

NACD NEWS

A SPECIAL BULLETIN FOR AGENCY MEMBERS

October 28, 1967

THE HOUSE SITUATION

The House Education and Labor Committee at midnight Friday, October 27th, filed its report and submitted its formal bill of amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act. The House Bill will technically be called S. 2388 (the Senate bill number).

The Chairman of the Committee, Carl Perkins (D.-Ky.) will now appear before the Rules Committee and ask that body for the necessary "rule" so that the measure can go to the floor. The earliest date that a "rule" would be granted for would be November 7 and if the Rules Committee for any reason wants to delay the measure or as is much rumored in Washington if the House Democratic leadership feels that it does not have the votes to pass the measure yet, the November 7 date will be set back.

THE MEASURE

S. 2388 as reported by the House Committee is a strange bag of amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act. Below is a brief description of important changes from existing law or important actions. For the first several changes noted, NACD has indicated its position in regard to changes which must be made on the House floor to make the measure acceptable as a valid piece of anti-poverty legislation.

The major and basic revision made regards the creation of CAAs and the make up of the governing Board. The measure provides that (a) CAAs must be public bodies, i. e., state, counties or cities or combinations of them or may be another public body or a private non-profit organization if designated by a public body. There is inadequate "bypass" language in the measure permitting the establishment of a CAA or a single purpose agency if the public body system doesn't work. The existing systems for the establishment of CAAs must be restored or the language strengthened so that where public bodies subvert the true intent of the Community Action Program or fail to act with good intent OEO may "bypass" the public body and fund a private, non-profit organization; (b) It provides that a public body operating its own CAA should do it through a tripartite community action board, organized as below; and (c) It then provides that a "community action board" shall consist of not more than 51 members and shall be of three parts: (a) 1/3 are to be public officials including chief elected officials or their representatives; (b) at least 1/3 persons chosen as representatives of the poor; and (c) the remainder members or officials of private groups.

The measure states that where a CAA places policy determinations for a subsidiary program with another agency, such agency must have tripartite governing body similar to that required for CAAs. This would not fit many neighborhood corporations and other delegate agencies.

The measure states that at least 1/2 of the 20%, or at least 10%, of the non-Federal share must be in cash. NACD supports the Senate measure which only requires a 10% non-Federal share with no specific cash requirement.

The House measure deleted the Senate bill provision that indicates that CAAs will be the sponsor of community manpower programs and deleted the special impact program. These Senate bill provisions should be put in the House measure.

The measure prohibits any CAA activities regarding non-partisan elections in a community. This should be a community-made decision.

The measure outlaws voter registration activities on the part of CAAs. This decision should be made at the community level.

It includes new language in the "Statement of Purpose" Section which says that OEO shall pursue a policy of providing benefits to enable the poor living in rural America to remain there. Also, it shall not be the policy of OEO to "encourage the rural poor to migrate to urban areas." This destroys community based decision making and making of priorities.

The measure provides new programs but no additional money for Follow Through, Day Care, Family Planning, Senior Citizen Opportunities & Services and Small Business assistance.

It provides for a new special emphasis program of "Emergency Food & Medical Services" which responds to the findings of starvation and malnutrition in our patrons but no new money is authorized.

It provides for a more flexible Health Services Program for rural areas.

It provides for the creation of two new Assistant Directors of OEO. One for Rural Areas Community Action and one for Urban Areas Community Action.

(Over)

It provides more direction and specifies proposals for increasing community action in rural areas. However, no new money is authorized or designated.

No amendments to Title III-B were adopted.

It provides for the funding of conduct and administration grants to single purpose agencies directly where a CAA does not exist or where the CAA "gives its approval" for a grant.

The measure provides that any local subdivision (i.e., a city or a county) may have a CAA independent from a CAA covering a larger area (i.e., a whole state, region, several counties or a county).

It provides that CAAs shall have until June 30, 1968 to come into conformance with the new provision for CAA designation and Board structure.

It provides that CAAs shall insure that program participants shall have "made a reasonable effort to become a registered voter."

It contains a new provision (sometimes known as the "anti-hippie" or "the voluntary poor" provision) which says that no benefits under Title II shall go to any person who refuses "without good cause" to seek or accept employment.

The measure provides that up to 10% of CAP funds may be spent on Research and Demonstration projects. This compares to 15% in the Senate bill.

It provides for an authorization of \$2.06 billion for this fiscal year (FY-68) and an amount not to exceed that figure for next fiscal year (FY-69).

The measure adds new language in providing for Head Start which indicates that programs must provide for direct participation of parents in the development, conduct and program directors of Head Start programs.

THE APPROPRIATION SCENE

While the House passed a Continuing Appropriation for OEO at a reduced rate of \$1.2 billion, the Senate on Wednesday passed a regular measure at last year's appropriation rate or \$1.6875 billion.

Since there was not a common figure signed by the President as of midnight Monday, October 23rd for those agencies like OEO who don't have completed appropriations, they have been operating without money since then.

The measure is now in Conference Committee between the two bodies and as of Friday there was no agreement and the agencies are still out of money.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Obviously, a lot of activity is going on across the country before the House floor action.

At the Washington level NACD has taken the lead in mobilizing national Church, civil rights, labor and other civic organizations to secure the passage of the bill with improving amendments.

In the communities, program participants and community leaders are busy writing letters to the White House and to their Congressmen. In those areas where Congressmen get home weekends, delegations are meeting with them.

The issues are (1) keep Community Action alive and ensure that it is really a community based program with poor people having an effective voice in its activities and (2) provide adequate funds (\$2.06 for OEO of which \$1.022 is for Community Action) without any strings attached about cash requirements.

Are you a member of NACD? If not, why not? NACD needs your voice and your participation.

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