

COMMODITIES AND NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY

HEARING BEFORE THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING UNITED STATES SENATE NINETY-SIXTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

MISSOULA, MONT.

FEBRUARY 14, 1979



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CONTENTS

Opening statement by Senator John Melcher, presiding-----	Page 1
CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WITNESSES	
Anderson, Jane, administrator, Area V Area Agency on Aging, Anaconda, Mont-----	4
Adams, Nancy, site manager, Missoula, Mont., nutrition program-----	7
Still, Alma, Missoula, Mont-----	11
Fay, Opal, Missoula, Mont-----	15
Luck, Holly, director, Aging Services Bureau, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Service, Helena, Mont-----	16
Kerchner, Orval, Assistant Deputy Administrator, Special Nutrition Programs, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C-----	18
Moore, Forrest, Assistant Regional Administrator, Mountain Plains Regional Office, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, Denver, Colo-----	21

APPENDIX

Material submitted by individuals:	
Item 1. Statement of Patricia Connolly, green thumb worker, Missoula, Mont-----	29
Item 2. Statement of George Erickson, State director, Montana Farmers Union Green Thumb, Missoula, Mont-----	29
Item 3. Paper submitted by Rustem Medora, project director, associate professor of pharmacy, University of Montana, Missoula, Mont-----	30

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1979

U.S. SENATE,
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING,
Missoula, Mont.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 1:30 p.m., at Eagles Lodge, Missoula, Mont., Hon. John Melcher presiding.

Present: Senator Melcher.

Also present: Deborah K. Kilmer, professional staff member; Eileen Winkelman, minority professional staff member; Jim Stasny, legislative assistant to Senator Melcher; and Marjorie J. Finney, operations assistant.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR JOHN MELCHER, PRESIDING

Senator MELCHER. The committee will come to order.

While we talked this morning about the increasing costs of energy for the elderly and the size of their utility bills, we also mentioned, and it was carried out in some of the testimony of the witnesses, when the utility bills are higher and the income is fixed, something has got to give. Oftentimes if there is a squeeze on there is less money spent for food.

I think we dwelled a little bit on the fact that if spending less money for food lowers the nutritional level of the individual, an individual's health isn't as good. It is really just the creation of a vicious circle. If you pay the full utility bill, there is less for food, the health level is lowered and more medical cases follow.

What we would like to do this afternoon is look at the nutritional part of it. In 1972, Congress authorized the nutrition program for the elderly. When they did that, it was two-fold. We knew that nutrition was often neglected, often lost sight of for the elderly, and we wanted to provide not only good meals, but some sort of opportunity for getting together for socializing. A lot of the efforts were centered in senior citizen centers.

I am most proud of the recent accomplishments of Montana during the past 5 to 7 years. The thing I am the most proud of and impressed with is the quality and the number of senior citizen centers that have been developed around the State of Montana.

There has been a tremendous impact in the life of the elderly. It has made life more interesting. It has helped in the problems of life and has given more meaning to life. I think it has been most helpful to all the rest of us, regardless of age. When a problem is looked at in a community and the response of the community to solve the problem;

I don't know of a better example of success than the increase in senior citizen centers throughout the State.

I just ate lunch at the senior citizen center here in Missoula at noon. The location is excellent. There are facilities inside not just for eating, but for entertainment and socializing. They are excellent. The success of the group and the organization is excellent. This is most encouraging. It is really a quarter-million-dollar investment in the community and it is almost all paid for. It has been paid for principally by the people themselves. They have proven they have American ingenuity when responding to needs. They have worked cooperatively and have come up with a first-class product. The example of this center here in Missoula is repeated many times across the State.

I am also encouraged by the fact that the State of Montana has done this. Two big cities out here are Missoula and Billings. Coming from States like California or New York, they would think our centers were very tiny and the cities very small. When you think about a town like Forsythe that only has 2,000 or 3,000 people in it, or Malta, which is about the same size, or White Hall, which is smaller yet, and think that all across the State in these communities from Billings to towns that may only have 1,000 people or less, at every level of our community, senior citizen centers are almost invariably there, that is both impressive and reassuring.

Getting back to the nutrition part of that, there are over 9,000 community sites all over the country that serve meals weekly to older persons. Here, in Montana, we have 106. I think we should look at our population spread over a large area and compare that to the percentage that we are nationally. Out of about 220 million people in the United States, we have about 720,000. That we have 106 community sites where we have programs feeding lunches daily to our elderly is outstanding. We are feeding at those 106 community sites at least 3,800 nutritional lunches each day. That is here in Montana. I am very proud of that.

Besides serving the meal right at the center, many of our community centers serve meals to the elderly who are at home and who can't come to the center. We used to call that meals-on-wheels. It's too bad that name has been dropped. We have sort of drifted away from that. It still means the same to me. You take a meal to the elderly and serve it to them in their own home. That gives the volunteers who do the work some communication with the elderly who must stay at home or who can't get to the center, or can't get there very often. That, too, supplies the necessary social link of communications between people. That is one of the nicest things about our senior citizen centers and the meals-on-wheels program. Nobody needs to feel isolated.

Last year, we set up a separate program for these meals to the elderly in their own homes under the Older Americans Act. This program is in operation with congregate programs offering the elderly two alternatives for a nutritional meal and social contact, either at the center or delivered to their homes if they can't come to the center.

We are going to hear today from people who participate in both sides of the program. We want to see if they can suggest to us better ways of implementing it, better ways of carrying out the intent of the program.

A big part of our efforts this afternoon will be to talk about what it costs to serve these meals, and how we can make the dollar go farther

for the centers themselves, either to serve the meal right there or to have it delivered to the home.

We will hear, first of all, from witnesses here is Montana who will make suggestions on how they think the program is working and how it could be improved and how we can carry out what Congress said in 1974 when they changed the provision of the nutrition program for the elderly to make sure that those programs were eligible for surplus commodities. These commodities, if they can be gotten to the centers on a regular basis where they can be counted on without too much expense in transportation costs, can be a very important part for those cooks to turn into those lovely meals at the centers.

I know there are some problems here. I am convinced that we can do a much better job in the distribution of commodities. I am a strong advocate in Congress for the commodity programs. I do it for two reasons. One is that in the greatest country in the world for raising food, we ought to make sure that everybody has a good chance at it. That is the first reason.

The second reason is that in the greatest country in the world for raising food, the people who raise it, the people who are our farmers and ranchers, have to have some stability in their markets so we don't have sharp ups and downs. You have too much beef sometimes, and other times you have too little because the price goes clear up and the price goes clear down. We don't want that. We don't want that for the potato people or for the wheat people. We want a dependable market for our producers and the commodity program lends itself to making the markets more stable for the producers, the farmers, and ranchers. When you have a greater supply, you take some of it off and save it and use it in the commodity programs. Where you have a lesser supply, you concentrate on the food supplies that are in greater supply.

Overall, we have a combined goal of helping both the producers who raise these crops to have a good market, and to assure that everybody in this country can have the benefits of good nutrition by distributing surplus commodities.

Our problem has never been, thank God, that we can't raise enough in this country. Our problem, frankly, has been the farmers can always raise enough, but not everybody in our country can afford to pay for it at any price. So we have gone into the commodities program and the food stamp program to level that out.

The commodities program lends itself beautifully to supplying food for good balanced nutrition at low cost for something like senior citizen centers.

Now, let's find out how we can help make it work better. I am sure there are going to be people here to testify who actually do this work there in the community center. They are going to tell us that it doesn't work out quite as well as it should. It costs too much in transportation to get it there. That could be a big item. The other thing is, can we count on it, can we plan ahead, is it going to be available every month, or is it only going to be available 3 or 4 months out of the year? Well, I think we can make it available every month of the year. I do not believe that we should let the transportation costs interfere with the prompt delivery of commodities for senior citizen centers. I don't believe there are very many hardhearted people in Congress who would want that cost to interfere with bringing

the food and delivering it very promptly and very dependably to senior citizen centers, regardless of where they are at.

I think those may be a couple of key points that we will be talking about this afternoon.

I have asked the Department of Agriculture to send one of their commodities experts. They have got some commodities experts there. They have got some professional expertise, expert people, in nutrition in the Department of Agriculture who are available. We have one of them with us this afternoon that knows quite a bit about commodities, but he is not the only one.

This is Orval Kerchner and he is going to be here to answer some questions.

I want to tell all of you in this program, any aspect of the nutritional program, that there are people right here in Montana who are experts and who can tell you how to get the most out of serving nutritional meals at the lowest possible cost. Mr. Kerchner is one of them. He will answer questions about the commodities program directly, but there are others, too, if you want to go into more technical aspects of actually preparing the meals themselves.

I want you to know that the suggestions you make, the ideas that you have, could very well contribute to some prompt solutions by actions in Congress. What we do on the Federal level has to be in cooperation with our State people, the people in Helena, the people working for State government. It has to be in conjunction with the grassroots people here who actually run the programs. We want these suggestions. We think we can greatly improve and enhance and cut the costs of our nutrition program.

We will get on with the witnesses.

Our first witness is Jane Anderson, administrator, area V Area Agency on Aging, Anaconda.

Jane Anderson deals with the program of preparing the meals; then they are served right at the center and they have distribution at several points in area V.

Jane, I think you are a good leadoff witness.

STATEMENT OF JANE ANDERSON, ADMINISTRATOR, AREA V AREA AGENCY ON AGING, ANACONDA, MONT.

Ms. ANDERSON. Senator, ours is a problem. This testimony was prepared by the nutrition director, but hopefully I will be able to answer any questions that you will have.

Every year a nutrition plan must be submitted to the Montana State Office on Aging by June or July of each year. The plan is to be implemented by October 1. The State office gives you an approximate dollar figure for cash in lieu of commodities and a good guess at what food you might receive. The plan must contain in detail the number of persons to be served, the number of meals to be served, the dollar amounts of commodities to be used, including the cash in lieu of commodities, freight costs, et cetera.

Now October arrives. All food sites have completed their planning, including equipment, some food purchases, menus, staffing volunteers, et cetera, but no commodities are available, no cash in lieu of

commodities. In fact, due to—and this is a quote from a memo we received:

Due to the USDA error, last quarter's cash allotment has not arrived. When it does, please credit it to last year's grant. Adjust your raw food item and carry over the appropriate amount. By the way, you only have a couple of weeks to get the money spent after you do receive it.

Now, what happens at the sites? All the careful planning made to provide 14,000 meals per month to approximately 600 low-income elderly goes right out the window. First, you throw away the menus. You serve what you can afford to buy in small quantities, paying higher costs because you cannot buy in quantity. Remember, you still haven't received the last quarter of last year's cash in lieu of commodities. Freezers are sitting empty waiting for the commodities, hamburger, butter, et cetera. Rent is being paid on empty storage facilities waiting for the canned fruits, vegetables, et cetera. Upset staff, long-distance calls, and since the advisory board is made up of elderly recipients, total frustration and worry is the result.

I personally feel that until the problems of USDA commodities are resolved, nutrition projects should not be forced to include commodities resources in their planning at the local level. When and if commodities become available, then, and only then, should the plan be revised and projects expanded using commodities to provide more meals.

Because of the financial limitations at the State and local levels, USDA commodities are needed. Area agencies on aging have succeeded in eliminating most of the barriers and policies and practices of the local level institutions that prevented the elderly from utilizing available resources. Why can't the State and the Federal agencies do the same?

