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THE ROLE OF FAITH-BASED CHARITIES IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, RESTRUCTURING, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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THE ROLE OF FAITH-BASED CHARITIES IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MONDAY, MAY 18, 1998

U.S. SENATE,
OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT, RESTRUCTURING,
AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SUBCOMMITTEE,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:07 p.m., in room SD–342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Sam Brownback, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senator Brownback.

Staff Present: Michael Rubin, Staff Director; Marie Wheat, Deputy Staff Director; and Esmerelda Amos, Chief Clerk.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR BROWNBACK

Senator BROWNBACK. Good afternoon. We will call the hearing to order. As a matter of fact, if our first panel of witnesses would like to go ahead and take their seats at the table, I think that would be a good first step for us to make.

I want to welcome everybody here today. Our hearing is going to examine the role of faith-based charity in the District of Columbia. I would like to give an especially warm welcome to our guests from the various charities throughout the DC area who are giving us their precious time and were willing to share with us today a little insight into how they serve the people of the District.

Last year, I visited several small charities in my home State of Kansas, and what I found were folks on the front lines, with open hearts and amazing love, who were living proof of the effectiveness of small, local charities. I was encouraged to see the success of faith-based ministries in responding to the needs of those around them.

I visited the Topeka Rescue Mission, the Marion Clinic in Topeka, and I had previously visited Salvation Army facilities. I saw really a broad range of local charities with open arms and hearts reaching out and really helping people. A lot of times, folks look at these and say, "It is too small to really do anything." The beauty of it is there are so many that are doing so much and reaching out and touching and helping and changing lives. I was very encouraged by that, and that is why I wanted to have the same sort of view on DC charities today, with a hearing first, and then I hope to get out within the next couple of weeks and visit a number of charities in the District of Columbia as well and see what things they are doing.

Certainly, we have problems in Washington, DC, in the Nation's Capital. There is poverty, drug addiction, crime and violence. Seemingly every day, we learn of new atrocities going on in the streets and even in our schools in the Nation's Capital. But what we often do not read in the paper are the stories of the ordinary people, the true heroes of our society, who are giving their lives, their hearts, and even their very destiny to help the people here in the District of Columbia. We want to look at that today.

The witnesses here today will share how they display compassion to the alcoholic and her children, how they administer "tough love" cloaked in empathy to drug addicts and prostitutes. It certainly is not easy work, I can assure anyone who is listening or watching; yet these witnesses today spend their lives doing this work day in and day out, helping people so much and reaching out to them in whatever condition they are in.

Part of the reason why I called this hearing today is that I believe we must encourage these charities—not discourage them. I want to lift up the good that they do and highlight their effectiveness so that others might follow the same example.

I am a Federal legislator, yet I believe the Federal Government is sometimes limited, and in many places often is limited, in its capacity to solve the problems that plague our Nation's Capital and even our Nation as a whole. I do believe that the Federal Government can assist in eliminating perverse incentives from our inner cities, encourage entrepreneurship and charitable giving. At a minimum, the Federal Government should not be a barrier to the work of charities.

As many of you know, I am part of a group of 16 Members from the House and 13 from the Senate who have already formed the Renewal Alliance. The mission of our group is "to build a partnership between government and community-based, nonprofit charities in order to promote real solutions to human problems."

To me, the Renewal Alliance is all about bringing balance to the relationship between the State and the institutions of civil society. We promote in the Alliance community renewal, economic empowerment and educational opportunities for low-income families.

In the next panel, we will hear from Senator Coats, who leads the Renewal Alliance, about some of the work that he has been doing and what else he feels is possible for us to do in the District of Columbia.

We will begin today by hearing from four local charities, and I am delighted that you have all been willing to join us today and hopefully receive a bit of recognition for all the great work you do, day in and day out, in a very difficult set of circumstances.

First, we will hear from Dr. Ed Eyring, President and Executive Director of the Gospel Rescue Ministries of Washington, DC Gospel Rescue Ministries helps crack addicts and the homeless getting men off drugs and teaching them practical skills.

Next up will be Hannah Hawkins, founder of Children of Mine, an after school program providing a hot meal, clothing and tutoring to needy children in Anacostia. I am looking forward to that testimony as well.

Next, we will hear from Jim Till, who will speak about the STEP program, Strategies to Elevate People, a ministry with services

ranging from summer day camp for children to adult literacy training.

And finally on this panel, we will hear from Amy Johnson, who will share about the Neighborhood Learning Center and their tutoring programs.

I am looking forward to hearing from each of you about how you feel your charity has worked, and also, please feel free to express any of the needs that you might have, or things that we might change in Washington as well.

I am delighted with all of your work. Mr. Eyring, let us hear from you first.

TESTIMONY OF DR. EDWARD J. EYRING, PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GOSPEL RESCUE MINISTRIES

Dr. EYRING. Thank you, Senator Brownback. Listening to you talk, I almost wondered if I needed to bother, but I guess I will go ahead.

Senator BROWNBACK. Yes, I want to hear about what you are doing and the obstacles you experience, too.

Dr. EYRING. Thank you so much for inviting us to come here and talk about good news, some of the good things that are happening in Washington, DC.

We believe that the root cause of drug addiction, crime and homelessness is often alienation of the individual from conventional society, and we believe that Jesus provides the most appropriate model for us to follow to see fundamental heart changes within the individual.

I most particularly would like to tell you about what we at Gospel Rescue Ministries are doing to model the character of Jesus in such a way that the bonds of alienation are broken, and lives are transformed.

Now, if proof of any pudding is in the eating, then the proof of what we do should be transformed lives, and I have taken the liberty of bringing some of that proof with me.

The first person I would like to introduce is my wife, Mary Jane, who lives with me at Gospel Rescue Ministries and shares our lives with the 110 men there—just eight blocks from where we are sitting right now.

Senator BROWNBACK. Yes; I drive by it once in a while.

Dr. EYRING. Come in; drop in.

Mary Jane believes that we should model a family, that that is the model we should create in our place, basically by caring for one another and thinking about one another. Mary Jane prayed for 14 years for me to get things straightened out and accept Jesus as the best model for our family.

Most folks pride themselves when they get into the centerfold of Playboy, but my wife made the centerfold of *The Washington Times* a couple of weeks ago, and I just thought you would like to see her picture.

Senator BROWNBACK. Congratulations. I like that centerfold much better.

Dr. EYRING. I will leave you a copy.

I have also asked David Treadwell, who is the director of Central Union Mission, our sister faith-based organization here in the Dis-

trict, to join us to illustrate that genuine collaboration can actually occur between previously competing groups. People say, "You cannot work with them; they are your competitors." And I am saying that that is not actually true. Just last week, for example, David brought men and trucks from his mission to our mission to help us move furniture around, and in exchange, we gave him some of the furniture, so we both profited from that.

David has brought with him Brian Thompson.

Senator BROWNBACK. Welcome.

Dr. EYRING. Brian graduated from Michigan State, fell into some of the problems that you have been talking about, and got his life together at Central Union Mission.

I have also invited James Washington, who is probably the most famous member of our group, who works here on Capitol Hill—as you all know, Senator Coats talks about him quite a bit—he made the centerfold, too. Only 12 months ago, James was a member of our change Point Ministry, working to overcome the effects of drugs and a shattered, dysfunctional family, which had left him alienated from society as we know it.

Just last week, a staff person from Senator Kennedy's office told my wife that whenever she is feeling pressured or frenzied, just seeing James helps her put things in better perspective so she can face the day here on Capitol Hill. Could it be that James' attitude and smile embodies the hope in Jesus that we all need to persevere?

We believe in establishing relationships as the preferred means of effecting change. After all, Jesus did just that. He walked along with his disciples and shared his life with them, and they were changed. We at Gospel Rescue Ministries develop relationships with our members. We believe that does as much or more, fundamentally, to transform lives than a well-crafted and executed case management strategy.

Sure, we do drug testing, but we combine it with life lessons. For example, we ask each person before the test if he has used. If his answer is "No," and the test says "Yes," the discipline that the member has chosen for himself is 10 times more severe than it would have been if he had been truthful. In that way, we build trustworthiness and honesty into these transformed lives.

To illustrate trustworthiness, I have asked Nate Jones, our food services coordinator and director of our Zacchaen Ministry to join us as well. The Zacchaens prepare our food and teach food services to their members.

Not only is Nate considered a benchmark in the food service business around the District, but he has one of the highest success rates in putting homeless and previously addicted men to work in food services within the District. Yet Nate himself fought off the grip of heroin addiction through our Ministry.

Gospel Rescue Ministries, with its effective record in transforming lives of crack cocaine addicts—our reported success rate is about 70 percent, as noted by Senator Coats—has caught the eye of the Department of Justice. Both Attorney General Reno and Assistant Attorney General Holder came to our neighborhood and transferred publicly a building named the Fulton Hotel—nicknamed "Murder Hotel"—to Gospel Rescue Ministries to be restored

to its historic beauty and used to provide a safe haven for women with drug addiction problems, primarily crack cocaine.

You may not be aware that women and children represent the most rapidly growing segment of the population addicted to crack cocaine. Our ministry to women will be patterned after our model program for men, which is called The Haven.

We believe that education is essential for successful integration into modern American society. And just parenthetically, we feel that the idea of "Work first" has a potential pitfall in providing education afterward. From our perspective, we really do believe that people ought to be educated first, rather than going to work and trying to pick up education secondarily.

Our School of Tomorrow provides GED training, and so far, nearly 50 people have successfully passed the exam in the last 2 years. Also, we provide training for the commercial driver's license. This course is taught by a man named Earl Cotton, who successfully transformed his own life at Gospel Rescue Ministries, and he can boast that 100 percent of the people, both men and women, who have completed his classes have passed the tests.

Hundreds of women and men have taken our computer courses, which employ state-of-the-art technology, which I guess is what they call 586's and 686's and Windows and those things that I do not know much about.

Our recent program within the school is called WorkNet. This is our strategy for welfare-to-work. It is designed to effectively equip people to enter the work force. Over the years, we have seen dozens find work, mostly in survival jobs, as part of our ministry; but this new strategy is designed not just to find survival jobs, which usually lead nowhere, but it is designed to find entry-level employment in a substantial career track, which matches the individual's gifts and dreams with what could reasonably be expected to lead to promotion.

And last but not least, I will tell you about Barnabas House. We are just opening this ministry today, as a matter of fact, as a transitional house for graduates of our other ministries. Many of these men simply cannot go back to the environment from which they came.

Our vision is to transform neighborhoods as well as individuals. We dream, for example, of establishing a site for cooperative ministry here in the District between many agencies to meet the complex needs of a whole neighborhood. I would like to cite an example of such a site, which is the McKinley-Langley-Emory School site in Northeast Washington, just off North Capitol Street. It is a place that we could just get so excited about. Wouldn't it be exciting to see the whole service community working together to see an entire neighborhood transformed into the hospitality image of Jesus.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify here. We look forward to hosting you and your staff at Gospel Rescue Ministries.

Senator BROWNBACK. I look forward to going there and seeing it. I have visited several in my home State, but I have not visited this one, so I look forward to getting there.

You remind me, too, what someone was telling me the other day that prostitutes, criminals, and tax collectors never felt uncomfortable around Jesus during his ministry in his time; it was only the

religious leaders who generally did—some of them, not emulating some of the models that he was talking about. And when that person mentioned that, I thought, well, that is certainly true, isn't it. He just reached out all the time in that transcendent love.

Dr. EYRING. That is right.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you. I look forward to some questions in a moment.

Ms. Hawkins, my staff has briefed me on your program and says I need to send my own kids to your program, that you have gotten them to where they respond quickly and well, and are doing great. I am looking forward to hearing about your program and how you do that.

TESTIMONY OF HANNAH M. HAWKINS,[1] FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, CHILDREN OF MINE CENTER

Ms. HAWKINS. Bless your heart, Senator Brownback.

My name is Hannah M. Hawkins. "Hannah" is a name you can spell backward and forward and get the same name. I would like to just deviate from my written speech for a few seconds.

Over 16 years ago, I was counseling adults who had a chemical abuse problem, and I saw that so much emphasis was being thrust toward the adult chemical abusers, that they did not understand society, and that they were really leaving behind the children, and consequently, they left a lot of children with dope-fiend behavior.

For 16 years, I have been dealing with children at the Children of Mine Center. I founded that center in my home, without any government funding, very few volunteers—just through the grace of God. I was just like the little old lady in the shoe who began to have so many children she really did not know what to do.

So I went to public housing, and they gave me a 2-bedroom apartment in the naked city. Now you will probably say to yourself, what does she mean by the naked city? The naked city is classified as a community without any resources and only a fool would dare to tread there. It was public housing in Sheridan Terrace. I founded the center with approximately 140 children coming from everywhere, not just in the community of Anacostia—but I also service children in Virginia and Maryland, as well as the District of Columbia.

Our slogan is "The cost of real love is no charge." There is no charge for the services that we provide at the Children of Mine Center.

And what I would like to emphasize—and I am glad that you eluded to it, Senator, because so many of our churches get caught up in church. And I hate to say this, because I always run into trouble, but if God would come down here, visibly, and stand before us, one of the first institutions he would close would be the churches, because many of the churches are not reaching out to the least, the lost and the lonely. And I can very well say that because of where I am located. I am located, sandwiched in between hundreds of churches, and I get no support. It is only from people that I least expect that support to come from, that I get it.

[1] The prepared statement of Ms. Hawkins appears in the Appendix on page 38.

I would also like to say that I got the idea for the Children of Mine Center in my home when I saw so much despair. I started with a group of small children at the age of 4. Now I am servicing 4 through 18. And I am here to say to you today, my brothers and sisters, that we have not seen anything yet. In the next few years, we will be dealing with children of the damned. And you wonder what I mean by that—a lot of it will come from welfare reform. Many of these children, after their mothers are displaced or placed off the roles, are being thrown away. I know, because I get at least 6 to 10 children per day, begging me for a place to stay. And these are not adults. These are children ranging in age from 4 through 10, a critical stage. I just left this morning The Psychiatric Institute, which is on Wisconsin Avenue. One of my 9-year-old boys tried to commit suicide. These are the cases that I am running into every day.

I am glad to know that you are not just sitting up here in these marble halls, behind a desk. I am glad to know that you are coming out, because that is the only way that you can really say that you have seen the true picture.

I would also like to say that I have lobbied the DC Council, I have lobbied many other congressional aides, trying to reestablish not only my place—because I am just busting loose at the walls—but I am trying to establish a settlement house for children.

Just alone, myself, I take home five and six children each night, along with many of the volunteers. Every day, a child comes, begging, "Please take me home," because of the despair that is happening in the houses.

We provide at the Children of Mine Center—and I know I have limited time, but I would just like to tell you about some of the services that we provide at the Center—we provide acting classes, arts and crafts, Bible study, computer training, drug and alcohol counseling—many teenage adolescents are currently drug abusers, and they are also selling at the ages of 11 and 12. We are also dealing with chronic prostitution. We have a food bank. We have fundraisers. We do outreach. I have two medical doctors who come in from the National Institutes of Health to give physical exams. We have creation. There is safe haven at the Children of Mine Center. I provide social services. We have sewing classes. We have teen services. Also, we have agricultural farming. There is a priest, Father Pittman, who is the oldest priest in the metropolitan area, who loans us his farm to teach the children about agriculture. At one time, the only chicken that some of our children had ever seen was in the grocery store, and that chicken or that rooster was dead; now, they are able to cultivate them on the farm and grow many of the vegetables that we eat at the Center.

We have barbering classes. We have dancing lessons. We have educational placement. A group of small donors provided scholarships, such as Dick Armey's office, for some of our children to go to parochial schools, and they are doing so much better since they have been placed from the DC Public School System into a private or parochial school setting.

We also provide foster care and adoption services; field trips; parenting skills for our parents; rap sessions; and regular physical checkups.

We serve them each and every day a nutritious dinner, and before they leave, we give them a snack to take home, because many of the children after leaving the Center will not receive anything to eat until they go to school the next day, because many of them, 99.9 percent of them, are on the school lunch program at the DC Public Schools.

We have tutoring, of course, and volunteer services. These are just a few of the many services we provide.

In closing, Senator Brownback, I would just like to say that the greatest sin—and this is not only coming from my head, but it is coming from my heart—the greatest sin that any of us can commit is the sin of omission. It is not the things you do; it is the things you leave undone that become your haunting ghost at night.

I am here, not pleading for Hannah Hawkins. I have a place to stay and food to eat. I am pleading for the children, the thousands of children that you—and not you per se, but your staff and the people here on the Hill—will hear about this in the next few years. Many of these children's parents and mothers have been incarcerated due to crack cocaine, and that is another ministry that I am dealing with. I just returned from Albuquerque, New Mexico, where I visited a brand new prison for women out there. Many of our mothers are out there, serving time for grand larceny, auto theft, and different things. And you know that when a woman is incarcerated, it depletes the family, because very seldom can a child go to visit the mother.

That is why it is very important that we have established here in the metropolitan area a correctional facility, because once Lorton is closed down in 2001, you can forget all about it—that will be the depletion of the family.

Thank you for listening me. If I went over my 5 minutes, I apologize.

Senator BROWNBACK. No apology necessary, Ms. Hawkins. That was a powerful statement and powerful testimony on the great work that you are doing. I look forward to talking with you and asking you some more about it.

Mr. Till, welcome to the Subcommittee.

TESTIMONY OF REVEREND JIM TILL,[1] EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STRATEGIES TO ELEVATE PEOPLE

Mr. TILL. I would like to thank you and say that it is a privilege and an honor to be here with you today.

The philosophy of the STEP Foundation is straightforward. We believe that poverty is a condition of the spirit which manifests itself in physical need. Poverty is relieved by a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, STEP focuses on services to others so that through this service, people might meet Jesus.

The mission of STEP is to help break the debilitating cycle of poverty and dependency—and I think we all know that once a person gets into this cycle, it is very hard, generation after generation, to break that cycle of poverty and dependency on outside agencies.

We try to replace it with a cycle of hope, stressing affirmation through faith in Jesus Christ and a firm educational foundation, so

[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Till appears in the Appendix on page 47.

that changes in self-esteem, self-reliance and self-sufficiency can follow.

Currently, we are working primarily in the Park View, Park Morton and Petworth neighborhoods of Northwest Washington. Our target populations in those neighborhoods are the children at Park View Elementary and Macfarland Middle School, and the parents of those students. At Park View, there are about 530 students; at Macfarland, there are about 450. With their parents, that is quite a target.

The programming that we have established was developed from some needs assessments by STEP staff, school administrators, and community leaders who helped us with the needs of the children and the adults.

Let me first address the programming that we have for children through the STEP Foundation. On the elementary school level, we have adopted four primary thrusts. The first thrust is our Thursday evening tutoring program where we try to match students with tutors on not more than a 3-to-1 ratio. It is a 2-hour session where students are primarily tutored in the areas of reading and math for 1½ hours. The last half hour is set aside for Bible study and snacks, so that the last thing these children hear about before they leave is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

At present in this tutoring program, we are serving about 85 children, with about 40 tutors who participate.

