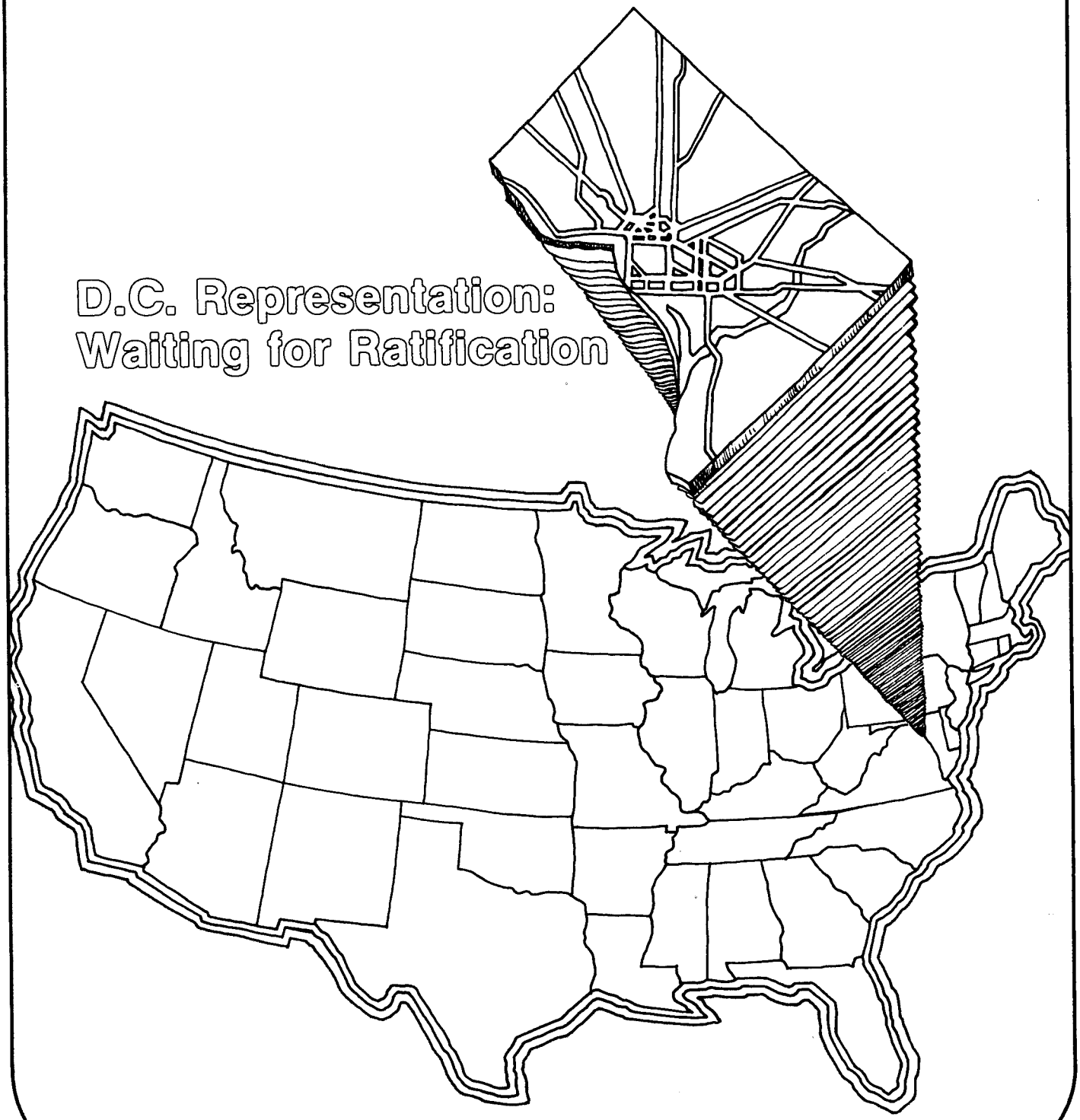
VOL. 6, NO. 9 October 1978

FOCUS

D.C. Representation: Waiting for Ratification



Joint Center For Political Studies

Perspective

In less than two years the Census Bureau will be conducting the 1980 Decennial Census of Population and Housing. As mentioned in a previous issue of FOCUS (June-July 1978), the statistical data obtained from this census will be used to determine both the level and availability of billions of dollars in federal funds to states and localities. Currently, about 130 federal grant programs use census data wholly or partially to allocate funds.

Whether the minority community reaps the maximum benefits from these federal programs will depend largely on the Census Bureau's ability to reduce the undercount of minorities in the 1980 census. Only if this undercount is reduced will federal funds be distributed on an equitable basis throughout the nation as a whole.

As a member of the Bureau's Advisory Committee on the Black Population, I have been watching with great interest the various programs designed by census technicians to improve the population coverage of minority citizens. Based upon my observation of these programs, I would like to highlight one component of the Bureau's overall minority statistics effort: The Community Services Program.

The Community Services Program is a crucial element in the Bureau's minority coverage strategy. The objective of this program is to develop a two-way communications network between the Bureau and minority groups in an effort to (1) win the confidence and active cooperation of these groups; (2) convince them of the confidentiality of information furnished to the census; (3) make them aware of the advantages of being included in the census; and (4) obtain first-hand recommendations for improving the coverage and quality of the census.

For 1980, the Bureau plans to hire approximately 200 Community Services Specialists whose sole responsibility will be to make inroads into the minority community. These individuals will be assigned to the Bureau's 12 regional offices. Some already have begun soliciting the active participation of mayors and city council members in the campaign to motivate interest in the census. For the first time, these individuals will also attempt to establish communications with hard-to-enumerate segments of the population, including street gangs and patrons of pool halls, bars, etc. In addition, census programs will be developed in schools and churches.