I am going to add a little something to this. We serve approximately 14,300 meals per month. The cost for the total program, including administration, outreach, transportation, the total program, is approximately 94 cents per meal. Anaconda receives the least money of any nutrition program in the State. Butte is just above us. We pay \$150 per month approximately, depending on the commodities that we do get, to send a truck to Helena to pick these items up. Then the sites come in to Anaconda and get the commodities there.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator MELCHER. Thank you, Jane.

Is this just once or is it customary? Does it happen year after year that you don't know when you are going to get your commodities?

Ms. ANDERSON. It happens year after year.

Senator MELCHER. Every year?

Ms. ANDERSON. Every year.

Senator MELCHER. Whose fault is it, do you know?

Ms. ANDERSON. I don't know. I could guess.

Senator MELCHER. Well, you can't hurt anybody's feelings here, Jane.

Ms. ANDERSON. OK. I am not sure. It might be the State and it might be the USDA, but I think possibly it was the State up to this point.

Senator MELCHER. Do we have somebody to testify who is going to defend the State?

Holly is going to testify.

Ms. ANDERSON. Yes; Holly will.

Senator MELCHER. It could be USDA's fault, too, right?

Ms. ANDERSON. It could be.

Senator MELCHER. We have got Mr. Kerchner to find out about that.

Ms. ANDERSON. Right. I talked to him this morning. All I know is that the commodities aren't there. We are given \$82,000 a year and we are told to feed people in six counties. We went out and we did this. We set up projects thinking that we could use the commodities. We don't have commodities and we are still feeding them. We are getting the money a little here and a little there.

Senator MELCHER. When you do this in six counties, do you think you can successfully reach out to the elderly in the little towns? How many little towns do you go to? We are going to count Anaconda as a big one.

Ms. ANDERSON. Butte has their own nutrition project. We have a meals program three times a week in Drummond and Philipsburg. We serve out of the hospital in Deer Lodge. We have a meals program in Pony, Mont., 3 days a week; in Sheridan, 5 days a week; and in Dillon, 5 days a week.

Senator MELCHER. Pony and Sheridan are both very small communities, aren't they?

Ms. ANDERSON. Pony is especially small.

Senator MELCHER. You are sending those meals right out of Anaconda?

Ms. ANDERSON. No. They are prepared at the senior centers and at the hospital in Deer Lodge.

Senator MELCHER. Is there a senior center at Pony?

Ms. ANDERSON. Yes.

Senator MELCHER. And it is prepared right there?

Ms. ANDERSON. Yes.

Senator MELCHER. When you send a meal out to somebody that is at home, does it pose much of a problem in keeping it warm? Now have you found that? I think you use volunteers to deliver these meals. Do you have any problems with the volunteers or are there always plenty of volunteers to deliver these meals?

Ms. ANDERSON. In Anaconda we have approximately 100 home-delivered meals per day. We have our outreach worker and we have two volunteers who have been with us since 1973. When the weather is bad, like it was today, the four-by-four patrol volunteers their vehicles and services to deliver the meals.

In Dillon there are volunteers delivering the meals. In Pony there there is no problem in keeping the meals warm because they just run across the street, almost. In Deer Lodge we have a hot food box that we take the meals out in.

Senator MELCHER. I see. Without that you would have a real problem?

Ms. ANDERSON. Oh, yes.

Senator MELCHER. Does everybody have access to hot food boxes who need them?

Ms. ANDERSON. They do in our area. We buy them for them.

Senator MELCHER. Are they costly?

Ms. ANDERSON. The first ones we bought were \$124 and they are now \$199, the same box.

Senator MELCHER. I was going to suggest that maybe the Government could buy them cheaper, but the GSA has been having some problems lately and I don't know if I want to propose that.

Do you have any problem with the new law that defines the homebound? According to the criteria, you are only supposed to deliver a home-delivered meal to somebody who is homebound. Is the term "homebound" too tight?

Ms. ANDERSON. We have never paid much attention to that.

Senator MELCHER. Good for you. I don't think you need any standards like that.

Ms. ANDERSON. No, we don't.

Senator MELCHER. I just think it is ridiculous. I am glad you are not paying any attention to it. The law seems to say that you have to determine whether somebody is home bound, sick, disabled, or there is an extreme transportation difficulty. There are always extreme transportation difficulties, I think. It is pretty tough anyway. I don't think you ought to have to pass a test to eat a meal at home.

Ms. ANDERSON. Some people are alone, and they are alone so much that they just need the attention of a person coming in one time a day. That is reason enough.

Senator MELCHER. Yes, I think that is reason enough, too. I agree.

All you can tell us, then, if we are going to make this commodity program work, is to arrange it so you have it on time and you know you are going to have it and you are not going to have to be worried about trying to apply the money, taking the cash rather than the commodities retroactively. Is that it?

Ms. ANDERSON. If we can't depend on the cash, we have got to have some way to operate. We borrow from Peter to pay Paul. We received the last quarter's funding of cash in lieu of commodities, I don't remember if it was the last part of November or the first part of December. That is what Gerry talked about in her testimony. We should have had it before the first of October and we received it almost 2 months late. Then we are told to use it on last year's program which ended September 30. Holly wasn't there then.

Senator MELCHER. No. OK, thanks a lot, Jane.

Ms. ANDERSON. Thank you.

Senator MELCHER. You have outlined the problem, I am sure.

Our next witness is Nancy Adams site manager for the Missoula nutrition program.

STATEMENT OF NANCY ADAMS, SITE MANAGER, MISSOULA, MONT. NUTRITION PROGRAM

Ms. ADAMS. Good afternoon. It is exciting to be here. I am glad I get to meet you, Senator.

First of all, I would like to answer your question on why we don't call the home delivery service meals-on-wheels. There is a program separate from the nutrition program for the elderly in Missoula and it is called meals-on-wheels. We have called our home delivery service the home delivery program.

Presently in Missoula, there are two congregate meal sites and a home delivery service through the nutrition program. Having two congregate meal sites is good because it gives the person a chance to choose the site at which he feels more comfortable eating at. He will choose the one also that is closer to his home. There is a meal service at the senior citizens center. There is a kitchen site which is located at the Salvation Army Church.

Part of our nutrition program is supportive services. That includes recreation when they come to eat the meal, nutrition education, and we provide transportation and shopping assistance. We have an information and referral technician. If somebody has a specific problem, they can talk to her. We do supply the socialization time for these people. It is very important. It is great for them to get out of their house and eat a meal in a group setting when they otherwise would have stayed at home and ate alone.

All these things, along with the nutrition program and other aging programs, have the same goal in mind; that is, to keep people in their homes as long as possible. That is where they are the happiest.

A big problem with aging programs in this community is coordination. We need an action type of decisionmaking body to help coordinate all these groups together so we are not duplicating services and so we can act efficiently and effectively to serve our elderly population.

We need an outreach program to the rural areas. The rural area here in Missoula—which includes Frenchtown, Lolo, Clinton, Seeley, Swan—hasn't been touched. If there is an outreach program, we can find those people who are homebound and get hot food out to them, or we can transport them into the city.

The city has all these programs available and I think it is time to check the rural areas and see if we can't get some help out to them.

It is my understanding that there are more funds available to increase the home delivery service. You were just talking about cutting funds, so hopefully there will be some more money available for the home delivery program.

In talking about home delivery eligibility, it is a tough situation because we have some people who I feel might be capable of coming into a congregate meal and in order to keep costs down we should try to move those people into a congregate setting where they can socialize with people and take them off the home delivery program. For me, I would like to have some kind of eligibility criteria for a homebound person. I wouldn't want regulations so strict that you couldn't use your individuality and personal touch in deciding who gets homebound food and who doesn't.

For instance, we have an emphysema patient who, in the winter months, it is so cold that if he goes outside, the air just takes his breath away. Therefore, he is shut in for the winter months. This would be a good time to give him the home-delivered food. In the spring and summer and in the warmer months he could come in to the congregate meal site.

A homebound person might say they are homebound because they don't want to walk out on the ice, yet we have an escort service to take this person to and from the bus into the building. Would that be a legitimate reason to keep a person at home just because they are afraid to walk with snow on the ground? These are questions that I have.

I think it is fine to have fluctuation in that a person could get home delivery maybe once or twice a week and gradually work them in to coming in to a congregate site so they could take part in some of the recreation and socialization. I hope we don't have regulations that say you are either homebound or you are not. I would like to leave it open so that a person could, if they are convalescing from the hospital, receive home deliveries. Then if they feel they can come in a few days a week, they could come in to the congregate setting.

This leads up to a needs assessment being done on each person. A lay person could do this. If they had any question whether or not the person was eligible for home delivery, they could talk to the patron's doctor and see if there is any reason they couldn't get out.

Once it is determined a person needs home-delivered meals, do they stay on the program forever or does there come a time when we can assess their needs again and have them come to the congregate meals. This is a real problem. I see people who will go shopping and yet I will say the program needs to be opened up for people who need it: "Would you like to come in to the congregate meal?" "Oh, no; I can't; I just couldn't get out." A problem is determining how long a person should stay on the program. If the program stays full, there's no room for new people.

The last I read in our manual for the nutrition program was that only 10 percent of the total meals served should be home delivered. Well, we are feeding that percent now, and over. I am hoping that the home delivery program will be open to an indefinite number.

As far as funds go, it would be great to have funds for an outreach program to search out the people in need. We could use funds to increase the home delivery program, the number of meals served in Missoula and the number of meals that could be served on rural routes. This would include paying gas mileage for volunteers. We could use money to buy equipment to keep this food hot. The lady who just spoke said that they used a hot box. We use insulated bags and sometimes the food isn't as hot as it should be because these bags have a limited ability to keep food warm when on long routes. There is no oven involved. If the funds were available, I would like to see it go to equipment and increase the home-delivered food program.

Another area of concern is the volunteers. The nutrition program relies greatly on volunteers to get the meals out and to serve the food. We also have university students who give their time. I really appreciate these young people taking an interest in the elderly and wanting to work with them. I just hope the elderly are as accepting and want these young people to be involved. So many times I hear the elderly saying they don't want the young people: "What do they know? They can't tell us how to live our lives." I think that is sad.

Volunteers are a very special breed of people and sometimes they are hard to find. Once you find a good volunteer, you also find they are involved with many other programs. They will soon decide they have overextended themselves and they are going to have to cut back so they stop driving a route. Well, where does that leave me? I call on our employees to deliver the meals. In this area it is not a hard thing to pick up a route and deliver it. We only deliver in a 3-mile radius from our kitchen site.

For some areas who do rural deliveries, as in the Hamilton area; they go many, many miles to deliver food. It is hard, all of a sudden;

to drop what you are doing as an administrator and go drive a route. In some areas, it might be beneficial to have funds to pay a flat fee to a person to deliver meals as in rural areas.

I made it sound like volunteers come and go at the drop of a hat, but that is not true. We have volunteers who drive as couples and they have been with us for many years. Without them, I think our program would be hindered.

I think with community coordination and everyone working together and everyone understanding the problems we have, that we can keep this program a success.

Thank you.

Senator MELCHER. Nancy, first of all, you mentioned you use insulated bags for the meals you take out. How much do those bags cost?

Ms. ADAMS. I believe they are about \$30 apiece. That was a year ago. I am sure they have gone up since then.

Senator MELCHER. How many meals do they hold?

Ms. ADAMS. Fifteen.

The ones on top stay hot; the ones on the bottom are warm, but I am sure they are not kept to the standard 100 degrees, or whatever it has to be.

Senator MELCHER. For a while here in Missoula, one of the sites was closed, was it not? Didn't you have transportation problems?

Ms. ADAMS. Right now the kitchen site at the church where we were preparing the meals—we do not serve there because of lack of transportation. We do not transport the people there. It is not closed. The kitchen is there; the food is there; we are just not serving a lot of meals there.

