

The Final OK for Aid to Refugees

Washington

Taking final action on emergency aid for Indochina refugees, Congress approved a \$455 million authorization for the aid yesterday and sent it to President Ford.

The authorization requires the refugees be made aware that they are free to return if they wish and that their expenses will be paid if they do so.

It also requires Mr. Ford to report efforts to recover all possible U.S. aid for South Vietnam and Cambodia before their collapse and to put the money back into the U.S. Treasury.

In a reversal of procedure, Congress had sent Mr. Ford a \$405 million appropriation of money for the refugee aid Monday.

The White House had announced that Mr. Ford would not sign the \$405 million into law until the authorization arrived because of the question of whether money can be spent on a program before Congress authorizes it.

The fact that the authorization is for \$455 million means Congress can appropriate another \$50 million under the present authorization but would have to approve a new authorization to allocate any more refugee money than that.

Both the Senate and House approved the authorization bill yesterday afternoon with voice votes and no debate.

The administration originally requested \$507 million for the refugees.

Associated Press