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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
480 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2365
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Craig Bird, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

June 28, 1984

84-93

Senate Informed Of Baptist Concern About Tobacco Use

By David Wilkinson

WASHINGTON (BP)—Southern Baptists' concern about the dangers of cigarette smoking and other tobacco use has been communicated to members of the United States Senate.

A copy of a strongly-worded resolution approved by messengers to the recent Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, Mo., was sent to the legislators by Foy Valentine, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission.

The convention's action is "especially timely," Valentine said, since the Senate now is considering several legislative proposals related to the use of tobacco.

At the head of the list is the Comprehensive Smoking Education Act which would replace general health warnings now printed on cigarette packs with a rotating series of more specific and informative warnings.

The legislation, now before both houses of Congress, also calls for stepping up educational programs on the dangers of smoking and would require tobacco companies to disclose the chemicals they add to their products.

Another piece of legislation still pending would preserve the authority to require "no smoking" sections on commercial airplanes. That authority is now under the Civil Aeronautics Board which will go out of existence later this year. The bill has been opposed by the Reagan administration in favor of federal deregulation.

Legislation to increase the federal excise tax on each pack of cigarettes is "dead" for the current session, according to Matthew Myers, a staff member of the Coalition on Smoking or Health, a lobby supported by the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society and American Lung Association.

An excise tax increase from eight to sixteen cents, approved three years ago, will lapse next year without further Congressional action.

Although the increase was the first on cigarettes since 1951, efforts to maintain or add to that increase have been staunchly opposed by the tobacco industry and legislators from tobacco-producing states.

The wide-ranging resolution adopted by the SBC not only expressed opposition to the use of tobacco in any form, but also objected to the growing of tobacco and to any public subsidizing of the tobacco industry.

Valentine noted in a cover letter that messengers to the convention do not speak for the denomination's 36,500 churches. Yet "the strength of this statement and the near unanimity of the vote," he added, "give evidence of extremely strong feelings" on the issue.

The resolution pointed out that C. Everett Koop, U.S. surgeon general, has described cigarette smoking as "the most important health risk in the country."

The resolution urged Southern Baptist churches "to give people the facts regarding the physical harm involved in cigarette smoking, beginning with children of an early age."

Religious Liberty Status
Called Bleak At Hearing

By Larry Chesser

WASHINGTON (BP)—Religious leaders painted a mostly bleak picture of the status of religious liberty in the United States during an oversight hearing by the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution.

Appearing at the hearing chaired by Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, Unification Church leader Sun Myung Moon and Nebraska pastor Everett Sileven joined a handful of other religious leaders in charging that government is increasingly overstepping its bounds in dealing with churches.

Moon, whose conviction for income tax evasion was recently denied review by the U.S. Supreme Court and Sileven, who along with seven members of his congregation, was jailed after operating a parochial school in defiance of state teacher certification laws, cited their personal experiences as examples of government violation of religious freedom.

Moon, whose case has drawn support from a number of American religious leaders and organizations, told the Hatch panel, "I stand convicted for no other reason than my religious beliefs and practices. I am to be punished for being who I am."

Moon faces an 18-month prison term beginning July 20 and a \$25,000 fine unless his appeal for a reduced sentence is successful. He pointed his finger at the Reagan administration for what he sees as a decline in the nation's religious liberty.

"I supported Ronald Reagan for president because I hoped he would do God's will to stop the spread of communism and truly bring this nation back to God and to her founding spirit," Moon said.

"It is disappointing that under this man, who was elected with the tremendous support of the religious community, the state is encroaching more than ever on the affairs of the church. For the first time, ministers are being jailed. Truly religious freedom is being dealt a devastating blow."

Sileven argued that refusal by his church school to comply with Nebraska certification requirements for all teachers except those teaching religion was justified because "We believe that every subject we teach is religious."

"For instance," he continued, "two plus two equals four is religious because it is truth, and Jesus said I am The Truth or the Source of Truth. Therefore, if two plus two equals four is true, it came from Jesus, thus making it religious."

Two constitutional scholars invited by Hatch to testify—church-state attorney William B. Ball of Harrisburg, Pa., and Harvard Law School professor Laurence H. Tribe—generally agreed the current status of religious liberty is a cause for concern but stopped short of the bleak descriptions offered by some religious leaders that the First Amendment and religious liberty are now dead.

