the client could go to a local supermarket and get the food he needed. Then we discovered that for 12 cents a pound, we could purchase food from the community food bank in Newark, New Jersey. So, we go up there at least once a month and for 12 cents a pound we bring back good, nutritious food. We assist our clients in the preparation of the food and in the planning of menus to use the food they have. Last year, we provided 4,489 meals. In the month of January, 1985, we had already given 1,414 meals, so you can see that the increase is becoming phenomenal.

If you will permit me, as an aside, I have a personal interest in hunger because I have seen it both as a hungry person and, also, as a representative of an agency which provides food to hungry people. Twenty-seven years ago, as a 30-year old wino, one of my drinking buddies invited me to go to the Salvation Army for a bowl of soup. That meal literally was the impetus to change my life because I became a part of that rehabilitation program. My life has been completely turned around. I have a beautiful family; I have a life of meaning, a life of purpose. So, meals are very important to a hungry person. I don't think many of us realize how important a meal can be. I know that this Commission is interested in feeding hungry people in our area. We have every indication that you will do something to help us to alleviate hunger in Atlantic City and in Atlantic County.

The figures I gave you previously did not include the number of people who come into our shelter program. When we are operating near capacity, we distribute almost 360 meals per month to women who come into our shelter. If you have any questions, I will be glad to try to answer them for you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions? (negative response)
Thank you very much, Captain Chapman. We were happy to have you here. We have another Councilman to be introduced.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Thank you. Once again, it is my personal privilege to welcome the Councilman for the Fourth Ward of

Atlantic City, Councilman John Wittington. John, it is very nice to have you with us.

COUNCILMAN WITTINGTON: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Thank you for being here, John. These are the names I have for the next hour. If your name is not listed, please get in touch with us so we can make sure you are heard. I have the names of James Gormley, Regina Carrington, Louise Basile, and Councilman Mosee. We will take a three-minute break and then we will be back.

(RECESS)

AFTER RECESS

MR. GROVE: We are now going to reconvene the hearing. May we please have Mr. James Gormley?

I would like to remind everyone of what we are doing. We are asking you to give us your name as you come up to testify, to spell your name, and to tell us the name of the organization you represent, if you are representing an organization. You have 10 minutes each to share your thoughts with us about what we ought to do.

Is Louise Basile here? (negative response) Then Regina, you are next on deck. Welcome, James.

JAMES GORMLEY: My name is James Gormley -- G-O-R-M-L-E-Y. I am a relative of New Jersey State Senator Bill Gormley; I am also related to the Gormley funeral family. John is my uncle, and Helen is my aunt.

I receive food stamps. Regarding the hunger situation, I am going through the same thing. I receive about \$53.00 a month for food stamps. I used to get \$10.00 a month, but I told my caseworker that that wasn't enough to last me. So, they raised the amount of food stamps they give me to \$53.00 a month -- I think it is \$53.00.

I am a former resident of the Rescue Mission. They treat people very good there. What I am concerned about is the apartment at Ocean Manor. My wife is over there (witness indicates where his wife is sitting). I'm not sure, but I think she is related to Dolores Cooper somehow. She and I are going into an apartment as soon as we

can get the money for the rent. It is \$130.00 for two months for a one-room apartment at Ocean Manor. We would like to get the money as soon as possible because we're tired of staying in the bus terminal at night and freezing to death on the streets.

Father Haley, who happens to be my official guardian -- my legal guardian -- has promised to put up part of the rent money if we get the apartment. So far, we are living on the streets. For food, in the morning we go to the Patsy Riley Center on Arlington Avenue, right near the bus terminal, and then at night we get sandwiches for supper with my food stamps. But, we just can't continue to live on the streets. I want a home to settle down in. I promised my mother, who died November 22, 1976 at 10:15 p.m., that I would make Atlantic City my hometown. I am originally from Philadelphia, but I wouldn't trade this City for all the money in the world. I have been here for eight years, going on nine, and the person who has helped me the most is Father James J. Haley, of the Holy Spirit Church.

When I played the machines up at Resorts one Wednesday -- I played from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon -- I hit for \$575.00. When I hit the jackpot, Father Haley was in on it. When I hit the jackpot, they put on all the lights. They ran around shutting the doors -- locking the doors. They put the burglar alarm on. Then they rolled out the red carpet.

