

Conservatives lose on Panama treaty replay

Here's how area Members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes June 14 through June 20.

HOUSE

PANAMA — By a vote of 220 for and 200 against, the House headed off efforts by conservatives to scuttle the Panama Canal treaties. The vote adopted an amendment requiring Panama to pay only \$3.3 million to cover U.S. costs in turning over the Canal Zone, rather than the \$2.3 billion required under a separate, Republican-sponsored amendment. The vote came during debate on a bill (HR 111) implementing the Canal treaties. The bill was headed for final passage and the Senate.

Rep. John Murphy, D-N.Y., the sponsor, said that if the House adopted the GOP amendment rather than his amendment the U.S. "would look indecisive and unable to carry out the will of its leaders."

Rep. Mickey Edwards, R-Ola., an opponent, said the U.S. should seek more money from Panama to offset the high costs to U.S. taxpayers involved in turning over the canal to Panama.

Most members voting "nay" were trying to thwart implementation of the Panama Canal treaties.

Reps. David Bonior, D-Mount Clemens, William Brodhead, D-Detroit, James Blanchard, D-Pleasant Ridge, voted "yes."

Reps. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, William Broomfield, R-Bloomfield Twp., voted "nay."

Rep. William Ford, D-Taylor, did not vote.

EVACUATION PLANS — The House rejected, 147 for and 235

Roll Call Report



against, an amendment stipulating that before a utility can be federally licensed to operate a new nuclear power plant, the state in which the plant is situated must have an emergency evacuation plan as a safeguard against catastrophe. Presently, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission requires only an evacuation plan for the plant site. The amendment was proposed to HR 4388, a fiscal 1980 appropriations bill later passed and sent to the Senate.

Rep. Ted Weiss, D-N.Y., a supporter, said, "In the wake of Three Mile Island, it is no longer possible for any ardent advocate of nuclear power to suggest that the worst could not happen."

Rep. Hohn Wylder, R-N.Y., an opponent, said, "This amendment is probably the opening salvo on a campaign whose ultimate purpose is nothing more nor less than to bring nuclear energy and power in our nation to a standstill."

Members voting "yes" want state-wide evacuation plans to be mandated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Bonior, Brodhead and Blanchard voted "yes."

Pursell, and Broomfield voted "nay."

Ford did not vote.

UTILITY RATES — The House

rejected, 136 for and 271 against, an amendment to provide public financial reimbursement to "intervenor" who represent the consumer viewpoint before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The amendment sought to provide \$550,000 for that purpose. It was attached to HR 4388, a fiscal 1980 appropriations bill later passed without money for intervenors.

The FERC is the former Federal Power Commission. It sets rates and otherwise regulates interstate commerce in natural gas, pipeline oil and hydroelectric power, directly influencing the utility bills of most Americans.

Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., the sponsor said his amendment is necessary to balance the clout of the "high-priced

lawyers" whom utility companies send before the commission.

Rep. Tom Bevill, D-Ala., an opponent, said "No one wants to prevent anyone from appearing before the FERC" and that the agency has a public information office which any citizen or intervenor can use at no cost.

Members voting "nay" were opposed to federal funding of intervenors before the federal utility commission.

Ford, Brodhead and Blanchard voted "yes."

Broomfield voted "nay."

Pursell and Bonior did not vote.

SENATE

PEACE CORPS — The Senate rejected, 32 for and 62 against, an amendment to remove the Peace Corps from the jurisdiction of the federal volunteer agency Action. The amendment, offered to a bill (S239) concerning volunteer programs, would have made the Peace Corps an independent agency. The bill was later passed and sent to the House. The House has voted to place the Peace Corps under State Department control.

Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., sponsor of the amendment, said: "It is imperative that the (Peace Corps) be insulated from the political and social pressures that seem chronic to the Action agency."

Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, an opponent, said the Senate should support the Carter administration's plan to give the Peace Corps more autonomy within Action. He warned of any "unfortunate perception abroad that it was another arm of American foreign policy."

Senators voting "yes" favored removing the Peace Corps from Action.

Sens. Donald Riegle, and Carl Levin, both Michigan Democrats voted "nay."

VETERANS' AID — By a vote of 40

for and 52 against, the Senate rejected an amendment to block cuts of \$35-\$42 million in veterans' dental care, travel reimbursement, and over-the-counter drug benefits. The Senate earlier had restored part of a larger cutback proposed by the Carter administration to make more money available for staffing VA hospitals.

The vote came during debate on a bill (S1039) extending veterans' health care programs. The House had approved a similar bill earlier.

Sen. Gordon Humphrey, R-N.H., sponsor of the amendment, said: "The burden of these cuts will fall basically on the needy..."

Senators voting "yes" favored retaining the veterans' benefits at current levels.

Riegle and Levin voted "nay."

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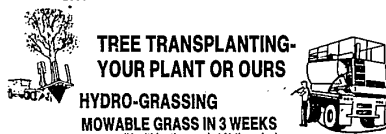
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