



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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The Honorable Abraham A. Ribicoff  
Chairman, Committee on Governmental  
Affairs  
United States Senate

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

As requested by your letter of October 18, 1979, we are pleased to provide our [comments on S. 1835] which would extend the Joint Funding Simplification Act of 1974 for a five-year period.

The goal of joint funding is to make Federal assistance efforts more effective by facilitating grantee integration of Federal programs. Joint funding does not eliminate problems among funding agencies or among grantors and grantees, nor does it alleviate problems in Federal and State grant programs. However, joint funding does provide a means to address and minimize such problems through built-in communication lines and consequent understanding and compromise.

Our recent report, "A Study of the Joint Funding Simplification Act," (GGD-79-87, July 26, 1979) pointed out that the implementation of the act has been a disappointment. However, despite the low use of the joint funding process, the experiences of a few highly successful joint funding projects have demonstrated that given the proper level of Federal support, joint funding is a viable process for (1) packaging related programs and (2) simplifying grant administration. The State and local governments which have established successful joint funding projects have become strong proponents of the process.

On October 3, 1979, I testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations on S. 878, the Federal Assistance Reform Act. Title III of S. 878 authorizes joint funding for five more years and revises the Joint Funding Simplification Act. We support this legislation. It would provide a stronger role for the Office of Management and Budget and mandate that Federal grantor agencies more seriously consider the joint funding process.

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We understand, however, that Title III of S.878 may not be enacted before the Joint Funding Simplification Act of 1974 expires in February 1980. While we would prefer to see an extension of the joint funding legislation with the changes contemplated by S. 878, we do not believe the legislation should be allowed to lapse and therefore we support S.1835.

We would be pleased to discuss these matters further with you or your staff.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNED ELMER B. STAATS

Comptroller General  
of the United States