Children's Aid Concerns Official

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP)—Louisiana welfare officials are concerned about the recent dramatic rise in applicants for welfare assistance in the aid to dependent children category.

Welfare is a $236 million annual business in Louisiana but the state only pays for nearly $70 million, with the remainder coming from the federal government.

In November, 189,442 persons were receiving welfare checks. The major categories are old age assistance, 124,773; aid to dependent children, 27,720; and disability, 23,602.

Pay Children

Bonin said another federal rule will cost the state money in the short run. The rule will require the state to pay dependent children to attend day-care centers.

"Louisiana has a policy that if employment is available to the parent, she has to accept it or the aid is cut off," Bonin said.

"Under these amendments, we don't believe we can do it."

He said beginning July 1, 1969 the state must pay for the eligible child's day-school expenses even if the parent goes to work.

Bonin said the dependent children aid is the most unpopular of all, mainly because the public doesn't understand all the implications.

About 77 per cent of the recipients in this category are non-white, he said. In all categories, the non-white percentage is 52.6.

Bonin said about 20,000 illegitimate children are receiving welfare aid in all categories. But he said there are 120,000 illegitimate children in Louisiana under 18.

"And 75 per cent of the children receiving aid to dependent children checks are legitimate children," he said.