Tribe suggested such pronouncements may have been rhetorical excesses, insisting the First Amendment is "alive, if not well." The Harvard professor said he perceives an "escalating disregard by government" for religious freedom and separation of church and state.

Ball identified two points of concern—overkill in the name of government interest and a narrow recognition of the realm of the sacred. "We must not be afraid of religious controversy," Ball said. "We must be afraid of the suppression of religious controversy."

Much less pessimistic views of the status of religious freedom were offered by John Buchanan, a Southern Baptist minister and former Alabama congressman who now serves as chairman of the board of People for the American Way and Charles V. Bergstrom, executive director of the office of governmental affairs of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A.

Other witnesses included Greg Dixon, national chairman of the Coalition of Unregistered Churches, Indianapolis, Ind.; D. James Kennedy, senior minister of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and president of Coalition for Religious Liberty; Herbert Titus, vice-president for academic affairs, CEN University, Virginia Beach, Va., and Edward V. Hill, pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Los Angeles.

Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, and recently elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention was scheduled to testify but did not appear.

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Lotti , Annie Goals
Cut By WMU Board

By Carol Sisson Garrett

Baptist Press
6/28/84

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—The Woman's Missionary Union executive board recently took action on a wide range of business, the most disturbing of which will directly affect future Southern Baptist mission efforts.

Meeting in executive session prior to the WMU annual meeting in Kansas City, Mo., the board voted to lower the 1985-86 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal, and the 1985 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal at the request of the Home and Foreign Mission Boards.

The Easter offering goal was lowered from \$32 to \$30 million and the 1986 goal from \$34 to \$33 million. The Christmas offering goal was lowered from \$72 million to \$70 million.

"My heart rebels against it but my mind says we have to do it", said North Carolina WMU Executive Director Nancy Curtis. Her reluctant acceptance of lowering the offering goals was an attitude voiced by many WMU leaders, including WMU SBC Executive Director Carolyn Weatherford.

"I feel very sad about the lowering of the offerings because of the fact every penny we put into the goal is money that is actually needed to do a specific thing on the mission field. Lowering the goal means some of the plans that have been made, some of the work that was going to be done, can't be done," Weatherford said.

Weatherford also voiced concern the goals have not been met for the last two years.

Alabama WMU President Carolyn Miller stressed a need for missions awareness in the local church. "Because the local churches are not pushing mission study and prayer support, we are going to have a decline in the offering, I believe, until our local churches again put this as priority on their church calendar," Miller said.

WMU SBC Recording Secretary Betty Gilreath called the current giving trend most distressing "in the face of the fact Cooperative Program funds are down. It can't do anything but harm the missions work at home and around the world."

Woman's Missionary Union will seek to offset the lack in missions giving by "doing a better job of missions education so that people will know what the money is going to be used for, how much money is needed," Weatherford said, "and thereby be challenged to give more."

Vision 88 is WMU's plan to involve almost one million more Southern Baptists in missions education by 1988. The WMU goal is to have two million members by that year.

In other action the board adopted an \$8,642,450 budget, a 15 percent increase over last year's budget. Most of the increase was due to relocation interest payment and to the inclusion of computer hardware.

Also included in the budget was minimal assistance to several groups whose purpose in membership are complementary to Woman's Missionary Union. The Conference of Minister's Wives, Baptist Nursing Fellowship, the Baptist World Alliance Women's Department, and Women in Ministry are among groups which will receive support from WMU.

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Speaking directly to doubts voiced by some Southern Baptists about the purpose of Women in Ministry, Weatherford said, "Women in Ministry is not an organization for ordained women. It is for women employed in church-related vocations. That includes almost 200 women in WMU work, church secretaries, chaplains and church staff.

"Woman's Missionary Union is about missions and does not have a stand on the ordination of women, but we are made up of and do support women who have a career in ministry," she said.

The board also voted that the final cost of relocation would be limited to \$8.75 million, a figure lower than the projected \$10.5 million.

A recommendation from the relocation committee was accepted that payment for relocation be fully retired by the end of 1988, WMU's Centennial Year.