Senator MELCHER. Is it a location where a lot of people would walk to ordinarily, or do you always have to have car or bus transportation?

Ms. ADAMS. There were people who lived close, maybe three or four blocks away, and they would drive their car. There were some ladies who would just walk across the street and come and eat there. From the kitchen site on down to the center, it would be another 1½ miles. Many people just feel that extra mile is too far, so they do not go in to the downtown site.

Senator MELCHER. Since there aren't too many people going there to get a meal, are more of those meals being taken out to the homebound, then, from right there?

Ms. ADAMS. We did not increase our home deliveries. The people who used to eat at the Salvation Army Church did not receive home-delivered meals. Some of them are from rest homes and some said no, they could prepare their own food. They came to the congregate site, not only for lunch but for the socialization and the recreation we provided.

Senator MELCHER. I see. You want to stress the continuation of that, because there is more recreation and socializing at the center?

Ms. ADAMS. Right. We try to get the people off the home-delivery program and into the congregate site. We feel that is more sociable.

Senator MELCHER. In your job, do you deal at all with the commodity program?

Ms. ADAMS. Yes. We order once a month for commodities. We, at one time, were given cash in lieu of commodities, and I found it rather

inconvenient. I would prefer receiving the commodities. It is quality food. We haven't had much problem with it in our area. We have received what we have needed. Because we are not at our capacity, because of one site being down, we haven't had a problem with waiting for the food to come in to serve. That hasn't stopped us. I do like the commodities and I hope they continue to come. If I had a choice between cash and commodities, I would take commodities.

Senator MELCHER. OK. Thank you very much, Nancy.

Ms. ADAMS. Senator, I would like to say one thing.

Senator MELCHER. Sure.

Ms. ADAMS. Barney Pearce, who is on the agenda to speak, could not come today. The weather got her down. She wanted me to say that she enjoys getting the home-delivered meals and without them she doesn't know what she would do. The doctor told her to gain weight and she has to eat five meals a day. If we can provide one of them for her, that keeps her from cooking.

Senator MELCHER. Well, great. Thank you very much.

Our next witness will be Alma Still.

STATEMENT OF ALMA STILL, MISSOULA, MONT.

Ms. STILL. Good afternoon.

I first want you to see how well nourished we all are.

I am sure you have seen some of that glorified hamburger we have. It goes under different names. If you move your fork around, you will always find it there underneath something.

I want to mention a few things to the senior citizens about their diet. We are so apt to think a cup of tea and a slice of toast is sufficient. One day I entered one of my friend's homes and she said, "Oh, Alma, come and have something to eat with me. I just had my supper." I said, "Fine." What did she have for supper? Two slices of toast and a cup of tea, and that is what I got for my supper. Well, I proceeded to talk to her. I said, "Do you eat eggs?" She said, "Oh, no. They give you cholesterol." I said, "Oh, no." We lived on the farm and we had two eggs for breakfast, and they were usually fried. Then at noon we had them scrambled. In the middle of the afternoon we had an eggnog. Then in the evening maybe some hard-boiled eggs with a salad. None of us died of having cholesterol.

I want to tell you this. Dr. Dudley White, the very eminent heart specialist, put in one of his egg cartons the fallacy of saying that eggs cause cholesterol. He said it was the fat that you use with those eggs. It is the way you prepare them. Now, we need the iron in those eggs and I hope the senior citizens eat eggs. I have had several little fights with doctors about eating eggs. I do eat eggs. I have a duck that lays a great big one. You stick some bread into that soft yoke. Oh, it is just delicious. It gives you pep, not cholesterol.

Now, another thing. Senior citizens are prone not to drink enough milk and that is one thing we have to have. We need calcium. We get decalcified as we get older. We need that milk. We could use three or four glasses a day. It wouldn't hurt us. Some of us can't have milk. We are just allergic to it. That is a different story.

Some of our life habits—why sit after the program, this lovely program that we so deserve? We have pushed away the rocks and felled the trees and we deserve a little recognition for what we have

done for the future generation. There is a tendency to just sit back and say: "Well, I have had enough to eat now. Oh, my, I wish I wasn't eating alone." They get so morose. Get something to do, for goodness' sake. Do something. If you are real depressed and real blue, go out and do something for a neighbor. Shovel some snow. Not too long, not too much. Offer someone a cup of coffee. Invite them in for tea or tell them: "Oh, there are a lot of good sales and I am going shopping; don't you want to come along?" Give them something. That day you will feel good inside because you have done something for somebody. Your blues vanish. You are a happy individual.

Another thing. Have a pet of some kind. "The landlord won't let me have a cat. She digs the furniture." She can be declawed. "He won't let me have a dog because he barks." Get a dog that won't bark all the time. You can get a fish. You can get a bird to live in an apartment very nicely. Last, but not least, get a good big buck rabbit. I have been raising rabbits for Dr. Larson for the leukemia project at the university. I sold one of my big bucks as a pet. Well, that little girl put a hood on him, she put little mittens on his paws, she put little boots on his feet. She wrapped him up in a blanket and put him in a baby buggy and ran him all around the yard and the house. Well, the grandparents were just so enthused they stayed young with that child. They enjoyed that rabbit so much. In the corner—now they are very clean animals—he has his little corner and no place else. Believe me he was an ideal pet. He appreciated being hauled around.

Well, one time I gave a talk and I took one of my big bucks over and set him on the table. I said, "Now, you sit there, Bucky." He had one ear up and the other one down. He would sit there. After I was through, everybody would put him on their shoulder and would carry him around. There is so much happiness in something like that. It gives you something to do. You have to have something to do.

Well, as I said, I did work for Dr. Larsen. One day he called up and said, "Oh, Alma, hurry up and bring me a chicken." I said, "A chicken? You mean a rabbit." "No, no, I mean a chicken. I have got to get some blood out of the aorta for this experiment. I have to have it right now. He said, "Just ignore the police and come." Oh, my. I flew out into the yard and I said, "Oh, Blondy, I can't take you, you lay that big egg. Blackie, you are a pet. Oh, Whitey, you are such a good mother. What shall I do? I have got to sacrifice a hen for society."

Well, I thought of the little old banty. She was much smaller than the rest. She laid such a little egg and she was 3 years old. I said "All right, banty, we will go. We will give you to society." So I took her and I flew. I got over there and they were all dressed in hospital operating things. The hospital operating room has nothing on the way they handle them over at the university. I will tell you, they don't suffer. I have had a buck there for several years. I would come over and I would say, "Well, Bucky, are you still here?" Oh, yes, he was still there. They bled him whenever they needed him, but he was thriving very nicely. So I took the little hen and hurried home to do my other work. Well, in a couple of days Dr. Larsen called up and said, "Mrs. Still, come and get your little banty." I said, "What? Do you mean she lived through that ordeal?" "Oh, yes. Yes, she is fine. She is running around in everybody's office here." I said, "Oh, oh." He said, "Well, we took care of that too."

I took banty home. You know, chickens are peculiar. As soon as one leaves their premises, they don't want it back any more. I said, "You are not going to be tortured. You're the last one in, the first one out. You lay an egg almost every day. I will give you the lawn and the flowers and I will put a nice rabbit hutch here for you and feed you. You can be by yourself until you get well." She was a little pale. Well, after a couple of days I saw no more of the little banty. She was gone. I said, "Oh, some mean dog got her." I looked for her all over. I couldn't find a sign where she had been mutilated by a dog. Well, I just forgot about it. I said they gave her enough sedative to tide her over for a day or so and I guess she is gone. That is what we gave to society.

But in a couple of weeks I heard a little noise behind the garage. I said, "My goodness, I didn't count my animals. I can't imagine. Sure, that is a hen." So I go around there and there was my little banty. Oh, my. Her wattles were white, her comb was pale. I said, "Honey, where were you? You must have had a box fall on you. You haven't had anything to eat or anything to drink. My poor little banty." I picked her up and put her on my shoulder. She cuddled up against my neck so nice. All of a sudden—you know, they get a little feisty and she wanted to get down. I let her down. She looked up at me and she said, "Cluck, cluck." I said, "What are you saying? You didn't say 'cluck cluck' when you went. You didn't say 'cluck cluck' when you came back. Now you want to have babies?" Well, anyway, she ran and I followed. Believe me, there behind the garage she was with 13 chicks. She had found a nest where they all had been laid and she said, "I will fool you fellows." So she sat. Some were big already. They were running around saying "Peep peep."

Anyway, I took her over to Dr. Larsen with the chicks the next day and he was so amused about her. He said, "Well, you see, Ms. Still, that is that university education."

Much thanks to you.

Senator MELCHER. Alma, you are a university education all by yourself. I think we could stand a daily lecture in your class any time.

Alma, in all of this advice for the elderly, I was particularly impressed with your idea to have a pet. As a veterinarian, one of my colleagues that is practicing the profession, that is a very important point.

If the habit of the elderly is to say to themselves, well, I don't need very much and take the easy way out like you said with toast and tea, how do we overcome that other than to say to them to get out and go to the senior citizen center or arrange to have a meal brought to them. You are really talking about people who can do their own cooking, are you not? How are we going to reach those people and tell them what to do, other than to listen to you when you tell them. You are friends, but how do we spread out this advice?

Ms. STILL. Well, over at the senior citizens, Nancy always puts out a little tent there and it says, "One of these tablespoons equals so much of your day's requirements." Things like that. You can learn from the senior citizen classes. Otherwise, I think our public health nurses should be doing something along that line. If you come into a home and you see there is nothing hardly cooking there, if they are not eating at the senior citizens where the meals are generally good—they are generally good, and we appreciate them. I was lucky a couple

of times; it was by mistake. I got a meal brought to me in my home. It was so piping hot, Senator Melcher, I couldn't believe it. It was just delicious. I had been grubbing outside with my animals and working hard and I looked forward to eating a little lunch. Here came this dinner. Oh, my, it was just delicious.

You have to teach them. You have to by word of mouth. That is the best thing. They won't read things very often. You can have little classes, too: nutrition classes. They will come. I had a group of Indians over in the Bear Paw Mountains at Haver when I was their school nurse over there. The parents were reluctant to come. They didn't have clothes. I got clothes for them. We had a little mothers' party over there. Those little kids with scabies and impetigo and what all they didn't have, I tell you, it made a world of difference by talking with them. You have to get down on their level; get down with them. They did wonders with their cooking; too. They cook better than the Indians generally do, and they are so undernourished so often. They are so subject to TB because they have such poor nourishment of their own unless the Government does it.

In Wisconsin we gave them stoves and everything. They let the stoves rust out and they built their little campfires outdoors. It is a matter of teaching. It is a matter of getting them to go to a movie. Get one of their own group to speak on what they cooked, how good it tasted, what they put into it. It will encourage others to do it. Have one of them come to a little meeting with some dish that she has cooked. We have to nourish them. After the Government has done so much to nourish them, they should do something for themselves. They shouldn't just wither away and get morose and wait for the reaper to come. He comes soon enough. We don't have to wait for him. They should make something of themselves, have a pet, do something. You have to work with that pet and it will give you reason to get up in the morning. Don't just lie there. "Oh, it is cloudy and rainy and cold. I think I will stay in bed." But you have got chickens to feed. You have got to go out there. So you go out. There they are. One has already laid, one is on the nest, another one is running around, "Cluck, cluck, cluck, cluck." The rooster is going "Er er er er er." They are all making such a commotion. When you come back into the house, you feel like a different person, you know.

Senator MELCHER. Alma, have you been participating, perhaps, in any television programs here in Missoula?

Ms. STILL. No; I haven't.