The second thrust of our children's program is a weekly Bible club. This club meets for 1 hour after school, and a great importance is placed on Biblical training in life skills. We currently have about 50 students who attend our Bible club on Monday afternoons.

A third thrust is the Pals Club. This involves pairing a group of volunteers with a group of children for a monthly event. It helps to put a positive role model in the children's lives and also helps them to experience life outside of the two or three blocks where they live and go to school.

You would be surprised how many children who live in Washington, DC have never seen this building, have never seen the Capitol, have never seen the White House, have no idea what it is. I remember the first time I took the children from the Pals Club out to McLean Presbyterian Church, and as we were crossing the river, a little third grade boy asked me, "How does this highway stay above the water?" He had never been across a bridge.

So we feel it is important to get these children out of those three or four blocks and let them see some other parts of life.

A fourth part of our children's program is our summer day camp. This helps to give the children something positive to do during the summer rather than learning to sell drugs, learning the street culture. This summer adventure includes daily Bible teaching, arts and crafts, swimming, organized game times, and we try to take them on at least one field trip a week. It is 5 days a week, 8:30 to 5 o'clock, and last summer, we had 100 children involved in our summer day camp.

For the middle-school children, which is a new thrust that we have just recently moved into this past year at the Macfarland Middle School, following the kids up from Park View, presently, we

are providing a Saturday tutoring and mentoring program. We have found a corporation that has adopted these children. They provide transportation for them each Saturday; they either take them to their corporate offices for tutoring, or on a field trip somewhere that they feel would be enjoyable for the children.

Each child has his own individual tutor or mentor who stays with him throughout the entire year, and it has gotten to be quite a sight for me to see how many of these tutors are calling the students at home now, asking, "Have you done your homework?" or they will call me and say, "Johnny called me last night and wanted me to look up something for him on the Internet." They have learned about the internet from this corporation, and they are helping them all during the week now, not just on Saturday. This has become a very positive role model situation for these junior high school students. We are also making plans right now to place a Bible club in the middle school for next year as well.

Also, we have a daily presence through myself or one of my part-time staff members in these two schools every day. Each morning, I try to make time to walk through Park View Elementary School, where my office is located, and walk by every classroom to see how the children are doing.

One thing our teachers are beginning to realize in the public schools is that bad behavior does not mean it is a bad kid, because we do now know what these children have come from when they come to school in the morning. I know that our lunch room is full of children at 7:30 every morning, waiting for breakfast, because there is no food at home. And at lunch, you can tell those who do not have food at home, because no matter how bad the lunch may be, they eat it. And most of them do not eat again until they come back.

We have worked with some children at the school—I am talking about kindergarten and first grade students—who may not have seen a parent for 2 or 3 days. They go home to public housing, let themselves in the door, take care of themselves all night, and they are the first ones at school the next morning to get something to eat.

Senator BROWNBACK. How old are these kids?

Mr. TILL. These are 4-, 5-, and 6-year-olds who are on their own. Their mothers are either on Georgia Avenue, dealing crack, or on crack, or they may come home after 3 or 4 days and straighten up for a while.

There is a lot of criticism of our public schools, but we have got to realize that these teachers have had to become psychologists and social workers, and before they can start their classes in the morning, they have got to understand what is going on with their children before they can ever get to reading and math. So it is not just a bad situation with the schools; the teachers are in a bad situation to try to teach. It is not that they are not putting forth an effort. I am a great defender of some of our good teachers and our good principals.

We do have a daily presence in the schools which allows us to pray with children—I have had teachers ask me to come in classrooms—"Could you start our day off with prayer?" Teachers are not allowed to do that, but I can do that because I am not a school em-

ployee. I can pray with children, and I can help them with their needs.

We also believe that it is important to help the family as much as possible, so we have an Adult Education Academy as well. We believe that the best way to actually help a child is to turn a parent's life around so that parent can help that child as well. If we can get a mother who can turn their lives around to Christ, become productive and deal with that child, then the child's problems are primarily over with, and that child will have a positive model at home; we do not have to take him outside the home.

We do this through two vehicles. The first is the Adult Education Academy. The academy's goal is to increase the literacy and the life skills of its students. We can educate a drug addict, but then we have an educated drug addict. If we do not change their life skills, changing what is on the inside of them through Jesus Christ, they are no better off—they are not going to be able to hold a job, and they are not going to be able to keep their family together.

So a lot of our teaching is through spiritual values and personal growth, and the education portion then falls into place.

We have weekly focus groups where these students can get together with their peers and learn to interact with each other in a positive way, rather than getting mad at somebody and reaching around and slapping them or something. They learn how to deal with anger in the proper way, and they learn how to deal with conflict in the proper way. Through these focus groups, they can learn to apply the new life skills that are being taught to them.

The second thrust, quickly—and I know I am running short on time—the second vehicle we use is care teams. This is where we try to affect the neighborhood rather than just the family. This is done by one of our academy students reaching back to four of her neighbors and bringing them into a little group together. This academy student then helps to mentor these other four families, and at the same time, all the members of this group are helping each other and encouraging each other. From this, change not only comes to the family, but change comes to neighborhoods also.

STEP is very volunteer-intensive. We have very few paid staff; we depend heavily on volunteers, as you have heard from our tutoring and mentoring programs. We have quite a few good volunteers now, but as with all organizations, we always need many, many more.

In closing, I would just like to quote from the Apostle Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 10, Verse 33, where he says: "For I am not seeking my own good, but the good of many, so that they may be saved."

As we at STEP attempt to fulfill this scripture, we ask for your prayers and the prayers of your colleagues so that we can continue to bring Jesus to them so that they may be delivered out of the lives that they are in now.

I would like to thank you once again for allowing me to be here today.

Senator BROWNBACK. We are happy to have you here, Mr. Till, and I appreciate that statement of what you are doing to provide nurture to both the soul and the body.

Next, we will hear from Amy Hunt Johnson, director of the Neighborhood Learning Center.

Thank you very much for joining us today, Ms. Johnson. We appreciate your appearance here today.

TESTIMONY OF AMY HUNT JOHNSON,[1] DIRECTOR, NEIGHBORHOOD LEARNING CENTER

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to testify this afternoon. My name is Amy Johnson, and I am the director of the Neighborhood Learning Center.

We are a faith-based organization just down the street, at 9th and Maryland Avenue, less than a mile, and we are an out-of-school-time program providing a place where students and their families can learn and grow together.

Through our after school and summer enrichment programs, Neighborhood Learning Center provides remediation and academic enrichment, social skill development and spiritual training for children and teens located on Capitol Hill and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Center currently serves nearly 65 students in grades 1 through 12, and the majority of our students come from single-parent working families as opposed to some of the situations that we have heard about today, but we see some of the same kind of issues and problems that we have been working with.

Our Center works closely in partnership with Miner Elementary School but continues to work with our students as they graduate and either switch to other schools or move into junior high and senior high as well.

It is our vision that all of our students will be prepared with an academic, social and spiritual foundation. They will graduate from high school, successfully transition to higher education or full-time employment and become productive, contributing members of their communities.

NLC students will strive to love God, their families and themselves, valuing each other and all peoples.

After 15 years—we have been in operation for 15 years now—we have seen some of the fruit of our labors. One of our full-time staff members, Carmen Strong, who is here this afternoon, was one of our original students, and after she completed her college degree in elementary education, she came back and has been on staff for the last 3 years and leads our elementary education program.

Senator BROWNBACK. Welcome.

Ms. JOHNSON. We have five other students who are in institutions of higher education, and two more are considering enrollment this fall. In fact, 46 percent of our students continue into higher education, and we compare that to the DC public schools' average of 26 percent; so we are seeing some improvement there.

A full-time staff and many volunteers facilitate the academic tutoring and homework assistance, computer and reading labs, testing and advocacy, Bible study and enrichment activities, job training, camp opportunities, field trips and parent programs.

[1] The prepared statement of Ms. Johnson appears in the Appendix on page 49.

One of the second grade teachers in our partner school commented to an NLC staff member that she could tell which of her students attended the Center. Their word recognition skills were far more advanced than those of the other students. One student in the class was showing remarkable improvement, and her mother wrote us a note saying the Neighborhood Learning Center was "heaven-sent." She said her child was very slow in reading and that with the help of the Learning Center, she is 90 percent better.

We have noticed that our students really dislike science, and we are convinced that the reason for that is because they have not been given interactive, hands-on experience with science. Last summer, our students—similar to the Children of Mine experience—had the opportunity to really have some hands-on experience with science when they monitored the hatching of baby chicks, watched larva turn into butterflies, and they got to dissect frogs and a fetal pig.

One of our students whom I will call Lamont—I have changed the names of some of my students to protect their confidentiality—was having a really rough time during the summer until he watched the eggs hatch into baby chicks. Then, something really touched this young man, and the tenderness and care that came out of him was a sight to be treasured.

We believe that these are the kinds of experiences that make learning not only exciting but touch the very souls of young people.

This fall, Lamont's renewed interest in science continued, and he used some creative problem-solving and developed his own hands-on science experiment, which resulted in a first-place prize in science at his school. We feel like we accomplished something there.

But the Learning Center is more than academics, and I would like to share a story about a student who came to us just recently. Despite tremendous hardships at home, like some of the things we have heard today—his father is incarcerated, and his mom has a substance abuse problem—this young man, who was a very bright student, was having numerous discipline problems at school. While it took several months and a very persistent staff for us to get him into our Center, his grandmother finally completed the enrollment papers so he could participate.

When he brought in his first report card since his enrollment, we were actually pleased to see that his citizenship grade had improved tremendously. His teacher commented that his behavior and attention at school had improved significantly. We believe that this was true because Keith now has people who care whether he goes to school or not; he has people who care how his day went and whether he finishes homework; he now has someone who gives a warm greeting after school and offers encouragement on a job well done. This sounds insignificant, but it is critical to this young man's future.

It is a well-known fact that a young man will find his family somewhere on the street if he does not find it elsewhere.

Our students often say they love NLC because of all the wonderful places they get to visit and explore. We are convinced that in order to build dreams for the future, young people need to be exposed to the world, its different people and experiences.

We also believe that students should be rewarded for hard work and commitment and motivation. Frequently, these rewards at the Learning Center take the form of trips, near and far, to challenge students beyond their comfort zones. We have taken students whale-watching in the Atlantic Ocean, rock-climbing in Pennsylvania, and we are getting ready to go on a trip to Chicago with our students this week.

It is our desire to stand in the gap between school and our students' families. We believe the community has a significant role to play in supporting schools and families and can work successfully in bringing the two together. Our staff volunteer weekly in our partner school to aid in this process.

We all know the state of DC public schools, and I do not need to elaborate on that. We often see that students repeatedly fall through the cracks.

We have a student, Antonio, who has repeated the first, third and fifth grades, and it has only been through the efforts of our staff that this young man has finally been tested for learning disabilities. While designated to be socially promoted to junior high—you may have heard that all students who are 13 and still in elementary school will be socially promoted next year—we are hopeful that he will be placed finally in a setting that will meet his needs and that he will not be just socially promoted into the eighth and ninth grades.

Meeting the needs of the whole child includes working with our parents in being advocates for their children's education and teaching them what they should expect from their children's teachers and schools.

One of the hallmarks of the Neighborhood Learning Center is our long-term commitment made to students. Once a student is enrolled in the program and continues to meet our expectations, a commitment is made to walk with this student through high school.

Sheron is one of these students, and she is with me today. Sheron—she is waving.

Senator BROWNBACK. Welcome.

Ms. JOHNSON. Sheron came to us when she was in the third grade, as a struggling student who has a twin, and she was really struggling with her self-esteem. During her fifth grade year, we decided to put her as the lead in our Christmas pageant, convinced of that which Sheron did not even see in herself. When the parts were distributed, and Sheron was announced as the lead, I can still remember all the other students groaning and complaining that Sheron was going to ruin the Christmas play.

But they could not have been farther from the truth. As Sheron practiced, the hidden dramatic talent blossomed, and Sheron was the star of the show and changed forever in the process. Her self-confidence grew and spilled over into every area of her life. Preparing to graduate from Eastern High School in a few weeks, Sheron boasts of dramatic talent and recently performed in Othello at both the Shakespeare Theater and at B. Smith's in Union Station.

Knowing your students, their strengths and their weaknesses takes time, and over 75 percent of our students continue year to year, building the foundation for a brighter future.

I want to thank you for holding this hearing on faith-based organizations and the contributions that organizations like ours are making. So often, we are asked to minimize the faith component of our programs and downplay its significance in our success stories. However, just as we believe it is important to provide an academic and social foundation, providing a spiritual foundation is critical to the future of our students. A spiritual foundation provides the moral framework for the good decisionmaking that is just a practical application that we all know; but also, it provides the strength to stand firm in adverse situations.

Faith-based organizations like the Neighborhood Learning Center have to make the most of every dollar they receive, relying heavily on a small group of committed employees and volunteers to carry out its mission. I am convinced that some of the best work is being done in small, faith-based organizations. Imagine what we could accomplish with a greater resource base.

Thank you.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you very much, Ms. Johnson, for your testimony. That was a beautiful story about Sheron and the Christmas play in the fifth grade. It reminded me of the story they used to tell about Michelangelo, where he was rolling this big rock down the street in his village, and some people asked him, "Why are you sweating and rolling this big rock down the street?" And Michelangelo was reported to have said, "Because there is an angel in there, just waiting to come out." And I think there are angels within all people; we just have to figure out how to get them out.

Ms. Hawkins, your testimony was the most—not that all of you don't have excellent testimony and a lot of great accomplishments—but yours was perhaps the most troubling, where you said five to eight children each day are coming to you, asking for help.

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes.

Senator BROWNBACK. What ages are those children, and what kind of help are they asking for that is slipping so much between the cracks?

Ms. HAWKINS. I was sharing with the young lady who brought me over here today, Ms. Leslie Gardner, just a few minute ago how there was a young man—it is usually between Friday and Saturday that these children come to us, and they are in the program, but their mothers are being evicted, and they do not want to go into the shelter, or they do not want to go somewhere else to live, so they ask me or one of my volunteers if they can come and live with us. And this is what is so profound and frightening, because they are little children and adolescents.

Senator BROWNBACK. How old are they on average?

Ms. HAWKINS. Some are 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. The oldest usually is around 15, or 16. We have a young man who lives in Northeast who is my primary foster parent, and he has eight children living with him now, and he has to move. So when I leave here, I have to go somewhere to try to find him a house, because two more children over the weekend have requested to go and stay with him. He is going to have 10 boys, and so we are looking for a house.

I, myself, take home at night about four or five children.

Senator BROWNBACK. Every night?

Ms. HAWKINS. Every night.

Senator BROWNBACK. Different children, who just do not have a place to stay that night or do not want to go to the shelter?

Ms. HAWKINS. Different children, and they do not have a place to stay. Usually, the girls, someone will pick them up; but the young men are the ones who are hanging, and they do not want to be in the street. This is why I was sharing with one of the correctional directors that in the next 2 to 3 years, we will definitely see a whole bunch of young men coming up—they will be very young, and they will be your children of the damned. We are focusing up here, when we need to be looking down here. So it is a very, very serious situation, and the 4- and 5-year-olds come to me from all over the city, not just in Anacostia; they are coming from Northeast, they are coming from Prince George's County. I have children who come to me from as far away as Manassas, Dale City, Centreville, in Northern Virginia. They are in trouble, and they are trying to stay out of the streets. And the more I beg, the more I plead—I do not want anybody to give me anything; I just want someone to give me a place for these children.

Senator BROWNBACK. What do you need? What kind of place do you need?

Ms. HAWKINS. I need a building, something like my dear friend, Dr. Eyring, who has the mission; I need a building like that, because where I am now is just an after-school center. The children get there at around 3:15, and I keep them until 9 o'clock at night.

Senator BROWNBACK. So you need a building where you can keep them overnight.

Ms. HAWKINS. I need a building to keep them overnight temporarily, until a permanent situation can be found for these youngsters. Just like where he has the men, I need a building just like that for the children.

Senator BROWNBACK. How many children would you have each night if you had a building like that?

Ms. HAWKINS. I would have over 100. I service just within the realm of the center each day—and I am not talking about outreach; I do outreach on Wednesday, when I go all over the metropolitan area to see children who cannot come to me but who still have the same need. It is just like a dope fiend—just because you move to California, if you do not take care of the problem here in the District, if you were a dope fiend here, you are going to be a dope fiend there—that is the same way it is with these children. Even though they move from my general area, I still give them outreach services. So I am in a critical situation here, and it is getting worse and worse.

Senator BROWNBACK. Do you have your eyes on any buildings that you know of that are available that we could help push for you to get?

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes, I do, but it is such a bureaucratic situation——

Senator BROWNBACK. What buildings do you have in bureaucratic roadblocks?

Ms. HAWKINS. Well, there are some houses in the general area where I am, and you have got to go through "la-dee-da-dee" and everybody else—and all I want to do is find a building for my chil-

dren to stay in. That is all. I have no money. I am not federally funded. I do not get anything from the District of Columbia. I get a few dollars here and there from people who are committed to what I am doing, and that is enough to keep the lights on and for me to buy food. I do not get hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Senator BROWNBACK. Dr. Eyring.

Dr. EYRING. Just to highlight the problem that Hannah is talking about, we have in our constituency some pretty hardened men who have been on the streets, have been in the crack business, have been on drugs for up to 20 and 30 years—and they are scared to death of these children who are coming out now. Our men do not want to be around them. They see these children—and we talk about "children of the damned"—a problem that is a total quantum difference from the men we have who are lost; I mean, they are really lost. They are sleeping on grates and things like that, and they are afraid for their lives of these children who are coming along now.

So I think it is really not a bad idea to give some thought to the nature of the problem.

My wife is just telling me that if we had this McKinley site, we would give her all the space she needed.

Senator BROWNBACK. The McKinley site that is going to you, or——

Dr. EYRING. Well, we have the same kinds of issues that Hannah does, but there are three big schools, all in the same geographical area, that are on this program for selling the schools to get money to fix the other schools, and we are trying to find a creative way to have that whole site kept together and given to a consortium or a collaborative group of people who could minister to the total family spectrum rather than chopped up and given to developers for the highest dollar. So we are trying to talk the District and your counterparts and you into looking at the idea of assigning this center to a group of us to take care of these problems.

Senator BROWNBACK. Would this kind of facility work for you, too, Ms. Hawkins?

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes, it would.

Senator BROWNBACK. That would be the sort of thing that would work for you?

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes. I would make it more or less a home away from home. This is what the children are looking for—someplace where they can come and feel safe. But they are very dangerous, very dangerous.

