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Congressional Black Caucus

Legislative Agenda, 94th Congress, 1st Session

REMARKS

OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 1975

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 27, the Congressional Black Caucus announced its legislative agenda for the 1st session of the 94th Congress. This legislative agenda is the Caucus' first formal statement of legislative goals and activities for an upcoming session of Congress.

The Congressional Black Caucus has as its motto, "We have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests." The Caucus will be working with other groups inside and outside the Congress to develop legislative strategy around these common interests. This agenda will serve as a backbone for the Caucus' efforts to curb the present economic recession through sound and meaningful legislation.

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS, LEGISLATIVE AGENDA, 94TH CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION

For too long, we have seen no fundamental change in our national policies and priorities in response to domestic needs. In the 1930's, the Great Depression led to a system of Social Security. Following the War, the Employment Act of 1946 was passed. In the 1960's major civil rights laws were passed. And in the mid-'60's, a belated and only partial response to the problems of poverty was begun.

Today, we face a period of economic turmoil following closely an era of tragic international and American political turmoil. Yet, as in the '30's, these great events have served to create a common understanding among most Americans as to our common dilemma. It is not the rich against the poor, black against white. Instead, there is a mutual recognition that any of us may be the next victim of unemployment, and that all of us will most certainly be the next victims of inflation.

The Congressional Black Caucus has as its motto that "we have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests." At this time of economic distress, we feel we have many more friends than enemies, as our interests are even more clearly those of the nation. While our foremost concerns are those of blacks, those concerns and their remedies are inextricably intertwined with those of all Americans.

This legislative agenda begins to address both economic and political problems common to the nation and the black community. In this agenda, there are no instant solutions; there are specific remedies. As legislators, we operate in the legislative context, and our agenda consists of bills and resolutions which will come before Congress

this year. Some are far-reaching; some are short-range. Some will pass; some will not.

But each will be passed through the legislative process with a full recognition that many persons beyond our individual constituencies—including all those who bear the brunt of the economic dislocation—support our position and form a new constituency. Because blacks have endured economic hardship for so many years and learned much from the experience, we have unique contributions and leadership to provide in the development of constructive alternatives to the current situation.

The time is right for others to join with us.

The position of the Congressional Black Caucus is stated in the text which follows. The factual basis for these positions has been stated by the Caucus and by others many times in the past. At our meeting with former President Nixon in March 1971, a statement of the concerns of black and poor constituents was presented. At our meeting with President Ford in August 1974, further facts were presented. We have held Caucus hearings and fact-finding conferences around the country, as well as congressional committee hearings. Our legislative positions are compelled by our findings.

There are several legislative issues to be decided this year which the Caucus considers of primary importance. These are bills of broad scope with major implications for blacks and others, on which major national attention will be focused. They fall into three broad categories: (1) economic issues, (2) access and political participation issues, and (3) issues involving federal domestic assistance programs.

1. Economic issues

Our economic program will focus on full employment, tax reform, and a careful review of congressional appropriations in the framework of national priorities. The Caucus' January 16, 1975 letter to the President spells out in more detail our position on economic issues.

The political context is fresh for new discussion and action on these issues. Procedural reforms, changes in leadership, and an influx of new House members will permit measures to move which have been stymied in the past. The soaring unemployment rate puts the question of 'guns or butter' in a striking light. And inept Administration attempts to cut the Federal budget through the Food Stamp program while calling for an additional half billion dollars for Southeast Asia can only help to forge the new constituency around a reordering of national economic priorities. The Caucus does not agree that every time Congress asks for more money it adds to the deficit, for the reordering of priorities will permit the use of old funds for new purposes.

2. Political participation issues

The second major goal of the Caucus' program this year, will be to increase voter participation by removing barriers to voting.

While black voter participation has in-

creased tremendously since the 1965 Voting Rights Act, it still lags significantly behind that for whites. Equally striking is the decline in voter participation nationwide from 64 percent of those eligible in 1960 to 55 percent of those eligible in 1972.