There are four major components of the Community Services Program:

Community Awareness: By designing an advertising campaign that is directed specifically toward minority communities, the Bureau hopes to encourage a better understanding of the availability and uses of census data.

Community Education: By working through local school systems, including adult educational programs, the Bureau will underscore the nation's need for a thorough and complete decennial census.

Community Involvement: By working with community groups, the Bureau believes that it will enhance the chances of an improved census count.

Community Participation: Participation by community leaders and elected officials will bring about the trust and cooperation that are essential to a successful census.

I applaud this effort by the Census Bureau and encourage all minority leaders to take full advantage of this opportunity to get involved in assuring a correct count in 1980. For more detailed information on this program, contact Samuel Johnson, Coordinator, Community Services Program, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Elections '78

With the October 7 elections in Hawaii, this year's primary season has drawn to a close. Since March 21, and the year's first primary vote in Illinois, blacks have been vying for congressional and state offices — in many cases, running as Republicans and independents. Although many ran, most did poorly. In many cases, blacks were running against black incumbents and in other primaries, blacks, who had the support of the black community, were not able to muster enough white votes to win. Black voter apathy was another factor. But the candidates that won their primaries have geared up their campaigns for the November general election.

House Races

All members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election this year. Although 14 of the 16 members of the Congressional Black Caucus sought re-election, only 12 of the incumbents will be running in the general election. Rep. Ralph Metcalfe (D Ill.) had run unopposed in the Democratic primary in Illinois and was expected to win in the November election until his death October 10, of a heart attack. (See Telescope.)

Chicago alderman Bennett Stewart, a democratic party stalwart, has been chosen by the district's ward committeemen to replace Metcalfe as the candidate for the November general election.

Reps. Yvonne Braithwaite Burke (D Calif.), Barbara Jordan (D Texas) and Robert N.C. Nix (D Penn.) will not be returning to the House. Burke is the Democratic candidate in California for state attorney general and has a good chance of becoming the first black woman elected to that office in this country. (See FOCUS May and June-July 1978).

Jordan has decided to return to private practice in Texas and Nix was defeated in the May 16 primary. (See FOCUS June-July 1978.)

California assemblyman Julian C. Dixon, Texas State Rep. Mickey Leland and Philadelphia minister William H. Gray have won the Democratic primaries in their respective states (See FOCUS May and June-July 1978) and are virtually assured of replacing outgoing Reps. Burke, Jordan and Nix.

Rep. Charles C. Diggs (D Mich.), who won the Democratic primary in Michigan, has been convicted on 29 counts of mail fraud and illegally using federal funds for his personal and business use. The case is now on appeal and Diggs, the senior black representative in Congress, has not withdrawn from the November general election and has a good chance of being elected to his 13th term.

In Connecticut, black Republican Ben Andrews will be vying for a House seat against incumbent Rep. William Cotter.

Other black incumbents, in the House, who are odds-on favorites for re-election in November are: Reps. Parren Mitchell (D Md.); John Conyers (D Mich.); Shirley Chisholm (D N.Y.); Charles Rangel (D N.Y.); Ronald Dellums (D Calif.); Augustus Hawkins (D Calif.); Harold Ford (D Tenn.); Louis Stokes (D Ohio); William Clay (D Mo.) Cardiss Collins (D Ill.); and District of Columbia delegate Walter Fauntroy.

Senate Races

One-third of the Senate's members are up for re-election. Sen. Edward Brooke (R Mass.), the Senate's only black member, won a tight primary race and is in a close race in the November election.

In Mississippi, two blacks, Charles Evers, mayor of Fayetteville, Miss., and activist Henry Kirksey, are running as independents for the Senate seat of Sen. James Eastland (D Miss.), who recently announced his retirement. (See FOCUS May 1978.) Maurice Dantin, who upset Gov. Cliff Finch in the Democratic primary and Thad Cochran, a three-term congressman who won the Republican primary, are in a close race. The independent candidates may attract a large enough percentage of the overwhelmingly Democratic black vote to deny any Democrat a plurality. The result could be the election of a Republican senator in Mississippi for the first time in 98 years.

The black vote will also have considerable impact in the senatorial race in South Carolina. Sen. Strom Thurmond (R S.C.) is facing a tough re-election challenge from Democrat Charles Ravenel, Jr. Thurmond, the legendary one-time segregationist, has been gradually changing his image and is currently working on obtaining a larger portion of the black vote in the state. Recently, Thurmond gave his support for congressional representation for predominantly black Washington, D.C. and supported the appointment of a black federal judge in South Carolina.

Ravenel, who in 1974 won the Democratic nomination for governor but was taken off of the ballot because he did not meet South Carolina's five-year residency requirement for gubernatorial candidates, is running a hard race but is behind Thurmond in recent polls. Ravenel, considered a symbol of the New South, is trying to appeal to black voters. The black vote, which is 30 percent of the electorate, will have a definite impact on the election.

State-wide Elections

The nation's highest ranking black elected state officials are up for re-election this year. They include: Lt. Gov. Mervyn Dymally (D Calif.); Michigan Secretary of State Richard Austin; Connecticut State Treasurer Henry E. Parker and California Superintendent of Public Instruction Wilson Riles. All of these incumbent officials are favored for re-election. Also in California, Republican Donald French, an investment banker, is running for state treasurer against Democrat Jesse Unruh.

Lt. Gov. George Brown (D Colo.), one of two black lieutenant governors in the country, decided not to run for re-election. (See FOCUS August 1978) and has not disclosed his future plans.

