

Age Discrimination

The U.S. Labor Department's Wage-Hour Division is making a concerted enforcement effort in support of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act across the Northwest as well as nationally, Vernon P. Nilsen, Northwest Regional Administrator of the Labor Department's Employment Standards Administration, said in Seattle.

Nilsen pointed out that more older workers were found to have been denied promotions or fired because of age in 1972 than in the two previous years.

The ADEA was passed in 1967 to promote employment based on ability rather than age, and prohibits job bias against 40 to 65-year-old workers in hiring, firing, pay, promotions, leave and other terms or conditions of employment.

Discriminatory job advertising also is prohibited, and help-wanted ads expressing a preference for youth are banned

by the Federal law.

Nilsen also took note that the Age Discrimination in Employment Act stipulates that the Labor Department must first attempt to obtain voluntary compliance through informal conciliation, conference and persuasion, and he said that while these methods are almost always successful "they are none-the-less time consuming and we need a more voluntary spirit of compliance."

The Regional Administrator said that a "bright spot" in a national review of the fiscal 1972 enforcement program showed only one instance of age discrimination among labor organizations — involving refusal to refer a qualified older worker for employment.

Four ADEA violations were found among labor unions investigated in 1971 and one in 1970.