As a remedy, we will work vigorously for renewal of the Voting Rights Act for an additional ten years, as well as for passage of a new comprehensive and far-reaching universal voter registration act.

3. Federal Domestic Assistance Programs:

Our third major priority will involve federal domestic assistance programs. Four broad and timely issues here are revenue sharing, health care, social insurance, and education.

(a) Prior to endorsing continuation of general revenue sharing, we will be making a searching review of that program and its impact on minority and lower-income persons.

(b) Health care and (c) Income security, two other program priorities, involve the most basic security and well-being of a very large number of our citizens.

(d) Two major existing education programs, the Higher Education and Vocational Education Acts, will be up for renewal this year and important questions involving aid to education will be debated.

(e) Other major issues will come before this Congress, such as energy, the environment and assistance to nations of the Third World. It is those with lower incomes who suffer most from massive cost rises for energy. The Caucus supports passage of an energy rebate system, the F.U.E.L. plan (summarized in the agenda) to keep energy costs within the means of lower-income persons. It is those in the central cities, and in many rural areas, who suffer these effects of our worst environments. And it is those in developing nations who suffer the effects of a turn from our long-term commitment of economic aid and equity to the developing Third World nations to an over-reliance on military aid. As these issues arise and are raised in the legislative process, the Congressional Black Caucus will make its position known.

In addition to the three areas of primary focus, there are some forty additional important pieces of legislation in ten major categories which are being introduced this year which the Caucus strongly supports and which are being introduced by Caucus members.

Each involves a significant federal activity which does, or could, affect the lives of low and moderate income citizens. These legislative initiatives range from creating a cabinet-level minority enterprise agency to child care. They range from criminal justice to bureaucratic accountability, and from the problem of dishonorable discharge from military service to the problems which have developed with widespread condominium conversions.

At the same time as we press the legislative agenda, the Caucus will expand its oversight of federal activities, continuously evaluating the impact of federal programs on our constituents, to review civil rights enforcement, affirmative action, and substantive program effectiveness and equity. We have a particular concern this year with surveillance activities of the CIA and FBI, much of which appears to have been directed at black organizations and individuals. A more aggressive Congress will, we hope, further this oversight function. Further, we will be carefully scrutinizing nominees for federal appointive posts for their suitability with respect to the black community.

AREAS OF MAJOR LEGISLATIVE FOCUS FULL EMPLOYMENT

The Congressional Black Caucus sees as one of its highest priorities, the passage of comprehensive legislation which establishes both the policy and the mechanism for guaranteeing the right to useful and meaningful employment for all adult Americans able and willing to work. It is most important that the full employment concept be understood as reaching far beyond the public service jobs program to create both the right and the opportunity to meaningful jobs.

As unemployment skyrockets, with some predicting that January's 8.2 percent national unemployment rate will pass 10 percent this year, the need for relief is unquestioned. Black unemployment in January was over 13 percent and black teenage unemployment in the same month was at 41 percent. However, even many of those who recognize the need do not fully understand that Bureau of Labor Statistics figures show that the real national unemployment rate—which included the underemployed, those employed part-time who seek full-time work, and those who need work but are discouraged from looking—is over 15 percent. For blacks, that means a real unemployment rate in the neighborhood of 30 percent nationally, and even higher in depressed areas.

The major thrust of the effort to attain full employment legislation centers around a bill introduced by Caucus member Augustus Hawkins. That measure would create a Job Guarantee Office and a Standby Job Corps, as well as requiring the President to develop a national full employment and production program. Full employment would be achieved through both private and public employers. Central to the proposal is the concept that there is no tolerable level of official unemployment for a narrowly-defined labor force in contrast to present practice.

As the legislative process proceeds, the specifics of a full employment program will, of course, be refined and sharpened. Complementary proposals, such as that of Congressman John Conyers to require the federal government to become the employer of last resort, will also help shape the final legislation. There should also be legislation passed providing for flexible working hours,

as in Congresswoman Burke's Career Opportunity Act. Any legislation supported by the Caucus must have an adequate mechanism at the local level for ensuring jobs and eliminating red tape.