In Illinois, Roland Burris won the Democratic primary for state controller and is given a good chance to defeat his Republican opponent in November.

Blacks are also running for lieutenant governor in Georgia and Maryland as Republicans. James Webb II, who will face Democrat Zell Miller, is vice chairman of the Georgia Republican Party and is also an attorney and a minister. Aris Allen, a doctor and chairman of the Maryland Republican Party, is running against Democrat Samuel Bogley. He served as a Maryland state legislator for eight years.

— Barbara LaMarr

D.C. Representation

by Rebecca Leet

Ms. Leet is a volunteer working with the Self-Determination for D.C. organization.

The support of black elected officials and community leaders across the country was a critical factor in raising the civil rights aspects of political rights for the District of Columbia and in getting through the House of Representatives and the Senate the Constitutional amendment which would grant the District of Columbia full voting representation in Congress.

It has been a widespread assumption that the amendment resolution — which passed the House by a 289-127 vote on March 2 and the Senate by a 67-32 vote on August 22 — would not have passed either body if it had not been portrayed as a black civil rights issue.

However, that assumption and the euphoria over success at the congressional level could set the stage for failure if the issue is not viewed in a much broader political and constitutional context. The success or failure of ratification by the 38 states, required to ratify the amendment, will be determined by the playing out of all the issues and interests raised by the representation issue not just the civil rights aspect.

The civil rights orientation helped the D.C. amendment get visibility; it provided the pressure needed to get the attention and action of Congress.

No doubt, in some states, success can be achieved by tying the amendment to the movement; however, in many others, the effect would be the opposite. Putting pressure on legislators through their black constituents may have been effective with Congress but state legislatures are a different matter. Black political influence is considerably stronger with the congressional delegation than with many state legislative delegations.

This is not to say that black leaders will not continue to play a key role in the ratification effort — they will. In many states, they will form the nucleus of those initiating action and organization support. State by state, they will be identifying key legislators and helping to educate the legislative leaders as well as citizens regarding the ratification.

But it is wrong to expect black legislators to carry the ball alone; it didn't happen that way in Congress and it won't happen that way in the states. A successful ratification effort will hinge on the same overall strategy that worked with Congress — bringing together a bi-partisan group of lawmakers with diverse political philosophies and outlooks.

Approach to Lawmakers

Obviously, the approach and leadership potential will vary from state to state, but lawmakers who want to help the ratification drive should consider the following:

- Try to surprise the opposition by obtaining support from leading conservatives. It's fine to have 30 liberal co-sponsors, but it's even better to have 15 co-sponsors if a few of them are people who might be expected to oppose you. Support from such apparently unlikely sources as Sen. Strom Thurmond (D S.C.) and Sen. Barry Goldwater (R Ariz.) helped to mobilize broad support in Congress; the same must happen in the states.

In building support for the amendment, it is important to make the case with and gain support from leaders of various political parties, factions, and racial and ethnic groups. The broad-based, bi-partisan support the amendment received in Congress was the major factor in its passage.

- Get the leaders on your side early. Work early and hard to educate the people who are going to influence the votes or other legislators when the decision is made.
- Know the issues.

The Basic Issue

The basic issue behind full congressional representation for D.C. is a simple one but it has been clouded by a great many extraneous arguments. Despite attempts to obfuscate the issue, it has gained widespread support among non-minority, as well as, minority groups because they realize the principle which is truly at the base of this issue — the right of every American to a voice in his or her government.

The issue is *not* that the District has a larger population than seven states; it is *not* that District residents pay $1.4 billion a year in federal taxes — more than the residents of 11 other states — but lack the right to participate in the imposition or lifting of those taxes; it is *not* that District residents suffered more casualties in the Vietnam War than 10 other states.

Rather, the issue is the same one which was embodied in the battle cry of the Revolutionary War — "taxation without representation is tyranny!"

The issue *is* that the United States was founded on the belief that people had a right to elect their rulers. It is a principle that this nation has in the past 200 years used to broaden the electorate by bringing in women, blacks, 18-year-olds, non-property holders and others. As former Attorney General Ramsey Clark put it, "The right to vote is the last we should ever withhold because it can protect all others."

Interestingly, of the 115 countries of the world which have elected legislatures, only two, the United States and Brazil, deny voting rights to the people who live in their national capitals.

Accident of History

The fact that D.C. residents do not vote for national legislators is an accident of history.

The provision for a national capital distinct from any state was written into the Constitution after its framers, situated in Philadelphia, at that time the Capital, were besieged by hungry and penniless soldiers demanding pay that was owed them for their service during the Revolutionary War. When members of the Pennsylvania militia refused to intervene, the drafters of the Constitution decide that the national government should never again be dependent on a state government for protection, but should reside in an area it controlled completely.

The present site of the District was not chosen until 1790 and the federal government did not assume full control of the city unitl 1800. In the intervening time,

THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF MINORITY PUBLIC OFFICIALS

By

Adam W. Herbert
and
Alan W. Steiss

Editor's Note: The preparation of this report has been supported by the Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under Grant #H-2871 RG. The statements and conclusions contained in this report are those of the participants in the project and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government in general or particularly the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Adam W. Herbert, former Director of Research at the Joint Center for Political Studies, was Project Director and Alan W. Steiss, was the Project's senior rapporteur.

Background

In the face of growing demands for limits on both the taxing and spending authority of local governmental units, effective financial management practices are becoming more and more important. However, in this increasingly restrictive financial climate, the problems and needs of low-income persons are often overlooked. Government officials worried about their disadvantaged constituents are concerned that much greater attention must be focused on systems and procedures to enhance governmental responsiveness to the needs of those on the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder.

