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REPORT TO THE PEOPLE FROM YOUR CONGRESSWOMAN

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With the arrival of President Kennedy's civil rights program here on Capitol Hill, the word is that Congress can expect to remain in session for most of the year. The prediction is based, of course, on the likelihood of a lengthy filibuster by Southern Democrats, especially in the Senate, against such legislation.

Speaking for myself, I can say that I'm perfectly ready to stay here in Washington just as long as it takes to pass a law that will effectively enforce the Constitutional guarantees of equal rights and equal protection of the laws for all Americans. This is so basic a responsibility, it seems to me beyond reasonable dispute. I am convinced, too, that a substantial majority of the House and Senate of both parties accept the urgent need for civil rights legislation. Opponents will try to talk the bill to death, as they have a right to do, but they can succeed only if we, the majority, permit them to succeed.

A MISUNDERSTOOD VOTE

The defeat of the Administration's proposed expansion of the area redevelopment program by a narrow 5-vote margin -- the biggest blow to the President's program this year -- has been widely misunderstood. Because the expressed purpose of this program is to help make jobs available to people in areas of high unemployment, newspaper headlines tended to make it appear as though opponents of the bill were against helping the unemployed. Emphatically not so! News stories and interpretive pieces also tended to blame the bill's defeat on resumption of the Southern Democratic-Conservative Republican coalition sparked by southerners who wanted to "punish" the President for his recent decision to seek civil rights legislation. A highly inaccurate interpretation!

Certainly, there are those in the House who aren't interested in doing much about unemployment, just as there are those whose animosity toward civil rights outweighs all other considerations. But they do not make a majority, and their votes did not defeat the area redevelopment bill.

The bill was licked by its own supporters -- by their refusal to recognize that a well-conceived program had not been working properly, by their failure to take seriously the proven charges of poor administration and bad judgment in the use of Federal funds, by their stubborn opposition to every amendment designed to eliminate abuses and get the program back on its tracks.

Reform was badly needed. Relatively little new employment had been created during the program's first two years. Additional unemployment had been caused, in fact, by encouraging industry to relocate and by subsidizing unneeded competition with companies already laying off workers. Well over half the program's funds were going into rural areas, many of which were not really distressed, instead of to the areas of truly hard-core unemployment. No less than 25 percent of loans and grants had gone into hotel and motel construction, and the biggest single project was a recreation program in Oklahoma. Moreover, in specific cases, the program had been used to lower wage scales, fight unions, and support racial discrimination in employment.

HARMFUL TO NEW JERSEY

For New Jersey, the area redevelopment program had been distinctly harmful, costing our taxpayers more than four times the benefits we received, and threatening our people with the loss of their jobs by encouraging industry to move away. As the most heavily industrialized, most intensely populated State in the United States, our problem is to find more jobs for our growing population here at home. While this

doesn't mean we should not be concerned with unemployment elsewhere, it certainly means we should insist on effective use of Federal funds and reasonable protection for our own people.

Ironically, now that the Administration has suffered this reverse, it is reconsidering its position on the proposed amendments. In the Senate, where the Administration is trying to revive its bill, I understand the Administration has indicated it would now accept two amendments which, when I drafted and offered them here in the House, were turned down flatly. These amendments would strengthen the Act's anti-piracy provisions and prevent funds from being used to benefit runaway plants like Mack Trucks, Inc. which abandoned Plainfield for a redevelopment area and left 2,000 employees out of work.

Continuing its solid work in the field of consumer protection, our Intergovernmental Relations subcommittee has just issued a fact-filled report on the regulation of drugs, narcotics and related products by State and local governments which should interest those concerned with assuring high standards of safety and efficacy. Since 87.3 percent of those answering my Congressional Questionnaire this year agreed that more should be done to protect consumers in this field, the interest is obviously great.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE STATES

Our subcommittee, of which I am ranking minority member, found vast differences among the States in the character of their regulations, in their enforcement activities as revealed by the number of personnel and amount of expenditures devoted to this work, and in the extent of their cooperation with Federal agencies. Some States are still operating under the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act while most of the rest base their regulations on provisions of a 1938 law. States are spending \$1.7 million annually while the Federal Government spends nearly \$10 million for similar consumer protection activities in the drug field. Annual expenditures vary from a high of \$464,383 to a low of \$142, with five States accounting for half the total spent by all States. The total annual man-years of work reported by State agencies amounted to 269 as compared with 997 reported by Federal agencies in related fields, and individual States ranged from a high of 37.4 man-years annually to a low of 0.1. Intergovernmental cooperation extends from the simple exchange of information in some cases to joint inspections and investigations in others.

Among the reporting States, New Jersey ranks 23rd in total expenditures, though it ranks 7th both in population and total personal income. On a per capita basis, the State ranks 5th in income per person but 30th in per capita expenditures for drug protection activities.

A further report will deal with State and local government consumer protection work relating to food. After all the data has been collected, the subcommittee plans to hold hearings. Our goal is to determine how consumer protection can be improved, how duplicating activities can be eliminated, how cooperation between Federal, State and local governments can be made more effective, and how you the consumer can be assured greater safety, better information, a wider choice of high quality products, and the right to be heard on a subject of such deep personal importance to each of us.