Passage of a full employment act as soon as possible is vital. Yet even as that measure is discussed the unemployment situation demands an immediate expansion of both public service jobs programs, particularly aimed at low and unskilled workers and expansion and extension of unemployment benefits. Congressman Hawkins has also introduced a bill providing for an additional one million public service jobs, which the Caucus supports. Further, a youth unemployment program aimed at getting young people from school into the labor force, including provisions for summer jobs must be established immediately.

TAX REFORM

If we are to solve our nation's basic problems of unemployment, inadequate housing, health care, public education and other social ills, it will take lots of money. When the question is asked "how shall we fund these programs," the inevitable answer given is that the average American taxpayer is already overburdened with the cost of government and simply is not willing to have taxes raised to fund desperately needed human needs programs.

The Congressional Black Caucus agrees with that assessment. We also agree that if the money to attack these basic domestic problems—which just happen to be reflected most acutely in the black experience—is ever to be raised, it must come through extensive tax reform that will close up gaping loopholes in the tax law by which rich individuals and multi-national corporations get away with over \$50 billion a year in revenues which would come to the federal Treasury were they taxed the way the average American is taxed today. That amounts to an enormous "welfare payment", "a free ride" for the rich in our nation today.

The noted Brookings Institution economist and now Director of the Congressional Budget Office, Alice Rivlin, believes that with the annual yield from tax reform applied to our national budget we could house all of our low and moderate income families, and fund health manpower, health research and a health care system that would meet the needs of all our citizens. Over several years, we could also create jobs for all our unemployed and train less-skilled people to fill socially useful jobs on a permanent basis and substantially increase our spending on public education at every level from pre-school through college. The Congressional Black Caucus agrees.

The Congressional Black Caucus will be pressing in the 94th Congress, therefore, to effect such reforms of the tax law as:

Repeal of the oil depletion allowance.

Enactment of a minimum tax to ensure that those who earn incomes are taxed on it.

Restructuring of capital gains provisions to fully tax income from whatever source.

Elimination of hobby-farm tax deductions.

Repeal of tax credit provisions which enable multinational corporations to fully deduct foreign taxes from their U.S. tax obligations and thereby avoid U.S. taxes.

Elimination of tax incentives for foreign investments that move industry and jobs from the U.S., thereby eroding the domestic tax base.

Tightening of provisions for business activity to prevent taxpayer subsidies of a high standard of living not legitimately related to business activity.

THE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

Despite its importance, the congressional budget and appropriations process is frequently overlooked by groups outside Congress, and not fully dealt with on the inside. Programs which are not adequately funded cannot operate effectively. Programs which are overfunded and exist and grow on the basis of unexamined premises and traditions take money from more pressing and current needs.

The Congressional Black Caucus will make a major effort this year to have federal appropriations more nearly reflect real national priorities. We are especially concerned over plans for fiscal restraints coming at a time that the Administration budget calls for defense budget authority of over \$100 billion. Defense outlays rose from \$85.3 billion in fiscal year '75 to \$94.0 billion FY '76. We are neither anti-military, nor do we advocate a weak defense posture. But we cannot see any valid relationship between the absolute size of the military budget and the quality of America's defense.

Therefore, while we can agree that there must be limits on federal spending, for us the key issue is where cuts and limits should be made. We have already worked to defeat the Administration's proposed cuts in the Food Stamp program and we will continue to work to keep the burden of anti-recessionary measures from the backs of the poor.

The time is ripe for a more realistic view of the military and foreign aid budgets and a hard questioning of the premises on which they are built.

There are numerous budget areas which deserve paring. These include:

The B-1 Bomber.

The Trident Submarine.

Overseas troop level, by 100,000 troops.

AWACS Air Warning System.

MARV Counterforce.

