

HOUSE BARS SHIFT ON POVERTY PLAN

Liberals Block G.O.P. Move
to Give Rule to States

By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12 — Democratic liberals succeeded tonight in blocking a Republican move that would shift control of a key antipoverty program to the states. The vote was 231 to 163.

The action marked a stunning defeat for a powerful coalition of Republican and Southern Democrats seeking to give Governors control over the community action programs.

Earlier, Democratic leaders had sent up a loud cheer when they learned they had defeated the state-control plan by a non-recorded vote of 183 to 166.

Backers of the state-control plan then made a final try, failing this time on the 231-to-163 roll-call vote.

The bill—calling for a two-year, \$2.343-billion extension of the antipoverty program virtually unchanged—then passed the House by a vote of 276 to 117. The bill now goes to conference with the Senate, which passed a similar measure earlier this fall.

Throughout the day-long debate, Democratic liberals all but conceded that they did not have the votes to turn back the usually dominant coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats.

Yet they scored a double victory, not only blocking the state-control plan, but also succeeding in retaining \$295-million added in committee to the Administration's proposed \$2.048-billion bill.

It was apparent that many Republicans, confident of victory, had decided their votes would not be needed and had left for home before the crucial vote.

For days, Democratic liberals had insisted that President Nixon alone held the key to the future of the antipoverty program. He had called for a simple two-year extension of the program, without changes.

However, with the House Republican leadership firmly committed to shifting control to the states, the President did not personally seek to line up Republican support for a simple two-year extension.

Instead, at his news conference on Monday, Mr. Nixon said he hoped that his antipoverty director, Donald Rumsfeld, could take some kind of "accommodation" with critics of the program.

Heeding the President's advice, sponsors of the state-control plan modified their earlier proposal by permitting the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity greater leeway in overriding vetoes of Governors over local community action programs.

They also provided the O.E.O. director with several methods of by-passing states that failed to adequately fund local programs.

Even with these modifications, Mr. Rumsfeld spoke out today against the Republican substitute proposal.

Exemptions Pile Up

In hour after hour of debate today, several moderate Republicans and Democratic liberals stripped the state-control plan even further.

The Head Start program of pre-school training for the poor was exempted from state control by voice vote.

The family planning program was also exempted by a vote of 75 to 26.

And the House voted, 96 to 41, to exempt from state control all community action programs on Indian reservations.

In the end, the proposed state-control plan was limited primarily to non-Indian community action programs and to Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA).

Of all the antipoverty programs, enacted five years ago under a Democratic Administration, community action has drawn the most fire, particularly in urban areas where the newly organized poor have staged rent strikes and other demonstrations.

This year, the antipoverty agency has funded 969 community action programs serving about six million poor in some 2,000 counties, both urban and rural.

The community programs vary from place to place, offering such aid as health services, emergency food and medical services, aid to migrant workers, legal services and consumer counseling.

OEO Gets New Life in House Vote

By SHIRLEY ELDER

Star Staff Writer

In an upset that startled nearly everyone involved, the House has voted to give the Office of Economic Opportunity a two-year, \$2.3 billion lease on life.

It was a rebuff to House Republican leaders, a victory for former member, OEO Director Donald Rumsfeld, and a mixed blessing for President Nixon.

The key vote came yesterday on a motion to substitute a bill shifting most OEO programs to the states. It lost, 231 to 163.

The antipoverty measure then was approved, 276 to 117, and sent to a conference with the Senate.

"I am pleased and darn grateful," Rumsfeld said after the vote.

He said he would work for continued reform within OEO and said the bill's approval shouldn't be interpreted as full approval of what has gone on in this agency.

Although Nixon had asked Congress for a simple two-year, \$2-billion-a-year extension of OEO, his support in recent days was seen as less than enthusiastic. At his press conference last Monday the President said he backed Rumsfeld but urged him to seek an accommodation with House leaders.

There was no evidence that the White House took an active role in lobbying for the bill. Rumsfeld carried the fight in dozens of meetings with congressmen, frequently urging that he be given a chance to correct OEO problems on his own.

Vote for Substitute

On the House floor, the opposition was led by GOP Leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan and William H. Ayres of Ohio, the top Republican on the Education and Labor Committee.

They joined forces with Southern Democrats behind a substitute bill drafted by Reps. Albert

H. Quie, R-Minn., and Edith Green, D-Ore., that would have sharply changed OEO's course.

Up to the moment when House members filed down the center aisle in an unofficial "teller" vote, friends and foes of OEO alike were predicting victory for the substitute.

Ayres, who acted as floor leader for the Quie-Green bill, said he knew they were losing when clusters of Republicans and conservative Democrats joined OEO supporters. The "teller" vote was 183 to 166.

Ayres called the vote a personal triumph for Rumsfeld and sent him a telegram: "The Rumsfeld Raiders rode again. Congratulations. Good luck on the mess you inherited but don't say you didn't ask for it."

Rep. Joe D. Waggoner, D-La., a leader of the Southern forces, said many congressmen from Border States broke away

from the substitute bill, even though critical of OEO, because they did not want to turn antipoverty programs over to Republican governors. He mentioned Arkansas, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Florida and Kentucky.

