

WASHINGTON -- Alabama schools will receive an extra \$16,184,000 a year under legislation approved by the House of Representatives today.

The legislation, which is co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL), consolidates 31 existing federal education programs and sends the money directly to states in the form of a single education block grant. The proposal also requires that at least 95 percent of the funds be spent on classroom activities.

"Our children should be the beneficiaries of federal education dollars. This bill ensures they will be because it puts our education dollars in their classrooms, not in the Washington bureaucracy," Bachus said. "It will send more money than ever before directly to our local schools. We must get our education dollars out of Washington and instead to our children, teachers and local schools."

Alabama currently receives \$27,243,000 annually from the 31 existing programs. Under the bill, the state would receive \$43,427,000 annually, an increase of 62.7 percent, according to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service.

The bill, called the "Dollars to the Classroom Act," was approved 212-198. It was introduced by U.S. Rep. Joseph Pitts (R-PA).