Senator MELCHER. You know, if you were a regular feature where people knew you were on, I think you could transmit a lot of information in a very convincing way.

One of the things that has impressed me is the point you make that the elderly are best talked to by someone like yourself who is of that same generation and who can express these ideas. For instance, I doubt whether a very high percentage of the elderly—I would say a very low percentage of the elderly—have ever thought about the point you made on decalcification and the need to have milk in the diet. Perhaps I am wrong on that, but I doubt it. I think there are very few of the elderly who take that into consideration. If you tell them so, I think it means more than probably even their doctor mentioning it to them. The credibility angle is there.

I would hope, as part of public service for all television stations, we would have more programs geared for the elderly and that they were on a regular basis so that the elderly got in the habit of watching them.

I do subscribe completely to your point on communication with people to get these ideas across to better their nutrition, their attitude on life, and to do the very things that you have mentioned with pets too. How right you are. If you have the chickens to feed, you have to get up and do it. That really struck a point with me because, when I was a youngster, I lived for several years with my grandmother. She had been blind since about the age of 65, but she never quit. One of the things she did to keep herself doing things was taking care of the chickens. That was her job. That was one of the jobs that she insisted nobody else could do because she had to have something to do, some reason to go out. She did go out every day and she lived to be 90-some years old and was very healthy, except for the disability of blindness.

I would hope that this information could be distributed to these people as part of television's responsibility. It is a very fine medium and will provide the opportunity for programs specifically for the elderly by the elderly. You are ideal for that. You ought to be on national television.

Thank you very much, Alma.

Opal Fay.

STATEMENT OF OPAL FAY, MISSOULA, MONT.

Mrs. FAY. Many years ago, a dear and trusted friend gave me a key to happiness. Both my husband, Harry, and I believed this guideline and have tried to live by it ever since. It became, you might say, our motto. This is it: "Service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy in the world in which we live."

We have lived in Missoula since September 1972. We have been with the title VII nutrition program since 1977. It is the most important project we do. We love the work. The recipients of the lunches need the food for a variety of reasons. Some cannot get about too well to prepare a meal and some do not have money enough to buy ingredients of a well-balanced meal. Some would satisfy themselves with a bowl of cold cereal or, as Alma said, a cup of tea and a slice of bread, because it is too much bother to cook for one's self.

Everyone on our route, and I am sure everyone on the program, needs someone to look in on them every day. Each one becomes very precious to us and we miss them terribly when they go off the program and we worry about them when they go for a little while or when we lose them permanently. All have been contributing members of society and are entitled to a touch of tender loving care in their old age. How happy they are to have us come. They will visit, they are lonely, and they will talk as long as we can spare time to talk to them.

We have hot meals to deliver to other people so, of course, we have to go on, and we cannot stay and visit as long as we would like to.

Our director is doing a fine job. She is very sensitive to any suggestions any of us have and tries in every way to follow the guidelines efficiently. The cook, Jo Anne, is most proficient. The meals are hearty, nutritionally balanced, and as tasty as can be, even without the addition of salt which none of us oldtimers need.

It appears to us that the entire crew of helpers are concerned energetic, and efficient.

This past 2 months has been a good testing time for all of us. It would have been easier to stay indoors when the temperature was 20 below zero and snow 2 feet deep on the level, but the rewards of checking on our people were far outweighing the efforts of getting out to do the job.

I was asked to make suggestions for improvement in the program. I have only one and it comes not as a change from within the program, but from without. We need more drivers from the community. The director should have to deliver meals. She has enough other work to do and can contact the recipients of the lunches at other times when she can spend more time with them.

We, who are in the program, are trying to recruit drivers all the time and cannot believe the answers we get when we ask them.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is not hard work. The contacts you make are most rewarding. It won't tie you down. If we had more substitutes, we could all take a day off and go fishing occasionally. You would be giving service to help pay the rent on the space you occupy in the world.

Thank you.

Senator MELCHER. Thank you very much, Opal. I think it is grand that we have your testimony not just for you, but for many thousands of other volunteers who take the time and go to the effort and get the rewards they do for the service they perform. I think it is great and thank you very much for it.

Mrs. FAY. Thank you.

Senator MELCHER. We are now going to have as a panel, Orval Kerchner from the Department of Agriculture, and Forrest Moore. Orval Kerchner is from Washington. He is the Assistant Deputy Administrator for special nutrition programs of the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department. We are also going to have Forrest Moore of the USDA from Denver, and also Holly Luck, director, aging services bureau, department of social and rehabilitation services, Helena.

Orval is on your left and Forrest is on your right.

STATEMENT OF HOLLY LUCK, DIRECTOR, AGING SERVICES BUREAU, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND REHABILITATION SERVICE, HELENA, MONT.

Ms. LUCK. Thank you, Senator, for the opportunity to address the commodity program in Montana.

I have some prepared comments that I would like to address.

The commodity program is a valuable asset to Montana's eight nutrition sites. Having commodities has allowed our project to serve an additional 575 to 600 meals per day. We realize this is a supplemental program and was never intended to provide all the food for our nutrition sites. However, from the viewpoint of the State aging office, the following major problems exist in dealing with the USDA commodity program.

No. 1, because we are not furnished with a proposed buying list during the late summer or early fall, it is necessary for us to assume we

will receive the same items as the previous year. This is not always true. It is impossible for the projects to properly plan their budgets when they are not sure what items will be available. The 38.5 cents we currently receive per meal is a nice supplement. However, it is a far different thing to have a meat item, vegetables, and fruit, than it is to have 38.5 cents worth of peanut butter, dry milk, and flour.

It is not certain when commodities will be shipped during the year. It seems that this year commodities have been arriving later than last year. This has resulted in a long period of time when our warehouse has had only the most basic items available, again resulting in hardships to the nutrition projects.

We have been urged to fully utilize the commodities available to us. We have done so and greatly increased the meal participation which presented one more problem. With the exception of staples, we are usually allowed to order any one item only once a year. Therefore, even though we are earning more money to buy commodities by increasing the number of meals served, we cannot use it to purchase higher priced food such as meat which would benefit the projects more than a like amount of flour or shortening. Perhaps allowing us to order some vegetables, fruits, and meats quarterly, as does Family Feeding, would make commodities more available and thus facilitate planning.

Last year when the final allocation of funds based on meals served was done, Montana was notified too late to use the money. If our distributing agent had not been able to do some transfers between programs, we would have lost over \$13,000.

The cash in lieu of commodities has been extremely slow ever since we were given the option of taking some cash. This makes budgeting for the use of this money very difficult and also an obstacle to the cash flow of our projects. The law says cash payments will be made in advance of the quarter in which they are earned. Currently, the cash payment is 5 months late.

An equally confusing issue is the fact that not all senior nutrition programs are available with the same kinds of commodities; that is, nutrition programs funded out of title III of the Older Americans Act are eligible for limited kinds of food, cheese, flour, dry milk, shortening, oil, rice, and margarine, while programs funded with title VII funds under the Older Americans Act are eligible for 30 to 40 different kinds of foods.

Further compounding this situation is the USDA policy to permit school feeding programs to receive their commodity foods first, thus allowing senior programs to pick up the crumbs, so to speak. Perhaps this is the reason our yearly entitlements is rarely known prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

The end result of all of these situations is that the senior citizen we are supposed to be serving once again is paying the penalty for Government inaction. I urge the USDA to consider any revisions in their current system so as to expedite this valuable food supplement program to Montana's most deserving elderly.

Senator MELCHER. Those are some very pertinent and right down-to-earth points.

How about it, Mr. Kerchner?

STATEMENT OF ORVAL KERCHNER, ASSISTANT DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, SPECIAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. KERCHNER. Thank you, Senator. I am pleased to be here to testify to this group.

Maybe I could start out with a couple of issues that have been raised and work my way on through.

I want to discuss some of the concerns that I have as an administrator for these programs. I would like to point out that we view these not as USDA or Federal programs, but as Federal-State-local programs. There is a cooperative effort here that we must try and work out. Granted the Federal Government sets the guidelines and provides the funding, but we also have some responsibilities placed on the States and the locals that they must carry out. If those are in error, we need to make corrections.

Jane Anderson pointed out a real problem.

Jane, I appreciate the comments you made. Cash payments were late because of changes in the legislation as a result of Public Law 95-65. This meant we had to issue new guidelines on cash and/or commodities. An error on our part was made in terms of funding for Montana. We did make an error by about \$33,000 in the calculations for payment for fiscal year 1978 to the State of Montana. As a result, \$33,000 came into the State after the fiscal year had ended.

The money reached the State in October. Why it did not get to the local, I do not have the answer to that. I suspect that within the State there are a series of operations that must take place to transmit funds. We can address that a little later. I do know, in fact, that we were late in getting that money to you. The reason for the lateness was a clerical error on our part. I have to say that when we make the computations and determine how much money States should get and whether they choose cash or commodities or both, there is a chance for error. We do try to rectify those, however.

I also found out that as a result of meal data adjustments toward the end of the year for Montana, we have in effect overpaid the State both in cash and commodities on a per meal basis. Now, I am not sure how we are going to handle that.

This brings up a problem, Senator, that we have to cooperatively work on and that is one of reporting the data that all of us need to determine how much cash or commodities the States are to get. As Jane pointed out, they are asked to make estimates on the number of meals or the number of people they expect to serve. Those estimates come in from the locals to the State, and at the State level they are compiled and sent to the USDA. We use these to make our national estimates of how much food or money is going to be utilized by title VII projects, or title III, as it now is. We have had an amended law which has placed title VII projects under what is now called title III in the act. I will refer to it as title III if I can keep my numbers straight.

The reporting requirement is, one, that we need participation data on a quarterly basis to anticipate what the needs are going to be for each of the States. We have been precluded from developing our own reporting system in the USDA and as a result have used one from

HEW. The timing of that is: On a quarterly basis, data are to be reported to USDA within 30 days following the quarter. Many States are late with their reports. I don't know how quick the State of Montana is in reporting. If we do not get those reports on time, we cannot make adjustments in the quarterly funding that we give to States in terms of cash and commodities. I would impress upon those of you who are responsible for data and numbers to please get those in on time.

We do not put out a buying list ahead of time to the schools, to the elderly feeding programs, or any of the other groups that we purchase foods for. Nutrition programs for the elderly are entitled to any foods offered to schools in quantity. Keep in mind that we purchase foods under a number of different authorities, such as surplus removal, support prices, and outright direct cash purchases. We do not publish a list in advance of what those foods will be because we don't know.

Let me explain just a little bit, if I might, of the system we go through in the Department of Agriculture to determine what foods will be available for a given year. We begin some time in late April of each year to discuss within the USDA what the production, the marketing, the weather, climate, and any other factors that affect American agriculture will be for that growing season. We meet with the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Food Safety and Quality Service, and people who actually handle the distribution of foods, trying to ascertain what commodities, what foods from the farm, will be in surplus supply or which should be removed from the market, as Senator Melcher has pointed out, to assure the American farmer a more stable income for his efforts.

Once those meetings are held, we then lay out what we call a purchase plan, to guide us in purchasing for schools, title III, the commodity supplemental program and the needy family program. We develop that plan, submit it to the Commodity Credit Corporation, which is a unit within the Department that makes policy decisions on the levels of price support and what products are to be removed for surplus removal purposes.

These amounts are then ruled on by that board and they say yes, based on the data that you have provided us, it looks like there will be a need to remove some canned corn, some peaches, canned pears, and a whole host of other commodities during this coming year. We estimate that it will be in these quantities. That plan, once approved, determines which commodities we go out and seek bids on. We are not permitted by law to release that total package of information as it may have an influence on the market. But we know pretty well what will be available and we can give an indication to States of the nature of the commodities, not the amounts, but the types of commodities that will be available.

