

## roll call report

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the days before the Memorial Day recess.

### HOUSE

**MEDICARE VS. MILITARY** — By a vote of 228 for and 168 against, the House adopted an amendment to increase fiscal 1983 Medicare outlays by \$4.85 billion and reduce military outlays by the same amount. The language was attached to the chief GOP-backed 1983 budget plan, and House GOP leader Robert Michel, R-Ill., later said it was "the margin of difference" that caused defeat of the Republican budget. The vote occurred during debate on the budget measure (H Con Res. 345) setting 1983 spending, revenue and deficit targets. The resolution later was defeated and the Budget Committee now is working on a new budget blueprint for consideration by the full House.

Sponsor Mary Rose Oaker, D-Ohio, said the House has lost "our sense of morality when we say that the cost overruns of a submarine are more important than the health of older Americans."

Opponent Robert Michel, R-Ill., accused the Democratic leadership of playing politics with Social Security and Medicare issues, calling this the "most aggressive and the most irresponsible exploitation of America's elderly and the issues affecting them that I can remember."

Members voting "yes" wanted to spend nearly \$5 billion more on Medicare in 1983 and to cut defense expenditures by the same amount.

Reps. Carl Pursell, David Bonior, William Ford, William Brodhead and James Blanchard voted "yes."

Rep. William Broomfield voted "nay."

**TAX LOOPHOLES** — The House rejected, 164 for and 245 against, an amendment to force the House to formally include money lost through "tax expenditures" or tax loopholes, in its annual budget computations. The \$273 billion that the Treasury loses annually as a result of some 104 loopholes — from mortgage deductions for homeowners to massive corporate writeoffs — is an annual budget resolution. Critics say this is fiscally irresponsible because Congress is relinquishing control over a major "expenditure" that greatly affects spending, revenue and deficit levels. The vote occurred during debate on H Con Res 345 (see preceding vote).

Sponsor David Bonior, D-Mich., called revenue lost through loopholes a "hemorrhage" and he said it was time for Congress to "deal with the tax expenditure within the budget itself."

Opponent Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., chairman of the Ways and Means Committee that writes tax laws, said the amendment was out of place during debate on the fiscal 1983 budget and should be offered instead in committee consideration of changes in the congressional budget act.

Members voting "yes" wanted the congressional budget process to reflect their concern that tax loopholes need to be better policed by Congress.

Pursell, Ford, Brodhead and Blanchard voted "yes."

Broomfield voted "nay."

**FEDERAL PENSIONS** — The House adopted, 327 for and 94 against, an amendment providing full cost-of-living increases in the pensions of federal civilian and military retirees. This removed a 4 percent cap from the fiscal 1983 budget plan sponsored by Republicans and the White House. The GOP and Democratic budget plans did not cap other annuities such as Social Security. The vote came during debate on H. Con Res 345 (see preceding vote).

Sponsor Thomas Downey, D-N.Y., called it "unfair to single out

federal . . . retirees for an arbitrary 4 percent cap" when neither the GOP nor major Democratic budget plans contained caps for Social Security recipients, railroad retirees and veterans who get U.S. pensions.

Opponent Bill Frenzel, R-Minn., said the amendment would worsen the federal deficit, and he added that "we have been warned that control of entitlements is the key to control of the budget. If we vote for this amendment, we give away the key."

Members voting "yes" were opposed to limiting at 4 percent the cost-of-living hikes in federal military and civilian pensions.

Ford, Brodhead and Blanchard voted "yes."

Pursell and Broomfield voted "nay."

### SENATE

**MEMBERS' TAXES** — The Senate adopted, 70 for and 23 against, an amendment to repeal the higher tax deductions for Washington living expenses that senators and House members approved for themselves in late 1981. The amendment restored the previous \$3,000 per year flat deduction, thus abolishing the new \$75 per diem system that enables members to deduct as much as \$19,000 for expenses associated with being in Washington. The House has not yet considered the repeal legislation. The amendment was attached to an appropriations bill (HR 5922) that was sent to conference with the House.

Sponsor William Proxmire, D-Wis., said "the public well understands and disapproves of the action Congress took in the closing days of last year" and has responded with "almost universal condemnation" of the higher deductions.

Opponent Robert Dole, R-Kans., said the vote "will give the media another round of shots. The million dollar anchorman will be taking about our \$4,000 savings, but they will say it is a \$19,000 tax break. I have suggested to some of the networks and others . . . that they may be acting hypocritically."

Sensors voting "yes" wanted to repeal the higher tax deductions congressmen voted themselves in 1981 for Washington living expenses.

Sens. Carl Levin, D, and Donald Riegle, D, voted "yes."

**SUBSIDIZING HOME BUYERS** — The Senate adopted, 69 for and 23 against, an amendment to appropriate \$5.1 billion over five years for a program subsidizing the mortgage interest paid by buyers of new homes. Tens of thousands of buyers earning less than \$37,000 annually could get up to four percentage points of their interest paid by the Treasury. The amendment was attached to HR 5922 (see preceding vote).

Supporter Henry Jackson, D-Wash., said "This is not just a housing bill. This is an attempt to ignite a spark to start to turn the economy around."

Opponent S.I. Hayakawa, R-Calif., called the measure an expensive "quick fix" and said "the only way to reduce interest rates is to reduce spending and reduce the deficit."

Sensors voting "yes" favored subsidizing interest payments to spur the housing industry and help home buyers.

Levin and Riegle voted "yes."

**BUTTER VS. GUNS** — By a vote of 61 for and 30 against, the Senate tabled and thus killed an amendment to spend \$18.9 billion less on defense in fiscal 1983-85, \$4 billion more on domestic programs such as Medicare and unemployment compensation, and to reduce the deficit by about \$14.9 billion. The amendment was proposed to the budget resolution (S Con Res 92) for 1983 and later years. The resolution later was passed and sent to conference with the House.

Sen. John Tower, R-Texas, who voted to kill the amendment, said it would "cripple our (defense) modernization program and jeopardize our national security."

Levin and Riegle voted "nay."

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