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**Bagley Will Ask SBC
To Cancel 1981 Sessions**

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--George Bagley, executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist Convention, said he will recommend on the first day of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta, June 13-15, that the 1981 SBC meeting in Los Angeles be canceled.

Bagley will suggest that Southern Baptist churches should be asked to send their messengers to the western area of the country to become involved in Bold Mission Thrust, the SBC goal to evangelize the world by the year 2000, instead of attending a convention.

He said the visiting Baptists could "help establish new churches and missions, make surveys in large cities, conduct evangelistic campaigns and organize to confront every person in the area with the gospel of Christ." He will recommend that the SBC Home Mission Board coordinate the effort, working with state Baptist conventions.

Such an action would require changes in Articles V and XI of the SBC Constitution regarding election of officers and frequency of meetings. It would require a two-thirds vote on two succeeding years. If it passes, then a number of bylaw changes dealing with reporting of the SBC Executive Committee, agencies and standing committees would have to be made.

A survey taken in 1970 of SBC messengers, regarding opinions on holding the convention every two years, revealed strong sentiment for an annual SBC meeting.

Bagley said, "It is estimated that Southern Baptist agencies and churches will spend more than \$10 million to attend the Los Angeles Convention. I feel it is poor stewardship of the tithes and offerings that pay for messengers to go to the convention when we are involved in Bold Mission Thrust and the conventions in that area need our help."

After Bagley made his suggestion originally in an open letter to editors of Baptist state papers, the executive board of the Baptist General Convention of California countered his proposal. It asked that instead of cancellation that Southern Baptists coming to the 1981 convention plan to share with western Southern Baptists in Bold Mission Thrust in every way possible during the time they spend in the area.

The board commended Bagley for his concern for mission work in the west but expressed doubt that his idea would be approved.

-30-

House Passes Tax Credits;
Final Outcome In Doubt

By Stan Hasteley and Carol Franklin

Baptist Press
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WASHINGTON (BP)--The House of Representatives approved, 209-194, a tuition tax credit proposal for parents of students enrolled in nonpublic, parochial schools.

The action marked the first time the House has passed such legislation, although the Senate has approved tax credits on several previous occasions. That body is expected to pass a new tax credit bill within the next few weeks.

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While the House action is a disappointment to opponents of tax credits, it may prove to be only a temporary defeat. President Carter has promised to veto any such legislation.

The narrow victory for elementary and secondary tax credits came on an amendment by Rep. Charles A. Vanik, D.-Ohio. Vanik cited figures estimating the cost of the measure to the U. S. Treasury at \$25 million in fiscal year 1978 in lost revenues. That figure would increase to \$1.26 billion by 1981, according to Vanik. Other estimates, including one cited by Associated Press, run much higher.

Opposition to extension of the tax credit to the elementary and secondary level is focused on civil rights and the separation of church and state. Rep. Parren J. Mitchell, D.-Md., objected strenuously to passage of any part of the measure on the grounds that it would reverse desegregation efforts.

Rep. John Buchanan, R.-Ala., explained that he had supported tuition tax credits when the idea was first proposed but noted that "tuition tax credits have failed the test of open public debate and intense statistical and legal review." He pointed out that the attorney general has stated that tuition tax credits for nonpublic elementary and secondary education "appear to violate the First Amendment guarantee against the establishment of religion."

"I believe that we must be extremely careful that we do not take any action that may infringe on the very basic doctrine of separation of church and state," Buchanan said. "To force taxpayers of another faith to bear additional tax burdens so that my child can attend, by my choice, a sectarian school of my faith is of questionable constitutionality."

The House rejected, by a vote of 261 to 142, an attempt to increase the portion of tuition eligible for the tax credit from 25 percent to 50 percent. Also rejected was a substitute motion which would have provided deferral of income taxes for college tuition. This proposal, introduced by Rep. Abner J. Mikva, D.-Ill., would have allowed the taxpayer to repay the amount of taxes deferred over a period of 10 years at an interest rate of three percent.

The measure, as passed by the House, would allow the taxpayer to reduce federal income taxes by 25 percent of the amount spent on college tuition up to a maximum of \$100 per student this year, \$150 in 1979 and \$250 in 1980.

At the elementary and secondary level the credit would allow 25 percent of tuition up to \$50 per pupil this year and \$100 in 1979 and 1980.

Several obstacles remain before the tuition tax credit becomes public law. The U. S. Senate must pass a similar bill to that passed by the House, an action widely expected. Six times previously, the Senate has passed similar legislation only to be stymied by the House's failure to act.

After Senate passage of a tax credit bill, the two measures would go to a conference committee, comprised of members of both bodies designated by Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, D.-W. Va., and House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D.-Mass. That group would hammer out a compromise reconciling differences in the two bills.

The conference-approved measure would then go back to both bodies for final approval. Some observers note that due to the close House vote on tax credits to parents of elementary and secondary students, the conference version might be defeated in that body if it contains a substantially higher credit than the \$100 passed by the House.

Even if both the House and Senate agreed to the compromise measure, President Carter has repeatedly promised to veto any tax credit bill. He and HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano Jr. have been pushing Congress for an expansion of the federal tuition scholarship programs for college students. Califano was outspoken in his criticism of House passage of the tuition tax credit measure, calling it an "unconstitutional" bill.

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