Permission was granted by the WMU executive board for Meadowbrook Baptist Mission to meet in the new WMU headquarters building. The church now meets in a rented office building and will begin services at WMU in August.

"This is not WMU telling people how to do missions. It is doing missions itself," said Dotson Nelson, interim pastor of the mission.

The approximately 40-member mission is currently paying \$1,600 per month for meeting space. The mission will be responsible for minimal direct maintenance costs at the new site.

Six new positions were approved by the executive board. The positions have been projected with last year's staff reorganization but were funded with this vote. Also approved were extensive enrichment grants for seven WMU employees. These grants will fund travel or study, related to mission work, as requested by the employees.

The 29-member executive board is made up of the president of state WMU organizations (these state conventions qualify for representation on the boards and agencies), national WMU president, recording secretary and executive director.

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'Respond To Attacks,'
SBC Educators Told

By Lonnie Wilkey

Baptist Press
6/28/84

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (BP)—A denominational leader in education has challenged Southern Baptist educators to respond positively to recent attacks on Baptist colleges and seminaries by elected officials of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director-treasurer of the SBC Education Commission, addressed some 150 presidents and deans during his annual report to the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Walker told the educators the state of Southern Baptist education could best be described in terms of "good news and bad news."

Before stressing the negative aspect, Walker emphasized the growth and cooperation among Southern Baptist educational institutions that has occurred over the last several years. He also cited the increased participation of schools in various activities and workshops sponsored by the association in the education commission.

Walker warned, however, educators must also be "aware of the growing criticism of all types of educational institutions within our fellowship."

He pointed out to the educators that the new SBC president (Charles Stanley of Atlanta) has been quoted, "I'm almost convinced that a Christian student is better off on a secular, heathen campus where he doesn't expect any sympathy, than on a so-called church-related campus where cunningly by degrees his faith is shattered by a 'Baptist professor'."

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Individual Baptist schools, Walker continued, have been singled out and charged with "heresy" and immorality. Walker revealed the accusation so educators could be aware of what some SBC and church leaders have been saying about Baptist educational institutions.

"So very often," Walker said, "these charges grow out of a lack of information and understanding of what Baptist schools are all about." He called for educators to collectively act on what "might be called the worst of situations which prevail."

The educators were emphatically urged to become more involved in the denominational process. He stressed the necessity of becoming a part of what is happening in the SBC and the importance of attending the convention itself.

Walker warned if educators do not become more visible in the denomination, the vacuum created would be filled with those of different goals, concerns and commitments. "It is not enough to gather peer groups who are those sympathetic with our approaches. We must be a part of the total activity and process."

Walker called for the educators to anticipate "the likely move on the part of those who have been most active in the SBC to attempt to control state convention structures." Such a move, he said, would eventually have an impact on educational institutions.

He reminded the presidents and deans that Baptist colleges have a greater motivation for existence than just providing a quality education. They exist because of a commitment and people need to be aware of it, he urged.

"We cannot assume things will be all right if we simply ignore what is happening. The Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools should be a forum for educators to respond to the challenge our institutions are facing."

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Court Strikes Law Limiting
Charities' Fund-Raising Costs

By Stan Hasteley

Baptist Press
6/28/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 26 a Maryland law forbidding charitable organizations from paying expenses of more than 25 percent in connection with fund-raising activities violates the free speech guarantee in the U.S. Constitution.

Struck down in the 5-4 ruling was a 1976 law designed to prevent fraudulent solicitation following a fund-raising scandal involving the Pallottine Fathers, a Baltimore-based Roman Catholic religious order. A series of newspaper reports that year revealed that the order, headed by Father Guido Carcich, engaged in a massive direct mail solicitation campaign for missions and then used much of the money raised in questionable business and real estate deals.

But the high court, building on a 1980 decision forbidding municipalities from imposing percentage limitations on non-profit fund-raising activities, held the Maryland statute to be overbroad and to inhibit constitutionally protected free speech activities.

Justice Harry A. Blackmun, writing for the narrow majority, held that "the flaw in the statute is not simply that it includes within its sweep some impermissible applications, but that in all its applications, it operates on a fundamentally mistaken premise that high solicitation costs are an accurate measure of fraud."