Senator BROWNBACK. The children themselves are very dangerous?

Ms. HAWKINS. Yes, because they are angry. They know I go out every day, lobbying. I lobby every day, Senator, and come back empty-handed. And then, when I turn on the TV and see someone being given $100,000, who does not do a fraction of what we are trying to do for these kids here, it really vexes my soul.

These kids are very, very depressed, and they are very, very angry, and consequently, they are very, very dangerous. It is survival. And most men—and the reverend said it—most men are very afraid of them.

Senator BROWNBACK. They are afraid on the streets?

Yes, please, Mrs. Eyring.

Mrs. EYRING. I am Mary Jane Eyring; I am the other half of this man right here.

Senator BROWNBACK. The transforming part of this, I believe.

Mrs. EYRING. One of the reasons why we are so excited about the possibility of this complex of schooling is that there is a marvelous physical facility of football fields, tennis courts, basketball fields and a baseball diamond. These children, as well as the men whom we are serving, need to have some outlet. They stand on corners, stand and smoke and talk and think about things they can do to get into trouble. They need to have something to do. They need to have competitive sports that they can participate in, and this would provide us with a means of giving them this opportunity.

Senator BROWNBACK. Good.

Dr. Eyring, you stated a 70 percent record on getting people off of drug addiction in your program. Did I catch that correctly?

Dr. EYRING. That is correct.

Senator BROWNBACK. How does that compare to other treatment programs?

Dr. EYRING. One of the problems we have is that people do not always compare apples with apples. For example, if you measure the success rate of people who come into the program versus those who graduate, a good success rate is 50 percent. If you take the people who graduate, and then you follow them for a certain period of time—and that particular number comes from a group of men who graduated from our drug management center, called the Haven, and were followed for 15 months—we found that 70 percent of them were still clean and sober and productive.

It is very important to find out exactly how the statistics that you are looking at were measured, but that is how we do it, and I know everybody does it a little differently. I would like to say that they would like to be clean and sober and a Senator, or something like that, as a sign of success, but we would not get very many successes that way, so we have to be somewhere in the practical range. Follow-up is very difficult; that is one of the things we are looking at now, is a means of assessment and follow-up of the people who come through.

Senator BROWNBACK. I do not know that many people would say becoming a Senator is a sign of success or not. They may look at that a little differently.

I appreciate the specific example that you have given me of this facility, because that is something that we can follow up on, and I am turning to staff to make sure we do that. We do have some chances here, as change are going on in the District of Columbia, to try to do some things like this, and this is a terrible situation that you are identifying and something we need to address.

Do any of you see specific items that are blockages in the way of your programs delivering services or things that we need to address to allow you and your programs to be more effective?

Dr. EYRING. I do, but you need a chance.

Ms. HAWKINS. Go ahead.

Dr. EYRING. A lot of it has to do with permitting and zoning and ANCs and city government and the Federal Government. We tried to put this Barnabas House building on the line, and we have been

over a year just trying to get the permit signed and people to come and look at the place, and one thing just leads to another. It is very, very complex in terms of even the selling of the schools. They have a system where people put in bids, and if they do not like the bids, they do an appraisal, and then they come in for a best offer after the appraisal, and if they do not like that, then you put them back into the bidding process.

It could take us 10 years to get these buildings through the ordinary bureaucratic river that flows in the District, so I am looking to you as "God" in this situation, to simply say, "Hey, give it to these people, and write off a certain amount of the debt from the public schools" and say, "Hey, you do not have to pay us that much—instead, you count this assignment against what you owe us." I think the Board of Trustees that has been assigned to sell these buildings would probably be happy if part of their debt were written off and this thing was diverted.

Unfortunately, I am a surgeon, and I sort of cut to the quick of things, and what I am saying is not standard District bureaucracy, but I do think that is the thing that I run into.

Perhaps some of you would like to comment on that.

Ms. JOHNSON. I would like to comment on the same theme. One of my staff has been very involved, and we are trying to start a school, and last year, it could not open in our facility because of zoning issues. It has taken another whole year just to get a hearing, so we are in the same kind of situation, where we are just trying to get a zoning variance, and the red tape and the bureaucracy around that and knowing just how to make that happen is a very trying situation.

Ms. HAWKINS. I am currently in the Southeast Neighborhood House, and I have been in court for the past 6 years, trying to save the facility. They have board members who are no longer board members, but it is still lingering.

I would also like to say, Senator, that there are plenty of vacant, boarded-up houses right there that I could utilize and get started with—tomorrow. With your help and through the grace of God, I would like to see that happen. But going through all this bureaucratic stuff is nonsense. Like the Reverend said, the children are getting older, the children are getting angrier, yet all of these houses are still boarded-up.

So I would like it if, through your influence, you could help to get things moving for us.

Senator BROWNBACK. That is a good point. You have given us a couple of good suggestions here, things that we can help with and work with you on. We will re-contact you as well after this hearing to see if there are things that we can do specifically on targeted facilities. You have given us a good example of this one here, and we will see if we can follow up with you and help you move through some of the bureaucracy as well.

A lot of the Senate offices do a great deal of that for constituents back home, and the District of Columbia does not necessarily fall into anybody's specific category—it falls into all of our categories. So we need to do a lot, each of us, in that area.

This has been an excellent panel. I am heartened by your work, and I want to be a partner with you to help you get it done, and

we are going to see what we can help out with. As I mentioned, I will be touring, and we will see if we can help facilitate some of these needs.

Thanks a bunch.

Senator BROWNBACK. Next, we will hear from the Hon. Dan Coats, the Senator from Indiana, who is the head of the Renewal Alliance and dean of all of us who seek to do the good and noble things in Washington. Dan has been an inspiration to me for many, many years. I hate to see him leaving the U.S. Senate, but I know his work is not done, and it will continue in many other places.

Senator Coats, thanks for joining us here today. Your staff member has been here, listening to a number of other folks who have been testifying ahead of you. Let me know what you think we ought to do about the District of Columbia and what we can do with Renewal Alliance efforts in DC.

TESTIMONY OF HON. DAN COATS, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Senator COATS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for inviting me here today. I want to commend you not only for your participation and involvement in a number of the renewal efforts that I have been involved in and that many of us have been involved in, but for your leadership, particularly in calling this particular hearing to again highlight the importance of nongovernment organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations in addressing some of the most difficult social problems that our country faces, particularly urban social problems, and in this particular instance, those problems that are just down the street from where we now sit that have had such a profound negative impact on the lives of so many here in Washington, DC, but also offer such great hope, I think, for addressing these problems through utilization of the services, the transforming nature that many of these organizations can bring to renew neighborhoods and, more importantly, to renew lives. I commend you for your interest in that.

One of the great satisfactions that I have in leaving the Senate is knowing that there is a cadre of individuals like yourself who share the vision, who have the passion to activate that vision in a meaningful way and to assist these organizations and bring about real renewal and real hope for renewal for the people of the District of Columbia as well as other areas of the country. I think the District of Columbia can serve as a great example of how we can address a lot of these problems in a more effective than they have been addressed in the past.

We both know, Mr. Chairman, that over the past 30 years, we have undertaken the greatest experiment in the history of mankind to try to utilize the services of government, the revenues that this wealthy Nation has been able to supply, to solve these problems; and we both know that while many of these programs were well-intended and well-motivated, they not only have failed to solve the problem, but in many cases, they have aggravated existing problems by creating a culture of dependency, by misapplying funds that ought to go to those in need and instead are eaten up in a very significant way by the bureaucracies that have been established.

The Beacon Hill study just a few years ago indicated that more than 60 percent, almost two-thirds, of the dollars that are appropriated never get into the hands of the individuals who most need them; that along the way, bureaucracy and a number of other entities seem to interrupt that flow of well-intended support.

But as a black rural minister told our Subcommittee on Children, Youth and Families in Macon, Georgia several years ago at a hearing on the problems of rural youth—he looked us directly in the eye from the witness table—about eight or nine Members, both Republicans and Democrats—and he said, "You people in Congress just do not seem to understand. All the money in the world, all the programs in the world do not go to the heart of solving the problems that I have to deal with on a day-to-day basis. You need to understand that we are dealing here with individuals who consist of body, mind, soul and spirit. And there is no way that government can or should even try to be involved in solving the problems of soul and spirit. That is the role of the family. That is the role of the church. That is the role of organizations that are not tied to government, not restricted by First Amendment problems, not tied to bureaucratic oversight, but those that are constituted to reach in and change individuals from the inside out. Government is constituted to try to solve problems from the outside in—change the environment, and you will change society." Well, for 30 years, we have pretty much had that backward—change individuals, and we will change neighborhoods, and we will change societies.

But you have to start with the individual. And when you are dealing with the individual, as Reverend McKinney said at that hearing in Georgia, you are dealing with more than just material needs; you are dealing with profound social problems, psychological problems, problems of the heart, as well as mind and body. So that providing a roof, providing a meal, providing a process does not address the fundamental, underlying needs that have resulted in some of the problems in the first place.

That is why I was so pleased to know that you were holding this hearing and that you are reaching out to organizations that have demonstrated success in changing the lives of individuals and, therefore, changing communities and neighborhoods and families and changing society by these individuals' changed lives.

I was proud to walk in and see someone who has become very near and dear to me in addition to the Eyrings—James Washington, who is a living demonstration and representative of many living demonstrations of that transformation that can take place. I hope James has an opportunity to tell you his story; I do not know if he is here accompanying the Eyrings or not, but his is one of the most inspiring stories that I have ever heard—but it is not unique, and that is where the hope comes from. There would be hope enough just in James' story, one life, but James represents hundreds if not thousands of transformations that have literally been what society would call unexplainable.

No Federal program made this happen, and no amount of Federal revenues made this happen, no well-intended Federal, 5-step, 10-step, 20-step, 50-step program made this happen. It was the combination of the kind of love—some would call it "tough love"—combined with spiritual transformation that James was able to re-

ceive when he walked through the door of the Gospel Rescue Ministries that succeeded where numerous programs before had failed. His life today is a living witness and testament to the success of these organizations that can bring not only elements that deal with body and mind, but soul and spirit.

The reason why we need to encourage these types of organizations is because that is where the real hope lies, and that is where the real transformation can take place. Because we know that government cannot create these types of organizations and cannot be in that kind of business and would not be successful if they were, we know we need to go beyond government. We need to reach out and find ways in which we can nurture and encourage and expand and allow these organizations to do greater work.

So the question comes, is there a role for government. I think there is a role; there is a transition role as government transitions from a system that has demonstrated failure to encouraging those organizations outside government that have demonstrated success and to help rebuild those organizations. You know, it was not that long ago when they flourished in society. The church was the center of the social services, it reached out to people, and these organizations had a more prominent role. But government came along in the sixties and seventies and said, "They are not doing enough, and we can do much more through government."

Well, we are about $4 trillion or more later. We are 30 years later. We are a lost generation later. Now, fortunately and thankfully, we are turning back to recognizing the value that these organizations and these types of programs can bring, and the kind of healing and the kind of hope that they can bring.

You have been working with me, Mr. Chairman, and our colleagues to form the Renewal Alliance, to promote ways in which we can begin the transition back to these types of organizations so they can play a much more prominent role. We have created a number of initiatives, the latest of which is called "REAL." "REAL" stands for Renewal, Empowerment, Achievement and Learning. It is a package which we introduced together not that long ago which contains three basic components. It is a very significant piece of the puzzle, I think, in terms of how we reach out and paint that mosaic which will really make a difference in so many lives, but none of us claim that it is the only blueprint. It is one of a series of initiatives, but we think it is one that has a real chance of success in the Congress to begin this transition process back.

I would just like to briefly explain it for the record, and I know you know much about it. It contains three basic components.

First, the Real Life Community Renewal Act is a renewal credit, combined with liability reform and charitable donation protections. But the heart and soul of this is allowing individuals to achieve a tax credit to offset some of their tax dollars if they direct those dollars toward organizations like Gospel Rescue Mission, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Salvation Army—some of these programs that are working within our communities and are making such a difference in people's lives.

We think it holds a great deal of promise. Two, we avoid First Amendment problems. It is not a politician or a government bureaucrat who is directing where the money goes; it is the individual

taxpayer himself or herself who is saying: "I think some of my tax dollars can be used more effectively by my selecting an organization that I think is really making a difference, rather than sending it to Washington, where it seems to just get lost in a maze of bureaucracy, and I do not know where it goes."

When I read this Beacon Hill study, saying that two-thirds of it never gets to the people that I think the government is going to use it for, I think I can do a lot better with my dollar by giving it to an organization where I know the people who run it, I know the kind of work they do, I have seen the results, I volunteer there on a Saturday, or I have a friend who volunteers there—I have much more confidence in this.

I have used the line, and maybe you have, too, that if you had $1,000, and it was eligible for a tax credit, but you knew it was going to be sent to the government to be used for social purposes, and you really cared about providing, say, good housing for low-income individuals, do you think that dollar would be better used and would go farther if you gave it to Habitat for Humanity or to Housing and Urban Development?

Well, 999 out of 1,000 will say I think Habitat for Humanity can make better use of that money. The only one we find who votes on the other side is the local HUD representative who shows up at the town meeting.

If you care about fatherless kids, kids without a father in the home, do you think Big Brothers, Big Sisters or big government can better address that problem?

On and on it goes. So the value of the tax credit, we think, and giving individuals a choice as to where their money goes—if they think it can be better used in HUD, fine, they pay their taxes; but if they think it can be better used at Habitat or better used at Gospel Rescue Mission, then we want an incentive in place to do that.

The second part of that package is the Economic Empowerment Act. That brings the economic renewal, combined with the social service renewal, into poverty areas or low-income communities. It combines a whole series of targeted benefits for the 100 poorest communities in the Nation to demonstrate its benefit, with pro-growth tax benefits, regulatory relief, brownfields cleanup, home ownership opportunities, and a number of initiatives that you and I have worked on in the House previously and are now working on in the Senate.

The third part of that package is educational opportunities. We think that economic empowerment, compassionate care that works, combined with educational opportunities for young people, are a good set of initiatives that really bring hope and transformation to some of our poorest communities. We have also worked together on these scholarships for children, particularly as it applies to the District, since that is what we are talking about here today. The whole scholarship here in DC is, I believe, going to make DC schools better schools; it is going to bring about the reforms that we have been pleading with the system to make, but without much success, because they really have not been put in the competitive situation whereby they either improve their product, or they do not survive.

Not that long ago, the Washington Scholarship Fund offered 1,000 scholarships, and 7,500 people signed up. There probably

would have been a lot more if they thought they had a chance. Some additional funds are going into that, and part of this whole effort is to try to provide some funds that will give the only kids in America who do not have a choice as to where they get their education a chance along with everybody else. These kids are condemned to a failing education, which means they will not have the skills to enter the job market, they will not have the education to leave those schools and go on to further their education, and they will not qualify for that.

The statistics in DC are appalling. We had the former superintendent of public schools in Milwaukee testify before my Subcommittee, and he said, "Believe me, Senator, I have tried every initiative known to mankind to reform the public schools in Milwaukee." He said, "I am dedicated and committed to public education, and I have tried everything, everything you can think of, and a lot of things you never thought of, every idea that came to me, to try to shake that system and change that system, and nothing worked except vouchers. Nothing worked except Choice." And when we put the Choice program in place in Milwaukee, suddenly, the schools said, "Hey, we had better get our act together, or we are going to lose our jobs; we had better get our act together, or we are going to have to close this school down; we had better get our act together because all the parents and kids are opting out of the system."

Well, that is the American way; that is the free enterprise system. What kind of cars would we drive if we only had one car company that we could purchase our cars from? It would just be a mediocre, run-of-the-mill, average—kind of the car equivalent of the education system described by the blue ribbon panel in 1984—"Mediocrity in Education."

America, with all of our wealth, with all of our capacity, it is shameful that we have an education system, a public education system, particularly in our urban areas. Now, as I said if you live in a suburban area, and if you have the income, and you do not like the education system you are in, and you have the income to pay for a private education, you can do so—but tell a single mother that in DC. Tell a low-income family that in DC. They will say, "Are you kidding? I can hardly get the rent paid by the end of the month and get the phone bill paid and clothes on the kids and shoes on their feet in order to get them to school. You are talking about me coming up with money to get them out of this school and send them to a private school? There is no way I can afford that."

They are the only ones who do not have the option, and that is what we are trying to do with the education program. So we have these three components. We are united as a Renewal Alliance; I am excited about it. We incorporate the wisdom and the resources of America's private, primarily faith-based institutions to solve the problems of the urban poor. We have had 30 years of experiment the other way. It is time to try a new alternative. We have some very hopeful stories that give us real cause for rejoicing and hope, that maybe we have found a way in which we can make a difference in people's lives and make a difference in the community.

Gospel Rescue Mission is one of the prime examples. It opened my eyes to the kind of transformation that can take place where

everybody else failed, where all the government programs, over and over and over failed. Suddenly, I walked into this most inspiring place in Washington, DC and literally saw transformed lives, people who are becoming productive citizens, reaching back to their families where there had been broken relationships before, earning gainful employment, moving from homelessness to home ownership, moving from civic irresponsibility to civic responsibility, making contributions to their communities. These are the examples that we need to emulate. These are the examples that we need to expand and nurture and let them grow so that they can begin to address some of these most difficult problems.

I have spoken longer than I ever intended. As you can tell, I get all worked up when I get into this subject. I have examples galore, and I just want to finish by commending you for, one, your interest, two, your vision, three, your passion in pursuing that vision, and four, your commitment to work with all of us in addressing the problems right here, where we live. People say maybe the Federal Government should not be involved in Texas or Kansas or Indiana or wherever, but we have a responsibility for this city. This is a Federal City. It is our Capital City. We have a responsibility here to try to reach out and solve some of these problems, and through your Subcommittee and through your work with our Renewal Alliance and other efforts, you are doing that, so I really commend you for it, and I thank you for this chance to testify.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you very much, Senator Coats, for the groundbreaking work that you have been doing to get us back, I think, to the right page so that we can really reach out and touch people and the proper role of government and the proper role of charity. You have tried to bring that balance to it, and you have really set the model and set the template for a lot of us in looking to do these sorts of things.

We heard an excellent panel of witnesses prior to your testimony about faith-based charities and what they are doing in Washington, DC, the good things they are already doing, and the much larger things they could do if they were free from some of the bureaucracy, which is part of the Renewal Alliance's agenda as well.

One thing that has been striking to me is that Members have, I think, an extraordinary opportunity to reach out and see these charities grow and flourish by the actions that we take privately. In your years in the U.S. Senate and you work with Big Brothers, Big Sisters and the work that you have done with a number of different charities, what is your advice to Members? Do you suggest they pick a charity or two and do not do any publicity about it, or do you suggest they pick 10 and try to help all of them?

How should Members live that example in working with these charities?

