

House Authorizes \$2.5 Million for Assassinations Panel

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The House has approved \$2.5 million to keep the Select Committee on Assassinations in business the rest of this year — despite complaints that it has failed to justify its existence.

The panel, created in 1976 to investigate the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., spent \$2.5 million in 1977 and asked for \$2.9 million this year. The House Administration Committee cut that request to \$2.5 million.

"The only thing we've been told in the report is that significant issues have been discussed," said Rep. Robert Bauman, R-Md., whose motion to cut the funding to \$600,000 for three months while new hearings are held on continuing the committee was narrowly defeated on a 198-182 vote.

The funding measure, one of two acted on by the House yesterday, was approved 204-175.

The House earlier approved a \$1.5 million measure for the Judiciary Committee after it defeated, 216-161, a move by Rep. John Ashbrook, R-Ohio, to tag \$300,000 of the money to carry out the work of the defunct House Committee on Un-American Activities.

The assassinations panel, which has nearly 140 employees, will automatically go out of business when Congress adjourns this year. Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, chairman, promised that the panel would complete its two investigations by that time and issue a report on its findings.