

House Backs Court Role On Tapes

United Press International

The House gave final congressional approval yesterday to a bill giving U.S. district court here jurisdiction over a Senate Watergate committee subpoena of White House tapes.

Chief U.S. District Court Judge John Sirica ruled in October that there was no law giving him jurisdiction to enforce such subpoenas and dismissed the committee suit.

Instead of appealing to higher courts, the committee wrote a bill to confer jurisdiction upon the court and the Senate passed it Nov. 9. The House approved it by voice vote and sent it to the White House for expected approval.

Sirica said when he dismissed the suit that he was making no judgment on the merits of the committee subpoenas. He meanwhile ordered the White House to comply with grand jury subpoenas of the tapes.

In its original bill the Watergate committee sought to give court jurisdiction to subpoenaed material sought by all congressional committees, but it decided later to restrict its effect to the Watergate committee only.