



City of Cambridge

4.

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

IN CITY COUNCIL
September 15, 1986

WHEREAS: Stability and certainty in the federal budget process are necessary so that cities can plan local budgets and set local tax rates; and

WHEREAS: Congress is primarily responsible for determining the spending level for federal programs, including the programs which provide vital financial assistance to cities, through the budget resolution and appropriations legislation; and

WHEREAS: The President's primary role in the budget process is to submit a proposed budget to Congress each year and to decide whether to approve or disapprove appropriations legislation which has been passed by Congress; and

WHEREAS: In recent years, several developments have injected instability and uncertainty into the federal budget process, diminished Congressional control of this process, and shifted authority to make spending decisions to unelected federal officials and the President, including --

- (1) Gramm-Rudman's automatic budget-cutting process under which across-the-board spending cuts must be made in city programs (and various other federal programs) when certain deficit targets cannot be met, and
- (2) the President's increased use of the deferral power to refuse to spend billions of dollars which have been appropriated and signed into law by the President for various community developments and housing programs; and

WHEREAS: The courts have restored some balance to the budget process in two recent rulings --

- (1) The Supreme Court struck down Gramm-Rudman-Hollings automatic budget-cutting mechanism on July 7 for separation of powers reasons and found that the Comptroller General, designated under Gramm-Rudman to perform critical functions relating to the across-the-board cuts, was a legislative branch official and could not perform executive branch functions; and

- (2) a federal district court judge, in a lawsuit brought by NLC and several cities, ruled on May 16 that, under the Budget Act, the President's power to defer and Congress' right to disapprove a deferral by a one-house legislative veto were inseverable and that the Supreme Court's invalidation of the legislative veto in 1983 therefore means the entire deferral process must be struck down;

now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council supports preservation of the historical balance of power between the executive and the legislative branches of government under which Congress is responsible for determining spending policies and the President is responsible for the implementation of those policies; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge City Council opposes efforts to alter this balance by shifting the authority to make basic spending decisions from Congress to unelected federal officials or the President by --

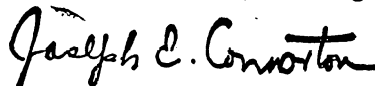
- (1) establishing an automatic budget-cutting process such as the recently-invalidated provision of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings;
- (2) authorizing the President to defer the spending of duly appropriated funds; or
- (3) providing the President with expanded control over Congressionally-approved spending through a line-item veto or similar device.

and be it further

RESOLVED: that copies of the resolution be sent forthwith to Senators Kennedy and Kerry and to all members of Congress from Massachusetts.

In City Council September 15, 1986.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.
Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, Acting City Clerk.

A true copy;



ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton, Acting City Clerk.

Order #4

S-524

C. Duehay re: resolutions supporting the preservation of the historical balance of power between the executive & legislative branches of government & opposing efforts to alter same by shifting authority to make basic spending decisions from Congress to unelected federal officials or the President.

In City Council,

September 15, 1986

C. Duehay
v/v
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