

House springs for pay hikes

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes Sept. 20 through Sept. 26.

HOUSE

PAY RAISE: By a vote of 208 for and 203 against, the House passed an appropriations bill containing a 5.5 percent pay raise for congressmen, 22,000 judges and high-level federal workers.

Efforts to force a record vote on the pay issue alone failed when only 41 members (of a required 44) stood to demand one. For congressmen, salaries would go from \$57,500 to \$60,700. The bill was sent to the Senate where the provisions for a congressional pay raise appeared to have been killed.

Rep. Silvio Conte, R-Mass., a supporter, called the increase in congressional salaries "modest and restrained" in view of the current inflation rate.

Rep. Larry Hopkins, R-Ky., an opponent, said: "Collectively, this Congress has not done anything to deserve a raise."

Members voting "nay" opposed the pay increase.

Reps. David Bonior, D-MI, Clemens, William Ford, D-Taylor, William Brodhead, D-Detroit, and James Blanchard, D-Pleasant Ridge, voted "yea."

Reps. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, and William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, voted "nay."

PANAMA CANAL: The House passed, 232 for and 188 against, legislation putting into effect the Panama Canal treaties ratified last year by the Senate.

The bill cleared the way for a U.S. Panama commission to take over operation of the canal on Oct. 1. The commission will operate the waterway until 2000, when Panama will assume

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ownership. The bill does more to protect U.S. interests, including the canal's security, than did a similar measure defeated by the House a week earlier.

Rep. John Murphy, D-N.Y., a supporter, said it was too late to be debating the pros and cons of the treaty. "The treaty is the law of the land, whether we like it or not."

Rep. George Hansen, R-Idaho, an opponent, said: "The real issue is the gateway of the Panama Canal."

Members voting "yea" favored putting the Panama Canal treaties into effect. Pursell, Bonior, Ford, Brodhead, Blanchard, and Broomfield voted "yea."

DEBT CEILING: The House passed, 219 for and 198 against, a bill raising the national debt ceiling from \$830 billion to \$879 billion. The bill later passed by the Senate, enables the Treasury Department to borrow money so that the government can pay its bills. The new ceiling is \$49 billion higher than the one enacted last April.

Rep. Al Ullman, D-Ore., a supporter, said: "Fiscal responsibility is a concern that I think is shared by the members of this body." The debt ceiling is only a matter of accommodating those decisions that have already been made so

that the government can stay in operation."

Rep. Delbert Latta, R-Ohio, an opponent, said, "The question before us today far transcends the issue of a temporary increase in the national debt. We are once again being asked to bail out the government for not living within its means. This is an issue of accountability as much as one of fiscal policy."

Members voting "yea" favored raising the debt ceiling.

Bonior, Ford, Brodhead, and Blanchard voted "yea." Pursell and Broomfield, voted "nay."

SENATE

PANAMA CANAL: The Senate passed, 63 for and 32 against, a bill implementing the Panama Canal treaties. The House later approved the measure (see vote above) and sent it to the White House. Congressional approval came 15 years after the U.S. and Panama began negotiating the transfer of the 533-square-mile canal zone.

Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., a supporter, said it would be "tragic" if the Senate failed to "obey a treaty which is, in effect, the law of the land."

Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kans., an opponent, said "I will not have any part in any way, shape or form — in giving away the Panama Canal."

Senators voting "yea" favored implementing the Panama Canal treaties. Democratic Sens. Donald Riegle and Carl Levin voted "yea."

ABNER MIKVA: The Senate confirmed, 58 for and 31 against, the nomination of former congressman Abner

Mikva as U.S. Court of Appeals judge for Washington D.C. The Illinois Democrat quit his House seat to go on the federal bench. His liberal credentials drew the opposition of many conservative senators.

Sen. James Exon, D-Neb., a supporter, said judicial nominees should be primarily evaluated "on the basis of their integrity, ability, temperament, intelligence and honesty." The question then comes secondarily on "philosophy."

Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., an opponent, said Mikva "regards the bench as an important nonlegislative road to reform. Those senators who wish to approve of judicial activism... will certainly want to vote for his nomination."

Senators voting "yea" wanted Mikva on the federal appeals court. Riegle and Levin voted "yea."

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: The Senate approved, 69 for and 22 against, the conference report on the bill to establish a cabinet-level Department of Education. The department would absorb the U.S. Office of Education (now in HEW) and other agencies and programs scattered throughout the government.

The bill was stripped in conference of anti-abortion and anti-busing language which the House had attached to it earlier in the year. Still, the House later passed the conference report and sent it to the White House.

Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, D-Conn., a supporter, said for the proposed department: "There are no new programs, no increase in the federal government's powers, and no changes of any kind in substantive education law and policies."

Sen. S.I. Hayakawa, R-Calif., an opponent, said: "The growing belief that we should look to the federal government to solve the problems of our schools is, I think, a major mistake. Our schools should be a primary responsibility of our parents, students and the state and local officials."

Senators voting "yea" favored creating a U.S. Department of Education. Riegle and Levin voted "yea."



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