But, that is in the past. What I want is a home so I can settle down to live normally. I don't want to sleep under the boardwalk in the wintertime. You know, you people don't understand. As for me going to the Rescue Mission, no way. My wife and I will not be apart. If I go someplace and we have to part forever, it's straight into the ocean. I am not suicidal; I do not intend to kill myself, but I want to live normally in an apartment at Ocean Manor. I have been to the Welfare Department here in City Hall. I think it is on the third floor. They turned me down flat. I went up to Mayor Usry's office. He helped me the first time, but I understand that he can't do anything for me. Even if it is enough money for a room for the night-- We spent our last check in a motel. The first one was the Bryn Mawr Motel; the second one was the Princess. They owe us \$274.00 back rent

for four days that we didn't spend there. The last motel was the best. It is right across the street from my aunt's funeral home.

I just can't stand it anymore, living on the street, sleeping under the boardwalk, being called a beach bum, no way. I'm out there with the beach patrol all summer long. This will be my third year. I walk the beaches from twelve midnight until six a.m., from Albany Avenue clear up to Gardner's Basin and back. My job is to keep the beaches clean. I can't stand being under the boardwalk and being called a beach bum. I have to get a place immediately.

MR. GROVE: Thank you for coming, James. Are there any questions? (negative response) Jim, thank you for giving us this information. We will take it as part of our study to the Commission. I don't know that we are in a position to give you any help immediately. That is not our function at this point, but, hopefully, what we do will give you some help eventually.

MR. GORMLEY: May I say a little bit more? We have an apartment waiting for us at Ocean Manor. All we need to move in is the rent. My caseworker, Mr. Kenneth Miles, is a City housing inspector for the City Housing Authority. He was the one who recommended me to Ocean Manor. Also, Mr. Kenny Wright, who is in Relocation downstairs, helped me for a month and a half at the Hotel Bryn Mawr. That didn't work at all. When I went back to him, he flatly refused to help me. He said, "Go sleep under the boardwalk." How would he like to be under the boardwalk all winter long with the tide coming in and the snow coming down?

Then I went to -- who's the other one? There was another one, but I forget.

MR. GROVE: Jim, the thing is that this Commission, while we understand what you are struggling with, is not in a position to do anything. Some people have heard what you have said; they will do some talking and get back to you in some way. However, I can't promise anything because we are not in a position to do anything.

MR. GORMLEY: You are a Commission on Hunger, right?

MR. GROVE: We are a Commission to take testimony, and that is what you have given us. But, we are not in a position to offer you

anything, other than to say that we are going to work on what we have heard from you and others today. As a Commission, we are not, in any way, able to--

MR. GORMLEY: (interrupting) Who do I have to see, the Commissioner of Housing? I don't know where his office is.

MR. GROVE: I don't know who you would have to see here. We can try to find out for you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: I happen to know Mr. Gormley, and I have tried to help him. However, there seems to be some obstacle somewhere in the whole municipal welfare network. Councilman Mosee, are you aware of Mr. Gormley's plight?

COUNCILMAN MOSEE: As of now, yes. In fact, I just instructed the secretary to make sure that he has a place to stay before 4:30 this afternoon; that is about 10 minutes from now.

MS. SMITH: Bravo.

MR. GORMLEY: On one condition, that Edna can go with me.

COUNCILMAN MOSEE: I just don't want you laying under the boardwalk.

MR. GORMLEY: Okay, but can Edna come with me?

MS. SMITH: He wants to know if his wife can go with him.

MR. GROVE: He would like to have his wife with him.

COUNCILMAN MOSEE: Okay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Councilman, thank you very much for your cooperation. I know there is a breakdown in communication somewhere in this whole network. I am very happy you are here today to be made aware. Since I am a State legislator, technically I am not supposed to become involved in municipal issues, though I do, as you know.

Mr. Gormley, I'm sure Councilman Mosee is deeply concerned and will help you and your wife.

MR. GROVE: Mr. Gormley, we thank you for coming. It looks as if you have some help for tonight.

MR. GORMLEY: I don't have any money to pay the rent until my check comes.

MR. GROVE: You will have to talk that over with some other folks.

MR. GORMLEY: Okay, thank you.

EDNA GORMLEY: I would like to say something just for a minute.

MR. GROVE: Sure.

MRS. GORMLEY: We have been all over, and the answer we get is, "Go under the boardwalk." Why don't they go under the boardwalk and try it out? Right?

MR. GROVE: I'm sorry that is happening.

MRS. GORMLEY: It's not fair. I am due to go into the hospital for an operation on my stomach. I'm not fit because I have been sitting out there freezing to death. I didn't ask for this. We pay our rent, and all we are asking for is temporary help until we get our Social Security checks.

I was born and raised here. I raised all my children and sent them to Catholic school by myself. This isn't asking much. Everyone else can go and get all the help they want. I was told the other day to take my children under the boardwalk, but they are married now. The next one who tells me that, I am going to slap him right in the face. I'm not kidding. Today we took a lot of lip. I worked here; I am a nurse, but I took sick and I couldn't get back to work. He has his faults, but yet he would help you. I'm sick and tired of it, really.