We attempt each year to ask the States to tell us what they will need for their various programs. Now, we have heard that schools are given preferential treatment. We don't intend to give preferential treatment to schools in our requesting individual project wants. We attempt to find out what title III projects can use and we buy for them along with the foods we buy for schools. The same types of commodities are available.

We have these commodities ordered. We send them to what we call a State distributing agent. This is a person or an organization, sometimes located with the school food service operation within a State, sometimes as a separate entity, which handles the distribution to all the various programs. Now, there is an interface there which is very crucial for the title III programs. That is with the State administration on aging. It is a crucial link. Primarily because the orders as they come, go to schools, which are under the education department, and also go to the title III projects, which come under the State administration on aging. So the linkup there is very, very crucial.

Often I think we have not done as good a job as we might have in our communication. Here in Montana we have two relatively new people on board. We have Gordon Davidson, who has just recently taken charge as the distributing agent for the Welfare Department, and we have Holly Luck, who has just recently taken over in the Administration on Aging side. Hopefully if there have been internal problems within the State in the past these people can recognize what you have said here today and solve those.

In terms of the Federal level, we are not out of the woods yet. This year is going to be another difficult year. The only thing I can tell you about it is to explain where the problem lies and what we are attempting to do about it. Each year as we submit a budget to the Congress for an appropriation, we indicate, through a whole system of budgeting papers and getting the Office of Management and Budget's approval, what the needs will be for each of our programs. In the title III program, we have indicated that we would need \$45 million at least, perhaps more, depending on the reports that you folks send in to us.

If your programs are expanding, you will need more money.

Because of some problems in the appropriation process for this fiscal year, fiscal year 1979, there were certain organizations within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare which did not receive their budget appropriation through the normal process. They received it through what is called a continuing resolution, meaning that for most purposes you can spend at about the level you did in 1978.

Wrapped up in all this was title III nutrition food donation programs. Last year's level was at about \$30 million. Because of the process we are in now, we are restricted again this year to \$30 million. Now, this is a problem that you can't deal with. It is one that we must deal with in the executive branch. I don't need to go into all the details of what that involves in terms of the actors and the players, but I do need to point out that someplace along the line we have recognized that we need additional money for this program for this fiscal year in terms of delivering the cash and commodities that you have asked for. For instance, in this State you have asked for 60 percent commodities and 40 percent cash.

There are two ways that I see we can resolve this. One is we can go to the Treasury and simply ask for additional money to be allotted to us, despite what the continuing resolution says based on the data we have. Or we can go to the Congress and ask for what is called a supplemental appropriation saying to the Congress that our estimates were not as good as they should have been, but here is the data we have at hand and we need x number more dollars to carry out our mission.

The reason I want to give you this background is that we will be late again in providing States with funds unless we get this resolved very quickly. This will impact on the third- and fourth-quarter allocations to the States. The allocation of money to the States for the first and second quarter of this year was late. FNS did not receive funds until January. So States did not receive funds until the first part or middle of the second quarter. That is not our intention. Our intention, and one which we have not been able to fill, is that we get the money out to the States in advance of the quarter. If you are going to begin a quarter October 1, 1978, we want you to have money prior to that time in the State. That is our goal. We are having trouble doing that this year.

One other item I thought I should mention is that the difference under the old law and the new law. Holly mentioned that title III, prior to amendment, did not give the same commodities. By definition under title III of the act, projects under that come under the category of an institution for our programs which means that they are only eligible for a given set of commodities, the ones that she mentioned, and not the full range of commodities. That is because of the way the law was written. I am not sure how the new law, with everything under title III, handles that.

I have asked Forrest Moore to accompany me here today so that he can give you a little bit of the flavor of the way the regional office of USDA in Denver works with the Montana distributing agent. As Senator Melcher pointed out, we at USDA have a number of people who can help at different levels and in different capacities once we know the problem. Our interface with the Office of Administration on Aging has not been as complete as maybe it should be. This is one of the things that we in the food and nutrition service are looking at very closely. I can't tell you quite how we will come out, but I can say that we need to work more closely with the Administration on Aging to determine the problems that you are having at State and local areas.

Senator, if I may, I would like to ask Mr. Moore to discuss their operation with the distributing agents.

Senator MELCHER. Yes, sure.

STATEMENT OF FORREST MOORE, ASSISTANT REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, MOUNTAIN PLAINS REGIONAL OFFICE, FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DENVER, COLO.

Mr. MOORE. Thank you, Dr. Kerchner, and thank you, Senator Melcher, for the opportunity to appear here today.

Earlier in your comments you remarked that you wondered if the State was here. They were scheduled to be here, but I understand the storm held them up and they couldn't make it over here.

I think, if I might hitchhike a little bit on Alma's comments on education, this always gives us a little better perspective if we understand how some of the people in Government operate in their jobs.

At the regional office in Denver, what we do is take orders from the State distributing agency, in this case it is the department of social and rehabilitation services here in Montana, of which aging services is

also a part of, we take those orders and we enter them into what we call a pipeline and we place them to our office in Washington, and also to the agricultural stabilization conservation service office in Kansas City, Kans., which is called the Kansas City Commodity Office. That is how we order the food. The food is transported into the State of Montana free of charge to the citizens of Montana. After the food comes in to the State of Montana, since Montana has one central receiving point, which is Capitol Transfer & Storage in Helena, they are offloaded there at that warehouse and once they are offloaded off either a railcar or a truck, depending on the way they are shipped into the State, and tallied and signed for, they become the property of the State of Montana. Then it becomes the State of Montana's, and, in particular, the department of social and rehabilitation services' economic assistance to division's responsibility to get them to what we call the recipient agencies.

SRS has four commodity programs that they administer. The department of education has one, which is the school lunch program. I am sure a lot of you are familiar with that one too.

One of the things that we don't do for the State of Montana is we don't give them any money with which to operate this program. We do give one of the programs some administrative money, the needy family program, which Holly referred to a while ago, which orders on a quarterly basis. We give them administrative money to operate their program with.

Essentially the title III program in Montana rides on the coattails of the needy family program in Montana. We finance the needy family program in Montana 100 percent USDA funds, so you people aren't being charged anything at the State level. What you are being charged for is transportation charges out to the local projects.

One of the statements that Holly made about peanut butter, dry milk, and butter, I would like to read to you some of the items that are currently on order, commodity items that are on order for the State of Montana. They have not been received yet, all of them, maybe any of them, but they are on order. Frozen french fries, instant mashed potatoes, canned tomatoes, canned tomato paste, canned applesauce, canned sweet potatoes, frozen mixed vegetables, canned vegetarian beans. If anyone doesn't know what canned vegetarian beans are, that is pork and beans without the pork. Canned corn, frozen potato rounds, frozen chicken, ground beef, turkey rolls, whole turkey, canned boned poultry, canned beef and natural juices, canned peaches, fresh apples, canned vegetarian beans, canned corn, frozen corn, canned tomatoes, tomato ketchup, and turkey rolls. That is the basis of my statement.

Thank you.

Senator MELCHER. I have a question. Are those commodities you are listing under title III or title VII or what is the exact status? It seems to be quite confusing.

Mr. MOORE. Those are title III commodities.

Senator MELCHER. And we are operating under title III, are we not?

Mr. MOORE. That is correct.

Senator MELCHER. We can forget about title VII then and title III will cover not just a few basic commodities that used to go to institutions, but will cover the whole broad range of the commodity program or the commodities that are available for the school lunch program?

Mr. MOORE. That is correct.

Mr. KERCHNER. When the law was amended by the Congress, it essentially did away with title VII and incorporated it into title III.

Senator MELCHER. Under the law as it is now, is it clear that a senior citizen center is an institution and therefore qualified for any of the nutritional programs that were previously available for an institution?

Mr. KERCHNER. The way I read the law, the congregate centers and the home delivery programs are both eligible for the commodities.

Senator MELCHER. And they are treated as institutions?

Mr. KERCHNER. Yes; in the broad sense of the word.

Senator MELCHER. I know that was our intent. It makes it cleaner and it is better understood. That means a whole broad list of commodities.

Mr. KERCHNER. The list as Mr. Moore stated, plus some more.

Senator MELCHER. Now for institutions. What was the cost? I am searching for what was the cost for institutions. Was it a percentage cost, was some of it free or how was it arrived at?

Mr. MOORE. I am not sure about your question, Senator Melcher, but the one thing I can say is what we call the charitable institutions, there is \$25 million, as I understand it, set aside for that program for this year as opposed to whatever we are going to be at for title III. The institutional programs themselves only receive section 416, which is price support commodities, typically grains and dairy products.

Senator MELCHER. Now I am getting confused again.

Mr. KERCHNER. When you said institutions earlier, I did not intend to imply that they are the same as charitable institutions, which is another outlet for commodities, and they only receive section 416 foods. Under the old title III that Holly mentioned, those projects had to participate as charitable institutions to receive any commodities. Under the current title III, incorporating title VII and title III together, they are no longer considered charitable institutions. They are considered the congregate elderly feeding sites and home delivered, which get the full range of commodities and not just section 416 foods.

Senator MELCHER. But don't get as much money or have to pay more for it?

Mr. KERCHNER. They all get 38.5 cents.

Senator MELCHER. That doesn't vary, then?

Mr. KERCHNER. No; that does not vary.

Senator MELCHER. When you said \$45 million was available for title III, do you mean this current fiscal year?

Mr. KERCHNER. Yes; this current fiscal year. That is the 38.5 cents multiplied by x number of meals.

Senator MELCHER. So that really has nothing to do, then, with the whole process of determining what will be on the list this fall?

Mr. KERCHNER. No, sir.

Senator MELCHER. Let's go back to that, then. This has come up several times for me personally and a couple of times in the testimony today. I think Holly has identified it. If you have to wait that long to find out what you can order, it seriously handicaps the program. Is there anything wrong with speeding that up? I don't want to change anything too much. For one thing, you mentioned by law you can't notify the markets what you are considering buying because you will

disturb the market and the market would go up. All right. So that wouldn't be fair and it doesn't make good sense to do that. Couldn't you go through the same process that you do before you go to the CCC concurrently with the CCC?

Mr. KERCHNER. Yes. I think we attempt to do that, but we are off on our timing. That is our own internal problem which we are trying to correct. That is, notifying the States to request the projects to tell them what kind of commodities they would like so that we can put together a shopping list when we go to the board and say here is what title VII wants, here is what the schools want, if you can work that in to the purchase plan we would like to do that. We are out of phase with that, Senator, and we are trying to get back into phase.

Senator MELCHER. As a matter of fact, the States could notify you in May and then you would have that part of it out of the way.

Mr. KERCHNER. That is right, but in May we do not know what will be available. We cannot obtain CCC board approval on a purchase docket in May for purchases that are to begin in October. Market conditions are too fluid for that. We can request earlier approval.

Senator MELCHER. That is an in-house correction that you can make yourself?

Mr. KERCHNER. Yes.

Senator MELCHER. We will count on you making that correction.

The whole process in which you determine how much is going to be grown and what the weather conditions, marketing conditions, are, what the demand is, is one that generally takes you into May or June before you go to the CCC board, or is it even later than that?

Mr. KERCHNER. It is later than that. Often it is not until the beginning of the fiscal year.

Senator MELCHER. That would be October.

Mr. KERCHNER. That is right.

Senator MELCHER. Now, that is a real problem.

Holly, when do you need to know? When do you need to know what types of commodities will be available?

