

in a particular sector of the State. Maryland's rapidly emerging metropolitan clusters provide still another example of the need for more deftly weaving together many different governmental efforts. Closely intertwined in those thickets are such problems as traffic congestion, mass transportation needs, crime, health hazards, education, recreational requirements, the limitations of existing governmental jurisdictions, inadequate financial resources and many other questions. Better means must be found to relate the various State efforts not only at the level of the major State offices in Annapolis and Baltimore, but also in the actual localities where our funds and programs are brought to bear. The most creative and challenging front for administrative reform, in fact, is at the point of program impact in the individual counties and communities.

In connection with that, I want the proposed Commission to consider the possible merit of a State Office for Local and Metropolitan Affairs. Such a unit should not take over the actual administration of substantive programs from their functional departments. But it could coordinate the activities of the dozens of state offices now independently working on local and metropolitan problems, and assist the Governor and Legislature in formulating State policy concerning local-state relations in particular program areas. Such an office could also, on request, provide local governments with a broad range of expert services and research assistance concerning developing aspects of urbanization beyond the immediate specialization of other state agencies. When asked, it could even undertake studies of specific local problems with broader potential relevance in the State. The office could be a clearing house for information on local governmental activities and encourage community planning, the expansion and improvement of in-service training facilities, and other basic activities among local governments. The usefulness of such state services for local governments has been proven in a number of other states; and an office similar to that which I am suggesting is already in operation in several of the states. I would hope that the agency, once established, might eventually pull together special program centers in areas of the State with unusual economic or other problems. Such centers could provide a single intake for all State services in the community — employment, welfare, retraining, parole, rehabilitation, mental health, and other responsibilities. It might even undertake to bring together State services on a case basis and fuse efforts with the same family by agents from correction, welfare, employment and other agencies. This is just one of the possibilities that a State Office for Local and Metropolitan Affairs could open up.