

Senate Bars Counting of Illegal Aliens in '90 Census

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Body

The Senate endorsed legislation Friday barring the counting of illegal aliens in the 1990 census, an action with potential impact on the drawing of congressional districts and federal aid to areas with large alien populations.

The amendment, offered by Sen. Richard C. Shelby, D-Ala., would forbid the use of federal funds to count illegal aliens for the purpose of congressional reapportionment.

It was approved by voice vote and attached to a \$17.3 billion appropriations bill for the Commerce, State and Justice departments after an amendment to table it was defeated, 50-41.

The overall bill, which contains the annual appropriations for the three departments, the federal judiciary and related agencies, was approved on a voice vote.

The action took place after a number of senators noted that the Constitution provides for the counting of "the whole number of persons" in each state, not just citizens.

But Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said that if that were followed literally, "an occupying army would qualify" to be counted by the census.

"There's no reason not to order the Census Bureau to exempt illegal aliens," Hatch said.

Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole of Kansas agreed, saying some states with few illegal aliens are losing seats in Congress because illegal aliens are included in the population count.

"This policy simply does not make any sense," Dole said.

But Sen. Pete Wilson, D-Calif., said that many urban areas are impacted with a massive infusion of illegal aliens who are draining available funds for schools and health care.

If they are not counted by the census, federal aid to these regions will be decreased, Wilson said.

Sen. Thad Cochran, R-Miss., said that while he sympathized with regions trying to deal with aliens, the ultimate solution is to eliminate the problem.

"Illegal aliens ought to be deported," Cochran said.

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