Ayres said he had assumed that nearly all Republicans, long committed to decentralization of federal programs, would vote for the substitute. In the end, 63 Republicans voted against it.

A breakdown on the key vote shows those 63 Republicans joining 168 Democrats against the substitute and 60 Democrats voting with 103 Republicans for it.

Both Reps. Joel T. Broyhill, R-Va., and William Scott, R-Va., voted against extending the antipoverty program. Reps. Lawrence J. Hogan, R-Md., and Gilbert Gude, R-Md., voted for it on final passage, although Hogan voted for the earlier substitute.

Credit for the OEO victory also must go, Waggoner said, to OEO itself and its constituency in urban areas where opposition to the substitute was organized hurriedly over the last week.

Telegrams, letters and telephone calls from mayors all added up. "After the pressure was on, we never had a chance," he said.

Began A Week Ago

The pressure began more than a week ago when Quie and Mrs. Green unveiled their substitute bill. Debate was scheduled for the next day but Education and Labor Committee Chairman Carl D. Perkins, D-Ky., yanked the administration bill off the calendar to bargain for time.

As yesterday's long day of poverty talk began, OEO critics were optimistic and its defenders gloomy. Both Democratic whip Hale Boggs of Louisiana and Majority Leader Carl Albert of Oklahoma said they did not have the votes to win.

Perkins said strong Republican support was essential for victory. He urged at least 55 Republicans to "come forward and support your President." No one expected that anywhere near 63 would answer the call.

The tone of the debate reflected the prevailing attitudes. OEO backers offered little resistance to the substitute. A few relatively minor amendments were adopted. There were frequent shouts of "vote, vote" to keep the action moving.

The substitute would have given governors a veto over VISTA and community action programs and would have permitted states to establish separate agencies to operate the anti-poverty program.

Head Start Funds

The bill that passed leaves OEO as it is and authorizes \$295 million extra for Head Start, job training and health services.

The bill now goes to conference with a similar Senate version passed Oct. 14 that authorizes \$4.8 billion over two years.

Joining in the end-of-session rush, the Senate Appropriations Committee went ahead yesterday and put nearly \$2 billion into an appropriation bill for OEO even though final action on the authorization cannot come until some time next week.

House Extends Antipoverty Law

By Richard L. Lyons
Washington Post Staff Writer

The House voted to extend the war on poverty through mid-1971 last night after rejecting—in a spectacular upset—a proposal to give the states control over most anti-poverty programs.

The state-control plan, supported by most Republicans and Southern Democrats, was defeated 231 to 163 on a roll call vote.

The House went on to pass the bill extending the life of the Office of Economic Opportunity by a vote of 276 to 117. The bill now goes to a House-Senate conference where the major difference is a Senate amendment giving governors a veto over legal services for the poor.

Rejection of the state-control plan was a shock to both supporters and opponents. Its approval had been conceded in advance by almost everyone, especially after its sponsors offered last-minute concessions.

President Nixon had asked for a simple extension of the present program. But when the bill was taken up yesterday after six months of maneuvering, his principal support came from liberal Democrats who distrust the ability or will of the states to operate meaningful antipoverty programs.

Donald Rumsfeld, director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, which runs the program, strongly opposed the state-control plan. At his news conference Monday night, the President expressed support for Rumsfeld, but also expressed hope that an "accommodation" could be reached. This made it seem even more likely that some version of state control would pass the House.

Several reasons were offered for defeat of the state-control plan. One was that the week's delay Democrats won when the substitute was introduced last week allowed time for a mail and personal lobbying campaign.

A number of conservative Democrats from states with Republican governors voted against turning the program over to them. Some Republican votes probably went to Rumsfeld, their former colleague, as a personal matter.

And several members who had voted against a strong voting rights bill Thursday switched to oppose state control, perhaps not wishing to cast what could be regarded as votes against the poor on consecutive days.

On the key vote, 163 Democrats and 63 Republicans voted against state control,

while 103 Republicans and 60 Democrats voted for it.

OEO deals directly with communities, with a minimum of state supervision. The substitute proposal would have permitted governors to take control of most of the controversial programs that come under the umbrella of community action on the local level.

It was chiefly a desire to get tighter control over the local programs, which the poor themselves help run, that motivated the campaign for state control.

Supporters of state control insisted that they were not trying to dismantle OEO, but rather were trying to give authority to state officials who have a better grasp of problems in their states.

But when Rep. William H. Ayres (R-Ohio), a leading cosponsor of the state-control plan, was asked by reporters if it wouldn't take away most of OEO's authority, he said:

"We are only taking away his (Rumsfeld's) canoe. He's still got his paddle."

In an effort to attract votes of moderate Republicans supporting Rumsfeld, a former member of the House, the state-control forces offered yesterday to make concessions that would give him some power to act if states did not operate effective programs.

But Rep. Carl Perkins (D-Ky.), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee and floor manager of the administration's extension bill, called the revised substitute "as destructive" as the original state-control plan.

Speaker John W. McCormack (D-Mass.) urged defeat of the substitute, saying the issue was one of "money values versus human values."