

Senate Approves More Aid for Elderly

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—The Senate, over the opposition of the Nixon Administration, passed legislation today that would provide additional social services and employment assistance to the elderly.

President Nixon killed a similar bill with a pocket veto after Congress adjourned last fall. But the vote by which the measure cleared the Senate today—82 to 9—indicated widespread support in Congress for the legislation.

The passage of the Older Americans Act was one of several efforts throughout the Capitol today to preserve Federal programs that the Administration wants to abolish or limit. There were these other actions:

Thousands of demonstrators rallied on the Capitol grounds to protest the Administration's cutbacks in antipoverty programs, and a delegation of mayors met with Congressional leaders to plan their strategy for retaining funds for urban areas.

¶The House Appropriations Committee adopted legislation that would allow spending through June 30 for foreign aid and for the programs of the Departments of Labor and Health, Education and Welfare without passage this spring of full-scale appropriations bills.

¶The House Agriculture Committee, by a vote of 19 to 1, approved a bill designed to require the Administration to spend appropriated money for water and waste disposal in rural areas. The program, first enacted in 1963, was abolished by President Nixon Jan. 1 although Congress had allocated money for the various projects.

¶The Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee unanimously approved a bill that would expand Federal vocational rehabilitation efforts. An almost identical bill was pocket vetoed last fall.

¶The Senate began debate on a measure intended to force the Administration to lend money to rural electrification and telephone cooperatives at 2 per cent interest. The 2 per cent loan program was another of those abolished by the Administration even though money had been appropriated.

¶Mike Mansfield, the Senate Democratic leader, and Representative Carl Albert, Speaker of the House, met with other Democratic Congressional leaders this morning and then issued a statement challenging the message on the environment that President Nixon sent to Congress last week. If the President is truly concerned about the environment, the leaders said, he should spend the money Congress has provided to combat water pollution.

Meanwhile, the House voted to extend the life of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission until June 30 while

it considers proposals to revamp the organization.

The legislation for older Americans that the Senate passed would authorize \$1.5 billion over the next three years for a variety of programs to aid the elderly.

The Administration particularly opposed the inclusion in the legislation of two manpower programs. One would create 40,000 to 60,000 public service jobs for low-income persons 55 years of age or older. The other would provide job training for workers 45 years of age and older.

In his veto message last fall, Mr. Nixon objected to the "range of narrow, categorical service programs which would seriously interfere with our efforts to develop coordinated services for older persons."

Urges Responsibility

Senator J. Glenn Beall, Jr., a Maryland Republican, tried today to delete the manpower sections of the measure, but he was defeated by a vote of 64 to 26. Mr. Beall said he supported the manpower programs but believed that they should be enacted as separate legislation.

Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, Democrat of Missouri, said he did not "seek a confrontation with the President" over the issue. But he said that the Senators could not "shirk our responsibility to enact programs that meet the needs of the nation's elderly citizens."

The Older Americans legislation is the latest of several bills that were vetoed last fall to begin moving through Congress again in the early weeks of the new session.

The House has passed a bill that would finance rural environmental programs, and the Senate has cleared measures to provide money for river and harbor projects and airport development.

The House Appropriations Committee's action was unusual in that it would allow billions of dollars to be spent without Congress's going through the normal appropriations process.

Last year, Congress twice approved appropriation bills for the Departments of Labor and Health, Education and Welfare, but both were vetoed on the ground that they would have been too costly.

The committee concluded that there was no prospect of devising legislation that could both clear Congress and be approved at the White House.

The measure endorsed by the committee today, called a continuing resolution, would allow funds to be spent by the Administration for each program at the lower of the levels approved last summer by the House or by the Senate in the first of the aborted appropriations bills. It would not allow expenditures on new programs.