

House Will Act Soon on Bill Continuing Urban School Aid

A bill extending for five years the most important federal program for urban schools -- the Elementary and Secondary Education Act -- is ready for debate in the House. The Education and Labor Committee of the House approved the bill (HR 514) March 18.

The cities look to Title I of the Act for money to support compensatory programs for their disadvantaged children. Title I distributes federal appropriations directly to school districts that have large numbers of children from low-income families, urban and rural.

In reporting the bill to the House the Education Committee overrode the request of HEW Secretary Robert H. Finch for only a two-year extension of the Act. He said the Nixon Administration needed time to study proposed changes in the Act and in the meantime, a two-year extension through June 1972 would provide adequate continuity for present programs. Most committee Republicans supported Finch's request and promised to fight the five-year extension when the bill is debated in the House.

Two changes affecting urban schools were recommended by the committee. One would make about \$300 million more a year available to school districts in which there is considerable public housing. The other amendment calls for participation by parents and community groups in the planning of Title I school projects.

Inadequate Funding

Throughout the committee hearings on HR 514, the bill's sponsor, Committee Chairman Carl D. Perkins (D Ky.), pointed out the need for larger appropriations for Title I of the Act. His com-

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ACTION COUNCIL LETTER

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States Hold Back Anti-Crime Funds from Cities, Report Says

Where are crime problems the most serious? Under the Omnibus Crime Control Act of 1968, American Samoa gets \$3.54 per capita and Vermont 31¢ per capita, while New York and California receive 7¢ per citizen. Similarly, a rural Georgia county gets 14¢ per capita while the metropolitan Atlanta region receives less than 3¢.

These are figures produced in a study of the Crime Control Act in operation, released by the National League of Cities March 18.

When Congress passed the Act last year, it directed that most of the funds go to the states in block grants, to be distributed according to plans drawn up by a state agency. Urban groups urged in vain that most of the money go directly to the 370 cities with population over 50,000, where crime is the most prevalent.

The League of Cities report says that instead of focusing dollars on the problems of crime in the streets, planning funds are thinly spread among rural and urban areas and "dissipated" among three levels of bureaucracy.

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committee is responsible for authorizing the education programs, but the amount of money that actually goes out to the schools is determined primarily by the separate Appropriations Committees of the House and Senate.

Under the present law about \$2.5 billion a year is authorized for Title I grants but Congress has appropriated only \$1.1 billion. In fact, last year's appropriation was \$68 million less than the previous year's, while the number of children eligible for the programs was increasing, and so were education costs.

Rep. Perkins has pointed out that in the first three years of Title I, the appropriations per child have decreased from \$210 to \$170. Some school superintendents told the House committee that an effective, comprehensive program for disadvantaged children would need \$600 per child.

A new federal program to help local school districts prevent teenagers from dropping out of school has proved popular. In fact, 356 proposals have been submitted to the Office of Education, of which only 5 can be funded.

There is \$30 million authorized for drop-out prevention programs, but Congress has appropriated only \$5 million. The funds will be granted for innovative plans that show unusual promise of success in preventing drop-outs.

The budget submitted by President Johnson before leaving office proposes \$24 million for the program in the next fiscal year. The 356 proposals submitted to the Office of Education would cost \$68 million.

HEW estimates that of children who entered 9th grade in 1967, 23%, or 900,000, will drop out before graduating from high school.



Rep. Carl D. Perkins (D Ky.) and his Education and Labor Committee are moving ahead with elementary education, school lunch and poverty legislation.

Bill to Improve School Lunch Program Is Passed by House

For the second year in a row, the House is trying to increase the number of needy children who get free or reduced-price lunches through the school lunch program. As it did last year, the House passed without opposition March 20 a bill (HR 515) to require all states to put some of their tax money into school lunches. Presently, some states contribute nothing to the program, requiring the children and local schools to put up all of the money needed to match federal funds on a 3 to 1 basis.

Last year, spurred by publication of a report by the private Committee on School Lunch Participation showing that less than 2 million of some 6 million needy school children got reduced-price lunches (see chart), the House