MS. HEART: Can you tell us how long it has been since you had a place to live?

MRS. GORMLEY: It was quite a while, until we received our Social Security checks. You see, I just started to receive them.

MS. HEART: Has it been months, weeks, or--

MRS. GORMLEY: (interrupting) Do you mean my Social Security checks?

MS. HEART: No, has it been months or weeks that you have been without a place to live?

MRS. GORMLEY: Weeks, and if I don't get into the hospital soon, Dr. Walsh, who is my doctor, told me that I won't be here for the summer. And, I'm going to go out there and walk around in the pouring rain?

MR. GROVE: Hopefully Councilman Mosee has done something that will be a help to you and your husband.

MRS. GORMLEY: Then why do we have to take -- I'll put it in plain words -- lip from the people up in his office?

MR. GROVE: I don't understand that; I can't answer that.

MRS. GORMLEY: If they worked out in California, do you know what would happen to them? They would be thrown out of the office. It's not fair. I didn't ask to get in this position.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much.

MRS. GORMLEY: All right, thank you.

MR. GROVE: Regina Carrington.

REGINA CARRINGTON: Ladies and gentlemen: My name is Regina Carrington -- C-A-R-R-I-N-G-T-O-N. I am a Nutrition Coordinator for SCOPE, Inc., which stands for Southwest Citizens Organization for Poverty Elimination. I am pleased to see that there are so many people here who are concerned about the welfare of the underprivileged citizens in our area.

SCOPE has many nutrition programs for the poor and hungry. We have USDA commodities, and we coordinate their distribution to Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester Counties. We have the East Coast Migrant Head Start Program, in which Hispanic migrant workers who come down seasonally to work in the fields-- Before, when they did not have child care services while they were out in the hot fields, the children had to sit in the cars all day, which was very bad for them. Now we have a Head Start Program which caters to migrant workers. We have an emergency food bank, and we also provide nutrition workshops.

I am here to elaborate on the emergency food bank. It has been in existence -- not SCOPE itself, but the food bank -- since October, 1981. As I said, it services Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester Counties with three-day nutritionally balanced food packages, depending on the number of people in the family. We find that the hungry in our area are the low-income families, of course. They are recipients of welfare, food stamps, and SSI. The moderate-income families are those which make just enough money to keep them from qualifying for these assistance programs. They may be only two or three dollars over the guidelines. When senior citizens come to me for emergency food, I ask them for verification of income, and they

verify that they receive between \$200.00 and \$300.00 a month. I look at that and think, "How can they survive on that?" But, what can we do about it?

Also, there are the unemployed, those of us who were recently laid off. We have people who were laid off and, between the time when they last worked and the time that they receive their first unemployment check, they have nothing to live on. There are no agencies which can help them. In fact, there may be some agencies that can help them, but it is hard because a lot of times they don't know about them because they have been in the work force for so long, and they do not know how to go about it. A lot of times they are too proud because they are used to supporting themselves, and they don't want to ask for help.

The causes of hunger, from SCOPE's perspective, are unemployment and the declining economy. There are many factories which have been in existence -- especially in Cumberland County -- for quite awhile, such as Owens-Illinois, which have laid off hundreds of people. These people are now on welfare, in the unemployment line, and in the Food Stamp Program. It doesn't seem as though anything is replacing the businesses which have gone out of business. We also have businesses moving out of the area because of the economy. Low-income people are experiencing hard times because of new Federal budget cuts. Food stamp programs have been cut.

We also have a Child Care Food Program. It is a Federal program, and we can reimburse family day-care providers, or, in layman's terms, baby-sitters, who feed the children they care for. The guidelines for that-- The qualifications have gone up. A lot of people are finding that they make a little bit too much money to qualify for feeding their own children, but they can feed the day-care children who come to them. How are you going to feed the day-care children who come to you, if you cannot be reimbursed for feeding your own children? Okay? However, the program is an excellent program. If you do qualify, you can be reimbursed for feeding your own children if they eat with the day-care children.

The high cost of energy bills and the purchasing of fuel are the reasons people cannot buy food. It is the old rule. You pay the rent first, and you buy food with whatever is left. There is also a great lack of awareness. A lot of people are not good with budgeting. When they receive their food stamps at the beginning of the month, they go out and buy a lot of things because they feel as though they are ahead at that time. A lot of times the food stamps don't last. This is not the people's fault because they have nothing to do with the amount they receive. Also, we need to supply some type of education, or some means, whereby people can be educated as far as budgeting, consumerism, and counseling are concerned. As I said earlier, a lot of people don't know where to go or who can help them with food assistance, emergency shelter, and things like that.