Ms. LUCK. We would need to know about midsummer, which would then correspond to the nutrition project and area agency planning cycles. Then we could subsequently inform the USDA while they negotiate with the CCC.

Senator MELCHER. Maybe, Mr. Kerchner, you can take that up back at the Department and see whether that can be recognized.

Mr. KERCHNER. In response to Holly and other people's concerns about not knowing early enough, as a rule of thumb the historical data have shown that we buy the same types of commodities year after year. The quantities vary. The one that varies the most probably is the red meat, but in terms of the canned fruits and vegetables, we buy about the same amount. As a rule of thumb, you can depend on those kinds of commodities year after year. They will vary somewhat depending on the market conditions, especially in the red meat.

Senator MELCHER. You know you are going to buy hamburger every year and you are going to buy turkey every year.

How about this point that Holly brought up about being able to order more than once a year?

Mr. KERCHNER. The way we work that is periodically we make buys which are for certain shipping dates. For example, chicken is generally purchased in July and the shipments begin in August.

Fruits and vegetables are generally purchased in August or at the end of the growing season for delivery October through February, and so on down the list of items. What is missing in part of this is in terms of the interface in the State between the DA and the AOA. We ask the distributing agent to find out a general shopping list of the commodities that people would like. The Administration on Aging should have input into that and if they don't within the State, then we need to talk to the distributing agent and insure that that is done. Or the Administration on Aging needs to force themselves upon the distributing agent to do that. That list, then, is given to us and we use that in the purchase plan. What is missing, and I am not sure how to get around this, is to give the State feedback on what they can expect. We share with the DA's when we make the purchases. I would think that would be the opportune time for the Administration on Aging to get that information from the DA so they could say, if chicken is on their list, we are going to get some chicken in about August or September. There may be another system we could devise. However, I think it is a matter of communications not flowing all the way down, Senator.

Senator MELCHER. Holly, I would like to ask you since when the commodities are delivered to the warehouse in Helena they are State property and whatever comes after that in transportation costs are either paid for by the State or by the recipient, and I guess it is the recipient, isn't it a little bit unfair, though, that for a small community with a smaller amount that the transportation costs for the actual commodities received is going to be greater, is it not?

Ms. LUCK. What we try to do is piggyback as much as we can for the smaller communities. For example, the truck would stop at key points along the way and drop off the foods as ordered prior by the nutrition projects. The burden, unfortunately, does lie with the grantee for picking up the total cost of shipment because we are not given additional funds from the USDA to pay for that.

Senator MELCHER. Has anybody thought to ask the legislature for funds to pay for it since the USDA has paid the whole cost of delivery?

Ms. LUCK. That is a good point. The aging budget has been submitted prior to my appointment as bureau chief. Today is my 74th day as bureau chief and hopefully there will be a 75th day, one day at a time. We are faced with a very conservative legislative session. This Friday will be our budget hearing and perhaps this subject may come up. Hopefully, I will be able to address it. Had I had the opportunity to have input into the aging budget, that would have been one of many requests that I would have submitted to the legislature. The unfortunate thing is now it is too late, I would guess, for this session. To wait 2 years is certainly no answer. I hate to put it back on the Federal Government and say, OK, the move is yours. If you could provide some guidance as to where we might receive those resources, I would pursue it.

Senator MELCHER. I guess our stock answer is there is always revenue sharing. When the State gets its share of revenue sharing, I hope that there is a provision in the law that wouldn't prohibit using a portion of that for these transportation costs. I know that is an item and why commodities are sometimes not used because the transportation costs to a larger center such as Missoula may be no problem, but it might be a huge problem at Whitehall or Culbertson.

I would think that sometimes you might have to use transportation such as buses, would you not, to really get it there at the right time?

Ms. LUCK. I think we would have to if it would accommodate our needs, but I am quite sure it wouldn't because the commodities have to be stored at the proper temperatures, et cetera. I am not sure that buses could accommodate us.

Another problem that needs to be mentioned is that we currently, the aging service, currently does not pay for storage costs at our commodity warehouse. We are not—we do not have any funding provisions available to pay the distributing agent to store the foods in the warehouse when they do arrive. Of late that really hasn't been a problem because we haven't had any food to store. Eventually we might. The fact remains that the warehouse costs are incurred in storage and who will pay for the aging food to be stored? Presently Family Feeding is picking up the bulk of the costs.

Senator MELCHER. I see. That is why you made that remark about piggybacking on Family Feeding, is that right, Mr. Moore?

Mr. MOORE. Yes, sir.

Senator MELCHER. I wonder, Mr. Kerchner, if you could provide me with information by March 15 of this year on just what is being done within the department to speed up the thing and move up to Holly's deadline. I make that request not only on behalf of our State of Montana, but I think we would find it would be very helpful in most other States too.

Mr. KERCHNER. We will be glad to supply you with some information on what we can do in that regard.

Senator MELCHER. I am going to allow questions from the floor if anybody would like to question this panel or make some comments regarding this. We may get some more good ideas from some of you out there. If you would, approach this place right here if there are any questions or comments.

Yes, please.

A VOICE. Are those commodities for the Indians too or is that a separate group that takes care of them?

Mr. KERCHNER. I am going to let Forrest handle that.

Mr. MOORE. Ma'am, there are, as I said earlier, five different programs in the State of Montana, four of them are under SRS-1 or department of education. One of the programs is the needy family program for Indian reservations. The bulk of the food in the warehouse in Helena is for that program. They have something like over 2 million pounds of food in that warehouse right now.

A VOICE. I am wondering why old people or senior citizens aren't sent frozen fruits and vegetables rather than canned vegetables because the canned vegetables have so much salt in them and most older people have trouble with their hearts and strokes and can't have salt.

Mr. MOORE. I would like to have a little input to that. One of the basic reasons is facilities to store the frozen food.

Mr. KERCHNER. A lot of this is dependent upon the purchases that are made, whether it is in the canned or frozen state. In terms of reducing salt, we have moved ahead in several cases to reduce salt in all the canned products as much as we can, especially in the canned beef. Another one that may be of concern to you is sugar. We are asking now and getting more canned fruits in natural or light syrup than in the past.

A VOICE. While on the subject of salt, there is another product, cheese, sausages, they are always so full of salt and spices that we are having a hard time working with them.

Mr. KERCHNER. I suspect that salt is necessary for the curing and the shelf life of those kinds of products. I think where your concern is, is whether or not you have asked for those kinds of products or not, the cheese, and I know some feeding sites have more cheese than they want. That may be as a result of an order to meet commodity entitlement.

Senator MELCHER. I think both of those salt questions are extremely important. After all, we want the Department of Agriculture to be the leader in nutritional advice. I would like to know a little bit more about this. When they call for bids, CCC is going to put the specifications in the call for bids, are they not?

Mr. KERCHNER. That is right. We have rewritten specifications for the canned beef and poultry and peaches. I am not sure about pears yet. We want suppliers to reduce sugar and salt. Mrs. Foreman, our Assistant Secretary for Consumer Marketing Services, has been very instrumental in trying to reduce the level of salt, sugar, and fat in the school lunch program, in the foods we purchase and in trying to work with the Food and Drug Administration to change the specifications they have, as well as ones the Department has, in that regard. Progress is slow, but we have made some steps in the last 2 years.

Senator MELCHER. Well, we will watch what happens this year in your call for bids. Carol Foreman has had about 2 years now to get those changes in. I know they are very important to her. I think these points are very well made and these commodities can be tailored for the elderly through the specification process and we should be doing that, we absolutely should be doing that. Low salt is something that can and should be obtained in commodities.

Holly, do you have anything further?

Ms. LUCK. No, sir, I don't.

A VOICE. It seems to me that when you come to the subject of salt and sugar that the Government should be leading in this particular field of health. The Government is certainly not setting an example by furnishing these foods.

Senator MELCHER. That is absolutely correct. I do happen to be a member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, a member of the McGovern Nutrition Subcommittee and it is very high priority with us and we expect the Department to get right into the lead on that. We think they will. Carol Foreman is an ideal person to make sure that is done within the Department. I am sure she is right on top of it. We will check it out very carefully this year to see how these calls for bids are made by the CCC for the senior citizens programs.

A VOICE. My question is directed to Ms. Luck. You mentioned that when you send commodities out from the warehouse that you piggy-back these for the different communities. Our understanding is that the seven reservations in Montana pay in for their transportation. My question is, is that money being used to bring our commodities to our reservations or where is it going?

Ms. LUCK. The money that you pay for transportation of commodities goes for the payment of the truck to transport the commodities to the various reservations. It goes strictly for the transportation of the food.

Senator MELCHER. Each reservation or each senior citizen center has to pay their own charges, is that correct?

Ms. LUCK. That is correct.

Senator MELCHER. In some instances I think that is totally unfair, particularly for the small communities and particularly for the ones that are further away from Helena. I always did think that Helena should have been more in the central part of the State, coming from Forsythe.

Ms. LUCK. We would gladly move Helena to North Dakota until the legislative session is over with.

Senator MELCHER. One time about 25 years ago there was a move, when the legislature met in Helena, they spent about the first 2 weeks talking about how they were going to act on a bill introduced by the representative from Sweet Grass County whose bill was to move the State capitol to Big Timber. We were all for it. That wasn't very far from us.

If there are no further questions, thank you all very much. I think you have been very helpful. We may find that during the course of the rest of this conference going on this evening and tomorrow that there will be more questions that will come up. I am sure that we can forward them on to you.

Thank you very much.

The committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:45 p.m., the committee stood adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED BY INDIVIDUALS

ITEM 1. STATEMENT OF PATRICIA CONNOLLY, GREEN THUMB WORKER, MISSOULA, MONT.

Income for some older people is a problem that causes hardship not only concerning the cost of energy, but in all areas. I had career-status with the Federal Government but found that getting reinstated was impossible. Too, I had a beaten path to the University of Montana in my effort to get a clerical position. I was given tests for various jobs at the university. I passed these tests with good scores only to find that younger people were hired in preference to me. This went on for 3 years. I felt I was discriminated against and it left me with feelings of depression, insecurity, and futility. I have also been penalized, in a sense, because I had to take my social security at 62 in order to survive. My office skills are such that from time to time I picked up typing through newspaper ads I placed, but still I could not get a job anywhere.

My social security amounted to \$159 per month. How was I to meet my basic needs such as, Blue Shield medical insurance, life insurance premiums, transportation expenses, medications, clothing, etc. I am much more fortunate than most people because I live with my son and he lightens my burdens somewhat. But what if I did not have a son and if I did not have Green Thumb income? What about the many older people in Montana who face the battle alone?

My plight seemed desperate for I believe in paying my own way. Then the wonderful day came when I heard about Green Thumb and the great things they did toward employing the elderly.

Green Thumb workers need a sponsor and RSVP became my sponsor. I am very thankful that RSVP gives me work that is dignified and useful. I am doing the type of work for RSVP (and doing it well) that all the places I searched for work would not hire me to do. Senator Melcher, I am a very capable worker, all I needed was a chance.

I want to conclude my remarks by pointing out two things: (1) work is extremely hard to find if you are older, (2) without work we cannot pay bills. Winter and energy costs are two of the worst things to keep up with. Winter not only means higher energy costs, but higher cost in almost all areas, such as, car repairs, home repairs, and even food. My son's heat bills for December and January were \$157. Our home is fairly new and well insulated. If I had to face the cost alone, I really don't know what I would do, especially if I did not have my Green Thumb income.