Additional military aid to Southeast Asia.
\$2.3 billion for inflationary costs for shipbuilding.

\$1.6 billion for 20 percent increase in research and development.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

Key to the maintenance of a free and open democratic society are the rights of individuals to exercise their franchise to vote. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been perhaps the most effective piece of civil rights legis-

lation ever passed. Focusing on areas where the exclusion of black voters was greatest, largely in the South, the Voting Rights Act has resulted in the registration of over 1 million persons since 1965. Black registration rates in covered areas in the South have risen from about 30 percent of those of voting age in 1965 to 57 percent of those eligible in those same areas in 1972. Black elected officials have increased from fewer than 100 in these same areas in 1965 to nearly 1,000 to date. Yet there is considerable evidence such as in the recent U.S. Civil Rights Commission Study, that the problems persist, and that without the Act, there would be serious regression in black voting rights.

The Congressional Black Caucus strongly supports extension of the Voting Rights Act for an additional 10 years. We feel that it is particularly crucial that the extension be for 10 years so as to cover reapportionment which will follow the 1980 census. Experience under the Act has shown it to be especially effective in overcoming racial gerrymandering. The Caucus also supports a permanent ban on literacy tests. Section 5 of the Act, which requires submission of any "change with respect to voting" in covered areas to the Justice Department or D.C. Federal District Court, has proved to be the heart of the legislation. It must be retained in the extension. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan has introduced a bill to extend the protections of the Act.

Further, the Caucus supports efforts to extend the Act's coverage to Spanish-speaking and other minorities who face severe problems of disenfranchisement.

UNIVERSAL VOTER REGISTRATION

The continuing decline in voter participation since 1960 challenges the nation's democratic principles. While voter registration and participation among blacks has increased greatly since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it still lags significantly behind that for whites. The nationwide voter participation rate has declined from 64% of those eligible in 1960 to 55% of those eligible in 1975. In 1974 only 39% of those eligible voted in the congressional elections. Black voter participation in 1974 is estimated at under 30% of those eligible.

Over the past several years, proposals have been made to institute a system of universal voter registration. Largely, they have been bills which would simplify registration through the use of postcards for registering for federal elections. Provisions to protect against fraud and to give financial incentives for states and localities to utilize the federal postcard registrations have been included in the major bills.

Last year, H.R. 8053, the Voter Registration Act, failed to gain a rule in the House by a vote of 197 to 204. The members of the Congressional Black Caucus supported that bill, and continue to strongly support similar legislation this year.

The states of Maryland, Minnesota, Texas and New Jersey have systems of registra-

tion by mail and have found them to be tremendously successful.

The passage of a universal voter registration act is among the highest priorities on our agenda.

GENERAL REVENUE SHARING

Revenue sharing was initially proposed during the mid-1960's as a means of distributing a budget surplus to states and localities as a flexible additional sum of money to supplement categorical programs. Under the Nixon Administration, general revenue sharing became a political weapon to shift the locus of decision-making to units of government less responsive to social needs of poor and minorities. Categorical program cutbacks, despite promises to the contrary, heightened the withdrawal from commitments to national priorities supported by the Congressional Black Caucus and its constituents. Reports and studies which have appeared to date, such as those by the National Clearinghouse on Revenue Sharing, civil rights organizations, the General Accounting Office, and the Brookings Institution, generally indicate that general revenue sharing funds have gone to purposes other than to meet most basic social needs. Few benefits of revenue sharing expenditures have reached blacks and the poor.

The Congressional Black Caucus will make a searching reexamination of the general revenue sharing program prior to endorsing its continuation. We understand the need for continuing funds for general city services at a time of financial crisis. Yet we see the review and debate concerning general revenue sharing as a focal point for discussion of our national priorities.

In that context, we will be looking closely at how responsive the program has been to the fundamental needs we perceive. We will be looking to see whether additional legislative provisions, including formula changes, might help to further that responsiveness, or whether alternative and complementary programs might better reach that end.