An effort to assist local governments to improve their financial management practices has been undertaken by the Office of Policy Development and Research of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Through its Financial Management Capacity Sharing Program (FMCSP), HUD is attempting to identify local financial management needs and to transfer to local governments proven techniques for developing and using sound financial data when making management and policy decisions.

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This HUD initiative is being implemented through a program of broad consultation with local and state officials and interested organizations. To identify goals and priorities, HUD called on nine organizations to convene workshops, conduct analyses, and contribute reports on the needs of particular groups of officials. Each of the nine organizations held a workshop for local officials between February and May 1978, and on June 8 and 9, five participants from each of these nine workshops came together in a national conference on the financial management needs of local government. At that conference, the 45 local officeholders provided HUD with an overall ranking of their most pressing needs and suggested specific strategies and policies HUD could use in developing its financial management program.

The Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS) participated in this process by assessing the financial management needs of local minority elected and appointed officials. It brought together 23 officials for a workshop, held May 4-6 and also distributed a questionnaire to a randomly selected group of minority public officials. Five of the participants at the May workshop later attended the national conference in June.

For both the workshop and the survey, JCPS selected participants on the basis of such factors as the size of the jurisdiction they served, their geographical location, and the level of office they held.

This report describes the results of the workshop and survey for minority officials, as well as the national conference.

Results of the JCPS Workshop

JCPS convened black and brown public officials from throughout the country, representing both elected officials and professional managers, at a workshop in Washington, D.C. The purposes of the workshop as well as the related survey, were to do the following as stated by HUD and JCPS officials.

- Identify, define, rank and document the perceptions of minority elected and appointed officials relative to their financial management programs and needs;
- Identify specific issues, programs, policies, or practices in the financial management area which have particular significance in terms of their impact on minority communities and the elected and appointed officials who serve them; and
- Encourage workshop participants to share information on practical approaches they are utilizing to deal with key financial management problems.

From the outset of the workshop, it was evident that the perceptions of the participants reflected the problems and issues of particular importance to minority communities. In this sense, the objectives which distinguished the Joint Center for Political Studies' Workshop from others sponsored by HUD in the Financial Management Capacity Sharing Program were clearly realized.

Participants were first asked to identify the general categories of problems they felt were critical in the area of financial management responsibilities. Within each category, participants then defined specific problems they thought called for further discussion.

Following are the general categories of problems ranked by how many participants included them on their lists of important areas:

Responsiveness to community needs (11)
Intergovernmental fiscal relations (10)
Building staff capabilities (7)
Budget formulation and review (6)
Budget execution and control (5)
Revenue planning and collection (5)
Financial policy analysis (4)
Private sector interface (3)
Expenditure forecasting (3)
Debt management and administration (0)
Cash management (0)

Clearly, the problems of finding ways to respond to community needs and of dealing with other levels of government are the most pressing to minority officials. In contrast, problems related to cash management and debt management and administration were given low priority.

Within the categories listed above, participants identified 17 concrete problems and ranked them according to urgency as first, second, or third priority. Following are these 17 problems, as stated by the participants:

First Priority

- "The need for federal policies to attack private development practices such as redlining."
- "Need to develop effectiveness measures for all city services, particularly human resource delivery system."
- "Targeting grants to black/brown population/ community needs."
- "Early participation by elected officials in the grant application process."
- "Inability to link budget expenditures to specific goals and objectives, and to hold agencies accountable."

Second Priority

- "Management of tax abatement and incentive programs."
- "Uncertainty of federal funds."
- "Matching revenues to future obligations."
- "Effective use of limited resources to meet community needs."
- "Decline of central-city tax base and competition with suburbs for revenues."

Third Priority

- "Forecasting the availability of federal and state grant programs."
- "Stimulation of private development in depressed areas in order to strengthen the revenue base and bring people back to the city."

- "Where to find revenues to meet community needs."
- "Federal guidelines prevent innovative integration of federal programs to achieve local goals."
- "Too many federal policies penalize central cities."
- "How to influence federal and state revenue sharing programs as related to sound fiscal management practices."
- "Getting administrators to deal with performance evaluation."

Solutions

As part of the workshop, participants paid particular attention to problem-solving approaches that had already been tried in their communities. Several of these approaches could be used in other communities. Following are some of the approaches suggested in the workshop.

Ways to Stimulate Development In Depressed Areas

The city of Flint, Michigan, is working with local banks and community groups to curb redlining and to promote redevelopment and rehabilitation of existing housing in the central city. The government exerts some leverage on banks by keeping its money in banks that promise to cooperate in this effort.

Flint is also considering an approach similar to a current Philadelphia program that sets aside 1 percent of the tax revenue generated by new construction to support citywide programs in the arts. This basic approach could be used to stimulate redevelopment of blighted areas. Some workshop participants suggested that state governments might also use revenues from new construction to set up "set aside" funds. Local communities could use these funds to make short-term loan guarantees to encourage new construction in deteriorating areas. After several years, such a fund could grow to substantial size.

Another type of revolving loan fund provides "seed money" to minority businesses in Benton Harbor, Michigan. The town's Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Corporation (MESBIC) got its start with $500,000 in capital drawn equally from federal grants and from local financial institutions and the community. The federal share was provided by the Economic Development Administration and the Small Business Administration (SBA) of the Commerce Department. Through SBA loans and loan guarantees, the fund can be used to make available up to $15 million in additional loans.