Blackmun wrote further that the statute violated the free speech provision of the First Amendment because it would sometimes be applied to groups whose causes are unpopular. Maryland's objectives in passing the law were too "imprecise," he added, creating "an unnecessary risk of chilling free speech."

Nor was the law salvageable, Blackmun declared, by a waiver provision that authorized state officials to set aside the 25 percent restriction in cases where it would effectively prevent the organization from raising contributions.

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Justice William H. Rehnquist objected, writing the Maryland law was "markedly different" from the Schaumburg, Ill. town ordinance struck down in 1980 which forbade charities raising money door to door to spend more than 25 percent on administrative costs.

According to Rehnquist, the key difference in the two situations was the Maryland law sought the "legitimate effect" of forbidding professional fund-raisers from charging charities a fee of more than 25 percent of the money raised.

Such fund-raisers "are not themselves engaged in speech activities," Rehnquist continued, adding that Maryland's law "is merely an economic regulation." In seeking to regulate the third-party fund-raisers, he said, Maryland actually encouraged charitable giving "by allowing the public to give with confidence that money designed for a charity will be spent on charitable purposes."

And, Rehnquist concluded, "such a law protects the charities themselves from being overcharged by unscrupulous professional fundraisers."

Joining Rehnquist's dissent were chief justice Warren E. Burger and associate justices Lewis F. Powell Jr. and Sandra Day O'Connor. Blackmun was joined by justices William J. Brennan Jr., Byron R. White, Thurgood Marshall and John Paul Stevens.

Although the wider impact of the court's decision is uncertain, 24 other states and numerous cities and counties have laws similarly designed to regulate fund-raisers.

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Women's Resolution
Lashed By Flamming

Baptist Press
6/28/84

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A resolution on women, approved by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention, is "a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," according to the pastor of First Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

Peter James Flamming told the 4,000 member congregation he has received several letters of resignation from members over the stance taken at the annual meeting in Kansas City earlier this month, but has declined to accept them, "until emotions cool," and told each the resolution does not reflect the position of First Baptist, Richmond.

Resolutions adopted at the annual SBC meetings are not binding on local congregations or state or associational agencies and conventions. Rather, they are said to reflect "the opinion of the majority of messengers present and voting at that time."

The resolution, which passed 4,793 to 3,466, took the position the Bible excludes women from pastoral leadership roles for reasons which include, "being first in the Edenic fall" when sin was introduced into the world when Eve ate of the forbidden fruit before giving the fruit to Adam, who also ate.

The wording affirmed the resolution was not binding on local Southern Baptist churches which decide for themselves who will be ordained.

Flamming drew amens from the Richmond congregation when he said the resolution, was apostasy--an abandonment of faith--because it blamed women for bringing sin into the world.

"For the Southern Baptist Convention, which names all of its mission off rings after women, to say this about women is sheer apostasy," he explained.

"The good news of the gospel is that the only way you can be excluded from the Kingdom of God is by your choice, and not by any factors set in place by where you were born or what sex you were born," he said in his two morning sermons June 24.

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"Please hear me," he said. "These (the resolution) are not the feelings, attitudes, nor pronouncements of our Lord, Jesus Christ. And they are not the feelings, attitudes nor convictions of the church to which you belong. After the resurrection, central fact of our faith, Jesus would have excluded women if He had had anything against them—but He didn't."

Flamming said the members who resigned, "are angry—and rightly so. But the basic wrong is not what I feel or you feel. The basic error is that it (the resolution) is a perversion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Jesus went out of his way to relate to women in an age when they were considered by the power structure as incapable of understanding Biblical truths, Flamming pointed out. "The Bible is to be read by Jesus Christ. All of it needs to be filtered through Him."

Flamming had planned a series of sermons this summer on the creation, but shelved it for three or four weeks to deal with the capture of power by fundamentalists in the 14.1 million member Southern Baptist Convention which led to the adoption of the resolution.

He warned it is risky for people to assume they are God's favored ones because, "almost without exception in the scripture, those who thought they were God's pets, weren't...If God includes only a few of his favorites, how do you know you are included? And if God treats a certain sex with special privilege, what makes you think you are among the privileged?"