There is also a lack of low-income housing. The waiting list for low-income housing can run into years. People have to wait and they have to pay high prices for housing while they are waiting. Then there is no money left for food; there is no money left for medical expenses. I really, really sympathize with those of us who live on a moderate incomes who can barely live from paycheck to paycheck, much less pay for food, high energy bills, and high rent costs.

I sincerely hope that this well-intended forum, which I think is very valuable, will result in some type of action which will help the needy in our communities. Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions anyone would like to ask?

MS. ROSS: You use the term "moderate income." For the Commission's benefit, can you give us a dollar figure on who those folks are who would be maybe a few dollars over the limit for food stamps and other assistance? What is that income?

MS. CARRINGTON: Okay. I can use the USDA commodities because I remember that offhand. For a person to be eligible to receive a five-pound block of cheese or five pounds of butter, a household of two may make \$12,000. For two people that is not a lot of money, but I wouldn't say it is poverty. If they have all these expenses, high rent, high heating costs, and medical care-- Obviously, if they are making \$12,000 a year, they are not receiving any type of

Medicaid or things like that. They are over by a couple of dollars. Did I answer your question?

MS. ROSS: Yes. That clarifies that you are talking about folks who are just above the eligibility.

MS. CARRINGTON: That's right.

MS. SMITH: Also, those are the people who, because they live from paycheck to paycheck, certainly do not have savings accounts. If they get laid off, or if there is a high medical bill, or whatever, or if they are forced to live without an income for two weeks, they do not have any backup money. So, if they go to the unemployment office and there is a three-week wait, they do not have three weeks' worth of money in the bank to sustain them for that period of time. Is that basically what you are saying?

MS. CARRINGTON: That's right. They come to me for emergency food, and I can service them up to three times a year. If they come to me and I give them a three-day food package, that is not going to last them the three weeks they have to wait. They will come to me a second and a third time, and after that I cannot service them again. You know, what do they do?

MS. HEART: How do people find out about your program? You said that a lot of them don't know about it. How do the ones who do come and take advantage, for instance, of the commodities, hear about it? Are they referred there?

MS. CARRINGTON: A lot of them are referred, but I can say that SCOPE has a very good public information department. We have increased our media outreach, not only to a few targeted radio stations and newspapers within the three counties, but when we publicize one of our services, we go to all of them. We have a mailing list of between 50 and 80 radio stations and news people. We just sent out newsletters to the offices on aging and places like that. I am not very good with public information because I don't work in it; however, I work with it. They really do their best to publicize any service SCOPE is offering.

MS. SMITH: Since we are interested in getting recipients of the services to testify as often as possible, we are going to be in

your area. I don't know what the exact date is going to be in the Bridgeton area. If you could get people to come to testify when we come down there-- If not, if people would be willing to write a paragraph or two about what their situations are, and send it in to us, that would be helpful. When will we be in Bridgeton?

MS. HEART: We'll be in Bridgeton on April 17.

MS. SMITH: It will be on April 17, in the evening.

MS. CARRINGTON: Okay.

MS. SMITH: So, if you could possibly round up some folks who would be willing to testify, that would really be helpful.

MS. CARRINGTON: Sure.

MS. ROSS: If you leave your name and address, we can mail you information about that.

MS. CARRINGTON: Okay. Thank you very much.

MR. GROVE: Cynthia, we would like you to do the same thing, since you are also in the same area. So, if both of you will write your names and addresses, we will make sure that you get the information.

Regina, thank you very much. If you have written testimony, we would like to have it.

MS. CARRINGTON: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Councilman Harold Mosee? Let me start by saying thank you for your timely intervention.

COUNCILMAN HAROLD MOSEE: You're welcome. The thrust of what I wish to speak about today-- We understand that this is a Commission -- a one-year Commission--

MR. GROVE: (interrupting) Would you please give us your name and the spelling of it so we will have it on tape?

COUNCILMAN MOSEE: My name is Dr. Harold Mosee -- M-O-S-E-E. The thrust of what I have to say was manifested just a few moments ago by Mr. Gormley. There is an immediacy about problems in this area. We understand that this is a study which will run for about a year, if I am not mistaken. Before the information is even totally collected, disseminated, ingested, and, hopefully, regurgitated so that something will come from it, we still have an immediate problem. I think that

with any type of commission or study such as this, we need to look to both the immediate -- the short-range -- and the long-range remedies to the problem. We can identify the problem, we can accuse society of generating the problem, or we can just say we have a problem, but let us attempt to remedy it.