Senator Melcher, I strongly urge you and all our other Senators and Congressmen to support such excellent programs as Green Thumb and RSVP so that they may continue to provide the elderly, who need work, with a means to meet our basic needs with dignity and pride. Both programs have allowed me to have the type of living that allows me self-respect. You'll never know how much that means to me.

ITEM 2. STATEMENT OF GEORGE ERICKSON, STATE DIRECTOR, MONTANA FARMERS UNION GREEN THUMB, MISSOULA, MONT.

Senator Melcher, it is a pleasure to appear before you. I will not explain Green Thumb because you are so familiar with the program. In fact, you were made our first honorary Green Thumber at Belt, Mont., some years ago.

I want to testify about the income of many older Montanans and the cost of energy. I will give some general statistics that concern a rather large group of people, and then Green Thumb worker Mrs. Pat Connolly will individualize her situation as to income and energy costs.

Green Thumb, as of January 31, 1979, has 222 people employed. These people average an even 66 years of age with an educational level of 9.27 years. Their average family size is 1.54 persons. Their pre-Green Thumb income averaged \$2,213.45 per family or \$1,429.52 per family member. It is estimated in Montana, that close to 13,000 people 55 years and older are eligible for Green Thumb. I would suggest the statistics for these 13,000 people would closely parallel those of the 222 people we actually have statistics on.

I am greatly concerned about the economic situation of these people and especially of the energy costs they face. Energy costs are the single most vital necessity of life in any budget. Not only are these limited income elderly faced with a cruel and unrelenting increase in the cost of energy, but they must also cope with the erratic course of our Montana winters. How defeating and fateful it must seem to these people when they experience a winter such as the one we are presently in. How can they plan for and cope with the squeeze created by increasing energy costs and the day after day, numbing cold of this winter? Every time I pass the home of an elderly friend I wonder how many dollars are going up the chimney and what hardship this is causing. I, personally, have been caught way off guard on the amount of energy it has taken to heat my home. In addition to fueling the main furnace, I have encountered hidden costs I never had to deal with before. We have had to use an electric heater, two electric blankets, and we have had to preheat the kitchen with our gas oven. These are items that are above what most winters have cost us. I would imagine the limited income elderly have faced these added costs also. But there is a big difference between my situation and theirs. I simply delayed buying some nonessential items to pay my energy bill. But what are they to do when all their income is already going toward necessities?

Senator Melcher, Mrs. Connolly will now present her testimony, trying to individualize my testimony into what a single, limited income elderly person faces. It has been a privilege to share this small piece of information with you.

ITEM 3. PAPER SUBMITTED BY RUSTEM MEDORA, PROJECT DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PHARMACY, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, MISSOULA, MONT.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ELDER WORKSHOP PROGRAMS: A SURVEY STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of elder workshop (a project funded through title I of the Higher Education Act of 1965) was to help older adults and practitioners who provide services to the elderly, understand and cope with the problems which occur in the aged.

The members of the advisory committee to elder workshop decided that the survey research method would provide the broadest possible base of information regarding needs and preferences for workshop programs.

The survey research fulfills one of the objectives stated in the proposal; namely, to gather data and determine the type of workshop programs that will effectively accommodate the interests and needs of both older persons and practitioners.

METHODOLOGY

Two different surveys were conducted: (a) Older adult survey, and, (b) the practitioner survey. (See exhibit A for the survey instruments used for this study.)

Printed questionnaires together with a letter of transmittal were mailed out to persons over 55 years of age and to practitioners who work with the elderly, between January and February 1978. Membership lists of different clubs, organizations and professional associations were utilized to identify the target populations. Exhibit B [retained in committee files] reflects the organizational and geographical distribution of the questionnaires. A total of 1,355 questionnaires were sent to older adults and 1,174 to practitioners. By the time of the survey cut-off date (March 3, 1978) a total of 188 older adult and 249 practitioners replies were received giving a 13.9 percent¹ and 21.2 percent response, respectively.

¹ The rate of return among older adults could have been higher if we had identified those individuals whose membership cuts across two or more organizations.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The items in the questionnaires were classified under two broad categories. Some questions were tailored to explore subject areas older adults and practitioners were most interest in. Responses to the rest of the questions, on the other hand, gave us input on how to plan the format for the workshops.

In the question number 6 of the older adult questionnaire and question number 10 of the practitioner questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their topic preferences by assigning a numerical value of:

High priority	1
Medium priority (high)	2
Medium priority (low)	3
Low priority	4

Spaces left blank were recorded as 0=no interest.

Tables I, II, III, and IV reveal the order in which the different topics were prioritized by the two kinds of respondents.²

TABLE I.—*Health related topics as ranked by practitioners (N=249)*³

	Cumulative score
Social topics:	
Alternatives to Institutional Care for the Elderly	410
Coordination of the Delivery of Existing Services for the Elderly	295
Aging: Old Myths and New Facts	264
Communicating with the Elderly and their Families	264
Services for Low-Income Older Adults	208
Involving Older Adults in Planning and Directing Programs for the Elderly	208
Developing Protective Services for the Elderly	113
How to Write a Grant Proposal for Projects for the Elderly	99
Volunteerism and Management of Senior Voluntary Programs	84
Supervisory Skills for Professionals	66
Social Action Outreach Skills	54
Services for Minority Older Adults	36
Other: Psychological Aspects and Needs of the Elderly	10

TABLE II.—*Health related topics as ranked by practitioners (N=249)*

	Cumulative score
Health related topics:	
The Aging Process	254
Nutrition and Feeding Problems	232
Use and Abuse of Medication by the Elderly	221
Stroke Related Problems and Treatment	218
Mental Health and the Elderly	212
Physical Therapy for the Elderly	185
Geriatric Pharmacology	182
Geriatric Medicine	170
Hearing Problems in the Elderly	106
Alcohol, Food and Drug Interaction	95
Rheumatoid Arthritis in the Elderly	85
Diabetes Mellitus in the Elderly	76
Suicide and Death Among the Elderly	64
Nutrition in Cancer and GI Tract Disorder	37
Other:	
Home Health	4
Vision Problems and Eye Diseases	4
Neurological Changes Related to Aging	3

² The cumulative score was calculated by (a) multiplying the number of responses under a given topic by 4 (first choice), 3 (second choice), 2 (third choice), and 1 (fourth choice)—depending on the way the topic was ranked by each respondent, and (b) adding the products of each multiplication corresponding to the given topic. For example, the cumulative score (410) of Alternatives to Institutional Care for the Elderly in the practitioner's questionnaire was calculated as follows: (a) number of respondents, 1st choice, $51 \times 4 = 204$; 2d choice, $40 \times 3 = 120$; 3d choice, $35 \times 2 = 70$; 4th choice, $16 \times 1 = 16$. (b) $204 + 120 + 70 + 16 = 410$.

³ N=number of respondents.

TABLE III.—*Social topics as ranked by older adults (N=188)*

	<i>Cumulative score</i>
Social topics:	
Tax Laws, Estate Planning and Wills.....	187
Continuing Education Programs for the Elderly.....	187
Creativity in the Use of Free Time.....	152
Home Care and Home Services.....	150
Housing and Living Arrangements.....	130
Community Programs for the Elderly.....	120
Social Security and Medicare Services.....	113
Travel and Recreation.....	108
State and National Legislation in the Aging Field.....	92
Retirement Budgeting and Wage-Earning Activities.....	88
Consumer Problems Faced by the Elderly.....	87
Exploring Attitudes on Aging.....	53
Self-Protection and Defense.....	47
ACTION Programs for Older Americans.....	46
Sexuality and Aging.....	25
Family Relationships.....	21

TABLE IV.—*Health related topics as ranked by older adults (N=188)*

	<i>Cumulative score</i>
Health related topics:	
Preventive Medicine.....	278
Total Physical Fitness.....	237
Physiological and Psychological Changes in Older Adults.....	192
Good Nutrition.....	181
Arthritis.....	158
Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Drugs.....	117
Hearing Problems and Aging.....	106
Self Care (eyes, teeth, feet, etc.).....	79
Food Buying and Menu Preparation.....	75
Mental Health Services.....	74
Alcohol, Food and Drug Interaction.....	35
Other:	
Medical Expenditures (Doctor, Hospital, Insurance Costs).....	8
Failing Memory.....	4

Item No. 5 of the practitioner questionnaire and item No. 13 of the older adult questionnaire are identical. Respondents were asked to rank problem areas (unmet needs) that they felt were most prevalent among the elderly. This question was included to determine if the two groups share similar views about issues that might be problems for the elderly.

The responses are summarized in tables V and VI.

TABLE V.—*Priority problems rated by older adults*

	<i>Cumulative score</i>
Unmet needs:	
Health Services.....	398
Income.....	385
Housing.....	266
Escort and Transportation Service.....	232
Legal Assistance.....	212
Nutrition.....	196
Effective Information and Referral Services.....	191
Home Maker Services.....	136
Recreation.....	121
Employment.....	101
Relationship with Family and Friends.....	92
Day Care Centers (Adult).....	40
Mental Health Services.....	3

TABLE VI.—*Priority problems rated by practitioners*

	<i>Cumulative score</i>
Unmet needs:	
Income.....	589
Health Services.....	351
Nutrition.....	345
Escort and Transportation Services.....	312
Effective Information and Referral Services.....	307
Relationship with Family and Friends.....	269
Homemaker Services.....	268
Housing.....	266
Recreation.....	181
Mental Health Services.....	123
Employment.....	116
Day Care Center (Adult).....	111
Legal Assistance.....	84
Other:	
Home Health Care.....	15
Consumer Problems.....	5
Architectural Barriers in Public Places.....	3

The elderly see their five most important problems as health services, income, housing, escort and transportation services and legal services. Practitioners, on the other hand, perceive the elderly's most pressing problems as income, health services, nutrition, escort and transportation services and effective information and referral services. Difference of opinion between the two groups is more pronounced on the issue of legal assistance but less so in that of housing and nutrition. Figure 1 graphically illustrates the comparative ratings⁴ of the problems.

⁴ The ratings are calculated by dividing the cumulative score of each issue into the total number of the respective respondents (188 older adults and 249 practitioners).

