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HOUSING AUTHORITY OPPOSED

EOA Asks Legal Aid, Defying ~~Objections~~

Economic Opportunity Atlanta overruled objections of the Atlanta Housing Authority Wednesday in asking for federal funds of the Atlanta Legal Services program.

M. B. Satterfield, AHA director, wrote EOA to ask that funding be delayed until an investigation could be made into activities of Legal Aid which Satterfield called a "disruptive influence on the public housing program and serves only to cause friction in the community."

The board of directors of EOA, on the recommendation of member Jesse Hill, approved the \$326,695 budget—\$271,939 in federal funds.

"It is inappropriate not to move ahead," board Chairman Boisfeuillet Jones said. He said he would "honor the complaint to the extent of looking into its merits."

Robert Dobbs, another board member, also urged the request for funds, despite the AHA letter. "The housing authority ought to look at itself. It has some problems itself."

Jones said he had received an anonymous call several months ago about Michael Padnos, director of Legal Aid. Jones said the caller threatened Jones unless he got rid of Padnos. "That's the last I heard of it," Jones said with a laugh.

Satterfield's letter said that the AHA was withholding "endorsement of this application at this time, pending clarification of certain actions taken by Legal Aid which affect the Atlanta Housing Authority and the community."

Satterfield's letter said Padnos had made "serious general allegations concerning Atlanta Housing Authority policy and

conduct of activities." But, the letter said, when called on for specific facts behind the allegations, "Legal Aid has refused to furnish such facts . . . That refusal can be documented."

Padnos' objections generally were that the AHA operates "arbitrarily." He said he refused to give names of those complaining because of the lawyer-client relationship.

Jones explained that the AHA had been informed of the application for legal services, but solely because they were an interested party, not a holder of a veto.

The EOA board also approved the Head Start program, which includes a request for \$516,649 in

federal funds, and summer recreation, including \$620,000 in federal funds.

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