The Rescue Mission has been -- and probably will continue to be -- the biggest asset we have here in this area, simply because it does not have the bureaucracy that government has where you have to fill out 40 forms, or you just say, "I'm the Councilman, I'm the Mayor, I'm the Assembly person, or I'm the Governor, I want you to do this for that individual," where you flex muscles simply because you have them there to flex.

I think the Chairman asked the question of one of the previous speakers, who I believe was from the Rescue Mission: "Is this area going to be a dumping pot?" It is not going to be a dumping pot; it is a dumping pot. With the advent of casino gaming, we became a dumping pot. There is absolutely nothing we can do about that. With the Supreme Court ruling that we have to provide food and shelter for the hungry, there is nothing we can do about that. The only thing we need at this juncture are the resources to do that. We can either do it through our local public assistance, or we can do it through agencies that can do it much cheaper, such as the Rescue Mission and other nonprofit organizations.

I believe Assemblywoman Cooper has set the wheels in motion for a lunch program that will be practiced everyday throughout the year. We in the uptown area, at the Westminster Church, presently have a pot on the stove everyday, where you can come in and get a bowl of stew without having to worry about someone wanting to preach to you. You're hungry; you are not interested in food for the soul at that particular juncture. You only want nourishment for the body.

I listened to the lady from SCOPE, and I am very familiar with SCOPE. As a matter of fact, I was one of the founders of SCOPE, as I was one of the original workers and founders of the Atlantic Human Resources here in Atlantic City, Can Do in Jersey City, and Community Action Plainfield, in Plainfield, New Jersey. I even wrote the programs for them.

I think it is nice for us to sit down and speak as Ms. Haynie and the other ladies did about calories versus nutrition; however, if you are hungry, you are not interested in calories. You are interested in something warm in your system, or just something in your system. They say we don't have the same problems as they have in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa. Well, we are not in Africa; we are not in Ethiopia. We should have no problems at all with nutrition or hunger, but we do. We attempted to work on the problems at one time, after the passage of the Act in 1964, which was the Economic Opportunity Act. It made some impact and some inroads, but I think the major inroad it made was to create a new middle class. After the first three years, the bulk of the program went to salaries. The dribblings that were supposed to go to the poor and needy were diminished because of the increases in salaries. During the Nixon years, there were cutbacks, and then during the Ford years there were cutbacks. We had a standstill during the Carter years, and then the cutbacks reappeared during the first four Reagan years. There are cutbacks presently being done during Reagan's second term.

Fortunately, in the State of New Jersey, whether we had a Republican or Democratic Governor, we have had people who have been sympathetic to the poor and have worked to help alleviate some of the problems to a small degree. I believe we need to deal with the immediacy of the problem. It will be as immediate one year from now as it is today. I hope in your findings and in your deliberations there will be some mention of projects such as Assemblywoman Cooper's project, this poor, humble servant's project uptown, or various projects such as this throughout the State. Jersey City has an organization called "PREP," the Puerto Rican Educational Project, which is doing the same thing now. In Newark, Donald Tucker, who is a member of the City Council there, has instituted some of the same kinds of things. In Jersey City, there is another project on York Avenue that is doing the same kinds of things.

These are the immediate things. I forget who it was who mentioned a few moments ago that, "Without shelter, you are in trouble." The basic needs are food, clothing, and shelter. If you

have shelter, you hope to scrape up the food. You may not even need clothing; you can just stay inside and cover your windows.

The needs are so great here in Atlantic City because of the casino industry and the lack of response from the casino industry. They will assist a person individually, but to put a pot of money aside for collective help-- For instance, if the casino industry would say, "All right, casinos one through 10 will put \$300,000 a year each into this pot," we would have \$3 million a year, and we could immediately start to reduce the rate of hunger and the rate of people not having a place to stay. There was a gentleman here from the Rescue Mission who said that with \$3 million he could build a facility that would house 300 people, both male and female, possibly in a dormitory situation, and also for families. No government in this country can house 300 people for \$3 million a year. We spend \$240,000 a month housing people -- I beg your pardon. We paid \$240,000 to one motel in a year, and to another motel, a half a million dollars. We paid for the motels; they never have to rent a room to anyone else. This is extremely unfortunate.

