

Roll Call Report

House vote gets committees out of budget cuts

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll-call votes during the week ending Feb. 7.

HOUSE

COMMITTEES FUNDING — By a vote of 146 for and 255 against, the House refused to force House committees to recommend the specific program cuts necessary to achieve the \$11.7 billion savings that the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings budget-reduction law requires by March 1.

The vote occurred during debate on a measure (H Res 368) funding House committees during calendar 1986 that later was approved. Under Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, if Congress and the president fail to agree on cuts needed to meet the law's series of austerity deadlines, the cuts are imposed automatically on an across-the-board percentage basis through a process called "sequestering."

Congress apparently will allow the first round of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings cuts due March 1, to be inflicted automatically. Had this motion succeeded, House committees, at least, would have had to take responsibility for the \$11.7 billion in fiscal 1986 cuts.

A major criticism of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings is that its automatic trigger forces lawmakers of having to answer to the public for their budget decisions.

Sponsor Robert Walker, R-Pa., said House members were sent to Washington to legislate, not "to sit on our duffs and wait for sequester orders to go into effect."

Opponent Leon Panetta, D-Calif., said the committees already have their hands full pre-

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paring for the second round of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings cuts, which will take effect soon after fiscal 1987 begins next Oct. 1.

Members voting yes wanted to force committee recommendations on the first round of cuts under the new deficit reduction law.

Voting no: Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods, William Ford, D-Taylor, Sander Levin, D-Southfield, William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

AMUSEMENT PARKS — By a vote of 179 for and 188 against, the House rejected an amendment to sidetrack tougher federal regulation of amusement park rides.

This occurred during debate on a bill (HR 3450) extending the life of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which was later passed and sent to the Senate.

The vote left intact a proposal empowering the commission to inspect rides at fixed sites such as Disneyland, in cases where state regulation is inadequate or a malfunctioning ride has caused injury or death. Presently the commission only can regulate rides in traveling carnivals.

The defeated amendment called for creating a commission to study the issue.

Members voting no supported federal inspections of fixed-site amusement park rides.

Voting yes: Broomfield, Hertel, Ford, Levin.

Not voting: Pursell.

RECESS — By a vote of 208 for and 179 against, the House adopted a resolution (S Con Res 107) in favor of the House and Senate taking a Presidents' Day recess Feb. 8-18.

The Senate also approved the measure and the recess, which lawmakers like to call a "district work period," took effect.

Members voting yes favored the 10-day recess.

Voting yes: Democrats Hertel, Ford and Levin.

Voting no: Republicans Pursell and Broomfield.

SENATE

TO SELL CONRAIL — By a vote of 54 for and 39 against, the Senate passed a bill to sell

the government's 85 percent share of Conrail, the federally run rail freight agency, to Norfolk Southern Corp. for 1.2 billion.

Senators voting yes favored selling Conrail to the Norfolk Southern railroad.

Michigan Democrats Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted no.

This was a victory for the Reagan Administration. It was a defeat for Conrail's management, private railroads such as the Chesapeake system that would compete with the merged railroad, and midwestern shipping interests and lawmakers.

Conrail, formed in 1976 out of the ruins of

Penn Central, has been profitable since 1982. Still, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole said the federal government should get out of the rail freight business.

The bill (S 638) was sent to the House, where opposition to Norfolk Southern is softer than in the Senate. The leading rival offer is a \$1.4 billion tender from a group led by Morgan Stanley & Co., the New York investment house.

Supporter Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., said of the transaction: "It is a good price. It is a good deal for the government. It is a good deal for Norfolk Southern. There is really no antitrust problem here at this particular time."

Chrysler gift to OU \$10,000

A \$10,000 grant from Chrysler Corp. tightens Oakland University's links with major auto companies, OU President Joseph Champagne said.

The award will be divided between the School of Engineering and Computer Science and the School of Economics and Management.

Chrysler Executive Vice President Stephan Sharf said the money "is part

of Chrysler's commitment to education and to educational institutions in areas where we have major operations."

Chrysler will be a major tenant in the Oakland Technology Park adjoining the university.

Last year OU and Ford Motor Co. announced a major plan in which university faculty and student interns will help in statistical quality control programs.

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