Senator COATS. Well, I think the first thing Members can do is get outside of these buildings. You do not have to go very far. You do not have to climb on an airplane and fly somewhere to understand—one, the problem, and two, the solution. Gospel Rescue Mission is only five or so blocks away, and on the way, you can stop at the Federal homeless center, and you can compare the two, the Federal effort versus the private effort. That is true for any number of initiatives.

It is great to have hearings, and it is great to have witnesses come in, and it is great to read publications like we put out with our Renewal Alliance, but there is nothing that can begin to compare with getting out of our comfort zone, out of our bubble here on Capitol Hill, and getting out into the real world—Southeast Washington, Northeast Washington are not that far away—getting into the real world, seeing what the real problems are, talking to the people who are in the trenches day after day after day, the foot soldiers of hope and renewal, and examining what they are doing, looking at their programs, measuring their success, and asking how can we help. And there are numerous ways that we can do that, whether it is getting involved exclusively with one or whether it is trying to promote a broader agenda, whether it is personally volunteering or simply bringing a colleague by to say, "You know, you ought to look at what is taking place here."

That is how ideas begin to ferment and begin to take root, and from that, numerous initiatives will come to mind or be suggested to us in terms of how we can help. Dr. Eyring has a vision in terms of utilization of now unused school properties and facilities that can be a central place where a lot of these services can be provided, where schools can be established, or charter schools can come in and flourish, where you can provide these services.

Because of declining student population, there is a lot of infrastructure available in Washington, DC. How can we help in terms of transferring that over or making it available?

Dr. Eyring probably told you about the Fulton House of Hope where Gospel Rescue Mission is attempting to develop for women the same kinds of programs that they now have for men; right around the corner. They were able to acquire that property through the Weed and Seed Program, and they went through all kinds of bureaucratic hurdles to do that, but that property is now theirs and, thanks to some start-up money and some seed money, that is going to be developed into a duplicate of what is done at Gospel Rescue Mission for men, but for women.

I only heard about that because I got off the Hill and, in trying to investigate how we deal with crack cocaine, visited The Haven, which is one of the Gospel Rescue Mission programs. It opened my eyes in a way that no hearing, no piece of paper, no story in *The Washington Post* could begin to open my eyes, because sitting next to me were some of the most miraculous transformations of the human spirit that I had ever witnessed in my life, anywhere. And I said to myself if this individual—when you hear about the background of some of these people, you think, there is just no way, there is no way this person that I am now talking to could have been that person that they told me they used to be—and you say here is something that works, and we would be foolish not to try to find out why it works, and how can we help it work for others, how can we assist this organizations in doing more of what they are doing. That means getting off the Hill.

But when you see that, all kinds of possibilities open up in terms of how we can be involved legislatively, through holding hearings, through spreading the good news, through setting up demonstration programs, through targeting tax credits, through helping deal with regulations and bureaucracy in order to allow them to do

more of what they are doing, to help solicit other donors, to help with their fundraisers. There are innumerable ways in which they can do it.

Leave here, and go down and take a look, and I think you are planning on doing just that. So that is a must recommendation.

Senator BROWNBACK. Good. Senator, thank you very much for your leadership, and I look forward to working with you for years to come on many of these issues.

Senator COATS. Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you very much.

Our next panel will include April Lassiter, president of The Initiative for Children Foundation, and Joe Loconte, deputy editor of Policy Review, The Journal of American Citizenship.

April, let us start with your testimony.

TESTIMONY OF APRIL LASSITER,[1] PRESIDENT, THE INITIATIVE FOR CHILDREN FOUNDATION

Ms. LASSITER. Thank you very much for having me speak here today. My name is April Lassiter, and I am president of The Initiative for Children Foundation. We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending childhood poverty and despair through the research and replication of best practices in the private sector.

I am also the author of the book, "Congress and Civil Society: How Legislators can Champion Civil Renewal in Their Districts," which was funded by the Bradley Foundation and published by The Heritage Foundation.[2]

The book that I worked on, "Congress and Civil Society," outlines several ways that Members of Congress can use their bully pulpits to renew civil society in America, and I am very encouraged to see that you have decided to hold these hearings today and that Senator Coats obviously also embraces this expanded vision of leadership.

I am inserting a copy of the book for the record in the hope that more Members of Congress will also embrace this vigorous civic activism and leadership in their districts and States.

I want to commend Chairman Brownback for holding this hearing today and also his staff, for doing such a great job of getting a very wonderful panel from the District of Columbia to talk about the important work that they do.

I think the need for public leadership in promoting effective compassion for the poor and needy in the District of Columbia cannot be overstated. By definition, too many legislators have focused on legislative remedies to address problems that cannot be addressed by bills or rhetoric that emanate from Washington, DC.

Today's hearing on the role of faith-based charities is an excellent example of how public leaders can highlight what is working here in the Nation's Capital to reach the poor and the needy, and how these successful efforts can then be replicated in other places around the country and translated into good public policy. We need more hearings like this to hear the success stories of civic efforts,

[1] The prepared statement of Ms. Lassiter appears in the Appendix on page 55.

[2] The book referred to above, "Congress and Civil Society: How Legislators can Champion Civil Renewal in Their Districts," is retained in the files of the Subcommittee.

faith-based groups and corporate programs and policies that are moving the poor and the needy toward self-sufficiency.

The book that I have submitted for the record outlines ways in which Members of Congress can use their bully pulpits to rebuild the civic infrastructure in America. Every Member of Congress, Republican or Democrat, Liberal or Conservative, can embrace this vision for leadership and take a proactive role in facilitating effective charitable efforts that should be a cornerstone of public service.

Members of Congress, as you know, have extraordinary power to recognize and recruit untapped social and financial capital to individuals, charitable groups and corporations whose efforts are effective.

To put this hearing in historical context, I would like to make a few comments about the state of the nonprofit sector in 1998. In the early part of this century, the nonprofit sector was primarily responsible for serving the poor and the needy. As government programs began to take over the role of charities, with the institution of the New Deal and again with the Great Society programs under President Johnson, the private sector increasingly abdicated its charitable role for the poor.

The unfortunate result has been, as we have heard today, that even with the Federal expenditure of $5 trillion in welfare services and even with the state of charitable giving in the private sector remaining relatively constant, the poverty rate for children rose from 14 percent in 1968 to 23 percent in 1993. In fact, the Great Society programs have paralleled startling increases in poverty, family breakdown, illegitimacy, and other social ills that directly impact the lives of children and their families.

One social scientist had the foresight to warn against an overreliance on government charities. In 1821, Josiah Quincy, chairman of the Massachusetts Committee on Pauper Laws, warned that subsidies might fail the poor because they would not help the truly needy enough and might discourage industry on the part of those who are able to become self-sufficient.

The failure of government programs to help the poor and the needy to become self-sufficient is well-documented. The facts bear out that even the most well-intentioned government programs cannot serve as surrogates for intact families or strong religious and civic institutions.

I know you will be hearing from Mr. Loconte later about effective compassion.

The welfare reform that the American people embrace, that we passed in the 104th Congress, was a new system of personal and local civic initiatives that more effectively eradicate social ills, not a desire to see compassion played out on a human level. In order to address these problems of poverty and despair at their root, policymakers must not only devolve decisionmaking power and resources to the local level, but they should supplement the safety net by becoming part of the rebuilding of the civic infrastructure with effective empowerment strategies.

Fortunately, efforts are being made to recognize effective empowerment strategies, and I have written about many of them in my book. Today's hearing, though, focuses on successful faith-based organizations in the District of Columbia. In contrast to custodial

programs, which simply provide financial subsidies to the poor, the effective charitable efforts I have studied are often need-based, personal, challenging, possess a high degree of accountability for their resources, and track their progress on a systematic and regular basis. Faith-based efforts also include a spiritual or values-based foundation.

Some skeptics have cast doubt on faith-based groups because of a facile assumption that only experts with degrees and letters after their names are qualified to help the poor and the needy. My own view is that we should let the record speak for itself.

For instance, some studies show that faith-based groups like Victory Fellowship and Teen Challenge are especially effective in drug and alcohol rehabilitation, often at a fraction of the cost of State programs. Victory Fellowship boasts a recovery rate as high as 70 percent for its participants. In addition, the National Institute for Drug Abuse conducted a government-funded study which showed that 86 percent of Teen Challenge graduates were drug-free after 7 years. According to Teen Challenge, many government-funded and non-faith-based rehab programs have a success rate under 5 percent.

We cannot afford to walk away from faith-based groups that are successfully transforming the lives of children and families, giving them the direction, hope and accountability they need to become productive members of society. We should let these groups rest on their successes and encourage their replication rather than discouraging them through barriers and regulations that the Federal Government or State governments impose, or allowing a few skeptics to disqualify them.

As Members of Congress, you can help recognize the work of faith-based groups, and my hope is that you will go back home and hold hearings like this in your district and State. We need Members of Congress to highlight the work of groups like those we have heard from today, and The Fishing School here in Northeast Washington, run by ex-cop Tom Lewis, who provides a safe haven in a crack-infested neighborhoods, where kids get tutoring, mentoring and Bible study.

We should also replicate civic initiative that have track records of success here in the District of Columbia and around the country.

I am submitting several other examples of civic and faith-based initiatives for the record.

Finally, Members of Congress should also encourage corporate efforts to help the poor and the needy. Many businesses have reached into their own pockets and recruited support from citizens and private groups to reach out to them. It occurred to me listening to the witnesses this morning that we should get some of the corporations that reside here in the District to adopt these charities and help them negotiate their needs.

I am also submitting several examples of corporations like Wendy's, Subway, and Bayer Corporation that have effectively reached into their communities.

Some Members of Congress are already making great strides toward encouraging these good efforts. I commend Chairman Brownback for his work toward these efforts. You have taken your time to travel around the State of Kansas to visit these centers of

effective compassion, to learn what works and to help raise their visibility. I hope that more Members will follow your example.

I believe the future of our country depends on the extent to which we take personal responsibility for ourselves, our families and our communities. Government is not inherently evil; rather, government cannot do the work of strong families, civic groups, voluntary associations or corporations who are providing family-friendly workplaces.

What we need today is education on what works. We need smarter government, government that operates on sound research rather than political fights about who cares more about the poor and the needy or about the children. We need, quite simply, a spiritual and civic renewal in America. Nothing short of this will address the challenges that children and families face today.

This is the work to which The Initiative for Children Foundation has dedicated itself—identifying and promoting the replication of best practices on critical children's issues.

The need for public leadership is nowhere more evidence than in our Nation's Capital, the center of power of the free world, and yet a prison of poverty and despair for so many children and families. I truly believe that by building these private efforts, these faith-based groups and civic groups, we will not only sharpen the way the public, the media and policymakers evaluate compassion in America, but also improve the welfare of American children and families.

I thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me to speak today, and I want to commend you for your work on these efforts.

Senator BROWNBACK. Thank you very much for being here, Ms. Lassiter, for your book, and for your encouragement and your identification of what Members can do, which I think is something that is important for us to talk about, what each of us can reach and do ourselves, and your book was very good about doing that.

Ms. LASSITER. Thank you.

Senator BROWNBACK. Mr. Loconte, thank you for joining us today, and the floor is yours.

TESTIMONY OF JOE LOCONTE,[1] DEPUTY EDITOR, POLICY REVIEW MAGAZINE, THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Mr. LOCONTE. Thank you, Senator. I want to thank the Senator for his leadership on this issue of the role of the faith community in addressing Washington's social problems.

I am Joe Loconte, with Policy Review Magazine, published by The Heritage Foundation. I also authored a book called "Seducing the Samaritan: How Government Contracts are Reshaping Social Services."[2]

I think perhaps the most important message of today's hearing is that here in Washington, in the shadow of the failed Federal welfare bureaucracy, are private charities pointing the way toward personal transformation and urban renewal—right here in the belly of the beast.

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[1] The prepared statement of Mr. Loconte appears in the Appendix on page 68.

[2] The book referred to above, "Seducing the Samaritan: How Government Contracts are Reshaping Social Services," is retained in the files of the Subcommittee.

The groups that have testified today are indeed a rebuke to the liberal government approach to combating social ills. I do not intend that as a partisan statement. They really are a rebuke. Unlike most Federal programs, these charities deal in what author Marvin O'Lasky calls "effective compassion, compassion that is personal, challenging and spiritual."

They personalize care by treating the whole person, each with a distinct set of strengths and weaknesses, rather than forcing people into one-size-fits-all programs, and we heard some compelling testimony to that effect. They are challenging in the sense that they summon people to virtue, not to vice, and they are spiritual in that they emphasize the religious dimension to life, the idea that men and women are made in God's image, and that their deepest needs are bound up in their relationship with their creator.

Last year, a White House aide told The New Yorker Magazine—not a bastion of conservative thought—"I do not know if we have reached this point because these programs have succeeded or because everything else has failed, but this certainly seems to be the hot social policy topic these days."

The aide almost got it right—it is for both reasons. The success of these and other charities is not only getting more media and political attention, it is creating healthy partnerships with government agencies, which is encouraging. But it is also lending weight to the idea in some places that government should bankroll these charities, which ought to make us tremble—and here, I am not talking about tax credits, which I think really have value and merit, but rather, direct government funding through contracts and other forms of direct funding, the way government has done social service provision over the last 25 years.

So with the remainder of my time, I want to issue a warning to private charities that might consider drinking deeply at the government well in order to expand their programs.

In the book that I wrote, Seducing the Samaritan, I talked to people in the trenches of social outreach, leaders from about two dozen or so human service agencies, most of them heavily dependent on government grants and contracts. Charity leaders, I found, when they are candid, admit that their dependence on the State makes for an unhealthy relationship. Government support easily leads to government intrusion and, ultimately, coercion.

My research suggests that given the chance, government will remake providers in its own bureaucratic image, and I am just going to talk about two ways in which this happens.

First, government funding causes what you might call "organizational mission creep." This, of course, was the phrase used to describe the shift in U.S. objectives of the Marines in Somalia. For private agencies on the public dole, it means bending their agendas to secure State and Federal contracts.

"It becomes almost like heroin," says a nonprofit veteran, Ed Gotgart. "You build your program around this assumption that you cannot survive without government money."

The problem with mission creep is that it allows distant politicians and government bureaucrats, rather than the front-line workers, to define an agency's objective.

"Most everyone is fighting for every penny they can get," says Jacquelin Triston of the Salvation Army. "If you cannot do it the way you want, then you will take your program and fit it into what government will give you money for," she told me.

The second point—government support focuses on delivering services and not results. Every year, for example, States pump millions of dollars into substance abuse programs, with little idea of whether they are curing or perpetuating addiction. Although the Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Abuse employs a staff of 40 just to manage the social service contracts, no one, not a single person, evaluates program effectiveness or, as the Bureau's program manager put it to me: "We do not do longitudinal outcome studies." The result is a system that too often dispenses assistance with no strings attached, that is, without discernment.

Boston's Pine Street Inn, for example, provides food and housing to nearly 1,000 homeless people each day, but the shelter, mostly dependent on HUD grants, places no work or education requirements on its residents. Even the "no drinking" rule is somewhat qualified. Some residents walk a few yards from the shelter to a "wet park"—a place where they can drink alcohol unmolested all day long—and return in the evening, no questions asked.

Beth Kidd believes that that is the wrong way to offer help. A 25-year veteran in neighborhood nursing, Kidd runs a small, privately-funded, Christian-based shelter in the heart of Boston. This is what she told me: "People who are substance abusers who have been out on the street for years, they have learned how to survive. What they have learned from the system is they can make the social worker jump. And what they need is moral and spiritual challenge, not milktoast charity."

This is the kind of assistance that faith-based providers offer—compassion that is both tough-minded and tender-hearted. Compassion that suffers with is compassion that is personal, challenging and spiritual. But government compassion, as Martin O'Lasky puts it, "It is too cheap. It is bureaucratic and impersonal. It refuses to challenge or engage the needy in the moral issues that envelope their lives. It ignores ultimate outcomes in people's lives, and it often drives religious expression underground."

Sociologist Peter Berger of Boston University warns of the compromising embrace of the modern secular State. "He who dines with the devil," he says, "had better have a long spoon."

If charities serving the needy in our communities are to continue to be effective in lifting the poor out of poverty, they should work collaboratively with government; but when it comes to government funding and oversight, they will need longer, not shorter, spoons.

Thank you, sir, for your time.

Senator BROWNBACK. Mr. Loconte, do you have specific recommendations of what you are speaking about, because what you say makes some sense to me. Even on my charity tour that I went on and some of the charities that I have visited with, as we are going into this phase where the government is not going to deliver the service, but the government is going to fund the service and then have a private, not-for-profit actually deliver the service, you could see people becoming excited about this huge pool of resources that they were getting. They had not fathomed this much money

ever coming to their not-for-profit organization. But you could also see that the "golden rule" could well come into play—he who controls the gold rules—that there would be that change.

Do you see thing that we can require or change within government that would not cause these charities to lose their primary mission along with taking the government funds?

Mr. LOCONTE. I make some recommendations in my book which I will enter in the record, and I will bring that in.

It is interesting—I had a conversation with the No. 2 or 3 person in Catholic Charities in Boston, Joseph Doolin, of the Archdiocese in Boston. Catholic Charities probably gets 65 percent or so of its money from government contracts. And Joseph Doolin told me that any relationship ultimately seems to become a dominant relationship with government—and they are very pro, of course, government funding. But his confession was that any relationship will ultimately become a dominant relationship.

Some of the things that Senator Coats has initiated make a lot of sense to me. I think the problem is that the more direct the relationship is between government and the providers, the more dangerous it is, the more direct the funding is and the regulatory oversight is. So I think you have to take the problem as kind of two sides of the same coin. You have got to deal with the government purse, and you have got to deal with the government pen, or the regulatory problem.

Part of the way you deal with the regulatory problem, I think, is you figure out what sort of oversight can be delegated to nongovernmental private agencies—whether this is in the foster care system or other types of social services, I think there are ways in which we can fairly and reasonably and responsibly delegate some of those responsibilities for oversight to nongovernmental institutions. We need to figure out ways to do more of that.

On the funding end, the most indirect way of getting more public resources into the hands of private charities is going to be the smartest. So whether it is a charity tax credit or something like a charity tax credit, that makes the most sense to me. The more direct that assistance is, the more likely, of course—and there is a responsibility on the part of lawmakers to track that money, to see how it is spent, to require the sort of documentation that goes on so that they can be responsible to their voters, to their constituents, that their money is being spent wisely.

It is the nature, of course, of government funding—it inherently requires oversight. So the more indirect we make that funding, the better we are going to be.

Senator BROWNBACK. The credits within the tax form would seem to be the purest, cleanest shot, as you noted. Do you see individual steps or other steps that are like that one that would make for a good indirect funding route versus what I am seeing develop, which is a lot of governmental agencies funding private groups to do what the government used to do and then saying, "OK, but you are going to have to do it this way," similar in many respects to how we treat a lot of State governments—we have this money for you, but to get this money, you have got to jump through these five hoops and do it the way we want you to do it, and then we will give you the money, which then dictates how it is done.