Managing Tax Abatement And Incentive Programs

Many cities offer tax breaks to industries that open new plants within their boundaries. The group first suggested the need for further studies and guidelines on the use of tax abatements. Before initiating tax abatements, the city needs to determine the relationship between its industrial development needs and the local labor forces. Job opportunities in the industries being considered for tax abatements must be matched with the skills of local residents to ensure that they will find jobs in these new firms.

The experience of Flint, Michigan, illustrates the potential dangers of tax breaks. That city gave tax abatements to a major corporation in return for a promise that a certain number of jobs in a new plant would go to city residents. The job opportunities for central-city residents never fully materialized, however, because one of the corporation's divisions later left the city.

Several workshop participants suggested that city officials obtain a commitment from a firm that it will keep its plant open for a minimum amount of time, such as three or five years in exchange for a tax abatement. The agreement should also specify that the firm would have to pay back taxes that had been abated if it broke its commitment. A participant noted that courts have upheld the legality of such roll-back provisions.

Involving Officials Early in The Grant Application Process

Participants noted that too often city officials are unaware of state or federal grant programs that could provide money to meet local needs. Some participants suggested that city councils should hire legislative analysts ("grantsmen") to alert them when funds became available, to warn them of approaching deadlines, and to provide a further mechanism for accountability. Kansas City, Missouri, retains a "man in Washington" to provide information on grant application procedures, new program funding, and the availability of foundation support for programs. The city council also employs and provides staff support for a lobbyist at the state legislature.

Other methods that participants suggested to manage the grant application process include:

- Plan for major expenditures over several years, especially as part of a capital improvements program.
- Establish a system to coordinate grant administration within different departments of the government.

Survey of Public Officials

To elicit as many views as possible, the Joint Center also prepared and distributed a questionnaire to approximately 1,000 black and brown elected officials and professional administrators. The questionnaire was intended to ascertain the views of minority officials from jurisdictions of four size categories with populations of: less than 10,000, between 10,000 and 25,000, between 25,000 and 100,000, and over 100,000.

Answers were received from 113 persons serving municipalities in all size categories. Because of the short time allowed for responses to be received, the response rate was not as high as had been hoped.

The questionnaire asked respondents to consider eight categories of financial management needs, and to rate each category as a major problem, a moderate problem, or not a problem. JCPS analyzed the responses overall and by size of jurisdiction.

Survey respondents ranked the eight categories from most significant to least significant as follows:

1. Responsiveness to community needs
2. Budget formulation and review
3. Revenue Planning
4. Expenditure forecasting
5. Budget execution and control
6. Intergovernmental relations
7. Cash management
8. Debt management

Survey respondents agreed with workshop participants by giving top priority to the category of finding ways to respond to community needs. This is clearly a prime concern of minority officials.

Overall technical, management-oriented categories — such as cash management, budget execution and control, and debt management and administration — were most frequently rated as offering no problem, roughly two respondents out of five gave them that rating.

The remainder of the categories were clustered in the middle in a pattern that was roughly similar to the listing of the workshop participants; survey respondents gave a low priority to the category of intergovernmental fiscal relations. About 40 percent of the survey respondents said they had no problems in this area.

When asked to identify specific problems within the general categories, officials responded in ways that differed according to the size of the jurisdiction where the official served. Respondents from places with populations of less than 25,000 identified a total of 40 specific problems that gave them major or moderate difficulty while only 16 specific problems emerged from the responses of officials from larger jurisdictions. The problems identified by officials from smaller jurisdictions tended to be more oriented toward management and technical questions than were the problems of other officials.

There were two problems that officials from jurisdictions of all sizes had in common. Both involved citizen familarity with the budgetary process. They were:

- "Facilitating citizen input into the budgetmaking process from all segments of the jurisdictions."
- "Taxpayers do not know what they are getting for their tax money."

While other problems were not identified with the same unanimity, the following seven problems as stated on the questionnaire were rated as major or moderate by officials from three out of the four size categories:

- "Relating departmental budget requests to their goals/objectives."
- "Insufficient information in departmental budget requests to determine if desired levels of services are being achieved."
- "Need additional information for setting user charges and utility rates."
- "Determining if government services are distributed equitably."
- "Determining the efficiency of government agencies."
- "Determining the effectiveness of government agencies."
- "Determining the extent to which agencies purchase goods or services from minority business."

Differences by size of jurisdiction show more clearly in the list of nine problems identified by officials from places in only two size categories. In the following list, those items marked by asterisks were identified by officials from places with more than 25,000 residents; the others were identified only by officials from smaller places.

- "Identifying impact of revenue sources upon elderly/disadvantaged citizens."*
- "Lack of criteria by which to evaluate potential new revenue sources."
- "Determining the accuracy of revenue forecasts."
- "Establishing budget priorities."*
- "Difficulties in forecasting expenditures beyond next fiscal year."
- "Estimating operating expenditures required by new capital improvements."
- "Identifying community needs."*
- "Experiencing frequent year and departmental budget deficits."
- "Absence of guidelines to determine which capital requests should be funded."

Conclusion

The immediate outcome of the JCPS workshop and survey has been promising. Of the 17 specific financial management problems that participants at the JCPS workshop identified as major, all but four were included in the final list of priority problems selected by the 45 participants in the National Conference on the Financial Management Needs of Local Government.

The fact that such a large percentage of the problems identified by minority public officials were given priority problem status by the other National Conference participants was particularly encouraging. As HUD develops its response to the recommendations made in the JCPS survey and workshop, and at the National Conference, it is now clear that a minority perspective has been effectively articulated, and that this perspective is acknowledged by other public officials as being worthy of receiving priority consideration by the Department.