Even more specifically, any extension of the general revenue sharing program should contain the following key provisions:

Stronger civil rights provisions which put a greater responsibility for effective enforcement on the federal government. We do not believe that states and localities which have not demonstrated that they have the capacity, the machinery and the will to enforce the civil rights laws should be given great leeway and authority in the enforcement process.

We oppose any attempts to limit the deferral of funds power to narrow functional areas to which funds may go.

There must be a specific requirement for citizen participation in the decision-making process for fund use prior to notification to the Treasury Department of planned uses of the funds. Citizen participation should include at least public hearings, better notification of minority groups, and public re-

ports on planned and actual uses which indicate the nature and type of projects as well as the real impact in terms of a locality's overall budget.

The formula and permissible use categories must result in greater benefits to lower-income communities and individuals.

There should be a specific requirement that the data used in the formula be responsive to the known census undercount.

HEALTH CARE

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that does not have a comprehensive health care system. Medicaid and Medicare reach only a minimal number of people and with a relatively low level of benefits. A large number of persons have no medical plan at all, and even those with medical plans frequently do not have regular preventive care.

Basically, the problem is one of cost. Unfortunately, the medical industry and the country have forced us to choose between the high costs of comprehensive coverage and a gamble with our own health.

Legislation will be introduced in this session of Congress, as it was in the last, to create national health care. Caucus members Congressman Andrew Young and Congressman Ronald Dellums will introduce major health care legislation. There are a number of principles which must be incorporated in any bill finally passed:

1. It must set forth a positive health concept which includes preventive services, health maintenance and community education for personal and community health.

2. Health care must be recognized as a right, not merely as a privilege.

3. Health coverage must be comprehensive and include the full range of health care, preventive, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation regardless of one's ability to pay.

4. There must be progressive trust fund financing so that health care is insured of continuation as a permanent program.

5. Consumers, that is, the community residents, must be permitted and encouraged to participate in health care program operations.

6. Finally, the health care program must be reinforced with adequate financing for research, planning and administration.

SOCIAL INSURANCE

For a number of years, there has been a great deal of discussion about welfare abuse, welfare reform and welfare replacement. Welfare or income security must be addressed this year both in terms of the amount of money and resources consumed by the program.

More importantly, it must be discussed in human terms. Welfare recipients are citizens who have a right to be treated with dignity.

The Caucus will explore and discuss the various alternatives to the present social insurance system which are presented. In particular, we will take a close look at the concept of a negative income tax.

However, any measure which receives final Caucus approval cannot be laden down with punitive, counter-productive amendments, such as has happened in the past. As one simple example, it is ludicrous to talk about forced work requirements at a time of spiraling unemployment. Moreover, it is necessary to remove procedures and activities which result in invasions of privacy. It is also crucial to recognize that the majority of welfare recipients are heads of single-parent households, frequently with young children.

Any welfare replacement or income supplement program is doomed to failure unless it is tied to job development, job training, a vastly expanded child care program, and a thorough and far-reaching program to eradicate sex and racial discrimination in education, job training and unemployment.

We also support expansion and increased funding of programs authorized by the Older Americans Act of 1965.

EDUCATION

During the past several years, important education policy questions have taken second place to a misleading, and emotional, debate over the question of busing. As misdirected discussion continues to take place, education for black children, as well as for many others, continues to suffer. While elementary and secondary education are of primary importance for our constituents, legislative activity in education this year will mostly concern higher education and vocational education.

Two major pieces of legislation, the Higher Education Act and Vocational Education Act expire this year and are likely to be renewed. We support their renewal, but we are concerned that they be strengthened, and not weakened. There are indications that attempts will be made to amend those acts in a manner which the Caucus considers detrimental to their purpose.

Thus, in extending the Higher Education Act, there are three important issues which must be addressed: 1. Eligibility criteria must concentrate on aiding those students with the greatest needs; 2. the strengthening Developing Institutions program must be continued at at least the same funding level; 3. There must be no provisions which restrict the affirmative action obligations of institutions to hire and promote minorities.