Do you see other indirect means that government can deliver the funds, other than the tax credit?

Mr. LOCONTE. I have not heard better scenarios than that one. That is the kind of thing you like to see for some set period of time.

The other sort of arrangements that you are to direct—you could perhaps sanction for a very limited time—some sort of grants that phase out over a period—but then you just raise the same political risk that once you establish a program, you have a natural constituency, and it goes on forever and ever, as you know.

I have not heard a better alternative, though, than the tax credit.

Senator BROWNBACK. Ms. Lassiter, as far as what you have suggested, can you think of anything else Members should be doing to educate the public about what works? You mentioned holding hearings in individual Members' districts. What else have you seen as being particularly effective in raising the visibility and the information that people have about these private, effective charitable works?

Ms. LASSITER. I think the first thing that needs to happen is that Members of Congress need to develop a more critical protocol for deciding which kinds of groups they promote. As Mr. Loconte has mentioned, we have no longitudinal outcomes studies, and one thing that policymakers can do here on the Hill is to begin to critically evaluate the efficacy of programs, both public and private, to see what is working.

Once you identify those programs, I have seen a lot of innovative strategies for raising the visibility of these effective groups. Site visits, as Senator Coats mentioned—and you have also made site visits to these groups—raises their visibility, and it also allows these charities to bend your ear about what their needs are, and you can find out how you might be able to, as a public leader, recruit social or financial capital that they might need, or be a part of problem-solving.

Some Members hold awards ceremonies in their districts where they have their staff and other people in the district nominate heroes, everyday people who have overcome great odds or are doing a lot with little resources, and that has served to recognize many of these groups.

A couple of very impressive effort that I have seen were by Senator Santorum and Representative Talent. They have actually restructured their district offices to make them in effect centers of charitable activity. They have set up a system by which, when constituents call in for help, they are actually referred back to a private organization in the district that can meet their needs.

Traditionally, as you know, and when I worked on the Hill, what I saw, is that most Members refer their constituents to government agencies or reference legislation, so it is a much more proactive role in solving problems on the local level.

Another very interesting example is that Representative Pitts created last fall something called the Hope Summit, where he gathered approximately 200 nonprofit organizations in his area to hear panels on everything from fundraising to evaluating outcomes, and their groups also allowed them a chance to network with leaders in the community and talk to other people to hear about how they were negotiating their way to becoming effective charities.

Finally, there have been some coalitions on the Hill, including the Renewal Alliance which we have already heard about today, just doing the good work of removing regulations and barriers that exist on a Federal level, as well as providing tax incentives.

There have also been two efforts on the part of Members, and I think you have also been involved with this, Mr. Chairman. The House that Congress Built was a partnership between Members of Congress and Habitat for Humanity. Several Members gathered last June to build a house here in the District and took that back home and replicated it in their districts.

In addition, the National Fatherhood Initiative has worked with Members of Congress to create the National Fatherhood Promotion Task Force, and they have done a wonderful job of raising the visibility of the problem of fatherlessness in the home. We really are raising a generation home alone, as 50 percent of children are growing up in broken families. On June 15, the National Fatherhood Promotion Task Force will join the National Fatherhood Initiative to put on a forum to further raise the visibility of, I think, probably the most threatening issue to children today.

Senator BROWNBACK. Those are great suggestions. I am writing them down.

Ms. LASSITER. If I could, I would have two other suggestions on regulations and barriers that have begun to be addressed but need some more leadership in Congress. One is prohibition on voluntarism. As you may know, the Federal Labor Standards Act prevents fire-fighters from volunteering in the communities where they work, for fear that they may in some way be coerced into working overtime. In fact, what this does is keep some of the best people we have protecting us from fires and other disasters from being able to apply their resources and talents in a charitable way.

There has been some legislation introduced by Representatives Bateman and Myrick and Senator Warner, but I think that is an issue that deserves a lot of attention.

The other issue that has not been addressed legislatively was brought to my attention by Dick Drake, who is director of Good Samaritan Helping Hand. That issue is that the IRS has ruled that charitable organizations which require work for charitable services must provide benefits for those people just as if they were employees. In other words, the IRS has said that if you require work in return for charity, they deem that relationship between the charity and the recipient an employer-employee relationship, which is unfortunately preventing some charities, which believe that some of the good work they do is governed by the requirement of requiring something in return for charity, from being able to do more of that work. That is something that I think might be a good legislative issue.

Senator BROWNBACK. Those are good suggestions and good examples.

I thank both of you for coming today and being part of this panel and also for giving us the specific suggestions that you have. Those will be very useful for us.

I will note that the record will remain open for 3 days if people have additional testimony or inserts that they would like to put into the record.

With that, the hearing is adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 5:10 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KAY GRANGER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Thank you very much, Chairman Brownback. It is my great privilege to speak out on behalf of private solutions to public problems. I have always believed that America is a place where every day ordinary people do extraordinary things.

Americans know that serving their brothers and sisters is an invaluable effort that cannot be measured in dollars and cents, in hours volunteered, or even in new programs started. But it can be measured in lives changed, commitment begun, and hope given.

America is a great Nation filled with good people—people who understand the importance of doing well by doing good. There are many troubling problems facing our Nation. And at the core of these problems is the decline of our families. I believe the most endangered species in America today is the family.

If anyone still has doubts, consider this: One out of every two marriages ends in divorce. Two thirds of all African-American children are raised in a single parent home. And perhaps most troubling, in the past 4 years, teenage drug use has more than doubled. There is not a family I know that has not been touched by troubled times. There's no doubt—we live in times of need. Yes, we live in a world of hurt. But I don't believe that the crisis of modern American society is insurmountable. And I don't believe our tools to combat this decline are insignificant. On the contrary, I believe our Nation is facing a challenge, not a crisis. And America has always responded to challenges.

The problems facing our Nation will not go away in days, weeks, or years. But they will go away, if we all work together as families, neighborhoods, and communities, in the spirit of citizenship—in the spirit of America.

I want to spend the next few moments outlining for you what I believe to be the keys to restoring our communities and our families. We can see some of these tools in some very encouraging statistics:

More than 90 million Americans spend some amount of time volunteering for some organization each year. *Volunteering is important.* Churches are reporting high attendance and increased contributions and tithes. *Churches are important.* And each year we see the establishment of new community foundations, women's shelters, and food pantries. *Charity and faith-based institutions are important.*

Volunteerism is becoming more than just a catchy cliche—it is literally an American tradition we are determined to protect. Let me give you some examples from my hometown. In Fort Worth, Texas, Trinity Valley School has started requiring each one of their students to complete volunteer work as well as course work. And in so doing, this outstanding school is proving that education should be about more than just learning to how to make money someday. It should also be about learning how to live with other human beings.

When I was mayor of Fort Worth, we began a program called "Our City Our Children." This program was designed to involve the entire community in the lives of our children. "Our City Our Children" encouraged businesses to donate computers for classrooms and businessmen to donate their time to Little League. This program provided private solutions to the very public problem of helping at-risk children.

These examples demonstrate that America is special not because we have big government but rather because we have great people. Too often we look to Washington for help. Too seldom do we look to help ourselves. The American people have the ability and the faith to make our Nation safer and stronger, healthier and happier. If only we give Americans the freedom to renew America. By working together, we can save our Nation—one community at a time, one family at a time, and one child at a time. Thank you very much.

Hannah Hawkins

Good afternoon. I am Hannah M. Hawkins, Director and Founder of the Children of Nine Center in Old Anacostia's Historic District, Washington, D.C.

Our slogan is, "The cost of real love is no charge."

I got the idea of a center for children when I realized the few children I was tutoring in my home were not benefiting from the multitude of activities I donated most of my day. I started mentoring them and they brought friends and friends brought friends. It was no longer an idea, it was soon to be a reality, I needed a place. The the number of children grew, my hours grew and I had to give up something if I was to help them. Goodbye social life first, then meeting after meeting. These children are my life and like my very own. I wanted them to look at life differently and be able to live through this life, able to take care of themselves when they matured.

I made an appointment with the Director of Public Housing, presented my program and requested free space. He honored my request for space in Sheridan Terrace Public Housing in southeast Washington, D.C. The place was a mess, everything you can imagine had been dumped there, but I was determined to have a clean and safe place for the children.

The children and their parents came out of curiosity. The children returned knowing they had a safe place to play in the midst of drugs, prostitution, burglaries, rapes, and many other crimes. Our center was like the Vatican, a place no one would bother. But, someone did, they broke into the center. It was at this time the children made me realize this was not Mrs. Hawkins' center but "Our Center." The magic word was <u>our</u>. They became the eyes and ears, protecting our center.

The only way to reach most of them was be as a second mother, not a replacement mother, social worker or warden, but someone who could be a friend and get the respect of a mother. The only way to reach the parents was to eliminate the questions asked by social workers or other programs, have a simple application for admittance to the center and deal solely with the children as a priority.

Food, drinks and clothing were donated, a lot of it I purchased and brought to the center. The children were given snacks and later a meal. Those who needed clothing were given clothes.

After a few short weeks, I was able to take them from profanity to prayer. I didn't think much about it at the time because I was overwhelmed by the number of children flowing in each day. It was miraculous, the children changed son-of-a to in-His Name, Amen.

Getting them in school became a priority. Some of the children needed physicals or just some medical care. Parents were requested to seek medical care. Some agreed, others ignored my plea.

Healthy, clean, in school, caring for each other, praying and feeling safe from the concrete jungle raised self-esteem in the children. Their nightmare was changing into my dream. God brought us through some trying times and we were on our way.

More more and more children came. We needed more space. It was back to housing where I received another unit. We were not in the second place very long, so many children were coming. I needed more space and in one place. Some of the children moved to other communities throughout Washington, D.C. Those who could, continued to come back, others called stating they missed the center but had no car fare. The Lord made a way for my bills and I purchased tokens for them. Volunteers took many of the children home. Our family was fighting to stay together.

We moved to the Southeast Neighborhood House where we immediately became threatened with eviction and litigation which I fought.

I lobbied the DC Council and IRS through our DC Delegate to get the tax liens on the property forgiven. The Council was willing to forgive the taxes for our center's use, but IRS never made a decision because a few of members of the defunct board of directors of the SFNH told them not to deal with us.

We remain in the SFNH today awaiting a Court of Appeals decision.

The Lord has seen to it that we survived and progressed to where we are today. I hope this background information gives you a clear picture of what it took to get to where we are today.

2 2

The center provides the following services:

Acting Lessons	Agriculture/Farming
Arts and Crafts	Barbering
Bible Study	Clothing Bank
Computer Training	Dancing Lessons
Drug/Alcohol Counseling	Educational Placement
Emergency Services	Field Trips
Food Bank	Foster Care/Adoption Assistance
Fund Raisers	Multi-Faith
Outreach	Parenting
Personal Hygiene	Rap Session
Recreation	Regular Physicals
Safe Haven	Snacks/Meals
Social Services	Speakers Program
Sewing Lessons	Tutoring
Teen Services	Volunteer Services

ESSAY

♥♥ CHILDREN OF MINE ♥♥

An Amazing Love Story

How the Program evolved...What the Program is really about.

12 ~~Eleven~~ years ago, Mrs. Hannah M. Hawkins began providing a hot meal daily, clothing, tutoring, and a host of additional services to needy community children in her SE home. The number of children that Mrs. Hawkins cared for increased due to word-of-mouth among the kids, so they quickly outgrew their limited space. Soon she found herself providing for children from all over the Metropolitan area, as far away as Manassas, VA.

Mrs. Hawkins' reputation and success in reaching those labelled "hard-to-reach", along with her ever-increasing popularity among the children, resulted in the D.C. Government providing her with rent-free space. In 1987, Mrs. Hawkins moved what had become an after-school program to two abandoned apartments in the Sheridan Terrace projects. In 1990, the Children of Mine Center ("CMC") was founded by Mrs. Hawkins. The CMC "campus" relocated to a larger facility formerly known as the Southeast Neighborhood House in May 1992, at 2263 Mount View Place SE, Washington, DC 20020.

Mrs. Hawkins and a handful of volunteers provide services every schoolday to approximately 140 children, with an average attendance of 90 daily, ranging in age from 4 - 17 years. Mrs. Hawkins' children receive: Clothing, hygiene instructions, Bible study, gifts at Christmas; the chance to attend day camp in Summer,

participate in field trips outside the community on Saturdays, play in league sports; in some cases, transportation to church on Sundays; and a hot meal and snack daily. *If not for Mrs. Hawkins' CMC, many of the children would otherwise eat no nutritional meal that day.*

Many of CMC's children have parents that are rarely home due to substance abuse, so the children fend for themselves. Visitors to CMC can observe: 1) Children as young as 4 years who have no adult to escort them home when the Center closes, pairing up with other kids barely older than they are, and then venturing home by bus and Metro; 2) children as young as 6 years that are responsible for maintaining their own clothes; and 3) children that, in the dead of Winter, wear just a thin outer jacket and don't have socks and underwear. *Many of the children rely on Mrs. Hawkins to provide their clothing.*

Mrs. Hawkins and her CMC volunteers serve as daily role models, teaching the children by their words AND actions. At CMC, a child with abusive and unstable parents has a fighting chance to make it in life, in spite of the disadvantages in the streets or at home. Mrs. Hawkins and her dedicated helpers strive to give the children a new perception of "normal" and provide a nurturing environment where each child is accepted for who he/she is. *For many of the children, life would otherwise be void of these basics which most of us take for granted.*

It has always been Mrs. Hawkins' mission to provide the children a caring, yet tough love, and the human touch. Mrs. Hawkins visits many of the children's homes and schools, monitoring grades and behavior, and checking on those that are

sick or absent for several days from CMC or school. *Children would "fall through the cracks" without the watchful eyes of Mrs. Hawkins and her volunteers.*

Mrs. Hawkins and the CMC volunteers reach out to the so-called "problem" children. By making a concentrated effort to inspire and motivate the children, by showing genuine interest and giving their time, many of "problems" have become successes. Some kids once described as "disruptive" by teachers now have report cards that recognize their good behavior. *Children who were once grade levels below normal have improved as a result of the CMC volunteers helping children with homework daily, or tutoring arranged by Mrs. Hawkins.*

Somehow, Mrs. Hawkins manages to accomplish all of these things without Government funding and with no major donors, but it is a tremendous, on-going struggle. Relying just on private donations and two organizations that regularly (but not daily) provide food, Mrs. Hawkins usually finds herself in the position of personally financing the operation to make ends meet, even though she lives on a very small monthly pension. *Each month brings financial uncertainty or financial crisis for CMC.*

In spite of the many obstacles, Mrs. Hawkins believes CMC to be her holy obligation, so *each and every child attends free of charge!* It's fitting that the slogan Mrs. Hawkins selected for CMC is, **"The Cost of Real Love Is No Charge!"**

by Brenda R. Ciomei
Volunteer, Director

CMC-CHILDREN OF MINE CENTER

PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

It is the charter of Children of Mine, Inc. to provide a clean, safe haven open to all youth, in a structured and supportive environment which enhances their self-esteem, scholarship, and cultural environment. Children of Mine, Inc. ("CMC") provides life support services including: Hot, nutritious meals and snacks daily, clothing, tutoring, guidance, outreach services to the homes and schools, participation in sports and field trips, crisis intervention, adoption services and foster care placement, sex education and adolescent/teenage pregnancy education, instruction on health, guest lecturers addressing various topics. All children attend free of charge. CMC, staffed strictly by volunteers, makes a difference in the quality of the children's lives and the choices they make by providing loving care and adult guidance.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

CMC's primary goals are: a.) To institute new fundraising practices to assure our continued existence. Specific individuals have been tasked to actively assist the Director by soliciting donations,applying for funding with UBF and arranging various fundraising activities. b.) To enhance existing services by actively recruiting additional volunteers to assist in the services described in Item I. above, and by forming a chorus and marching band, opening a computer science lab, offering drivers ed for youth and parents, as well as sewing, cooking, and ettiquette classes. CMC serves a wide range of children: Some that were formerly abused and/or incarcerated, latch-key children, and many come from homes where there is chronic substance abuse. Consequently, the youth must fend for themselves. Meeting these goals will enable us to continue in our present capacity and beyond. CMC fills a critical void in the lives of at risk children.

SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM

Success is measured by:

improved report cards

children *that go to school* each day and children that decide to *stay in school* rather than quit. (CMC participates in a truancy program. We also strictly enforce the rule that any child that does not attend school on a given day is not permitted on the grounds of the Center.)

children that now make prayer their daily routine. At CMC, they learn how to pray and why prayer is important.

children that, as a result of attending the Center, understand that God is real, that God loves them, and that they are never alone.

children that stay off the streets, out of trouble, *and stay alive*. CMC provides a safe, nurturing environment where the children can learn and play. Every child that attends CMC is a child that has not joined a gang or been drawn into drugs.

the numerous times we hear "please" and "thank you" without prompting. CMC conducts classes on etiquette and we teach respect by example.

Examples:

♥ Recently, an unemployed mother (who was usually absent from the home) and her two children were evicted from their apartment. We know the family because the children attend CMC. The mother found a shelter that would house her temporarily, but would not take children. Her sister took in her daughter, but not her son. One of our Board members became legal guardian of her son. He still attends CMC where his guardian regularly volunteers. A metamorphosis has taken place in that child. He practices good hygiene and grooming. *He has gained self-confidence from having a caring adult to love him and guide him. When we invest our time and ourselves in a child, the child feels self-worth.* This is not the first time a CMC director and/or volunteer has made a CMC child in an emergency situation part of the family.

♥ During Bible Study at CMC earlier this year, the instructor discovered 10-year old "R" could not read! He lost his mother at a very young age and was then raised by his grandmother. Not long ago, his grandmother died and after several unpleasant foster homes, an aunt obtained guardianship. R has changed schools with each new household change and is in a home presently where the responsible adult has others are always more important than R.

Now R___ is being tutored by our Bible Study instructor (who also happens to be a Director and regular volunteer). Whereas R previously did not do his homework and was being passed to the next grade each year in spite of his inability to read, R is learning to read and faithfully delivers his homework to his tutor each day for review. He, too, is slowly gaining confidence and someday his reading level will be *greater than* the grade that he is in.

The above stories are just two examples of the profound difference that CMC makes in the lives of its children. ***Every child*** **is a story. The Children of Mine Program is about making children's lives better by giving them certain essentials that help prepare them for life -- all of which by right they are entiled to.**

STEP Foundation of
Greater Washington
P.O. Box 55464
Washington, D.C.
20040-5464
(202) 829-8989

The Testimony of Jim Till, Executive Director
Strategies To Elevate People, Greater Washington
On May 18, 1998, Before
The Senate Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management,
Restructuring, and the District of Columbia

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee. My name is Jim Till and I am the Executive Director of Strategies To Elevate People (STEP). I thank you for the privilege and honor of testifying before you today.

