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## Leave-Transfer Extension Clears Congress

By Don Phillips  
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The House voted yesterday to extend for five years the leave-transfer program that allows federal workers to give annual leave to fellow workers with family or medical emergencies who have used up all their vacation time or sick leave.

A new experimental "leave bank" is also authorized by the bill, under which workers may contribute to a pool of leave time that could be used by fellow workers in emergencies.

The bill, passed earlier by the Senate, cleared the House by voice vote and went to the White House.

The leave-transfer program has been in effect for about a year, and technically expired at the end of September. Under the plan, a worker must certify that he or she has a family or medical emergency that requires time away from work, but has used all annual leave and sick time. The employing agency may require certification from doctors or other specialists.

Donating employees may not donate more than half their accumulated annual leave hours.

The legislation exempts the leave-transfer program from laws banning gifts to superiors, allowing

them to accept leave from employees they supervise.

The plan is government-wide, allowing workers in one agency to donate to workers in another. But the Central Intelligence Agency and other federal intelligence agencies would be exempted from the government-wide transfer program, although they would be required to establish their own leave-transfer programs.

Under the new experimental leave-bank program, the Office of Personnel Management must establish a program under which any worker could contribute leave into a central fund that would be available for other workers with emergencies.

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