A renewed Vocational Education Act must contain provisions to ensure that handicapped and disadvantaged students receive substantial benefits from the program. Moreover, legislative provisions must be added to see that administrative costs at the state level are substantially diminished.

Unfortunately, the bill known as the "Holt Amendment" has been reintroduced. That amendment would prevent the use of federal funds to collect data by race, sex and national origin for the purpose of compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Its passage would essentially undercut enforcement of most federal civil rights law, not only in education, but in all areas where

federal financial support is involved. The Congressional Black Caucus vigorously opposes the Holt Amendment, which was defeated in the United States Senate last year.

INDIVIDUAL LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

In addition to the preceding areas of major focus, following are some forty pieces of legislation in ten major categories which are being introduced by members of the Congressional Black Caucus. In different ways, each affects substantial segments of the nation.

1. Child Care (Chisholm).—A child care bill to be introduced would establish federally aided child development programs to provide comprehensive services to children under the age of six. Building on the Headstart experience, there would be multi-service programs for young children and their families. While the program would serve a broad population definite priorities are established for poor children and those with special needs including migrants, handicapped and bilingual children. This would also include children of working mothers and single-parent families. The bill would allow public and private organizations and institutions to operate programs.

2. Civil and Political Rights and Liberties: Voting Representation for the District of Columbia (Fauntroy, Diggs).—Despite the first election of local officials in a century in the District of Columbia this past year, Washington has no voting representation in the U.S. Senate or House of Representatives. A bill to be introduced later this year will provide for full voting members of the Senate and House from Washington, D.C.

Dishonorable Discharges (Stokes, Metcalfe, Young).—To ameliorate the severe and inequitable social and economic consequences of dishonorable discharges, legislation is being introduced to require that there be only a single category of discharge from the armed forces and that reason for separation be kept confidential.

Amnesty (Dellums).—A bill introduced provides automatic general amnesty for failing to comply with any requirement of, or relating to service in the Armed Forces during our Indochina involvement. An Amnesty Commission would also be created.

Discrimination in Bar Examination (Hawkins).—A proposed amendment to the Community Services Act of 1974 would provide for federal bar examiners for temporary periods in those states in which there is substantial and long standing evidence of discrimination in the administration of bar examinations.

Psychosurgery Prohibition (Stokes).—Under proposed legislation psychosurgery, including lobotomy, psychiatric surgery, behavioral surgery and all other forms of brain surgery to modify thoughts, action and behavior would be prohibited in any federally connected health care facility.

Mexican-American Land Rights (Hawkins).—Two bills have been introduced to guarantee, protect and, when necessary, to restore the community land grants belong-

ing to descendants of former Mexican Citizens. Further, the civil, religious, political and property rights of these persons are protected, as is their right to self determination.

3. Criminal Justice: Gun Control (Dellums, Fauntroy, Metcalfe, Nix).—The use of handguns and other firearms has become an overwhelming threat to the life and safety of Americans of all races. Black on black crime is an especially prevalent problem. Several bills offered by Caucus members and by others would ban the importation, manufacture, sale, purchase, transfer, transportation, receipt, possession and ownership of handguns, except in certain circumstances. These special circumstances would involve gun clubs, collectors, security guards and similar persons. An effective registration and reporting system would be established. A tax credit system for turning in handguns is proposed in some bills. The Caucus supports the strongest bill using these elements which can be passed.

Hearings will be held before the Subcommittee on Crime chaired by Congressman John Conyers.

Grand Jury Reform (Conyers, Rangel).—The Grand Jury Reform Act of 1975 provides rules and safeguards assuring the appearance of witnesses, protecting their constitutional rights and apprising grand jury members of their inquiry powers. A witness could be given immunity and a corresponding order to testify only if he or she agrees to this exchange. A favorable vote by a grand jury majority would be necessary to subpoena a witness and to request a contempt citation. Use immunity would be eliminated.