Editors and officials interested in receiving more information on this project and/or HUD's FMCSP should contact the Joint Center (202) 638-4477 or Office of Policy Development and Research, Capacity Building Division, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Room 8114, Washington, D.C. 20410.

residents voted for members of Congress in Virginia or Maryland depending on which section of the district they lived in. (The original boundaries of the District took in land that was previously part of Virginia and was later retroceded to that state.)

When Congress assumed full control of the city, residents were disenfranchised. The mistake was quickly noticed and the first of 150 efforts to correct it was attempted — but consideration of the issue was pushed aside in favor of issues having more immediate interest to the constituents of the members of Congress. The same fate has befallen the proposal repeatedly through the years, until now. The current campaign represents an attempt by Congress and the resolution's proponents to correct a glaring inequity in our governmental system.

The proposed amendment grants the District representation in Congress as though it were a state (i.e. two senators and representation in the House of Representatives based on population), but it would not turn the District into a state. The amendment would not reduce the control of Congress over the city's budget and law-making power; congressional representation is a separate issue from "home rule."

Representation in the Senate

The fact that the amendment grants two senators to an entity which is not a state is a matter of concern for many legislators; some of whom contend that the idea is "unconstitutional" since the Constitution provides for the Senate to be composed of two senators from each state.

There are several counter-arguments to this concern. First, a Constitutional amendment cannot be "unconstitutional"; it is a change in the Constitution and once it is ratified it becomes a part of that body of law. Second, the District is unique in our federal system and the disenfranchisement of its citizens requires a unique solution. The proposed amendment sets no precedent for other cities, which are already represented in Congress and on a state level, or American territories, which can apply for statehood — an option the District does not have given its current constitutional status and the political realities of its existence.

Opponents also argue that senators represent states, and to fiddle with this cornerstone of our system threatens its foundation; but the principle involved here is more fundamental to our system than representation by state. No principle is more fundamental than the peoples' right to a voice in their government; the system of state representation in the Senate is simply a method of structuring that voice.

Other Arguments To Contend With

Other arguments used against the amendment contend that:

- *The amendment violated Article V of the Constitution, which says a state cannot be denied equal suffrage in the Senate without its permission.* But the Senate has been enlarged 37 times since the Constitution was ratified, so while the exclusivity has been diluted, the states have remained equal, even though they had to share their legislative power — and would continue to do so with District representation.
- *The District should be given back to Maryland for purposes of congressional representation.* But retrocession is not a realistic alternative. Aside from the fact that Maryland has indicated no interest in having the District back and there is some opposition from Maryland politicians, the problems retrocession would cause are complex. For example, District residents would not be able to vote for Maryland officials and, would have no voice in filling congressional vacancies. Unless Maryland were granted more representatives based on the District's population it would violate the one-man-one-vote standard; but if it were granted them, other states could challenge the action because District voters do not actually live in Maryland. The precedent for not retroceding the District for such a purpose was set in 1961 with the ratification of the 23rd Amendment, which granted District residents the right to vote for President and Vice President.

Approval of Various Groups

Clearly, there is a strong case for full voting representation in Congress for District taxpayers and citizens. An array of constitutional scholars testified before Congress during hearings on the proposed amendment. Such legal authorities as William Rehnquist (now a Supreme Court Justice), Charles Alan Wright (Professor at University of Texas Law School), Steven Saltzburg (Professor at University of Virginia Law School), Ramsey Clark (Former U.S. Attorney General), Joseph Rauh, Jr. (General Counsel of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights) and Herbert O. Reid, Sr. (Professor at Howard University Law School) testified at the hearings and not one saw a constitutional reason why District residents should not be enfranchised.

The amendment has won wide backing from a cross-section of the political spectrum. The proposal was included in the 1976 national platforms of both the Democratic and Republican parties and the vote in Congress that passed the amendment showed wide bipartisan support. More than 50 national and local organizations including business, labor, religious, and community groups, support it.

So we know that the amendment is constitutionally proper and politically attainable. What is most important, however, is that it is morally the right thing to do. By correcting a centuries-old mistake and enfranchising District residents, the United States will reaffirm to the world its most basic principle — that every person is entitled to a voice in how he is governed.

In a nation that was founded on the principle of representative government and has presented itself to the world as the model of democracy, it is a travesty of history that the District of Columbia has no voting representation in Congress. It will be a travesty of our heritage if it continues to have none.

Americans who are interested in simple justice — and in the fundamental principles on which the nation was founded — can agree on the issue. They must be recruited to support the effort to ratify the D.C. voting rights amendment.

JCPS 1978 Roster

The number of black elected officials (BEO's) in the United States continues to increase, but at a declining rate, according to a recent survey conducted by the Joint Center for Political Studies.

The 1978 edition of the *NATIONAL ROSTER OF BLACK ELECTED OFFICIALS*, published by the Joint Center, lists 4,503 blacks in elective office, as of July 1978, in 42 states and the District of Columbia. The total represents an increase of 192 officials (4 percent) since the 1977 *Roster* was published. There were 1,469 black elected officials counted in 1970, the first year the Joint Center survey was conducted. The 1977 *Roster* listed 4,311 black elected officials.

Despite the steady increase of black elected officials since 1970, the 1978 *Roster* shows that blacks—who comprise approximately 11 percent of the U.S. population — continue to account for less than 1 percent of the more than 522,000 elected officials in the nation.

There are only 20 black elected officials for every 100,000 blacks in the population, while there are approximately 286 non-black officials for every 100.000 non-blacks.

Regional Distribution

The regional distribution of black elected officials reflects the national distribution of the black population in the United States. Thus, black elected officials are not only more numerous in the South, but their numbers are increasing at a greater rate than elsewhere.