Flamming, who came to Richmond last spring after 19 years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Abilene, Texas, said the push by fundamentalists to control the SBC will mean, "people like myself, who hate politics and don't like to get involved in that sort of thing will now get involved (in the SBC voting process) so the Gospel can be heard without bigotry."

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(Adapted from stories by Ed Briggs, religion editor of the Richmond Times Dispatch, and Julian Pentecost, editor of the Virginia Religious Herald.)

Ordained Baptist Woman Becomes Methodist Minister

Baptist Press
6/28/84

DALLAS (BP)—Martha Gilmore, possibly the first woman ordained to the ministry by a Texas Baptist church, has become a United Methodist minister. Her appointment was announced recently by Bishop John Russell of the North Texas Area of the United Methodist Church.

She was ordained in 1977 by Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas. She is a graduate of Baylor University and Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University where she has been a member of the religion faculty and directs the intern program. She will continue in that capacity and will also be associated with Glen Oaks United Methodist Church in Dallas.

Her husband, Jerry Gilmore, is chairman of the board of trustees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He will remain as a member of Cliff Temple.

"I am sad she is no longer a Baptist," he said. "We met at Cliff Temple, courted there, have been Sunday school teachers and church training directors and have sung in the choir."

"I am sad for her having to leave, but certainly understand her concern for working out her call to ministry with the total frustration in the structure of the Baptist church. For her and Methodists, I am thrilled to death."

The Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, Mo., June 14, passed a resolution opposing the ordination of women.

Gilmore said his wife's move will not compromise his position as an HMB trustee.

"No more than (evangelist) Billy Graham is compromised because he has a Presbyterian wife," Gilmore said. Graham, a member of First Baptist Church, Dallas, lives in Montreat, N.C., where his wife, daughter of Presbyterian missionaries, is a church member.

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"Martha has been very supportive of me and the Home Mission Board," Gilmore told the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, last week. "She will support me in that activity and I will support her in hers."

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U.S. Senate Approves
'Equal Access' Measure

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
6/28/84

WASHINGTON (BP)--By the resounding vote of 88-11, the U.S. Senate passed on an "equal access" measure June 27 that would give secondary school students the right to gather on school premises for religious activities, provided the meetings are student-initiated and are not sponsored by school authorities.

The unexpectedly large margin of the victory came after the two primary Senate sponsors of equal access legislation, Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., and Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., agreed to compromise their differences.

Except for the Lutheran Council and several Jewish groups, the Senate-passed measure had the support of virtually the entire religious community, including the beleaguered Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Hatfield, an active Baptist lay leader, expressed appreciation for the role of the Baptist Joint Committee and other groups that worked for passage. "The senator is very appreciative of the work done by a number of groups who really exemplified the highest form of constructive channeling of passions over this issue," said Hatfield's press secretary, Rick Rolf.

"And clearly one of these groups at the forefront of all these negotiations that helped to get us there was the Baptist Joint Committee," Rolf said.

Baptist Joint Committee Executive Director James M. Dunn, who along with other staff members at the Washington-based agency worked for passage of an equal access measure for more than three years, called the Senate vote "tangible evidence that Congress is sympathetic to the appeals of many Americans for the free exercise of religion." The size of the Senate vote, he added, "makes it clear that lawmakers understand the need" for equal access legislation.

Dunn also stated: "The vote is a tribute to the dedicated work of the Baptist Joint Committee staff members with that assignment and the great job done by editors of Baptist papers in keeping our people informed."

During the brief debate preceding passage, Hatfield and other senators repeatedly emphasized that the equal access approach, with its focus on students' freedom of speech, differs fundamentally with the rejected Reagan school prayer amendment. "This has nothing to do with school prayer," the Oregon Republican declared.

Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark., the only southern senator of either party to vote against the Reagan proposal, underscored the point: "The President's proposal was not a religious liberty amendment, despite the fact that he was able to convince much of the country to the contrary. The bottom line...is this: the constitutional amendment would have allowed school boards, state legislatures, or any local governmental body to adopt official prayers which would, inevitably, have become the official religious creed of the community."