Criminal Justice Reform (Conyers, Jordan, Rangel).—A number of other criminal justice reforms should be made in addition to those elsewhere in this agenda. (1) Citizens should be enlisted in the war against crime by such programs as citizens patrols and block security programs. (2) Criminal offenses, especially non-violent victimless crimes should be redefined. (3) Programs of deferred prosecution in federal criminal cases should be created. (4) A federal grand jury investigating executive branch officials should have the opportunity to appoint a special prosecutor if it is felt that the investigation is being compromised.

Dum-Dum Bullets (Burke, Metcalfe).—The Hollow Bullet Control Act would bar the importation, manufacture, possession or use of the so-called dum-dum bullet or any similar hollow point bullet.

Office of Federal Correctional Ombudsman (Metcalfe).—An independent third party system for investigating and arbitrating complaints of both inmates and the staffs of the federal prison system and those who are under the direction of the federal parole board should be established.

To Permit Suits Against States and Localities (Metcalfe).—Inability under the law to sue states and localities frequently leaves many persons without a remedy for injuries.

An amendment to Section 1979 of the Revised Statutes (42 U.S.C. 1983) would permit such suits.

Drugstore Robbery (Nix).—Provides fines up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 2 years for robbing a pharmacy of any narcotic as defined under the Controlled Substances Act.

(4) Consumer Protection: F.U.E.L. Subsidy Program for Energy Costs (Stokes).—To relieve the burden of rising energy costs on lower-income families, the F.U.E.L. program would make subsidies available for electricity, heating fuel and gas, allowing voluntary participation by needy families. It would graduate the allowance so that the greatest benefits accrue to the families of lowest income on a scale from 10 to 90 percent of energy costs.

Antitrust (Jordan).—Efforts must be made to increase the effectiveness of antitrust laws by such means as permitting state Attorneys General the authority to file class action antitrust suits in federal courts, repealing state fair trade laws, and by preventing leading conglomerates from controlling alternative sources of energy. Also the antitrust exemption for agricultural cooperatives should be re-evaluated.

Commodity Price Marking (Ford).—To protect consumers' right and ability to accurately determine prices, particularly in food stores, price marking on individual commodity items must be made mandatory. A bill to this end has been introduced in response to the growing use of computer checkout pricing in supermarkets. In addition, the Caucus strongly supports the establishment of an independent consumer protection agency with the power to investigate anti-consumer activities and go to court with its own attorneys.

5. Foreign Affairs: Rhodesian Chrome (Diggs).—The Congressional Black Caucus strongly supports the bill to repeal the Byrd amendment. The Byrd Amendment passed in 1971, authorizes the President, in disregard of United Nations sanctions, to import certain strategic materials, that is, Rhodesian Chrome. The world community recognizes the illegitimacy of the Rhodesian regime.

Fair Employment Practices for U.S. Firms in South Africa (Diggs).—Contracts between the U.S. Government and any person or firm doing business in South Africa should be prohibited unless such person or firm is doing business in accordance with fair employment practices and is listed on a roster established under this Joint Resolution.

African Development Funding Act (Young).—Would provide for multilateral trade and technical assistance commitments based on the development priorities of African nations.

6. Governmental Structure and Responsibility: Bureaucratic Accountability (Dellums).—In response to hearings on governmental lawlessness held by the Congressional Black Caucus in 1972, the Bureaucratic Accountability Act has been introduced to in-

sure that citizens may obtain information and redress concerning federal activities. The bill would extend due process requirements under the Administrative Procedures Act to social programs and other aspects of positive governments. It would also broaden requirements for citizen input in agency rulemaking and would further the private attorney general concept.

Census Undercount (Rangel).—The proposed legislation would require federal agencies administering domestic assistance programs utilizing population based formulas to adjust data in determining allocations to be responsive to census undercount rates determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Cabinet Level Minority Enterprises Agency (Mitchell).—Under legislation to be introduced, the minority business components of the Small Business Administration, the office of Minority Business Enterprise and those within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare would be combined into a single cabinet level agency.