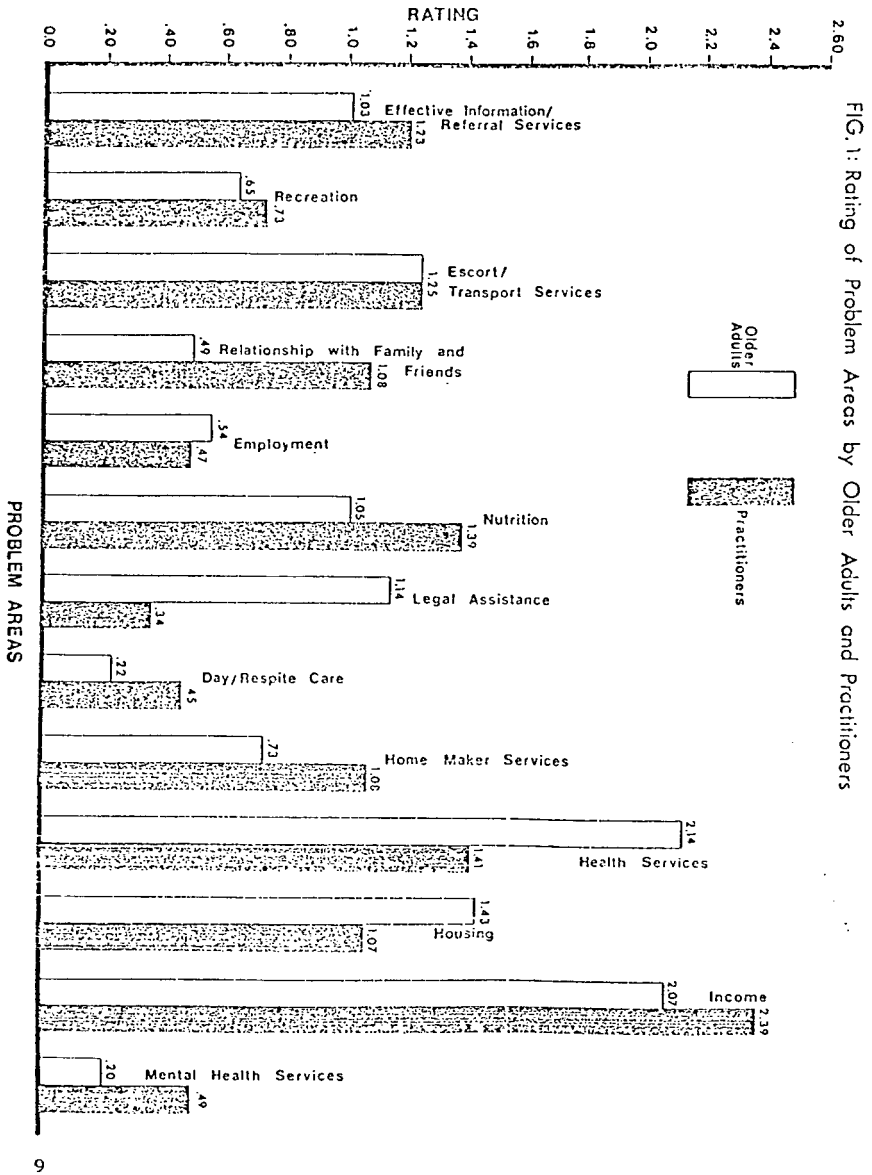


FIG. 1: Rating of Problem Areas by Older Adults and Practitioners

The following analysis related to the respondents' past experience with programs similar to the ones we proposed to offer, as well as suggestions about when and how to organize elder workshops.

Items Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 of the practitioners' questionnaire and items Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the older American's questionnaire sought to reveal the respondents' preferences as to the place, time, and length of the proposed workshops.

Questions No. 11 (practitioner) and No. 7 (older American): "Select one of the following locations where you would prefer to attend the workshops." Findings:

Location	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
U of M campus.....	91	30.2	76	49.3
Missoula, off campus.....	46	15.3	28	18.2
Kalispell.....	38	12.6	9	5.8
Butte.....	12	4.0	7	4.6
Hamilton.....	11	3.7	8	5.2
Dillon.....			5	3.2
Helena.....	24	8.0	21	7.1
Billings.....	32	10.6		
Great Falls.....	13	4.3		
Other places.....	34	11.3	10	6.5
Total (indicates multiple replies).....	301	100.0	154	99.9

The above tabulation implied that the majority of respondents preferred to have the programs held in Missoula in general, and the U. of M. Campus in particular. The findings are not surprising since 95 or 61.3 percent of the elderly respondents and 71 or 30 percent of the practitioners who responded to the questionnaire resided in Missoula.

Questions No. 12 (practitioner) and No. 8 (older American): "What month would be most convenient for you to attend such workshops?" Findings:

Month	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
May.....	139	50.7	79	52.7
June.....	72	26.3	42	28.0
July.....	32	11.7	13	8.7
August.....	31	11.3	14	9.3
Other.....			2	1.3
Total (indicates multiple replies).....	274	100.0	150	100.0

The results show that May is the most popular month for both older Americans and practitioners.

Questions No. 13 (practitioner) and No. 9 (older American): "Which part of the week would be best for you?" Findings:

Part of week	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Weekdays.....	174	74.0	129	88.4
Weekends.....	61	26.0	17	11.6
Total.....	235	100.0	146	100.0

Respondents from both categories overwhelmingly agreed that the programs should be held during the weekdays.

Questions No. 14 (practitioner) and No. 10 (older American): "What time of the day would be best for you?" Findings:

Time of day	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Daytime.....	193	82.8	120	82.2
Evenings.....	40	17.2	26	17.8
Total.....	233	100.0	146	100.0

Both practitioners and older Americans were unanimous in their choice of daytime programs.

Questions No. 15 (practitioner) and No. 11 (older American): "How long should the workshops last?" Findings:

Length of workshops	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1 week.....	8	3.3	34	24.4
3 days.....	34	14.0	47	33.8
2 days.....	125	51.4	45	32.4
1 day.....	76	31.3	13	9.4
Total.....	243	100.0	139	100.0

One- and two-day workshops are preferred by practitioners while two-day to three-day workshops is the primary choice among older Americans.

The following questions were asked for the purpose of exploring the probability of workshop attendance among the respondents of the questionnaire.

Questions No. 19 (practitioner) and No. 12 (older American): "If you would like to attend such workshops what do you think are the main obstacles which might prevent you from attending them?" Findings:

Obstacles	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Home responsibility.....	61	12.2	22	9.6
Registration fees.....	43	8.6	40	17.5
Job responsibility.....	142	28.5	19	8.3
Content of workshop.....	93	18.6	42	18.3
Distance.....	98	19.6	28	12.2
Other expenses.....	30	6.0	19	8.3
Lack of transportation.....			19	8.3
Indifference.....			14	6.1
Other.....	32	6.4	26	11.4
Total (includes multiple replies).....	499	99.9	229	100.0

The above statistics reveal that job responsibility was the major obstacle that practitioners thought would prevent them from attending the programs. On the other hand, content of workshop, registration fees and distance were the obstacles that were ranked highest by older Americans.

Questions No. 6 (practitioner) and No. 1 (older American): "Have you ever attended a conference, or a program that dealt with the needs of the elderly?" Findings:

Replies	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes.....	135	56.7	74	42.0
No.....	103	43.3	101	58.0
Total.....	238	100.0	175	100.0

While the majority of the practitioners indicated that they have attended programs on the needs of the elderly, a significant minority of older respondents have also attended such programs in the past.

Questions No. 9 (practitioner) and No. 5 (older American): "Thinking back to that conference/program, could you say how you happened to attend it?" Findings:

Factors that contribute to workshop attendance	Practitioners		Older Americans	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Friend told me about it.....	7	5.2	11	15.3
Heard about it on TV and radio.....			9	12.5
It was announced at a club meeting.....			19	26.4
Read about it in newspaper.....	30	22.2	12	17.0
Employment requirement.....	27	20.0		
Supervisor at work told me.....	17	12.6		
Agency worker from whom I receive services told me.....			16	22.2
Other.....	54	40.0	5	6.9
Total.....	135	100.0	72	99.9

The answers to the above questions were quite revealing in terms of the methods we should utilize to publicize the up-coming workshops. Most older Americans seem to be more receptive to direct means of communication about programs of this nature. In contrast, indirect communication is more effective among practitioners. For instance, "Read about it in a newspaper" and under "Other": "Invited to attend via mail" were ranked highest by the latter respondents.

In addition, the practitioners were asked the following questions:

Question No. 16 (practitioner): "Are you encouraged to attend such workshops by your organization?" Findings:

Replies	Number	Percentage
Yes.....	193	88.5
No.....	25	11.5
Total.....	218	100.0

It is evident from the response to this inquiry that a great majority of respondents felt that they are encouraged by their organization to attend workshops relating to the needs of the elderly.

Question No. 17 (practitioner): "Does your employing institution or employer provide you with in-service training in this area?" Findings:

Replies	Number	Percentage
Yes.....	101	46.8
No.....	115	53.2
Total.....	216	100.0

Since the majority of practitioners do not receive in-service training in the area of gerontology, it can be inferred that practitioners will be receptive to the workshops we plan to offer.

Question No. 18 (practitioner): "Will your employer pay for expenses involved in attending workshops of this nature?" Findings:

Replies	Number	Percentage
Yes.....	144	61.0
No.....	69	29.2
Maybe.....	23	9.8
Total.....	236	100.0

A fair majority of the respondents stated that their employer would pay for expenses involved in attending gerontology workshops.

Additional questions were included in the practitioners' questionnaire to help us identify the typical respondent.

Question No. 2 (practitioner): "Your job title and description." Findings:

Job title	Number	Percentage
Nurse.....	82	33.1
Administrator.....	80	32.3
Dietitian.....	19	7.7
Physical therapist.....	17	6.9
Speech pathologist.....	13	5.2
Pharmacist.....	12	4.8
Educator.....	9	3.6
Social worker.....	3	1.2
Physician.....	3	1.2
Other.....	10	4.0
Total.....	248	100.0

Question No. 1 (practitioner): "Organization you work for." Findings:

Organization	Number	Percentage
Hospitals and medical clinics.....	89	37.2
Manors, convalescent and nursing homes.....	42	17.6
Health department.....	20	8.4
Rehabilitation centers.....	25	10.5
Pharmacies.....	11	4.6
Others (with less than 10 responses).....	52	21.7
Total.....	239	100.0

Question No. 3 (practitioner): "What services and activities do you offer to the elderly?" Findings:

Services	Number	Percentage
Nursing care.....	78	29.7
Administration.....	56	21.3
Consultant dietitian.....	22	8.4
Physical therapy.....	17	6.5
Consultant pharmacist.....	11	4.2
Other (with less than 10 responses).....	64	24.2
Total (indicates multiple replies).....	263	100.0

Question No. 4 (practitioner): "How many individual persons (over 55 years of age) do you serve in an average month?" Findings:

Number of persons	Number	Percentage
0.....		
1 to 5.....	8	4.1
6 to 10.....	13	6.6
11 to 20.....	8	4.1
21 to 50.....	14	7.1
51 to 100.....	52	26.4
101 to 250.....	45	22.8
Over 250.....	28	14.2
Total.....	29	14.7
Total.....	197	100.0

Our research suggests that the typical practitioner respondent is a nurse or an administrator. The type of service he/she provides is in the area of nursing care or administration. Finally, his/her employment duties are performed in a hospital or medical setting, where 21-50 persons over 55 years of age are being served in an average month.

In summary, the survey results have confirmed our original assumption that there was a demand for workshops that deal with the social, psychological and health related concerns of the elderly. Both practitioners and other Americans indicated that they would be very receptive to such programs.

The survey research was only exploratory in nature and the findings should not be considered conclusive. Nevertheless, the results will serve as an important tool in formulating programs to be presented to older Americans and practitioners.

EXHIBIT A.—SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA,
Missoula, Mont., January 9, 1978.

DEAR FRIEND: We are presently planning workshops that will help train older adults to deal with their social, psychological and health related needs. Programs will also be presented for administrators and practitioners who work with the elderly. This project is funded under a grant from the community service and continuing education program, title 1 of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

We ask your participation in this four-page-long survey which will help us identify the subject areas you are most interested in, and which will assist us in planning the format for the workshops. Your name was selected from a list of administrators and practitioners in the State of Montana.

Please respond as best you can to each question. Where appropriate, please add your own viewpoint where it says "Other (please specify) _____." After completing the enclosed questionnaire please use the preaddressed postage-paid return envelope and mail it back to us at your earliest convenience. We hope to receive your completed questionnaire within a week after your receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions regarding items on the questionnaire, please feel free to contact Effie Koehn, research aide for this project, at 243-4934, between 9:15 and 11:15 a.m., Monday through Friday.

We greatly appreciate your effort to help us organize these programs. We, in turn, will be arranging for a number of specialists from our community and campus to lead the workshop sessions.

Please print your name and address on the last page of the questionnaire so that we can mail you the final workshop program that will contain all pertinent details.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

RUSTEM MEDORA,
Project Director, Associate Professor of Pharmacy.

