

No tax for gasahol; House opts for secret session

Here's how area House members were recorded on major roll call votes Feb. 21 through Feb. 27. There were no Senate votes.

roll call report

GASOHL: The House voted 294-118 to keep gasohol exempt from the federal gasoline tax.

Gasohol's exemption from the four-cents-per-gallon tax thus would be extended through 1992 under the windfall profits tax bill now awaiting final approval in both houses.

Rep. All Ullman, D-Ore., a supporter, said that without a tax advantage to make gasohol prices competitive with gasoline, "There is no way we could

proceed with gasohol."

Rep. Harold Johnson, D-Calif., an opponent, said continuing the gasohol exemption would have a "devastating impact on the major revenue source for our nation's highway program."

Members voting "yes" favor no federal tax on gasohol.

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

Reps. William Ford, D-Taylor, and William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, voted "nay."

Rep. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, did not vote.

NICARAGUA — By a vote of 191-212 the House refused to require the revolutionary, post-Somoza Nicaraguan government to hold free national elections as a condition of getting U.S. economic aid.

The vote came during debate on a foreign aid bill later passed and sent to the Senate.

Rep. Robert Bauman, R-Md., a supporter, said: "The hard-line Marxists (in the Nicaraguan government) have made it very clear that they do not want an election now. They will not permit an election now."

Rep. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said the U.S. did not have national elections until eight years after the American Revolution, and added that today the U.S. requires none of the 70 countries receiving its foreign aid to hold elections.

Members voting "yes" favor a "no elections, no aid policy toward Nicaragua."

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

SECRET SESSION — The House voted 230-74 to go into secret session to hear classified intelligence reports of communist influence in the Nicaraguan government (see preceding vote).

A secret session lasting 96 minutes was then held, marking the second time in 150 years the House had locked out the public and press.

Rep. Samuel Stratton, D-N.Y., a supporter, noted that the Senate has had innumerable closed sessions. And he

said it was wrong to suggest "that if we want to protect our secrets we are somehow aping the Soviet Union (Poliburo)," as one critic had suggested.

Rep. Peter Peyser, D-N.Y., who drew the Poliburo parallel, said "The greatest blow we strike at democracy in this country today and the clearest indication to the rest of the world that the democratic process does not work" is for the House to meet secretly.

Members voting "yes" favored the secret session.

Ford, Blanchard, and Broomfield voted "yes."

Bonior and Brodhead voted "nay." Pursell did not vote.

outdoors

Future appears dim for boat launch bill

A bill to restrict public boat launch development in Michigan breezed through the State Senate but has a low priority in the House Conservation Committee.

Senate Bill 8 was sponsored by state Sen. Donald Bishop, R-Rochester, at the urging of constituents in western Oakland County's lakes area. It passed the Senate 34-3 Feb. 27, a vote that surprised even Bishop "in light of previous opposition from the UAW and State Department of Natural Resources."

An aide to Rep. Thomas Anderson, D-Southgate, said, however, many higher priority bills face the conservation committee, which Anderson chairs. Thus, said Bob Garner, the aide, Bishop's bill "will probably die at the end of the session" without being reported out.

Bishop said his bill will allow "local citizens and units of government more input into the development of public access lake sites for fishing and boating."

In the past, the DNR has made the decisions on its own without sufficient local consultation. This has often times resulted in the overcrowding of lakes, boating accidents, trash dumping and traffic tie-ups, all at the expense of local residents."

KEITH WILSON, of DNR's Waterways Commission, said the department holds hearings when requested, but SB 8 would be more restrictive.

It would require local public hearings. In the event a local unit objected to a new boat launch, the state Natural Resources Commission would be able to develop it only by a two-thirds vote.

Wilson said DNR had three other objections to the Bishop bill:

• The bill provides that if a local road agency believes improvements are necessary to serve the boat launch

site, the state would have to pay for them. This would put DNR in the road funding business and be an impediment to developing public boating.

• It sets minimum standards for launches that would "virtually rule out access sites in non-urbanized areas." For example, a site would have to be adjacent to a public road, a standard impossible to meet in much of the out-state area, although still possible in Oakland County.

• It tightens standards of boats allowed per acre of lake. "It reduces the number of public sector boats that can gain access," he said.

The Southeastern Michigan Bass Association has denounced Bishop's efforts, saying, "Strong lake associations who control their local politicians and would deprive access to the general public to inland lakes in their area."

OAKLAND COUNTY has been relatively successful in stopping boat launch development.

DNR's report for the decade of the 1970s shows no new access sites added in Oakland. DNR district fisheries biologist Ron Spitzer said, in the report's section on southeast Michigan fisheries management:

"For a variety of reasons, acquiring, constructing and maintaining suitable access for boaters and anglers is always difficult, especially on inland lakes. Yet through the Waterways Division's efforts, progress continues."

"Major new sites were established on Belleville Lake, Wayne County, and Lake Penema, Livingston County, as well as several sites in various stages of planning and development on Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit and St. Clair rivers. The grants-in-aid program has provided a fine site on Ford Lake, Wayne county."

Genealogical society to meet

The meeting of the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 8, at the Explorer's Room of the Detroit Public Library at 5201 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

Bruce A. Hubbard, practicing attorney in Ypsilanti, will present "Where

there's a will there's a genealogical way" in a discussion of probate court records to be followed by a question and answer period.

During the morning members of the Society will be available to assist with individual problems in the Burton Historical Collection.

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