Free School Lunches

	Free lunches ¹ (daily average)	Needy children ² not receiving free lunch
Alabama	77,000	165,522
Alaska	7,000	976
Arizona	25,423	39,348
Arkansas	70,213	146,219
California	0	0
Colorado	13,533	51,833
Connecticut	4,914	34,129
Delaware	2,180	4,368
District of Columbia	16,759	0
Florida	117,550	105,249
Georgia	107,847	230,273
Hawaii	4,752	9,583
Idaho	1,880	12,764
Illinois	29,285	230,757
Indiana	15,939	134,061
Iowa	8,656	113,650
Kansas	8,564	85,640
Kentucky	80,000	201,945
Louisiana	69,260	131,830
Maine	6,480	38,520
Maryland	10,294	44,711
Massachusetts	24,911	52,581
Michigan	60,000	129,900
Minnesota	10,000	124,111
Mississippi	34,671	220,232
Missouri	30,000	95,159
Montana ³	(3)	(3)
Nebraska	8,180	54,456
Nevada	1,750	4,750
New Hampshire	3,245	4,969
New Jersey	7,010	52,835
New Mexico	32,432	30,281
New York	400,000	200,000
North Carolina	163,607	324,068
North Dakota	3,185	22,901
Ohio	33,486	91,571
Oklahoma	25,000	72,779
Oregon	3,614	42,714
Pennsylvania	8,781	247,491
Rhode Island	3,488	16,886
South Carolina	117,382	179,174
South Dakota	7,200	25,656
Tennessee	71,100	154,129
Texas	88,000	315,216
Utah	14,641	3,559
Vermont	2,600	12,696
Virginia	6,787	182,213
Washington	10,000	40,000
West Virginia	30,525	72,547
Wisconsin	11,000	114,922
Wyoming	752	5,317
Total	1,890,876	4,674,491

¹ Number of free or reduced-price lunches.

² Needy children were those of ages 5 to 17, from homes with less than \$3,000 annual income.

³ No figures were available from state school lunch authorities, who supplied information for the survey. However, a citizens Committee on School Lunch Participation April 16 reported that Montana had 16,978 school-age children from families earning \$2,000 a year or receiving welfare aid. Only 6,160 received free or reduced-price lunches.

SOURCE: House Education and Labor Committee survey (H Rept 1590), June 26, 1968.



passed a bill similar to HR 515.

More importantly, the House also passed a bill to add \$100 million a year for meals for needy children. The Senate passed neither bill, but it did agree to appropriate an extra \$45 million for free lunches.

This year, the House Education and Labor Committee, which sent HR 515 to the House floor, also expects to approve again the \$100 million free-lunch bill (HR 516). What will be done by the Senate Agriculture Committee, which has jurisdiction over the school lunch program, remains to be seen.

Congressional Hearings

Poverty -- The House Education and Labor Committee has begun hearings on the Office of Economic Opportunity and its anti-poverty programs. Chairman Carl D. Perkins (D Ky.) has introduced HR 513, to extend the programs for five years and authorize \$2,180,000,000 for them in the fiscal year that begins July 1. For the current year Congress appropriated \$1,948,000,000.

Hospitals -- Hearings on the Hill-Burton Act, held by the Public Health Subcommittee of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, are beginning. Two main bills are before the Subcommittee. HR 6797, introduced by Committee Chairman Harley O. Staggers (D W.Va.), proposes major increases in funds for hospital con-

struction and modernization, with priority to be given, in part, to outpatient facilities in low-income metropolitan areas. The other bill, HR 7059, sponsored by high-ranking members of the Health Subcommittee, authorizes less money than Staggers' bill and does not single out urban medical needs.

Medicaid, WIN Regulations -- Chairman Russell B. Long (D La.) of the Senate Finance Committee has said his committee intends to take "a good hard look" at regulations issued in January concerning Medicaid, welfare eligibility, the work incentive program (WIN) and others. Some of these, Long said, "run counter to Congressional intent."

No plans for hearings have been announced. The regulations were issued by the Administrator of HEW's Social and Rehabilitation Service, Mary E. Switzer. Long made his statement in introducing a bill to make the next Administrator's appointment subject to confirmation by the Senate. The Senate passed the bill (S 1022) March 4 and sent it to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Hearings Available

Congressional hearings on two subjects of growing importance in the urban field -- income maintenance and the role of financial institutions -- were held late in the last session of Congress. Summaries of these hearings, as well as the Action Council's pamphlet briefly reviewing Urban Affairs Legislation in the 90th Congress, are available without charge to anyone who wishes to write for them to the Action Council.

The summarized hearings are: Financial Institutions and the Urban Crisis. Hearings by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee.

Income Maintenance. Hearings by the Joint Economic Committee.

Minority Business Enterprise Coordination Is Established

President Nixon signed an executive order March 5 that established an Office of Minority Business Enterprise in the Department of Commerce.

The office is to stimulate business ownership by minority groups and coordinate -- but not take over -- existing government programs. Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans estimated there were 116 programs in 20 government agencies concerned in one way or another with helping minority enterprise.

Directors of the new office were named March 13. The director is Thomas F. Roeser, who has been director of public affairs for the Quaker Oats Co. and before that, press secretary for Rep. Albert H. Quie (R Minn.). The deputy director is Abraham S. Venable, a graduate of Howard University and formerly a conciliation specialist in black-white relations for the Community Relations Service, which was a Commerce Department agency until moved to the Justice Department.

In announcing the new office, President Nixon said: "Black, Mexican-American, Puerto Ricans, Indians and others must be increasingly encouraged to enter the field of business, both in the areas where they now live and in the larger commercial community -- and not only as workers but also as managers and owners."

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