More Blacks Wanted In Civil Service

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Rep. Ernest Morial of New Orleans, the only Negro in the Legislature, has introduced two proposed constitutional amendments to correct what he sees as too low percentage of blacks in state civil service.

Negroes make up about 21 per cent of the civil service work force and about one-third of the state's population. Additionally, most Negroes in state service are at the pick and shovel level, a fact Morial does not believe is indicative of Negro ability.

'Not Representative'

“I don't think there should be a mathematical proportion, nor do I think incompetents should be hired, but the Negro work force is not even representative,” Morial said.

Morial said his legislation was prompted by the current low level of employment of Negroes in state government, plus his belief that more qualified Negroes can be brought into state service without lowering standards.

At the same time, Morial maintains, Negroes deserve some compensation for past injustices.

Broaden Pool

Morial's two constitutional amendments, which must be approved by two-thirds vote of both houses and by majority vote of the people, would broaden the pool from which the governor selects members of the civil service commission, and would expand the number of potential employees from which an agency head may choose one.

The key proposal would change the “rule of three,” a long-established civil service practice.

Under the rule, the state Civil Service Department certifies a group of potential employees from which the appointing authority must select one of the top three as determined by scores on standardized tests.

'Rule Of Six'

Morial proposes to make it the “rule of six,” expanding the choice of an appointing authority to one of the top six test scores.

He argues this would not lower standards since a minimum score could be established for any given job regardless of the expanded rule.