Independent Office of Civil Rights Enforcement (Hawkins).—The Civil Rights Enforcement Act of 1975 would create the Civil Rights Enforcement Agency as an independent agency of the federal government with a director as chief executive officer who would be appointed by the Supreme Court of the United States and confirmed by the Senate.

Veterans' Pensions (Ford).—Legislation should be enacted to ensure that recipients of Veterans' pension and compensation will not have the amount of such pension or compensation reduced because of increase in monthly social security benefits.

Hatch Act Reform (Clay).—Federal government employees, who are presently prohibited from participating in partisan politics should be permitted to participate in election campaigns and other aspects of the political process.

Social Security Disability Benefits (Stokes).—Title II of the Social Security Act should be amended to provide that an indi-

vidual may qualify for disability insurance benefits and the disability freeze if he has enough quarters of coverage to be fully insured for old-age benefit purposes, regardless of when such quarters were earned.

7. Health: Narcotics (Rangel).—The Congressional Black Caucus supports legislative and appropriations efforts to (1) increase the Drug Enforcement Agency's budget, (2) provide funding for supportive services such as education and employment counseling to permit treated addicts to return to the economic mainstream.

Mobile Health Units (Burke).—Under the Mobile Health Units Act, health care delivery assistance to medically underserved urban and rural areas would be provided through special project grants for the purchase of mobile health units.

Amniocentesis Research (Burke).—To further research into the early detection of birth defects, funds should be provided for research to extend the availability of Amniocentesis to those who cannot now afford such tests.

8. Housing: Low-Income Housing (Mitchell).—A 3-year emergency housing program based on legislation now on the books, should be put into effect. Three million units in three years are required: one million public housing; one million 236 or 515 with rent supplements; one million 235 or 502 with interest credits. Sixty percent of the units should be in metropolitan areas, forty percent outside.

Limited Moratorium on Repayment of FHA and VA-Guaranteed Loans (Burke).—Under legislation to be introduced, persons faced with certain specified circumstances in the current economic crisis, such as loss of employment, temporary layoffs, etc. would be permitted to defer loan repayment under FHA and VA guarantee program for a period not to exceed six months without penalty.

Condominium Conversion Protection (Collins).—The National Condominium Act of 1975 (H.R. 228) would provide national condominium standards for condominium projects utilizing federal funds, and would

create the post of Assistant Secretary of HUD for Condominiums to administer the protections for condominiums. The federal standards would include submission of a form to HUD showing such things as contract terms and legal description of the project. Existing tenants would be given six months after notice of conversion for priority in purchase.

Low Interest Loans for Rehabilitation (Metcalfe).—Housing rehabilitation loans should be provided for low and middle income individuals. The legislation introduced also calls for a General Accounting Office evaluation of all ongoing housing programs on a regular basis to determine whether congressional intent is being met.

9. Martin Luther King Birthday National Holiday (Conyers).—January 15th of each year, the date of Dr. Martin Luther King's birth, should be designated as a legal public holiday. Making Dr. King's birthdate a national holiday would do more than honor the memory of Dr. King as an individual. It would provide at least one day during the year when all Americans would have an opportunity to reflect on the ideals for which Dr. King lived and died, and to consider how far we remain from truly fulfilling his ideals, as individuals and as a society.

10. Women's Rights: Rape Prevention and Control (Burke).—A National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape within the National Institute of Mental Health should be established. It would provide financial assistance for a research and demonstration program into the causes, consequences, prevention, treatment and control of rape.

Pap Smear Test (Collins).—The Social Security Act should be amended to provide for coverage under the Medicare program for routine Papanicolaou (Pap) tests for the diagnosis of uterine cancer.

Social Security Coverage for Homemakers (Jordan).—A bill has been introduced which recognizes household employees as self-employed workers and provides them with all the social security benefits available to other workers.