The young lady from SCOPE, the last person to speak, spoke about moderate income and low income. If you earn \$12,000 to \$20,000 a year in Atlantic City, and you are a family of two, you are in big trouble when you start talking about \$600.00, \$700.00, \$800.00, or \$900.00 a month rent. You have to eat; you have to travel back and forth to school or work; you have to pay your electric bill, your heating bill, your gas bill, and things of that nature. Just for those things alone, you are talking about \$2,300.00. If you intend to go to a movie a year, or to the theatre--

So, we have some immediate problems and we have a whole lot of long-range problems. I don't like the idea of someone sitting down and telling me, "Well, the best thing in the world to alleviate hunger is education." Education does not alleviate anything if you're hungry, because you can't learn. I don't want anyone to sit down and tell me, "Well, the best way to get yourself a nice apartment or a nice house is to go to work." If you don't have a job, and no one will hire you, how are you going to do it?

Not only are the local government, the county government, and the State government at fault, but the people in the State of New Jersey, in general, are at fault for allowing the casino industry to get away with what they have been getting away with. Number one, they are not paying their fair share of taxes, even though they will tell you they pay 54% of the tax base. They make 87% of the income in this City. Number two, they are not making good the commitment they made when they first tried to get casino gambling in Atlantic City. They said they would help to rebuild Atlantic City simultaneously; they haven't done anything but tear it down. If you come through here now, and if you went through here 10 years ago, you know it is a totally different place. There is an absence of houses. The casinos buy up property, and rather than rehabilitate or rebuild what is on that property, they simply tear it down, and do nothing but allow the land to lay idle. Therefore, the people who lived in those homes no longer live there. They have no place to go and they have to leave this area.

MR. GROVE: Councilman, I have to call time.

COUNCILMAN MOSEE: Oh, okay. I'm sorry. Sometimes it just gets to me. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

MR. GROVE: Thank you very much. Louise Basile, from the Outreach Office on Aging. Louise, we invite you to come up to speak to us. Please give your name and spell your name for us for the record. You have 10 minutes to share with us what you would like us to know, and then we may ask you some questions.

LOUISE BASILE: My name is Louise Basile -- B-A-S-I-L-E. We are located in the western end of Atlantic County. We are in a very, very rural area where poverty is great.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Where are you from?

MS. BASILE: We're from Atlantic County.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: I mean where in the west?

MS. BASILE: Minotola. We live in Minotola, but our Outreach Office on Aging covers Landisville, Minotola, Richland, Mizpah, and all the small-- There are nine places we cover.

MR. GROVE: Are they in New Jersey? (laughter)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Yes, all in Atlantic County.

MS. BASILE: We are at the western end of Atlantic County. If you get a map, you can pinpoint all of these little towns. But, you have to see them to believe it. The homes are in deplorable condition; they are run down. The people there are hungry. I have a food pantry in my center -- I also have a senior center -- and it took me two years to get food there. The first year I couldn't go get it because we would have had to go to North Jersey, which I couldn't understand when we have warehouses right in Vineland. But, you have to go there; you have to get a tractor-trailer load of food. We couldn't get it, but I was very fortunate that Father Fleming from Cumberland County-- Right now he is in Cape May County. I called him and asked him if he would pick up some food for us. He said, "Well, I will make you one of my pantries." This was very fortunate for us, but we had to go to Woodbine to pick up the food we needed. Woodbine is about 40 miles each way.

No matter what the need is -- maybe the food stamps are late, maybe the caseworker from Welfare is not ready to complete the case -- these people are just there. No one cares if the people are starving, if they don't have any food. They just have to wait. Then the people come to us because I am also the Chairperson of the Salvation Army in my area, and they know that once in awhile they can get a food voucher. If they come there, we give them the extra food. Also, they are very grateful for the other commodities we get, like the butter, the cheese, and the powdered milk.

We also have a Needy Food Closet in our office. Once a year, before Thanksgiving, we have a food drive through our school district, the Buena Regional School District. The children bring in canned foods. We keep this food mostly for the seniors. The first year we had 109 families which were unduplicated; then we had 80 duplicated. That means that they come more than once because their unemployment runs out or maybe they don't qualify. Sometimes the employer wants to have a hearing, and that holds up their checks. So, we have to help them that way. We just can't let people starve. I don't think it is right, and we try not to let it happen. These people live in a rural area. They don't live close to any stores. Thank God for county

transportation, which takes them shopping once a week. But, if you don't have any money, you can't go shopping.

So, that is our story about what we have out there. Lila Webb tells me we are going to have a warehouse in Landisville, which is only a mile from us.

MR. GROVE: I heard today there will be a warehouse where you will be able to buy food right in Landisville, so that may help the 40-mile problem.

MS. BASILE: See, I don't buy the food we get.

MR. GROVE: This is bought at 10 or 20 cents a pound.

MS. BASILE: Oh, I know what you mean, yes.

MR. GROVE: Are there any questions from the panel?

MS. SMITH: I missed it, what is the name of the organization you represent?

MS. BASILE: We are part of the Office on Aging.