The philosophy of STEP is straightforward. We believe that poverty is a condition of the spirit which manifests itself in physical need. Poverty is relieved by a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, STEP focusses on service to others so that through this service people might meet Jesus.

The mission of STEP is to help break the debilitating cycle of poverty and dependency on various outside agencies and replace it with a cycle of hope, stressing affirmation through faith in Jesus Christ, and a firm educational foundation, so that changes in self-esteem, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency can follow.

STEP currently works in the Park View/Park Morton and Petworth neighborhoods of Northwest Washington D.C. Our target population is the students of Park View Elementary School and Macfarland Middle School and the parents of these students.

The programming we have established was developed from needs assessments by STEP staff, school administrators, and community leaders. These programs will be detailed in two categories: first, children, and second, adults.

On the elementary school level, we have developed four primary thrusts. The first thrust is a Thursday night tutoring program. Tutoring consists of two-hour sessions in which we match students and tutors in a ratio of not more than 3-to-1. Students are tutored primarily in the areas of reading and math for one and one-half hours. The last half hour is set aside for a Bible study and snacks. At present, we have 85 students and 40 tutors participating in this program.

The second thrust is a weekly Bible Club. This club meets after school for one hour. A great importance is placed on Biblical training in life skills. This program has 40 to 50 students in attendance.

The third thrust is our Pals Club. This involves pairing a group of volunteers with a group of children for a monthly event. These are usually field trips taken on Saturdays. The intent is to help the child develop a positive role model and experience life outside their usual small world.

The fourth thrust is Summer Day Camp. This summer adventure includes daily Bible teaching, arts and crafts, organized game times, swimming and field trips. It is held five days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Last summer we had 100 children involved.

For middle school children, we are currently providing a Saturday tutoring and mentoring program. Through a corporate sponsor, transportation is provided each Saturday for 30 students to attend a tutoring session at the corporation's office, or go on a field trip. Each student is paired with an employee of the firm who serves as the student's tutor and mentor. Plans are being put into place to provide a Bible Club at the Middle School next year.

Now let me turn to the Adult Programming. STEP believes the best way to help a child is to help his or her parent get their life in order. We attempt to do this through two vehicles. The first vehicle we utilize is The Adult Education Academy. The Academy's goal is to increase the literacy and the life skills of its students. We believe that change has to take place in both of these areas for a person to truly become whole. Therefore, in addition to academic classes, special classes are being taught in spiritual values and personal growth. Weekly Focus Groups are held to help students learn to interact with each other and apply their newly-learned life skills to their everyday situations.

From the Academy comes the second vehicle which is Care Teams. This is the building block for neighborhood change. Care Teams consist of a leader who comes from the Adult Education Academy and four others whom the leader reaches out to help. The four are mentored by the leader and all the team members help and encourage each other. From this, changes not only come to families, but changes in neighborhoods also emerge. Through The Adult Education Academy and the Care Teams, STEP has been able to help find jobs for its adult students.

To accomplish all of this, STEP depends heavily on volunteers. These great servants come from area churches and businesses. As can be seen from earlier testimony, there is always a need for tutors and mentors for both children and adults. The primary qualification of these volunteers is the desire to serve others.

STEP also offers opportunities for volunteers to be a part of a Friendship Team. This is a group of 5 to 8 people that surround the leader of a public institution that works with the disadvantaged. Teams exist around principals, city officials, and law enforcement personnel. Teams have two goals: first, to be a supportive encouraging group of friends to the person and second, to help him or her achieve their goals and dreams for the institution and people they serve. We have been blessed with a great team of volunteers, but as with any organization, we can always use more.

In closing, I would like to quote the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 10, verse 33, "For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved." As we at STEP attempt to fulfill this scripture, we ask for your prayers so that many hurting lives will be turned around.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity and may God bless you and be with you as you serve in the United States Senate.

Testimony

before the

U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management,

Restructuring and the District of Columbia

May 18, 1998

Amy Hunt Johnson, Director
Neighborhood Learning Center
Urban Family Development, Inc.
907 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify this afternoon. My name is Amy Hunt Johnson, and I am the Director of the Neighborhood Learning Center, a faith-based organization right here on Capitol Hill.

The Neighborhood Learning Center, at 9th and Maryland Avenue, NE, less than a mile from the Capitol, is an out-of-school time program providing a place where students and families can learn and grow together. Through its after-school and summer enrichment programs, the NLC provides remediation and academic enrichment, social skill development and spiritual training for children and teens located on Capitol Hill and surrounding neighborhoods. The Center currently serves nearly sixty-five students in grades 1-12. The majority of students come from single-parent, low-income working families, and are vulnerable academically and socially. The Center works in partnership primarily with Miner Elementary School but continues working with enrolled students` who have switched to other schools through junior high and high school.

It is our vision that all NLC students will be prepared with an academic, social and spiritual foundation. They will graduate from high school, successfully transition to higher education or full-time employment, and become productive, contributing members of their community. NLC students will strive to love God, their families and themselves, valuing each other and all peoples. After fifteen years of operation, we have seen the fruit of our labors. One of our full-time staff members, Carmen Strong, was one of the original students at the Center and after obtaining her college degree in elementary education, Carmen came back to her community and joined the NLC staff to provide leadership to a growing elementary program. Five other students are in institutions of higher education and two more are considering enrollment in the fall.

In fact, 46% of our high school students go on to higher education compared to the D.C. average of 26%.

A full-time staff and many volunteers facilitate academic tutoring and homework assistance; computer and reading labs; testing and advocacy; Bible study and enrichment activities; job training; camp opportunities; field trips; and parent programs.

One of the 2nd grade teachers in our partner school commented to a NLC staff member that she could tell which of her students attended the Center. Their word recognition skills were far more advanced than those of the other students. One student in the class was showing remarkable improvement. Her mother wrote the Center "My child attends the Neighborhood Learning Center. This place is heaven sent. Briana* was very slow in reading. With the help of the Learning Center she is 90% better."

The NLC was determined to make science more appealing to students. We suspected that the reason our students held such negative feelings toward science was that they had not been given interactive hands-on experiences with science. Last summer, our students monitored the hatching of baby chicks, saw larva turn into butterflies and dissected frogs and a fetal pig. One of our students, Lamont *, was having a particular rough summer until the eggs hatched into baby chicks. The tenderness and care that emerged from this hardened young man was a sight to be treasured. These are the kinds of experiences that make learning not only exciting but touch the very souls of young people. This renewed interest in science carried over into this school-year as he explored zoology. Lamont used creative problem-solving to develop a hands-on science experiment resulting in an award-winning science project in his school.

But the NLC is more than academics. Keith* is a relatively new student to the

program. Despite tremendous hardships in his home life (father is incarcerated, mother has a substance abuse problem), this young man is a very bright student but was having numerous discipline problems at school. While it took several months (and credit to a very persistent staff), his grandmother finally completed the enrollment papers and he could fully participate at the Center. Keith brought in his first report card since his enrollment and his citizenship grade improved dramatically. His teacher commented that his behavior and attention in school has improved significantly. Keith now has people who care whether he goes to school or not. He now has people who care how his day went and whether he finished his homework. He now has someone who gives a warm greeting after-school and offers encouragement on a job well done. This sounds insignificant, but it is critical to the future of this young man. It's a well-known fact that a young man will find "family" on the street if he doesn't find it elsewhere.

Our students often say they love the NLC because of all the wonderful places they get to visit and explore. We are convinced that in order to build dreams for the future, young people need to be exposed to the world, its different people and experiences.

We also believe that students should be rewarded for hard work, commitment and motivation. Frequently these rewards take the form of trips near and far that challenge students beyond their comfort zones. Examples include whale watching in the Atlantic Ocean, rock climbing in Pennsylvania, and ~~helping on a dairy farm in Canada.~~ + we're getting ready to go on a trip to Chicago w/our Students

It is our desire to stand in the gap between school and our student's families. We believe the community has a significant role to play in supporting schools and families and can work successfully in bringing the two together. Our staff volunteer

weekly in our partner school to aid in this process. We all know the state of D.C. Public Schools. Students repeatedly fall through the cracks. The drop-out rate in the District of Columbia is stated at 40%. We have a student, Antonio* (not from our partner school), who has repeated the first, third and fifth grades. Only through the efforts of our staff, has this young man finally been tested for learning disabilities. While designated to be socially promoted to junior high next fall which is academic suicide for this young man, we are hopeful he will be placed finally in a setting which will meet his academic needs and keep him from becoming another drop-out statistic. Meeting the needs of the "whole child" includes working with our parents in being advocates for their children's education and teaching them what they should expect from their child's teachers and schools.

One of the hallmarks of the NLC is the long-term commitment made to students. Once a student is enrolled in the program and continues to meet the program's expectations, a commitment is made to walk with this student through high school. Sheron is one these students who is with me today. Sheron came to us when she was in the third grade, a struggling student wrestling with her identity as a twin as well as with her self-esteem. During her fifth grade year, the staff unanimously voted Sheron to be the lead role in the Christmas pageant convinced of that which Sheron did not even see in herself. She would have to memorize pages and pages of script. When the parts were distributed and Sheron was announced as the lead, the other students groaned and complained that Sheron was going to ruin the play. But they could not have been further from the truth. As Sheron practiced and practiced, the once hidden dramatic talent blossomed and Sheron was the star of the show and changed forever. Her self-confidence grew and spilled over into every area of her life. Preparing to graduate from Eastern High School in a few weeks, Sheron still

boasts of dramatic talent and recently performed in Othello at both the Shakespeare Theater and B. Smiths in Union Station and performed as Evilin in The Wiz. Knowing your students, their strengths and weaknesses takes time. Over 75% of our students continue year to year building the foundation for a brighter future.

I want to thank you Mr. Chairman, for holding a hearing on a faith-based organizations and the contributions organizations like our own are making. So often we are asked to minimize the faith component of our programs and downplay its significance in our success stories. However, just as we believe its important to provide an academic and social foundation, providing a spiritual foundation is critical to the future of our students. A spiritual foundation provides the moral framework for good decision-making and the strength to stand firm in adverse situations.

Faith-based organizations like the Neighborhood Learning Center have to make the most of every dollar they receive, relying heavily upon a small group of committed employees and volunteers to carry out its mission. I am convinced that some of the best work is being done in small faith-based organizations. Imagine the impact with a greater resource base!

* names have been changed to protect confidentiality

the initiative for children foundation

1350 connecticut ave nw suite 201 washington, dc 20036 vox. 202.452.1080 fax. 202.452.1082 alass@mindspring.com

Testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring, and the District of Columbia

April Lassiter
President
The Initiative for Children Foundation
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Opening Remarks
Mr. Chairman, I thank you for inviting me to speak here today. My name is April Lassiter and I am President of The Initiative for Children Foundation, a nonprofit group dedicated to ending childhood poverty and despair through the research and replication of best practices on children's issues in the private sector.

I am also the author of ***Congress and Civil Society: How Legislators can Champion Civic Renewal in Their Districts*** which was funded by the Bradley Foundation and published by The Heritage Foundation. As a Bradley Fellow, I traveled around the country with members of Congress to study the way members of Congress work with poor and needy constituents in their districts and the way members of Congress use their leadership positions to promote effective compassion.

The book, ***Congress and Civil Society***, outlines several ways that Members of Congress can use their bully pulpits to renew civil society in America. I am inserting a copy of the book for the record in the hope that more members of Congress will embrace this expanded vision of leadership and vigorous civic activism, so that we can build an America where hope, freedom and opportunity are a reality for more children and families.

I want to commend Chairman Brownback and members of the Senate Subcommittee

on Oversight of Government Management, Restructuring, and the District of Columbia for holding this hearing today as a part of "D.C. Charity Week." The need for public leadership in promoting effective compassion for the poor and needy cannot be overstated. By definition, too many legislators have focused on legislative remedies to address problems that cannot be addressed by bills or rhetoric that emanate from Washington.

Members of Congress as Social Entrepreneurs

Today's hearing on the role of faith-based charities is an excellent example of how public leaders can highlight what's working here in the Nation's capital to reach the poor and needy and how these successful efforts can be replicated in other places around the country and translated into good public policy. We need more hearings like this to hear the success stories of civic efforts, faith-based groups and corporate programs and policies that are moving the poor and needy towards self-sufficiency.

The goal of the book I authored, ***Congress and Civil Society***, is to encourage Members of Congress to embrace a new vision for leadership—one which focuses on recruiting untapped social and financial resources from the private sector to solve problems in their districts and states. The book outlines the way in which Members of Congress can use their bully pulpits to rebuild the civic infrastructure in America. Every member of Congress, Republican or Democrat, Liberal or Conservative, can embrace this vision of leadership. A proactive role in facilitating effective charitable efforts must be a cornerstone of public service and a priority for every Member of Congress if we are to address the root causes of poverty and despair in our society today.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich has aggressively promoted this vision of leadership by articulating four roles for members of Congress as visionary, agenda setter and community value articulator; symbol of community power and standing; recruiter of

talent and energy for private activities; and, administrator and manager of government.

Members of Congress have extraordinary power to recognize and recruit untapped social and financial capital to individuals, charitable groups and corporations whose efforts are moving the poor and needy towards self-sufficiency. Members of Congress can and should become social entrepreneurs by using their bully pulpits to mobilize resources to help solve problems at a local level.

Government Programs

To put this hearing in historical context, I'd like to make a few comments about the state of the non-profit sector in 1998. In the early part of this century, the non-profit sector was primarily responsible for serving the poor and needy. As government programs began to take over the role of charities with the institution of the New Deal and again with the Great Society programs under President Johnson, the private sector increasingly abdicated its charitable role with the poor.

The unfortunate result has been that even with the federal expenditure of $5 trillion over the past 30 years, the poverty rate for children rose from 14 percent in 1968 to 23 percent in 1993. In fact, the Great Society programs have paralleled startling increases in poverty, family breakdown, illegitimacy and other social ills that directly impact the lives of children and their families. One social scientist had the foresight to warn against an over-reliance on government charity. In 1821, Josiah Quincy, chairman of the Massachusetts committee on Pauper Laws, warned that subsidies might fail the poor because they would not help the truly needy enough, and might discourage industry on the part of those who are able to become self-sufficient.

The failure of government programs to help the poor and the needy to become self-sufficient is well documented. The federal expenditure for welfare services and the

corresponding explosion of social ills over the past 30 years have shown us that government is incapable of addressing the deep rooted issues which threaten the health and welfare of children and families. The facts bear out that even the most well-intentioned government programs cannot serve as surrogates for intact families or strong civic and religious institutions.

Effective Compassion

Marvin Olasky, professor of Journalism and author of ***The Tragedy of America Compassion***, has written eloquently about the characteristics of effective compassion. He argued that programs that offer mere handouts may not move the poor and the needy towards long-term self-sufficiency. Instead, Olasky suggests that compassion, which literally means "to suffer with" must be personal challenging and spiritual.

Redefining compassion requires replacing the old school approach of throwing government programs at problems with vigorous leadership in civic activism. As such, compassion, with respect to members of Congress, should be defined as the extent to they work to strengthen civic institutions, faith-based groups, voluntary associations and corporations to address the needs of their constituents, and the extent to which they are able to channel resources to efforts which are not just offering a Band-Aid fix as custodial maintenance programs, but which are moving people towards self-sufficiency and responsible citizenship. As public leaders, you can redirect the debate about civic responsibility and redefine compassion as empowerment, rather than dependency.

While the passage of welfare reform in the 104th Congress ushered in a new era of transferring responsibility and resources back to the state and local level. This reform by itself, however will not sufficiently address the poverty and despair that exists in our inner cities and rural areas.

One potential danger is that without increased civic participation and resources, waning civil institutions will not be able to meet the new demands placed on them to serve the poor and needy in our inner cities and rural areas.

A secondary danger is the potential for a legislative backlash whereby the public and policymakers will move back into the business of temporary relief by legislating new government programs, rather than investing in need-based local empowerment strategies that move the poor and the needy towards long term self-sufficiency.

The welfare reform that the American people embraced was a new system of personal and local civic initiatives that more effectively eradicates social ills, not a desire to see compassion played out on a human level. In order to address the problems of poverty and despair at their root, policy-makers must not only devolve decision-making power and resources to the local level, but they should supplement the safety net by helping to rebuild the civic infrastructure with empowerment strategies for the truly needy.

Fortunately, efforts are being made to recognize effective empowerment strategies that are need-based, rather than custodial guardians of the poor and needy. This is the critical work to which groups like The Initiative for Children, The Institute for Justice and The Center for Neighborhood Enterprise are dedicated. In addition, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress called the Renewal Alliance is beginning to do the legislative work of removing barriers and regulations to private-sector efforts to help children and their families. However, there is still a lack of leadership with respect to galvanizing and recognizing private-sector efforts, which are often small organizations operating on a shoestring budget and yet are effective agents of change and renewal in their communities.

Faith-Based Groups

Today's hearings focus on successful faith-based organizations in the District of Columbia. In contrast to custodial programs, which simply provide financial subsidies to the poor, the effective charitable efforts I have studied are often need-based, personal, challenging, possess a high degree of accountability for their resources and track their progress on a systematic and regular basis. Faith-based efforts also include a spiritual or values-based foundation.

Some skeptics have cast doubt on faith-based groups because of a facile assumption that only experts with degrees and letters after their names are qualified to help the poor and needy. My own view is that we should let the record speak for itself. For instance, some studies show that faith-based groups like Victory Fellowship and Teen Challenge are especially effective in drug and alcohol rehabilitation, at a fraction of the cost of state programs. Victory Fellowship boasts a recovery rate as high as 70 percent for its participants. The National Institute for Drug Abuse conducted a government-funded study, which showed that 86 percent of Teen Challenge graduates were drug-free after seven years. According to Teen Challenge, many government-funded and non-faith-based rehabilitation programs have a success rate under 5 percent.

We cannot afford to walk away from faith-based groups that are successfully transforming the lives of children and families, giving them direction, hope and the accountability they need to become productive members of society. We should let these groups rest on their successes and encourage their replication, rather than allowing a few skeptics to disqualify them.

As members of Congress, you can help recognize the work of faith-based groups, as well as other successful civic and corporate charitable initiatives. We need Members of Congress to highlight the work of groups like The Fishing School, here in northeast D.C., run by ex-cop Tom Lewis who provides a safe-haven in a crack

infested neighborhood, where kids get tutoring, mentoring and Bible Study. Other groups such as Children of Mine, the Gospel Rescue Mission, The Neighborhood Learning Center and STEP are effectively serving the District of Columbia.

Civic Initiatives

We should also replicate civic initiatives that have track records of success here in the District of Columbia.