Almost 61 percent (2,733) of all black elected officials are found in the South which has 53 percent of the total black population. These Southern officials comprise 46 percent of all state legislators; 81 percent of county officials; 67 percent of black mayors and 67 percent of other municipal officials; 49 percent of all judicial and law enforcement officials, and 51 percent of all black education officials.

North Central states account for 20 percent of the total black population and about 21 percent (966) of all black elected officials. In 1976, this region had 24 percent of all black elected officials. The Northeast, with 18 percent of the black population, has 12 percent (529) of the black elected officials. The West, with 9 percent of the total black population, has 6 percent (275)of the black elected officials.

The 1978 *Roster* shows that Louisiana has overtaken Mississippi to become the state with the most black elected officials, with 333, an increase of 57 over last year's total. Louisiana's surge in black elected officials was the result of reapportionment and a change from at-large to ward or district elections at the county and municipal levels.

Mississippi now ranks second in the number of black elected officials, with 303, while Illinois ranks third, with 279. Michigan and the District of Columbia follow with 256 and 255, respectively. Other states with large numbers of black elected officials are: North Carolina, 237; South Carolina, 229; Georgia, 228; Arkansas, 223; and California, 213. There are no black elected officials identified in Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming.

Blacks at the Municipal Level

Black elected officials continue to be most numerous at the municipal level of government. Forty-eight percent of all black elected officials hold municipal offices. Elected school board members form the second largest group of black officeholders (25.3 percent).

Accounting for almost half of all black elected officials, the municipal category for 1978 (excluding mayors) shows 1,989 black officeholders, an increase of 68 compared to a year ago. There are 170 black mayors, eight more than a year ago.

Other categories registered much smaller gains: black judicial and law enforcement officials increased from 447 to 454, black education officials increased their number by 87 to reach a total of 1,138, by state legislators remained the same, 294, and the number of blacks elected to serve on regional bodies decreased by 7 to a total of 26.

The number of blacks elected to federal office remains the same; there are 16 black representatives and one senator serving in the U.S. Congress.

Black Women Officials

The 1978 *Roster* analysis of black women in political office notes that women constitute 26 percent (843) of all black elected officials in the nation. The largest concentration of black female officeholders is found in the municipal category (407) which includes 11 mayors. Black female education officials comprise the second largest category with 288. In addition, 46 black women serve as state legislators and four serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The District of Columbia has the largest number (110) of black women in elective office. Michigan and Illinois rank second and third with 60 and 51 respectively. There are no black women officials identified in 13 states—Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont and Wyoming.

Decline in Annual Percentage

The annual percentage increase in the number of black elected officials has been declining over the past four years, from 17.1 percent in 1974-75 to 4 percent in 1977-78. The Joint Center is conducting a study of the cause and significance of this phenomenon.

Some observers suggest that the number of black elected officials has peaked. Others suggest that the declining rate of increase is due to a combination of transient factors, including the following:

1. Between 1970, when the Joint Center initiated its annual survey, and 1974, blacks rapidly filled elected offices in jurisdictions with substantial black populations thereby creating an artificial annual rate of increase (22 percent in 1971-72; 16 percent in 1972-73; and 14 percent in 1973-74). This has not been true at the county level where blacks comprise 50 percent or more of 103 counties, mainly in the South.
2. Continuing political and economic barriers make it difficult for blacks to register and vote, run for public office, or to win.
3. The relatively low rate of black voter participation works against black candidates.
4. Blacks are also discouraged by the national disenchantment with politicians and by repeated allegations that black elected officials are harassed by media and law enforcement authorities.
5. In a sluggish economy, black interests may turn away from political participation toward personal survival.

Telescope

Rep. Ralph Metcalfe Dies

Rep. Ralph H. Metcalfe (D Ill.), 68, a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus and an Olympic gold medal winner, died of a heart attack October 10 in his Chicago apartment.

Metcalfe, a member of Congress since 1970, was one of the most dedicated representatives in Congress. He had come up through the political ranks. He began his political career in 1952 with his election to the Cook County Democratic Committee from Chicago's 3rd ward, a seat he continued to hold until his death.

He was an alderman on the Chicago city council and was selected as president pro tem of the council at the behest of the late Chicago mayor Richard J. Daley. Metcalfe, at one time, was one of Daley's closest black advisors.

When the late Rep. William Dawson announced his retirement, Metcalfe ran for his seat with the backing of Daley and won easily. But Metcalfe's close association with Daley ended in 1972, when he took a strong stand on the issue of police brutality. Although stripped of his patronage by Daley, Metcalfe won re-election three times.

In Congress, he served on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries and the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committees.

Metcalfe was born in Atlanta, raised in Chicago and graduated from Marquette University in 1936. Prior to college, he was the national interscholastic champion in sprinting. At Marquette, he was a national collegiate champion sprinter.

He was also a member of the U.S. Olympic track team in 1932 and 1936. He received individual silver medals both times in the 100-meter dash and received a gold medal as a member of the 400-meter relay team.

Metcalfe was named to the President's Commission on Olympic Sports in 1975 and founded the Ralph H. Metcalfe Youth Foundation, which is devoted to athletic, health and educational programs for youth and poor families.

Franchise Guide Available

Members of minority groups seeking business ownership opportunities in the fast-growing franchise field can get information on 39 categories of franchised businesses in a new directory from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Entitled "Franchise Opportunities Handbook," it is the 12th edition of the guide prepared especially to help minority men and women who may be interested in a franchised business. It is published jointly by Commerce's Industry and Trade Administration and its Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE).

The publication identifies franchisors who do not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national origin in the availability, terms or conditions of their franchises. The 798 listings in this year's edition represent an increase of about 100 companies over last year.