MS. SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

MS. BASILE: We are an outreach office from the Office on Aging here in Atlantic City in Atlantic County.

MS. SMITH: Thank you.

MR. GROVE: Donna?

MS. ROSS: Is the county transportation you talked about specifically for seniors, or are families--

MS. BASILE: (interrupting) It is also for the handicapped.

MS. ROSS: Okay. What about families? What do they do if they lack transportation?

MS. BASILE: They just have to pay someone. That is the situation we have out there. Let's say you say to your neighbor, "I want to go shopping with you." The neighbor will say, "You will have to give me \$5.00." The people don't even have money to buy the food, let alone pay for that kind of transportation. The homes are placed miles apart. We are not talking about a city or a small town; we're talking about a very rural area. You would have to see it to believe it. Anytime anyone here would like to see it, I would be glad to take you out there.

MR. GROVE That is the second best offer we have had today. Assemblywoman Cooper?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Occasionally I was out in Newtonville when I was a Freeholder. My understanding was that all of you were consolidated, and that your nutrition site and your activities were in Hammonton with Connie.

MS. BASILE: Just a few go there. County transportation takes them there if they choose to go to the nutrition site. Previously, you had to be a senior; now they have changed it. Before it was if you weren't 60 years old you couldn't go. They have changed it now; if the husband or the wife is 60, the partner can go. But, there aren't too many, not in the Mizpah area. Usually, there are about 35 or 40 people who go there. Sometimes 60 everyday. That is the nutrition site.

MS. SMITH: Are there a lot of seniors who, even though there is transportation available, are home bound and can't--

MS. BASILE: (interrupting) Then they have Meals on Wheels.

MS. SMITH: Okay.

MS. BASILE: We do an outreach on them. We evaluate their conditions and the medications they are taking. If they can go, we say, "They can go to the nutrition site."

MS. SMITH: Is there a waiting list for Meals on Wheels?

MS. BASILE: Yes.

MS. SMITH: How long is it?

MS. BASILE: Well, you know, people die, and people get off of it. You just can't--

MS. SMITH: But, you don't go on immediately?

MS. BASILE: No. Sometimes you do. If there is an emergency, you get it the next day.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: When was the last time you met with Steve Bruner on this issue?

MS. BASILE: We met frequently, but it has been about a year since Steve has been-- He knows about it. Everyone knows the problems we have there.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: No other attempts have been made to rectify this situation, to upgrade it?

MS. BASILE: I don't see how they can upgrade it outside of getting the food we give out. I know he tries very hard with the commodities. He gets whatever he can.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Well, may I ask, what do you feel -- A, B, C, D -- are the fastest things that can happen to upgrade the situation?

MS. BASILE: Well, I believe--

MR. GROVE: (speaking to someone in the audience) Would you like to add to that? You look as if you would like to say something.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: Viola?

VIOLA PARKER: If I may, please. Regarding food stamps-- May I ask whom I am addressing?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: I am Assemblywoman Cooper, your former Freeholder.

MS. PARKER: Yes, I thought you were. Regarding the food stamp proposition, people are in need and they go for the food stamps, but they do not get food stamps for at least 30 days or more. In the meantime, how do these people live and eat?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: This has never been resolved by our Office on Aging?

MS. PARKER: It is not the Office on Aging.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: But, haven't they interceded on your behalf?

MS. PARKER: They tried.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COOPER: And, nothing happened?

MS. PARKER: This has been requested several times. I don't know to what extent it has been looked into, but it is still a problem. You asked a question, and I want to make sure that question is addressed again.

MR. GROVE: Do you want to ask anything more? (negative response) Louise, we appreciate you and your companion coming all the way down here to be with us today.

MS. BASILE: Well, it was our pleasure; we wanted to be here. If we can help in any way, we would be happy to.

MR. GROVE: You have certainly helped us to obtain the kind of information we are looking for, and we appreciate it.

MS. BASILE: Thank you for inviting us.

MR. GROVE: Thank you. It is now five o'clock, and we have completed our first session. Thank you all for being here. This part of the hearing is officially closed. You are welcome to join us this evening at 6:30 at the Westside Complex.

(AFTERNOON SESSION OF HEARING CONCLUDED)

EVENING HEARING

MR. GROVE: This is the evening session of the first hearing of the New Jersey Commission on Hunger. We are at the Westside Complex in Atlantic City. My name is Terry Grove. Donna Ross is on the panel with me this evening. We are going to hear testimony on hunger in Atlantic City.

What we have asked each person to do as he gives testimony, is to give his name, spell his name so that we have it for the record, and give the organization he is with. If you will do that, we will be happy to take your testimony.

