

THE URBAN COALITION ACTION COUNCIL

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WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Education, Labor and Antipoverty Funds. Congress has cleared the final appropriations for the HEW and Labor Departments and the Office of Economic Opportunity, the antipoverty agency. The antipoverty appropriation was the largest Congress has ever approved, but funds for schools attended by educationally deprived children were below last year's appropriation.

The House narrowly defeated a Southern-backed provision that would have encouraged resistance to desegregation of schools. The Urban Coalition Action Council joined other organizations and HEW in working for defeat of the segregation provision.

Program	Budget	House	Senate	Final	Below Budget
(in millions of dollars)					
Title I					
Education	\$1,200.	\$1,073.	\$1,200.	\$1,123.	\$ -77.
Teacher Corps	31.2	15.	31.2	20.9	-10.3
Dropout Prevention	30.	0	20.	5.	-25.
Bilingual Education	30.	0	10.	7.5	-22.5
OEO Antipoverty	2,180.	1,873.	2,088.	1,948.	-232.
Manpower Training, Labor Department	413.	400.	400.	400.	-13.

The Title I funds for schools teaching educationally deprived children -- an important program for schools in big cities -- were \$68 million less than last year's appropriation and allowed the schools only 92% of the amounts they received for the past school year. Congress also gave advance authority for appropriations in fiscal 1970 but limited the funds to 90% of the amount received this year. This was intended to help

schools plan their programs before the opening of schools next fall.

The Teacher Corps appropriation was the largest Congress has allowed so far, and the funds for teaching bilingual children and for preventing school dropouts were the first made for these purposes.

The antipoverty appropriation, which was not earmarked for any specific OEO programs, was \$170 million more than Congress allowed last year. Funds for OEO have risen each year since the first appropriation in fiscal 1965.

The Labor Department's manpower appropriation was only \$1.5 million above last year's fiscal 1968 figure but some manpower training programs, such as JOBS and Concentrated Employment, are financed from OEO appropriations.

Funds Exempted from Budget Cut. HEW's education funds will be exempted from the over-all \$6 billion spending reduction required under the tax surcharge-budget reduction law if Congress has its way. A section of the vocational education bill (HR 18366) that Congress sent to the President October 3 exempts education appropriations from the \$6 billion reduction in spending and the \$10 billion reduction in obligations (committed money) voted for all Government agencies in June. However, the President still retains authority to hold down spending on any education program no matter what amount Congress may have appropriated.

Segregation Amendment. The key part of the Southern provision opposing desegregation of schools prohibited HEW from "forcing" children to attend any particular school against the choice of their parents. The provision was sponsored by Mississippi Rep. Jamie L. Whitten (D), a high-ranking member of the Appropriations Committee. The Senate amended this provision by adding language that prohibited forced attendance at a particular school "in order to overcome racial imbalance."

This phrase was already a part of civil rights law. It allowed the Government and the courts to put an end to "freedom of choice" school plans that were perpetuating racial discrimination.

When members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees met in conference on the Labor-HEW appropriation bill, Southerners had a majority of the votes and they struck from the bill the Senate language limiting the prohibition to plans to overcome racial imbalance. In effect, Whitten's purpose was achieved.

Action Council Chairman John W. Gardner wrote House Speaker John W. McCormack (D Mass.) and the Republican leader, Rep. Gerald Ford (Mich.), October 2, asking them to help defeat the Whitten amendment on the House floor. He said the amendment "raises the real threat of resegregation in many Southern school districts" and "implicitly sanctions racially dual school systems."

On a close, 167-175 vote October 3, the House rejected the Appropriations Committees' recommendation and adopted the Senate language nullifying Whitten's amendment. This will enable HEW to continue to withhold funds from school districts that are not making real progress toward desegregation.

New Housing Funds. The President sent to Congress October 3 a request for supplemental appropriations that included funds to begin some of the programs in the new Housing Act and to administer the fair housing law. These were his housing proposals:

Home Ownership Contract Authority	\$75 million
Rental Housing Assistance	75 million
Grants for Tenant Services	15 million
Planned Areawide Development	5 million
Low and Moderate-Income Sponsor Fund	5 million
Fair Housing Program	8 million
Flood Insurance Administration	1.5 million

The House is expected to take up the supplemental appropriation bill October 7 or October 8 and the Senate will act shortly thereafter.

HUD Personnel. Another attempt is expected to be made next week in the Senate to exempt the Department of Housing and Urban Development from the cutback in personnel required by the tax surcharge-budget reduction law. For the effect the law now has on administration of the new housing programs, see the September 27 Legislative Report of the Action Council.