

Congressional Black Caucus

1983 LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

The Congressional Black Caucus was successful in achieving its legislative priorities in 1983, and we are confident that we can continue this progress in the second session of the 98th Congress.

Collectively the 21 members of the CBC chair seventeen committees and subcommittees of the House. By any measure, the leadership of the CBC has greatly influenced the legislative process. Following is a summary of major priorities achieved by the CBC during 1983. The entire membership of the Congressional Black Caucus is available to provide you with more specific information relative to our legislative initiatives and actions.

* BUDGET RESOLUTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 1984

The budget resolution adopted by the House of Representatives on March 23 contained 75 percent of the CBC recommended funding levels for programs aimed at putting Americans back to work, reversing deep cuts in social programs, lowering projected federal deficits and reducing the President's proposals to increase defense.

* IMPLEMENTATION OF MITCHELL AMENDMENT TO THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

Under the leadership of the Chairman of the House Small Business Committee, Parren J. Mitchell, regulations which maximized the opportunities for small and minority business participation in the 10 percent minority set aside for Department of Transportation grants to state and local governments have been promulgated in final form.

* MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY

The CBC was victorious in its 15 year struggle to recognize the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when a bill designating the third Monday of each January as National Martin Luther King Day

was signed into law by President Reagan on November 2. The House passed the bill on August 2 by a vote of 338-90, and the Senate on October 19 by 78-22. The bill was introduced by freshman Caucus member Representative Katie Hall, who Chairs the House Post Office and Civil Service Subcommittee on Census and Population. Additionally, CBC veteran John Conyers deserves much of the credit for his organizing efforts over the past 15 years to honor Dr. King's accomplishments.

* COMMUNITY RENEWAL EMPLOYMENT ACT

On September 21, under the leadership of the Chairman of the House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities, Augustus Hawkins, a \$3.5 billion bill which will create 500,000 jobs for the long term unemployed cleared the House by a vote of 246-178. The measure is pending on the Senate Legislative Calendar.

* PROHIBITION OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONALLY MONETARY FUND INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

CBC Chairman Julian C. Dixon authored an amendment prohibiting U.S. support of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to South Africa which cleared the House on August 3, and was enacted into law on November 18. The amendment was labeled as the most controversial to clear the first session of the 98th Congress, and passage of the amendment marked a major victory for the CBC's efforts to restrain United States economic support of South Africa.

* PROHIBITION OF ALL NEW INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Representative William Gray, Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, authored a precedent-setting initiative to prohibit all new investment in South Africa which cleared the House of Representatives on October 27 as an amendment to Title III of the Export Administration Amendments of 1983. The Senate must now vote to retain the no new investment provisions in a House/Senate conference on the Export Administration bill.

* INCREASE OF MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Representative William Gray also introduced a bill to provide for the set-aside of more than \$145 million of development assistance money for economically and socially disadvantaged businesses, historically black colleges and private voluntary organizations. The bill cleared the House on November 15 as an amendment to the Continuing Resolution for fiscal year 1984 and is now public law. Over the next six years potentially \$1 billion of development assistance funds administered by the Agency for International Development (AID) will be available for these entities.

* HOUSING

A housing authorization bill providing \$15.6 billion for an assortment of community development, assisted housing, rental rehabilitation and development grants programs cleared the House on November 18. The Chairman of the House Banking Subcommittee on Fiscal and Monetary Policy, Walter E. Fauntroy, and Banking Committee member, Parren J. Mitchell led the fight to gain passage of this measure, which is the first housing authorization bill to clear the Congress since 1981.