The handbook includes background on the franchise system of marketing, advice for prospective franchise investors, and a checklist for evaluating a franchise opportunity.

Copies of the "Franchise Opportunities Handbook" are for sale at $5.50 per copy from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (Stock No. 003-009-00256-7) Washington, D.C. 20402.

JCPS To Research Minorities in Public Service

The Joint Center for Political Studies has been awarded a grant of $99,980 by the Office of Policy Development and Research, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), for a research project on "Minorities in Public Service."

The underrepresentation of minorities and women in decision-making positions in government is well known. The Joint Center's project will help identify the barriers to the employment of minorities in public service; examine career pathways; and recommend federal programs to improve the employment opportunities of minorities at the state and local government levels.

HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research has also funded the Center for the American Woman and Politics of the Eagleton Institute at Rutgers University and the International City Management Association as part of their effort to develop long-term solutions to the problem of underrepresentation of women and minorities in public service. The Joint Center will cooperate with both organizations.

Project director for "Minorities in Public Service" is Dr. Charles M. Christian, who recently joined the Joint Center as Associate Director of Research. Dr. Christian received his doctorate in geography from the University of Illinois. He is an assistant professor and social geographer at the University of Maryland.

Black Woman Elected President of the Virginia Municipal League

Last month a black woman was elected president of the 73-year-old Virginia Municipal League (VML). Precedent was shattered and history was made. But this was nothing new to Mrs. Jessie M. Rattley, vice mayor of Newport News, Virginia. Mrs. Rattley is a veteran of the Newport News city council, a businesswoman, and a past president of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO); she is in line to become the president of the National League of Cities in 1980.

In her acceptance speech, Rattley warned of the potential danger in the current mood of tax revolt and impressed upon her largely white audience that she would work to achieve the deferred dreams of blacks and other minorities.

Mrs. Rattley said that despite their best efforts, elected officials seem to fall short in meeting human needs. "I feel strongly that we must rededicate ourselves; we must re-evaluate our programs; we must re-determine our objectives; and we must rebuild and preserve our foundations."

VML President Receives Anonymous Insult

The Virginia Municipal League (VML) is red-faced over an anonymous insult leveled at its first black president, Mrs. Jessie M. Rattley, vice mayor of Newport News, Virginia.

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The insult cast a pall over the inauguration of Mrs. Rattley. It was found in an envelope addressed to Mrs. Rattley and left in the auditorium of Norfolk's Omni International Hotel where the politician-businesswoman delivered her acceptance speech on September 19. It read:

"When the Virginia Municipal League elected you president I am sure they expected a nigger show. They got it tonight. You had a nigger from Nigeria here. (Mrs. Rattley, who has traveled abroad extensively for the Carter Administration and the National League of Cities, had as her special guest the mayor of Lagos, Nigeria.) The Rachel years (a reference to biblical themes in her acceptance speech) for Virginia will come when all niggers are shipped back there (Africa). Also, it will be much cheaper than feeding you all. You were awful. Next to Henry Marsh (the recently elected black mayor of Richmond, Va.) it was the most blatant racist performance in the state."

Vice mayor Rattley reported this development in a special interview with FOCUS editors, but chose not to make an issue of it with the Virginia Municipal League or the National League of Cities.

Information Needed on Indian Elected Officials

The Joint Center for Political Studies is currently collecting data on American Indians who are serving in an elected or appointed position, on the federal, state or local level. We are requesting your participation in helping us identify these officials. Please forward the name, address, position, title and telephone number, or as much information available to: Von Locklear, Fellow, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1426 H St., N.W., Suite 926, Washington, D.C. 20005.

NBC/LEO to Meet in St. Louis

The annual meeting of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO) will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, on November 25-29, during the National League of Cities annual conference. The following is a listing of the activities that have been scheduled during this time:

Saturday, November 25:

10 a.m.-5 p.m.	NBC/LEO Registration
1 p.m.-4 p.m.	NBC/LEO-JCPS Workshop
4 p.m.-5 p.m.	NBC/LEO Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, November 26:

10 a.m.-5 p.m.	NBC/LEO Registration
1 p.m.-3 p.m.	NBC/LEO-JCPS Workshop
3 p.m.-5 p.m.	NBC/LEO General Business Meeting

Monday, November 27:

NBC/LEO Liberty Awards Banquet

6:30 p.m.	Reception

Wednesday, November 29:

From 3-5 p.m., a general business meeting will be held to elect new officers.

All activities, except the Liberty Awards Banquet, will take place at the St. Louis Convention Center.

Campaign Workbook Published

Need a "how-to-do-it" book on organizing a political campaign? You might want to get a copy of the *Campaign Workbook* published by the National Women's Educational Fund.

The loose-leaf volume contains tips on everything a candidate needs to do, from deciding to run and developing a strategy to issuing press releases and buying advertising. Although it pays special attention to the problems and experiences of women running for office, it is likely to be useful for any candidate.

A single copy is available for $15.00 with cover binder or $13.00 without the binder. Prepaid orders should be sent to the National Women's Education Fund, 1532 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Humphrey-Hawkins Bill Passes in Congress

The revised version of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill was passed during the all-night session which ended the 95th Congress on October 15. FOCUS will take an in-depth look at the bill in a future issue.

FOCUS

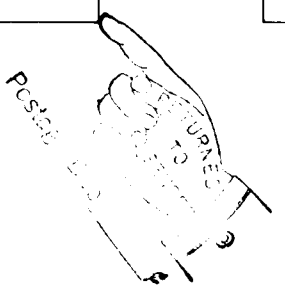
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