SAMUEL BEARD: My name is Samuel Beard -- B-E-A-R-D. I am Director of Municipal Welfare for the City of Atlantic City.

We are the agency which is responsible for providing assistance to single individuals who are residents of the municipality of Atlantic City. At the present time, we are trying to satisfy the homeless situation. When you talk about hunger, you must include services for the homeless and medical services. We are legislated to provide these kinds of services to the population of Atlantic City who are eligible to receive them.

I am here principally to make a correction. I heard this afternoon that we had 4,000 applicants for municipal assistance. That is not correct. We are currently servicing about 900 recipients, which is quite a large number for a municipality of this size. Last year at

this time, we were servicing 300 people. That number has tripled. Last month, we approved 262 applications. We are spending at a rate of \$90,000 per month for services. These services certainly include the hungry. I believe if we had a hunger bowl, it would take away from some of the expenses we have to pay to the recipients.

One-half of our grant is usually allocated for food. The grant is so small and the rents in this municipality are so high that it would be very difficult to pay for food, medical services, and shelter. Therefore, I feel that if we had a hunger bowl, it would certainly help us to defray some of the expenses for the high rents we have in Atlantic City. That is all I have to say.

MR. GROVE: Okay. Sam, we're sorry that you didn't get on board with us this afternoon. We were looking for you; I had your name on the list.

MR. BEARD: I was very busy in the office.

MR. GROVE: It just went on and on, and we just didn't get you. I'm sorry about that. I wish it would have worked out that you could have spoken this afternoon.

The information you wanted to make clear was about an inaccuracy you heard. Someone said that you were servicing 4,000 cases here in Atlantic City. Did you hear that this afternoon?

MR. BEARD: I heard on the radio that we service 4,000 persons for one month in Atlantic City.

MR. GROVE: That figure is to be corrected?

MR. BEARD: Yes, that figure is to be corrected. We have a caseload of 900.

MR. GROVE: Okay.

MR. BEARD: We accepted and approved 262 applications last month. For this month, so far, we have approved 100 applications.

MR. GROVE: Last month being January, this month being February?

MR. BEARD: Right.

MR. GROVE: Okay.

MR. BEARD: We are operating at a rate which I am certain exceeds any type of budgetary limitations we have. Last year at this

time we were servicing 319 recipients, and now we are up to a caseload of 900. I think that is primarily because of a pending suit against the City of Atlantic City and the Municipal Welfare Association. I heard tonight that all municipalities in New Jersey, at this point, are required to provide immediate assistance -- health services, food, and shelter -- to all applicants. That would be quite an expense to our municipality because our grant is very low. We are not geared to handle those types of responsibilities.

MR. GROVE: Donna, do you have a question?

MS. ROSS: Yes, two quick related questions. Can you give us the amount of the average grant for general assistance, and then tell us whether or not the people receiving it are receiving any other assistance?

MR. BEARD: You know, our place is just about the last place you come. When you have exhausted all other possibilities, you come to the Municipal Welfare Association. If you are receiving any other assistance, you are not normally eligible for general assistance. The amount of the grant for a person who is employable is \$127.00 per month, plus medical services. For people who are not employable, the amount of the grant is \$190.00. So you see, since the rents are so high in Atlantic City, if you use a portion of that money for food, there will not be enough money to pay for shelter.

MR. GROVE: And, if they are receiving from any other agency, they would not normally be eligible for grants from your agency?

MR. BEARD: That is correct. This is the last resort. When you have exhausted all other possibilities, you come to Municipal Welfare.

MR. GROVE: Any questions?

MS. ROSS: No, thank you.

MR. GROVE: Since there are no more questions, thank you very much for coming and making that clarification for us, and for adding your information. That is not information we received this afternoon. Again, thank you.

(EVENING SESSION OF HEARING CONCLUDED)

APPENDIX

TESTIMONY ON HUNGER

- I. SCOPE'S program to alleviate hunger
 - A. Emergency Food Bank
 1. time in existence - Oct '81
 2. area serviced - Cumberland, Salem, and Gloucester
 3. families serviced from 1/84 to 12/84 - 1,788
 4. nutrition workshops offered
- II. Who are the hungry in our community
 - A. Low - income families
 - B. Moderate income families
 - C. Senior Citizens
 - D. Unemployed; recently laid off
- III. The causes of hunger from SCOPE'S perspective
 1. Unemployment / declining economy
 - a. lack of business opportunities
 - b. businesses moving out of the area
 2. low - income
 - a. budget cuts to federally funded programs
 3. high cost of energy bills
 4. lack of awareness
 - a. budgeting
 - b. consumerism
 - c. programs available offering assistance
 5. lack of low - income housing