Additionally, members of the CBC made significant gains on behalf of their constituents through the following legislative victories:

* UNEMPLOYMENT/SOCIAL SECURITY

Under the leadership of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Assistance and Unemployment Compensation chairman, Harold Ford, major legislative initiatives to extend the federal supplemental compensation program, increase income assistance to the aged, blind and disabled poor, and mandate child support enforcement, cleared the House and were enacted into law. These included:

- A bill signed into law on October 24, which extends federal supplemental compensation benefits through March 31, 1985, and increases the Title 20 social services block grant from \$2.5 billion to \$2.7 billion.
- A measure mandating the enforcement of child support payments which cleared the House on November 18 by a vote of 422-0. The bill is now pending before the Senate Finance Committee.
- The Social Security Act Amendments of 1983, which was signed into law on April 20, incorporated Representative Ford's initiatives to increase the maximum benefits payable to the aged, blind and disabled poor under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

* COMMEMORATIVE LEGISLATION

Members of the Caucus were successful in gaining passage of legislation designed to honor Black Americans and to increase the public awareness of diseases which disproportionately affect Blacks. Specifically:

- Passage on October 6, of a resolution authored by CBC Chairman Julian C. Dixon, urging the President to award the Medal of Freedom to noted Black educator, civil rights leader and theologian, Benjamin Mays.
- A bill, introduced by Representative William Gray designating the week of October 16 through 22 as Lupus Awareness Week was signed into law on October 13.
- A resolution introduced by CBC Chairman, Julian C. Dixon, resulted in a proclamation being issued on September 21 designating the month of September as National Sickle Cell Anemia Awareness Month.
- Last August 4, a bill authored by Representative Harold Ford, which designates September 21, 1983 as Historically Black Colleges Day, passed the House.

* ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

When the Universal Telephone Preservation Act passed the House on November 10 an amendment authored by CBC member, Mickey Leland requiring State public utility commissions to establish lifeline low interest discount rates for low income residential telephone subscribers was adopted. The Telephone Preservation Act is pending on the Senate legislative calendar.

Another Leland amendment which codifies and strengthens equal employment opportunities for minorities and women was adopted on November 14 by the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Consumer Protection and Finance as part of the Cable Telecommunications Act of 1983.

* CIVIL RIGHTS

The November 30 enactment into law of legislation which ensures the continuance of the Civil Rights Commission as an independent entity can be attributed in large part to the efforts of all CBC members.

* SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS

Last May 13, a measure authored by House Committee on Small Business Chairman, Parren J. Mitchell establishing an 8(a) pilot program, which will result in high technology contracts for minority businesses with the U.S. Department of Transportation, was signed into law.

* CONSUMER PROTECTION

The Mail Order Consumer Protection Amendments bill, which was signed into Law by the President on November 30, was authored by House Post Office and Civil Service Subcommittee on Postal personnel and Modernization Chair, Mickey Leland.

On November 16, The Credit Card Protection Act, authored by House Government Operations Subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation Chairwoman Cardiss Collins, was passed by the House. The bill makes it a federal offense to possess five or more stolen account numbers or obtain more than \$1,000 of goods through credit card fraud, and allows a consumer to sue a consumer reporting agency that illegally discloses an account number. The measure is currently pending before the Senate Banking Committee.

A major component of the Federal Anti-Tampering Act which was enacted into law on October 13, was authored by Representative Cardiss Collins.

* LABOR HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES APPROPRIATIONS

The 96.2 billion Fiscal Year 1984 Labor/HHS/Education bill which was signed into law on October 31, included several amendments sponsored by Representative Louis Stokes. Specifically:

- An increase in funding for programs enhancing health and science educational opportunities for the disadvantaged.

- Nullification of the Administration's attempt to terminate the \$8 million National Health Service Corps Scholarship program.

- A \$1.055 million appropriation for a podiatric specialty training program.

- A \$1.5 million increase for support for a National Institute of Health (NIH) minority biomedical research support program.

- A \$73,000 appropriation for staff positions in the Women Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

* DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Under the leadership of House Committee on the District of Columbia Chairman Ronald Dellums, the Committee gained passage of legislation providing the D.C. government with interm borrowing authority, an increase in the retirement age for judges, an increase of \$254 million in the annual federal payment to D.C., and reform of the federal contribution to the D.C. Police Officers' and Firefighters' Fund.