

# House Nears Crucial Vote On Domestic Programs

*Labor, Health, Education Spending Would Be Cut \$9.1 Billion*

By Dan Morgan

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The House headed toward a decisive vote last night on a crucial spending bill that would pare back or eliminate dozens of federal education and social programs championed by President Clinton and earlier Democratic Congresses.

The \$60.9 billion measure funding labor, health and education programs beginning Oct. 1 is \$9.1 billion below the one enacted a year ago and marks a break with the historic upward trend in federal spending on programs to help the poor, elderly and disabled. Republicans must pass it in order to meet their budgetary targets in 1996.

But as the House continued with a second

day of debate, dissension in Republican ranks over abortion and other issues left uncertainty as to whether the measure would pass. Republican leaders worked through the day to get warring GOP factions to rise above their differences to support the bill.

"We're trying to make the point that this is an important bill that must pass," said House GOP Conference Chairman John A. Boehner (Ohio). Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.), in meetings with Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), in meetings with GOP groups, stressed that members of a political majority cannot expect to get everything they want in every bill.

But the arguments left some members unconvinced and ready to oppose the entire measure. Antiabortion forces were still smart-

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BY LUCIAN PERKINS—THE WASHINGTON POST

**Rep. John Edward Porter (R-Ill.), chairman of the panel charged with drawing up the spending bill, often has opposed key provisions within that measure. Story on Page A14.**

ing yesterday over a defeat Wednesday night that resulted in the main federal family planning program being restored to the bill. Other abortion-related votes were scheduled during the evening.

In addition to the abortion problem, some moderate Republicans are unhappy with some of the spending cuts and could vote against the bill on those grounds. Republican members in the last few days have urged that money be restored for vocational education, the National Institute for Literacy, health care research and a hospital in New Castle, Ind.

Defeat of the bill would be the most serious setback to date for the Republican leadership in the House and would raise questions about its ability to hold the party in line this fall when even more difficult votes are called for on cutting Medicare, overhauling farm subsidies and reforming welfare.

But the bill also has posed a difficult dilemma for antiabortion forces. While they are a large enough block to derail legislation that does not contain the provisions they want, use of that ultimate weapon could set back the Republican revolution. And it still does not assure that the provisions they want will be approved by the full House.

Democrats, meanwhile, kept up their attack on the bill.

In the House, Democratic leaders were hoping that at least 190 of the 202 party members would vote against final passage.

At the White House, President Clinton attacked the bill, which he has threatened to veto.

"From preschoolers to adults, this bill is a body blow to their future and a body blow to our efforts to create a high-opportunity, high-wage economy, not a hard-work, low-wage economy," he said.

Clinton said the bill would deny 180,000 youngsters a place in Head Start and cut off hundreds of thousands of recipients from student

loans, worker training and federal education assistance.

House Republicans promptly denied that. Appropriations Committee Chairman Bob Livingston (R-La.) said the legislation preserved "and even increased" student aid.

He said the ceiling on Pell grants, which provide college stipends to low-income students, had been raised to \$2,440, the highest amount in history. He said \$6 billion remained in the Perkins student loan program. "No student will go without aid as a result of this action," he said.

Rep. John Edward Porter (R-Ill.), who is managing the bill on the House floor, said Republicans are "fans of Head Start," the federal preschool program. The \$3.4 billion program, he noted, was cut by \$137 million but only because of management problems.

Nonetheless, the bill's effect will be vast. It terminates dozens of education, health and labor programs, including Goals 2000, Clinton's main education reform.

It reduces funding for Title I, which compensates school districts with large numbers of low-income students, by \$1.1 billion, or 17 percent. It would discontinue summer jobs programs for youth and assistance for poor people in paying their utility bills.

It also reduces money for drug treatment and substance abuse programs and cuts funds for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to enforce regulations for workplace safety. It also prohibits OSHA from developing rules for employers to prevent repetitive strain injuries, cuts the budget of the National Labor Relations Board by 30 percent and makes it more difficult for the NLRB to bring the courts into labor-management disputes.

It also would overturn Clinton's executive order prohibiting companies receiving federal contracts from replacing striking workers.

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