Forty percent of eight-year olds cannot read on their own. According to new studies, this crisis is largely due to the reading methodology of "whole language," which fails to give kids the tools they need to recognize words. In fact, according to the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, "80 percent of children identified as having learning disabilities have the primary difficulties in learning to read." In addition, the National Institutes of Health has spent over $200 million in research that shows that phonics is the best way to teach reading. Since 1987, the Saturday Learning Extension Program (SLEP) has successfully helped over 1200 inner-city children in Washington, D.C. learn to read by training 150 parent and community volunteers to work though a 36-step phonics program.

The National Foundation for the Teaching of Entrepreneurship (NFTE) teaches business skills to over 4000 youth each year at an average cost of $750 per student. NFTE has graduated over 18,000 students and has 180 programs nationwide.. An independent study by researchers at Brandeis University showed that 33 percent of former NFTE participants own businesses and that 78 percent plan on running a business at some time in the future. The study also documented such benefits among participants as a decrease in risk behaviors like drinking or violence, and an increase in diction and self-confidence.

As you may know, over 50,000 children nationwide were legally free to be adopted last year, but remained in state care. Started in 1985, Child SHARE in Los Angeles provides placement and training for foster care by tapping into the church community in Los Angeles. Foster families are certified through a private foster family agency. Child SHARE has successfully placed 70 percent of children in a single home until they are reunited with their birth parents or adopted, thereby greatly decreasing the trauma typically associated with multiple placements for children in foster care. One out of six foster children are adopted by Child SHARE foster parents, which is double the national adoption rate. Child SHARE is supported by private funds.

We need more efforts like Children of the Night in Los Angeles, run by Lois Lee, which brings young girls off the streets and, in some cases, for the first time, gives them structure, self-respect and a safe haven from their former lives of prostitution.

Founded in 1993 in Portland, Oregon with three "friends" and 24 kids, Friends of Children now provides full time, long term mentors to more than 200 children from elementary school through high school. "Friends" are carefully screened paid professionals who work full time as big brothers or sisters to 8 children each, spending at least 8 hours per week with each of their kids at a cost of $4,000 per child per year. The Friends program is cost effective-- one third of a typical foster care program and one-tenth of the cost of incarceration. While the Friends program is child-centered, Friends requires parents to give permission for their children to participate in the program. Friends also work to ensure open lines of communication with the parents in order to involve them in their child's development and progress. While the Friends program is new, research conducted by an outside evaluator from 1996-1997 shows that among Friends' children, school attendance is up 20 percent, and behavior referrals are down 20 percent.

The National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) was created in 1994 to address the growing problem of father absence by stimulating a society-wide movement to increase the number of children growing up with involved and committed fathers. NFI has created over 1500 fatherhood projects nationwide providing public information and support for fathers and, in Virginia alone, has trained 150 social service workers to engage fathers with the families they serve. NFI has partnered with the Ad Council to garner over $100 million in donated television and radio broadcasts over the past 18 months. The ad campaign has generated over 30,000 phone calls from individuals seeking assistance on fathering. NFI has also held forums in over 100 cities to raise an awareness of the importance of fathers in the health of families and communities. Finally, NFI has garnered support from 50 members of Congress in the U.S. House and Senate and 14 governors who are committed to advocating responsible fatherhood in their districts and states. In June of 1997, NFI worked with the Congressional Fatherhood Promotion Task Force and boxing champion Evander Holyfield to hold its first hearing on Capitol Hill through the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. The event attracted local and national press attention to the problem of fatherless families and resulting social ills.

Corporate Efforts

Members of Congress should also encourage corporate efforts to help the poor and needy. Many businesses have reached into their own pockets and recruited support from citizens and private groups to reach out to the poor and needy in the communities where they operate. Members of Congress should hold out and promote the replication of efforts like Bayer Corporation's on-site child-care facility in West Haven, Connecticut that allows working parents more time to spend with their children. Subway has developed the MILE program to provide micro-loans to welfare moms who want to start their own businesses. Wendy's provides the same benefits for employees who are adopting children as they do for employees who become pregnant. Blue Cross Blue Shield has raised over $80 million in private funds

for over 240,000 children to close an insurance gap for those not covered by Medicaid, but who cannot afford private health insurance. Burger King has invested nearly $2 million in start-up grants in partnership with other companies and public schools to build more 22 academies for at-risk children.
There are many more examples of civic and corporate efforts that deserve recognition and replication.

Some members of Congress are already making great strides towards encouraging these good efforts and as such, are helping to move the poor and the needy in their districts towards increased self-sufficiency, self-governance and thriving civil institutions. Many of these congressional efforts I have written about in ***Congress and Civil Society***. I commend Chairman Brownback for his work towards these efforts. You have taken the time to travel around the state of Kansas to visit these centers of effective compassion to learn "what works" and to help raise their visibility.

To mention a few other examples, Senator Santorum and Representative Jim Talent have implemented empowerment strategies by transforming their district offices into centers of charitable activity. Their constituents are linked to charitable efforts and resources, rather than referred to government agencies, which are often thousands of miles away. Rep. Tony Hall recruited volunteers in his district to form a gleaning operation from volunteers who work in the field to a linen company that lends its trucks to deliver the food to feeding sites. Rep. Jim Rogan reached out to social service providers, corporations and individuals to create a task force called the "Lend A Hand Foundation" to address the youth service gaps in Pasedena, CA. Rep. Rob Portman galvanized civic resources in Cincinnati, OH to organize an aggressive anti-drug task force with one of the largest ad campaigns in America. Rep. John Kasich just authored a book, entitled ***Courage is Contagious***, due out this summer which tells the stories of everyday people who have overcome great odds to make a heroic

difference in the lives of people around them.

I believe the future of our country depends on the extent to which we take personal responsibility for ourselves, our families and our communities. Government is not inherently evil. Rather, government cannot do the work of strong families, civic groups, voluntary associations or corporate efforts to provide family friendly workplaces. What we need today is education on what works. We need smarter government—government that operates on sound research, rather than political fights about who cares more about the poor and needy and the children. We need, quite simply, a spiritual and civic renewal in America. Nothing short of this will address the challenges that children and families face today. This is the work to which The Initiative for Children has dedicated itself: identifying and promoting the replication of "best practices" on critical children's issues.

Michael Joyce, President of the Bradley Foundation, summarized the call to leadership in a January 1996 speech to freshmen Members of Congress. His remarks bear repeating. Joyce charged members of Congress with the mission of charitable groups when he said:

> *Within every one of your congressional districts, there are individuals who have thrown themselves into the business of civic revitalization, although they might not call it that. Perhaps one day they simply looked around themselves at the decay, the crime, the moral collapse, and said: "Enough." Enough of the social pathology. Enough of government programs full of promise and short of performance. Enough of passively waiting for an alleged expert to do something. And so they themselves stepped forward to do something. What you must do now is go back to your districts and track these folks down. Take the time to become acquainted with them. Learn their stories. Learn to tell their stories. Talk about them incessantly to your constituents—just as much as you talk about budgets or congressional bills....*

You have heard from some of these community healers today and, over the next week, some of you will visit the places where they work miracles, changing lives and bringing the tools of empowerment to children and their families in Washington, D.C.

The need for public leadership is nowhere more evident than in our Nation's capital—the center of power for the free world, and yet a prison of poverty and despair for so many children and families. I truly believe that by building these private efforts, we will not only sharpen the way the public, the media and policy-makers evaluate compassion in America, but also improve the welfare of American children and families.

As you continue to look at the issue of what can be done to empower charitable work in D.C., I encourage you to look for ways that you can apply the same energy and resources to charitable efforts in your districts and states so that we can facilitate a new alliance of legislators, citizens and corporations who will seek to take back responsibility for the poor and needy that has been abdicated over the past thirty years.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you here today.

TESTIMONY

by Joe Loconte
Deputy Editor, *Policy Review* magazine, The Heritage Foundation

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Illustration by David Clark

By Joe Loconte

The 7 Deadly Sins of Government Funding

Welfare reform is once again forcing upon Americans an age-old debate: How should we, as a society, care for the neediest among us? Until about the 1960s, privately funded charities were the most vital and visible answer to that question—putting the jobless to work, lifting single mothers out of poverty, keeping delinquent kids out of jail. But gradually, after waves of Great Society programs, government has come to dominate the care-giving industry. Today, federal and state agencies fund and regulate every conceivable social service. And, increasingly, they do so indirectly: Countless charities and other nonprofits are now heavily subsidized to deliver care; many of these "private" groups depend on public funds for well over half of their income. Even numerous religious agencies, typically the most wary of entanglement with the secular state, could hardly survive without government aid.

With the lure of lucrative grants and contracts, government is quietly orchestrating one of the most profound—and overlooked—shifts in public policy in a generation. Massive, direct public funding for private nonprofits is quickly becoming the most important strategy for attacking social problems in America.

But is it working? By increasing the pressure on the private sector to mobilize against poverty

and other social ills, recent welfare reforms have raised two vital questions: First, have private charities become too dependent on government support? And second, what special risks accompany the taxpayer money that flows to religiously based charities?

Defenders of the "public-private partnership" argue that government contracts make it easier for private agencies to sustain and expand their outreach. That may be true, but more true of those agencies with good lobbyists and political connections. Moreover, the subsidies to these groups carry serious liabilities.

The following observations reveal the dangers—the "seven deadly sins"—of government's alliance with private social-service agencies. They are based on research in Massachusetts, mainly in the Boston area, which was chosen in part because of its heavily funded network of social services. Nearly all of the organizations cited depend on public money for at least 60 percent of their budgets.

What follows, then, are not the criticisms of disenfranchised outsiders, but the insights and concerns of the system's benefactors—or, put more precisely, its dependents.

for Private Charities

1. **Government regulations force providers to waste resources.** With government grants and contracts come government standards—reams of regulations intended to ensure accountability and guarantee quality care. What they guarantee instead is mindboggling waste.

Jacquelin Triston, a Salvation Army captain in Framingham, oversaw a federal lunch program at an Army center that mandated every child be served an entire meal every day—whether he wanted it or not. And if a child asked for a second helping of anything on the menu, he got an entire meal. "It was a crazy waste of food," Triston says. "It just ended up in the trash."

The Key Program offers counseling and other support services to 700 youths daily, most of them in trouble with the law, at 40 sites throughout New England. Ninety-nine percent of the program's $15 million budget comes from state and federal sources. To continue to receive government funds, however, all Key centers must be fully accessible to the handicapped under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

So exactly how many of its kids are physically handicapped? "Zip," says Bill Lyttle, a 20-year veteran of the agency. "Our programs are not designed to serve handicapped kids. We serve a lot of delinquent kids. There are not a lot of delinquent kids stealing cars in wheelchairs."

Local regulations may be as clumsy and wasteful as federal rules. Private schools are prime targets of overzealous regulators, says Dick Barbieri, the executive director of the New England Association of Independent Schools:

- A small elementary school sets up a lunch table for students to make their own peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches. A food inspector insists that every piece of bread placed out for use must be individually wrapped. Under the new rules, Barbieri says, "a kid comes along, takes two slices of bread, makes a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich. Regulators call that a health hazard."
- Another school builds a hockey rink, but a fire inspector rules it cannot open because it lacks exit signs that would remain lighted in case of a blackout. School officials point out that the rink has no walls—just a roof supported every 20 feet by girders. The fire inspector is unpersuaded, and the school installs the exit signs.

"What government agencies don't understand," says Bill Chiaradonna, the director of programs at Catholic Charities in Boston, "is that the more they regulate us, the more we have to spend what little money we get on business people and secretaries."

2. **Government regulations cripple commonsense caregiving.** The impulse to standardize care, to minimize the risk of accidents or failure, feeds an ever-growing regulatory thicket—one that entangles and paralyzes local decisionmaking.

Washington issues numerous guidelines, for example, for the distribution of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) money. The Salvation Army's Triston oversaw a Cape Cod chapter that received FEMA funds to help struggling families meet rent and utility payments. But the money was tightly regulated: help could be given to a family only once in a fiscal year, for example, and could never amount to more than a month's bill. Local caregivers found they couldn't apply the money in ways best able to meet the financial crises of individual families. And that, says Triston, "made it difficult at times to really assist people in an appropriate way."

It is a vice not confined to Washington regulators. Consider the Massachusetts Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), which oversees all residential facilities for the mentally and physically handicapped in the state. DMR regulations demand that facilities investigate and report every incident involving the possibility of injury

to residents. But the guidelines do not allow for the normal scrapes and bruises that mentally and physically handicapped people are bound to suffer. Though the rules permit program staff to use professional judgment in reporting incidents, providers say the mood created by regulators turns every bruise into a possible government probe.

"We're constantly debating whether something needs to be reported," says Maggie Mahoney, director of residential services at the Boston-based Justice Resource Institute. The Institute, which oversees several centers for the disabled, is continually processing paperwork on potential violations, incident reports, or actual investigations—sometimes eating up 75 percent of Mahoney's work week.

The organization's dependence on public funds—nearly all of its budget is paid by the state—makes it especially vulnerable to government oversight. "Regulations dictate everything we do," says Mahoney, who has since left the Institute. "They tell us how many staff we have to have depending on the level of disability, what things are locked, what medications are kept, how individual service plans are developed."

She's not kidding. A human-rights committee, authorized by the DMR to review caregiving policies, recently overruled a staff decision to lock a refrigerator. JRI staff locked the refrigerator at one of its facilities because a resident with an eating disorder was stealing everyone else's food. The committee wanted the refrigerator unlocked and a staff person assigned to monitor the woman.

"Regulations dictate everything we do."
—Maggie Mahoney, Justice Resource Institute

But all of the center's eight residents need significant custodial care, and there are not enough staff to give her exclusive attention. The Institute proposed an alternative: secure the refrigerator only when all the residents are home. The committee balked, spent months debating the issue, and ruled that the refrigerator should remain unlocked. "It just couldn't get resolved," says JRI director Bob Richards.

Many providers who deal with state agencies doubt that public officials appreciate the effect of regulation on day-to-day operations. "Some peoples' jobs are to create regulations," says the Key Program's Bill Lyttle. "If they don't find deficiencies, somebody thinks they're not doing their job. So their job is to find problems. It's the wrong orientation." Complains Ed Gotgart, the president of the Massachusetts Association of Non-profit Schools and Colleges: "Compliance becomes the focal point and not the program."

3. Government squeezes providers into its caregiving mold. The bureaucratic state places tremendous pressure on providers to adopt its vision of "professional" care. Listen to the Rev. Phillip Earley, legal counsel at Catholic Charities, who has reviewed his agency's state contracts for more than a dozen years: He wishes that government "would just give us a little more freedom in designing the services" and laments what he calls "the cookie-cutter approach to treating people."

One tool in that approach is the state's licensing system, which determines whether groups qualify for grants and contracts.

Jim Major, the director of the Massachusetts Association of Approved Private Schools, recalls a lengthy battle waged by the state Department of Education against a Springfield school for deaf children. The school, under contract to provide special education, cut its costs by renting classrooms from local public schools. By bringing its children into public classrooms, the Springfield school also encouraged interaction between deaf and nondeaf kids, a cherished goal among state educators. But the Education Department threatened to revoke the school's license and shut it down, Major says. The reason: The public school classrooms lacked state approval as appropriate facilities for the deaf.

The Department's licensing regs also stipulate that any new special-ed program must have 20 students. Major says the number is unrealistically high for most communities. "The regulations create a box kind of mentality about how special education should be provided," he says. "There are a lot of other ways to meet the educational needs of kids . . . but people aren't allowed to do it that way if they tell the state."

Thanks to state monitoring, Massachusetts educators also must anguish over the distinction between a preschool and a day-care center. The state licenses 120 independent private schools—elementary, secondary, and boarding schools—serving about 35,000 students. Many have preschool facilities on site, but principals and teachers don't operate them as day-care centers. Instead, they use educational materials and curricula appropriate for preschool classrooms.

But the state Office for Children makes a raw numerical judgment: If the majority of a school's students are in preschool programs, then the preschool arm is considered a day-care center. It must conform to all state regulations governing child-care facilities, including training for super-

visors and administrators, a high teacher-pupil ratio, and building and safety codes.

Many of the state's independent schools, however, use Montessori educational principles, which keep the number of teachers to a minimum to encourage children to work together. State staffing regs for day-care centers undercut the Montessori philosophy. Says Barbieri, "you thwart your educational aim in order to conform to the day-care center standards."

A license to heal. Government regulators also pursue conformity by insisting on credentialed staff. State contracts contain unbending requirements for certified caregivers. Though few providers challenge the need for professionalism, some say the system's inflexibility is utterly counterproductive.

"It's a disaster," says Joyce Strom, the executive director of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC). Her Boston agency, which offers early intervention programs for families at risk of abuse, historically has relied heavily on volunteers. But state demands for credentialed staff undercut the agency's ability to use them. "We are so turf-driven and so professionally driven that we let it create a rigidity that I'm not even sure does the best job."

In areas such as substance-abuse treatment, state-mandated approaches clearly are not doing the best job. Despite layers of licensing and credentialing rules, long-term recovery rates for those in government-approved treatment programs are notoriously low. State-funded services are designed to wean people off drugs for a few days or weeks at a time. But most don't touch the deeper factors that contribute to substance abuse, such as personal responsibility and accountability to others and to God

Meanwhile, private, noncredentialed, spiritually-based programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous remain one of the most successful efforts nationwide. "When somebody comes into recovery, he's spiritually bankrupt," says Karen Wakefield of STEP, a Boston treatment program based on the 12-step model. "But [state-approved] service provision deals with the physical or the mental. We've totally ignored the spiritual, and now we're paying the price."

***4.* Government focuses on delivering services, not results.** Whenever a social-service agency accepts a government contract, it also accepts a built-in bias in the way its work will be measured and rewarded. Government excels at quantifying and paying for services delivered: the number of clients counseled, beds provided, days spent in drug detoxification. But government pays little attention to the ultimate effectiveness of those services. "Nobody gives a darn if the kid got better," says Joyce Strom of the MSPCC, a leading recipient of family-service contracts. "All the auditors look at in my budgets is to see if I bought as many pencils and spent as much on gas as I said I did."

Each year, for example, Massachusetts pumps millions of dollars into substance-abuse programs, with no idea whether they are curing or perpetuating addictions. Though the state's Bureau of Substance Abuse employs a staff of 40 to manage its contracts, no one evaluates the effectiveness of the providers. "I don't know if a person we treat shows up in another treatment program across the city," says Steven Moss, the vice president of substance-abuse-treatment services at Dimoch Community Health Center in Boston. "Nobody really funds us to track people down."

This fixation on providing and quantifying services—whatever the ultimate outcome—reflects an entitlement mentality. It is the notion that all needy people deserve limitless public assistance, regardless of their willingness to change destructive attitudes and behaviors.

