

In recent years higher education has become a matter of increasingly important concern to members of the AFL-CIO. There was a time when it was the exception rather than the rule for the children of working class families to attend college.

Today it is a common presumption among working people that their children need higher education. A recent sampling of the concerns of union members indicated that about 42 percent listed as their major concern a desire for their children to complete college.

You may be sure that this percentage will grow even larger in the years to come. Yet the costs of higher education have increased so sharply that had there been no positive Federal action, most working people would find it an unmanageable burden to send their children on to college.

In supporting legislation concerned with higher education, therefore, the AFL-CIO is at one and the same time supporting a legislative program which it believes is in the national interest and which is also very much in the enlightened self-interest of our own members.

We are very proud of the part which we have played in helping to bring about the enactment of the legislation which is the subject of H.R. 6232 and H.R. 6265; namely the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the National Defense Education Act.

This committee has served the Nation well in its careful examination of the needs in higher education and in its shaping of legislation designed to meet those needs.

Before turning to the specific provisions of the amendments which are presently before the committee, we would like to reiterate our very deep concern over the possibility that existing programs in higher education may be funded at considerably less than full authorization for fiscal 1968.

This committee has spent countless hours studying the extent of actual need in higher education and the present authorizations reflect the committee's findings.

If the Congress were to appropriate less than full authorization for the higher education programs which have now been adopted, it would be doing a serious injustice to the wisdom and vision of this committee and the entire Congress.

Yet we note with apprehension that the requested appropriation for title III of the Higher Education Act, by way of illustration, is only \$30 million or 55 percent of the present authorization.

With the great need for facilities in higher education, it is of urgent importance that existing institutions be strengthened to the limit of their ability.

Many colleges which are inadequate to the demands of modern higher education—in terms of faculty standards, library facilities, and similar matters—can nevertheless be developed into valuable components of the national resources in higher education.

Similarly, the requested appropriation for title I of the Higher Education Facilities Act is for only \$338 million or 54 percent of the present \$728 million authorization. This reduction in funds for the construction of facilities for junior colleges and technical institutes would be tragic. The money which would be eliminated would be sufficient to provide classroom space for more than 300,000 American young people.