

# Area U.S. reps help Reagan win on tax rule

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll-call votes during the week ending Dec. 20.

**TAX BILL RULE** — By a vote of 258 for and 168 against, the House adopted the rule for debating legislation to give the U.S. tax code its first housecleaning in nearly four decades.

Coming soon after the House had bottled up tax reform by rejecting essentially the same rule, this vote was a major breakthrough for President Reagan, Democrats who run the Ways and Means Committee, and others who wanted the House to pass the tax bill.

Most members voting yes favored the tax-overhaul bill as well as the rule for debating the bill. Voting yes: Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods, William Ford, D-Taylor, Sandra Levin, D-Southfield, William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

The bill (HR 3838) later was sent to the Senate on a non-record vote. The bill:

- Shifts a tax burden of some \$140 billion from individuals to corporations.
- Lowers tax rates and reduces the number of brackets for individuals and businesses.
- Closes or tightens a host of loopholes that companies and wealthy individuals have used to avoid taxation.
- Drops some six million poor people from the tax rolls.
- Makes dozens of other major changes in behalf of a fairer and simpler tax code.

Supporter Tip O'Neill, D-Mass., the House speaker, said a vote for the rule was "a vote for the working people of America over the special interests... for the individual taxpayer over the well-financed corporations."

Opponent Buddy Roemer, D-La., who objected to the bill's higher taxation of the timber and oil and gas industries, said the rule "reminds me of a Louisiana bullfrog, all mouth and no guts. This rule does not allow us to touch the guts of the bill."

**CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS** — The House adopted, 230 for and 196 against, an amendment to the tax bill (above) to permit a tax credit of up to \$100 for a contribution to a House or Senate candidate.

On joint returns, \$200 would be the maximum credit. Because tax credits enable individuals to lower their taxes by the full amount of the credit, this was seen as a form of public financing of campaigns.

The amendment was drafted by House Democrats, who touted it as a way for small contributors to offset the influence of political action committee (PAC) money in House and Senate races. But many Democrats voted against it and many Republicans supported it.

Democratic opposition and GOP support was based mainly on a suspicion that members of single-issue pressure groups, which tend to favor Republican candidates, would utilize the tax credit much more than would union members, minorities and other small donors in Democratic ranks.

Members voting yes favored the tax credit for small congressional campaign contributions. Voting yes: Pursell, Hertel, Ford, Levin and Broomfield.

**GOP SUBSTITUTE** — By a vote of 133 for and 294 against, the House rejected the Republican substitute to the Ways and Means Committee's tax-overhaul bill (above).

Like the Democrats' committee bill, the GOP plan was designed to neither raise nor lower federal tax receipts. Among other similarities with the committee legislation, it eliminated a host of tax breaks for business and used the newly-found revenue to permit a lowering of personal and corporate tax rates.

But it was more accommodating to business, primarily in shifting \$110 billion of tax burden from individuals to businesses, compared to the Democrats' transfer of \$140 billion.

Also, it placed in a top individual rate of 35 percent, compared to the Democrats' 38 percent. And it set a \$2,000 personal exemption for itemizers and non-itemizers, except for taxpayers with incomes of more than \$810,000. The Democrats set only a \$1,500 exemption for those who itemize deductions.

Members voting yes supported the GOP alternative for overhauling the tax code. Voting yes: Republicans Pursell and Broomfield.

Voting no: Hertel, Ford and Levin.

**RECOMMITTAL** — By a vote of 171 for and 256 against, the House rejected a motion to effectively kill the tax-overhaul legislation (above) by sending it back to the Ways and Means Committee.

## Roll Call Report

When the bill later was passed and sent to the Senate, it was advanced by a non-record, voice vote. In the absence of a roll-call on final passage, this recommitment vote provided constituents with the most definitive record of where individual members stood on the bill.

Members voting yes wanted to kill the tax-overhaul bill. Voting yes: Pursell.

Voting no: Hertel, William Ford, Levin and Broomfield.

**SENATE BUCKLEY NOMINATION** — The Senate confirmed, 84 for and 11 against, the nomination of James L. Buckley to sit on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

The former U.S. senator from New York and State Department undersecretary in the Reagan administration will leave his current job as head of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty to join the court. Like his brother William, he is well-known articulator of the conservative viewpoint.

Michigan Democrats Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted against confirmation.

Supporter Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said: "Few individuals have had the diversity of legislative and executive experience that uniquely qualify former Senator Buckley to participate in judicial oversight

of governmental decisions." Opponent Lowell Weicker, R-Conn., said Buckley "has never appeared in a federal court, has never argued a case before a jury" and has "embarrassing and woefully inadequate" legal experience.

"a vote for the working people of America..." — Tip O'Neill D-Mass.

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