Boston's Pine Street Inn, one of the largest shelters in New England, provides food and housing to nearly a thousand homeless men, women, and children each day. But the shelter's contracts with government do not include any targets for moving people out of homelessness and into permanent independence. For most of Pine Street's 25 years of operation, its philosophy of assistance has mirrored that of government contractors. "The vision [has been] keeping people alive and meeting incredibly basic needs," says Jan Griffin, the director of program planning.

> **"It's the cookie-cutter approach to treating people."**
> **—Phillip Earley, Catholic Charities**

The shelter expects very little of its residents. They are not required to work or take classes. Nor do officials insist that all able-bodied residents enter its employment and housing program; no more than 20 percent of male resi-

dents ever volunteer. Even the no-drinking rule is qualified: Pine Street residents can walk a few yards from the shelter to a "wet park"—a place where they can drink alcohol unmolested all day long—and return to the shelter in the evening, no questions asked.

Beth Kidd, the director of another residential center for the homeless and other needy persons, believes that's the wrong way to offer help. "People who are substance abusers, who have been out on the street for years—they've learned how to survive," she says. "They know how to manipulate. And what they've learned from the system is, 'I can make the system take care of me.' " What they need, she says, is moral challenge, not milquetoast charity. Kidd's Boston agency, Place of Promise, won't take a dime of government contract money because she wants the freedom to challenge people to reform bad behaviors—a freedom that her state-paid colleagues tell her they don't always have.

A 25-year veteran of neighborhood nursing, Kidd tells the story of a young woman who had worked as a prostitute, became addicted to drugs, and eventually died of AIDS. "When she came here, she'd been through every government agency, everything Boston had to offer," Kidd says. Nothing had turned her around. A public nurse sent the woman to Place of Promise because she didn't know what else to try. A couple of days before she died, the same public nurse came to see the woman. "She struggled herself up on her elbows—she was so sick—and grabbed the nurse by her collar and pulled her down so she could hear," says Kidd. "She said, 'You've got to hear what I'm telling you. I have found life here. I am so filled with joy because I have finally found forgiveness.

" 'All those times you tried to tell me that everything I was doing was OK, I knew it wasn't OK. It destroyed everybody I ever cared about, everybody I ever loved. And most of all, it destroyed me. And you kept saying it's all right.' "

5. Agencies that chase public dollars confuse their mission. Government grants and contracts can be a tantalizing diversion. Even private agencies with the best of intentions may assume tasks that have little to do with their original purpose and for which they may be ill-equipped. "Most everyone is fighting for every penny they can get to run whatever program they have," says the Salvation Army's Triston. "It's really a matter of, if you can't do it the way you want, then you'll take your program and you'll fit it into what government will give you money for."

Sometimes private agencies have little choice. Kristen McCormack, a former executive director of Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, recalls a summer-camp contract with the state Department of Social Services to help abused and neglected children. Federated Dorchester, an association of settlement houses in Boston, ran its own camp program for local kids. But it was not equipped to handle children from the DSS caseload. Nevertheless, it struggled with the contract for years.

"Everything about it was a disaster," McCormack says. "It was insane, we lost tons of money on it, it wasn't consistent with our mission." DSS caseworkers referred children from all over the city, often without reliable transportation, to the Dorchester camps, yet the agency had no buses to pick them up. DSS required numerous pages of paperwork for each referral, yet the agency lacked the administrative manpower. Most importantly, the agency was being asked to provide a program to DSS children with intense behavioral and emotional problems. "They were abused and neglected kids, which we didn't have the capacity to deal with in our summer camps," says McCormack. "We did not have intensive counseling and therapy."

Eventually McCormack told a regional DSS officer that Federated Dorchester would discontinue the contract. "I said we can't provide this service and we're not meeting the needs of the kids," she recalls. The DSS officer reminded McCormack of the $2 million in day-care contracts her agency had with the state. "They actually said, 'If you want your day-care contract, you will take the summer-camp contract,'" she says. "They were very clear." The agency renewed the contract.

Watching the children. Up until the late 1970s, Massachusetts performed its own investigations and assessments of welfare families, through its child protective services department. As its welfare caseload ballooned, so did the

> **"You'll take your program and fit it into what government will give you money for."**
> **—Jacqueline Triston, Salvation Army**

state's need for protective-service work. But government lacked the staff to monitor families effectively. By the early 1980s, the DSS began enticing child-welfare groups to take on its investigative caseload.

"Rather than purchasing add-on or supportive services from private agencies," says Bill Chiaradonna, the director of programs at Boston's Catholic Archdiocese, "DSS was trying to get the agencies to do the same work that it

was doing." Although it boasted a long history of work in adoption and foster care, Catholic Charities had no experience in protective services. Nevertheless, by the late 1980s the charity brought in more than $1 million a year in child-protection contracts.

"This made us almost identical to the DSS office," says Chiaradonna, "and that became a problem." The problem was that Catholic Charities acquired the same stigma in the community that attaches to a government protective-service agency: It took on a quasi-policing function, monitoring and reporting parents suspected of abusing or neglecting their children.

A similar identity crisis enveloped the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC). Founded in 1878, the agency had long focused on preventive services to families at risk of neglect or abuse. But by the 1980s, after the DSS reorganized, most of the big state contracts available to private agencies funded family investigations and case management of DSS families.

For abuse-prevention groups such as MSPCC, this was the wrong emphasis. The agency wanted to make sure families were getting enough support from the start—including prenatal care, parenting skills, home visitation, counseling, health and other support services. Like Catholic Charities, however, MSPCC went along with the contract flow, eventually depending on child-protection work to fund 70 percent of its budget. "The board [of directors] felt it did contaminate their mission, and that they had to do what the state said," says Strom, who joined the agency in 1991. "They wanted to get back to the prevention word in our name."

Ironically, they soon got some help from the state legislature, which passed a bill banning most nonprofits from doing child-protection work. Cases were transferred back to the state, and funding to private groups was cut off.

Private agencies went into a tailspin. The MSPCC reorganized and launched a massive fundraising campaign. Catholic Charities scrambled to salvage other programs. The agency laid off social workers and supervisors, relegated program directors to part-time hours and restructured its administration. "There was a whole infrastructure that was supported in part by the DSS contracts," Chiaradonna says. "We were still being true to our mission," he insists, "but in the end, we probably would have gotten out of protective services ourselves."

Heavy dependence on federal and state contracts means dancing to the government piper. Public funding, says Strom, "definitely undermines your capacity to . . . show leadership, to try new demonstrations, to find strategies that work that bureaucracies can't get away with."

> **"They don't think that anybody can take care of themselves unless there's a government agency overseeing them."**
> **—Dick Barbieri, Association of Independent Schools**

The leaders of Bruce Wall Ministries, a church-based program for at-risk youth, place a holy premium on their financial independence from government. For 20 years, public funds have supplied less than 5 percent of the Boston agency's budget. "There's this feeling that the cat's already out of the bag," says Karen Wall. "But my feeling is you'd better hold onto the cat's tail. Better to stop now than to get in bed with the feds and not have a sense of where you're going."

6. Politics often drives caregiving decisions. Racial and ethnic politics, the biases of state agency commissioners, the shifting fiscal moods of the state legislature—all these factors affect program decisions. Consider:

- Project Place has a grant to work with Latino girls in a local school system. The girls are considered at high risk for pregnancy, drug use, and AIDS. But so are the whites, Asians, African Americans, and other students in the school district, which has asked Project Place to expand its outreach. "The grant doesn't allow us to do that," says executive director Suzanne Kenney. And so the program's government-funded counselor must literally turn away anyone but Latino girls.
- The DSS decision to end nearly all of its protective-service contracts with private providers had nothing to do with quality control. When the DSS transferred the cases of roughly 5,000 families back to its own caseworkers, critics said the agency wasn't ready. It lacked the personnel to handle the larger caseload and had no transition plan for the extra families. Says Joyce Strom of MSPCC, "It was not thoughtful, it was not practical, it was not logical."

Why the shift? It was part of a deal between state legislators, who wanted to cut the budget of the Department of Social Services, and the social workers union, eager to protect its members' jobs. "There was a political deal cut with the union and the Senate Ways and Means [Committee] in the middle of the night," Strom says. "They said, 'You're cutting so much money, at least bring back the private money in protective services, and we won't fight you on these budget cuts.' "

The state vs. St. Ann's. Finally, consider a dispute that broke out in August 1995 between a state agency and a residential facility for children. The Department of Social Services instructed all residential-care centers for emotionally troubled children to get DSS kids out of the expensive facilities as quickly as possible. Most would be sent to less supervised foster-care settings. Transition plans for the children were to be scrapped. So instead of a gradual transition—two or three months to get acquainted with a new foster family—the children were given a matter of days, sometimes barely 24 hours.

The roughly 1,700 children in the system, however, are some of society's most vulnerable. Most have been abandoned, abused, hospitalized for emotional problems, and in and out of foster homes. For these kids, the word "family" means pain, abuse, and rejection.

In justifying the decision, Governor William Weld's administration tried to have it both ways. Citing a $5.5 million deficit facing the DSS, the governor called the move "well within the range of reasonableness." At the same time, a DSS spokesperson portrayed the decision as a deliberate shift in the agency's treatment philosophy. "We've got a whole new attitude," she told the *Boston Globe*. "The old way was to park kids in group care forever. We don't think that's best for the kids. We want to see how they do in less structured settings, so we can get them into permanent situations."

Patrick Villani, the director of St. Ann's Home in Methuen, was aghast. "This all starts not with a new philosophy," he says. "It starts with a $5.5 million deficit. And then havoc breaks out."

Villani fired off protest letters to the governor, the secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, and the DSS commissioner. A child psychologist predicted terrible results for the children, writing of one case that "it would be hard to design a transition out of residential treatment that would be less appropriate/more destructive for this child." Unmoved, DSS officials ordered children shipped out to foster care or other less expensive settings.

"You work for us." Villani met with administration officials, who wanted his criticism to end. Villani says the $4 million in DSS funding for St. Ann's hung silently—but heavily—in the air. The administration's tacit message: "You've got to realize you work for us." End of meeting.

But not end of story: St. Ann's filed suit against the state, charging administration officials with an attempt to silence criticism. The Office for Children eventually found that DSS had violated 27 regulations for its own licensing. A follow-up with some of the children confirmed earlier fears: Some had passed through several foster homes, others needed psychiatric hospitalization, one had allegedly assaulted a roommate, and another had set fire to his room.

"Is the state committed to treating these kids? I think the answer to that is no," Villani says. "What this all shows in the end is that the state cannot be expected to act in the best interests of kids in its custody because of the funding constraints placed upon them."

Villani fears that government intrusion of this sort may portend the future of social services—an unhappy Brave New World of careless, cost-driven treatment philosophies. "They're in essence buying the professional to say that the child does not need the more expensive forms of treatment," Villani says. "Survival depends on producing the kind of optimistic statements about treatment—especially inexpensive treatment—that the state wants to hear." State accountants and politicians as therapists? That sounds more like a George Orwell novel than a philosophy of caregiving.

7. Government tends to secularize religious programs. Just like their secular counterparts, many religious providers would founder or shut down without government contract money. Two of the state's largest religious charities—Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army—depend on government contracts for more than 50 percent of their funding.

Paradoxically, the federal courts' obsession with the strict separation of church and state prohibits government support of religion. How, then, can government justify public assistance to these groups?

In a landmark 1988 case, *Bowen v. Kendrick*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the state may fund social-service agencies with religious ties—but only when those groups are not "pervasively sectarian." Though it never clearly defined that pregnant phrase, the Court insisted that agencies separate "religious" and "secular" activities to qualify for public funding. How does church-state law influence religious nonprofits that do

business with government?

Defining membership. Consider employment policies. Federal civil-rights laws allow privately funded groups to discriminate in employment for religious reasons. But wherever public money goes, anti-discrimination laws generally follow. Massachusetts law is especially restrictive: Once state funds flow to a nonprofit, the Commonwealth prohibits discrimination based on religious or sexual orientation, no matter how sectarian the group or agency.

For religious organizations, however, the religious credentials of its employees can be crucial. "Employees and their religious commitments virtually define an agency," says Steven Monsma, a political scientist at Pepperdine University and the author of *When Sacred and Secular Mix*. "If a faith-based agency may not limit their hiring to persons of their own faith, the religious nature of that agency would be effectively destroyed."

Catholic Charities now supports most of its paid staff through contract money. Agency officials seem surprised that religious questions would even be discussed in the job application process. "When a person becomes an employee of Catholic Charities, I'm not so sure they're doing it because of any spiritual thing, or because of our mission," says Earley. "It's a job. They're a social worker and there's a position available." Sister Linda O'Rourke, the vice president for the Boston charity's day-care programs, describes the "interfaith" nature of the organization's staff. She estimates that more than half are not Catholic.

Hiring practices at the Salvation Army, a Protestant evangelical organization, also can be problematic. Though known as a social-service agency, the Army is legally constituted as a church. Each local Army center, which supports a congregation, must be led by a Salvationist minister. This position is funded privately, so no discrimination statutes apply. Any staff position paid for with public funds, however, is subject to all relevant state laws prohibiting discrimination.

Although Army members may be hired under a state contract, religion must not be a criterion for these jobs. So many positions are now filled by applicants with professional—not necessarily religious—credentials. A day-care center employs a Jewish director. A drug-treatment center with a staff of eight employs only one Salvationist, and includes an Islamic counselor who serves Muslims. "We have a drug clinic, and that needs a licensed clinician. We have a day-care center that needs a masters-level program in child development. Those criteria will always be first and foremost," says Jeff Green, a social-service coordinator for the Army's Massachusetts Bay Area centers.

On the issue of homosexuality, both charities must live with a certain amount of tension. Catholic and Salvationist teaching considers homosexuality morally deviant and officially bans homosexuals from roles of spiritual leadership. But state law prevents officials from quizzing job applicants about their sexual orientation. When it comes to hiring, church officials seem to follow President Clinton's notorious compromise with the military: don't ask, don't tell. However, unlike military policy, openly gay, state-paid employees could not be dismissed because of their homosexuality.

God in a box. A second threat awaits religious charities doing business with government: Can courts really insist that they expunge the spiritual components from their programs?

> **"If they don't find deficiencies, somebody thinks they're not doing their job."**
> **—Bill Lytle, the Key Program**

The original mission statement of Catholic Charities in Boston was "to insure the religious education of Catholic children placed in non-Catholic foster homes." The charity's prime concern was to safeguard the Catholic faith of some of its community's most vulnerable members—parentless children. It was a decidedly sectarian mission.

The charity's most recent mission statement identifies its central task as "supporting the social, mental, and spiritual well-being of children, families, and individuals." Catholic Charities now offers a full range of health and social services to more than 100,000 people annually—to people of all faiths or of no faith. Says Earley: "We don't check baptismal slips at the door."

As the agency's agenda has broadened, however, its self-conscious spiritual agenda has withered: Catholic Charities is legally incorporated as a not-for-profit, nonsectarian agency, and there now is little religious content to most of its state-funded programs. The charity's largest day-care program in Boston, for example, offers no religious instruction for its children. Youth intervention programs avoid discussion of religious topics. Education and parenting programs for pregnant teens, though decidedly pro-life, are short on references to distinctive Catholic religious teaching.

"Some clergy think we should be teaching Catholic theology," says O'Rourke. "But it's not the mission of a social outreach movement to teach and evangelize." Says Earley, "I'm not sure

that the so-called explicitly spiritual issues come up."

The Army's quagmire. The Salvation Army—with a church facility, a minister, and a congregation at most local chapters—is in a stronger position than many other church-based providers to preserve a spiritual dimension to its social outreach. At one Army chapter, men from a state-funded shelter program attend a Bible-and-fellowship club; a day-care center for preschool-age children offers a Bible study for parents during the week; a drug-treatment program holds a mandatory chapel or meditation service every morning.

Moreover, the Army is legally constituted as a church—"an evangelical part of the universal Christian church." Its mission statement is unabashedly sectarian: "to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination." "It's an integrated ministry," says Steve Carroll, an officer of the group. "Our Christian mission and Christian focus is in no way separated from the social services and the work which we do. In the Salvation Army, you can't draw a line."

The dilemma is that this is precisely what federal and state law demands of religious charities. The Salvation Army is more aggressive than some other church-based agencies in providing its clients with "religious" activities—church services, Bible clubs, prayer meetings. But the contract system prohibits the Army from directly incorporating these activities into state-funded programs. No public funds can be used for them, and no publicly funded staffer can perform them on program time. Says Green, "The leader of the day-care center or drug clinic would not be leading a Bible study." In this sense, the Salvation Army manages to keep religion close at hand as it helps the needy. But in order to avoid violations of the First Amendment, it pushes explicit expressions of faith to the periphery.

All of this adds up to an ambiguous, adversarial, even precarious relationship between the secular state and its religious providers. Says Pepperdine's Monsma, "When one looks at the legal and constitutional bases on which they receive those funds, the situation could not be more uncertain and dangerous."

From the vantage point of the faithful, the greatest threat is not the loss of contract money but the slow corruption of their religious institutions. If staff members—and the faith they bring with them—do not help define a religious organization, what does? The government's effort to distinguish between sacred and secular activities only compounds the problem. To avoid being deemed "pervasively sectarian," religious entities are careful to separate their government-funded acts of charity from explicit expressions of Christian faith and practice. Ironically, the religious groups most successful at managing such segregation may be in the most danger. Warns John Samaan, the director of the Boston Rescue Mission: "If you're a Christian organization that doesn't have Christian outreach, you're not a Christian organization anymore."

A deadly peril. No particular political bent is needed to recognize the ill effects of entangling social-service providers in government financing: Some of the agencies most beholden to the public-funding regime are its most potent critics. Dick Barbieri of the New England Association of Independent Schools, a long-time servant in that regime, describes the mindset of state regulators this way: "If it isn't regulated, it's a deadly peril. They don't think that anybody in society can take care of themselves unless there's a government agency overseeing them."

Twenty years ago, Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus raised similar concerns in their groundbreaking work *To Empower People*. The authors warned that a social-service strategy with government funding as its lifeblood would produce all sorts of mischief. Government, they wrote, could easily co-opt private agencies "in a too-eager embrace that would destroy the very distinctiveness of their function."

Veterans of this system confirm their anxiety. "Virtually every agency of any size at all does some business with the state," says Joseph Doolin, the secretary for social services at Catholic Charities in Boston. "And, increasingly, any business [with the state] becomes dominant business—and, hence, the whole disappearance of a truly voluntary sector." Such is the verdict of one of the largest, most politically-honed providers in one of the nation's most progressive states. Let's hope it won't be lost on others determined to offer the most effective help to our nation's neediest.

"Better to stop now than to get in bed with the Feds and not have sense of where you're going."
—Karen Wall, Bruce Wall Ministries

Joe Loconte is the deputy editor of Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship. *His article is adapted from a book to be published by the Pioneer Institute, in Boston. The project was commissioned by Boston University's Institute for the Study of Economic Culture, directed by Peter Berger.*