What the equal access bill accomplishes, Bumpers went on, "is that there be no official hostility toward religion, and that the schools not discourage or discriminate against the free exercise of religion."

Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel John W. Baker called the measure "a piece of legislation which, unlike the proposed prayer amendment, asserts students who act voluntarily and without state sponsorship have the same rights to the use of public secondary school facilities whether they want to meet for religious or secular purposes." The prayer amendment, he declared, "would have vested the state with powers over religion" in public schools.

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Senators voting in favor of the Hatfield-Denton proposal came from all points on the political spectrum. Five Democrats and six Republicans voted no.

Besides the voluntary, student-initiated and non-school sponsorship provisions in the bill, other features include a provision that school personnel may be present at the religious meetings only "in a nonparticipatory capacity," and that outsiders "may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend" the gatherings.

Teachers and other school agents who object to being assigned as monitors of the meetings will be excused.

In addition, the meetings are to be held only during "noninstructional time," a term which according to the bill means "time set aside by the school before actual classroom instruction begins or after actual classroom instruction ends."

The equal access measure was passed in the form of an amendment to another bill designed to upgrade instruction in mathematics, science, computer technology and foreign languages in public institutions. Passage of the entire bill came on a voice vote.

Already passed by the House of Representatives without the equal access amendment, the math-science bill now goes to a conference committee.

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Congress Sets 21 As
Minimum Drinking Age

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
6/28/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—Both houses of Congress have given swift and decisive approval to a tough new drunken driving law that sets a national minimum drinking age of 21.

The new law, expected to be signed soon by President Reagan, also establishes a set of rewards and penalties for the states, based on their willingness or refusal to go along with the new federal statute.

Passed 81-16 by the Senate June 26 and by unanimous consent the next day in the House of Representatives, the Uniform Minimum Drinking Age Act also calls for uniform, nationwide criminal penalties for all persons convicted of drunken driving. Also covered are those who drive while under the influence of any controlled substance.

States enacting laws of their own setting the minimum drinking age of 21 will be rewarded with a special one-time five-percent bonus in federal highway funds, while states refusing to go along before Sept. 30, 1987, would lose up to 10 percent of the funds.

Federal highway funds, collected primarily from the gasoline tax, are apportioned to the states according to a prescribed formula.

Twenty-two states already have laws making 21 the minimum drinking age. Another nine make 21 the minimum age for purchasing hard liquor but allow sales of beer and wine to younger adults. The other 19 states have minimum drinking ages of 18, 19 or 20.

To avoid the highway aid penalties and qualify for the bonus, the state laws must also match the new federal law's criminal sanctions for individuals convicted of drunken driving.

For first offenders, the law requires a minimum 90-day driver's license suspension, along with a sentence of either 48 hours in jail or 100 hours of community service.

Second offenders would be subject to a mandatory 10-day jail sentence, accompanied by the revocation of the driver's license for at least one year.

Individuals convicted of drunken driving three or more times would face a minimum jail term of 120 days and a minimum license revocation of three years.

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Additionally, a person convicted of driving with a suspended or revoked license would automatically receive a separate 30-day sentence and a new period of suspension or revocation.

On a more positive note, the new law calls for rehabilitation and treatment programs for those arrested and convicted of drunken driving and establishment of research programs for detecting the use of controlled substances by drivers.

A separate provision of the new law would provide grants to the states to assist in setting up comprehensive computerized record keeping systems on drunken drivers. Such systems would have special value for law enforcement agencies in keeping track of repeat offenders.

Quick action on the measure came on the eve of a Glorieta, N.M., conference on alcohol and other drug abuse sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission.

Ronald E. Sisk, who specializes in alcohol and other drug abuse education and action for the Christian Life Commission, called the new law "a major plank in an effective platform of drunk driving control."

At the same time, Sisk warned, "it is by no means all that needs to be done." He added: "Alcohol abuse is a societal problem. Its solution will require a comprehensive approach. Better drunk driving laws plus adequate alcohol education programs and enlightened treatment of abusers are needed if long term progress is to be made."

Nevertheless, he said, "Raising the drinking age works. National studies have shown that several hundred young people's lives will be saved every year by this important new law."

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NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

LYNN MAY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37234

460 Jam s Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

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