

# How interest groups rate our congressmen

By Richard G. Thomas  
special writer

## Roll Call Report

**M**ANY of the nation's capital special interests have issued vote ratings for the 1987 session of Congress. They give their constituents an important yardstick for measuring where individual lawmakers stood on the year's major House and Senate roll calls.

Eight of these ratings are presented in the accompanying chart, which shows how frequently Observer & Eccentric area lawmakers cast votes for or against an interest group's policy goals.

Four groups are from the left side of the ideological spectrum, and four represent the right.

**TO THE EXTENT** that lawmakers can be judged by the company they keep on key legislative issues, the chart should prove useful to voters weighing whether incumbents deserve their support in this year's congressional elections.

of friends and foes on Capitol Hill.

"As union members and their families get ready to go to the polls in 1988, this voting record gives them an accounting of how their lawmakers voted on critical issues in 1987," wrote AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland to his membership.

From the other side of the spectrum, the American Conservative Union recently told its "voters" four ratings have become the standard by which to measure the conservative/liberal trends of members of Congress and Congress as a whole."

**AS HELPFUL** as "The Ratings Game" can be in aiding up federal lawmakers, its limitations as an evaluation tool should be kept in mind.

Ratings do not monitor voting in committees, cover only a small fraction of House and Senate floor votes, and fail to reflect the numerous times lawmakers help to kill or advance legislation without casting record votes.

Nor do interest group ratings help constituents answer other questions bearing on whether an incumbent deserves re-election, such as whether he is diligent or lazy, a straight-shooter or a falsifier, respected or ridiculed by capital insiders, his or her own person or a pawn of campaign contributors, a substantive legislator or merely a headline-hunter.

What the ratings unquestionably contribute is a candid look at one aspect of congressional performance that lawmakers and their image specialists cannot easily misrepresent — their publicly recorded yeas and nays.

Nowhere else can busy constituents cut so easily through the complexities and deceptions of Capitol Hill and find their lawmakers reduced to a number for ready reference on election day.

**HERE ARE** descriptions of lobbies represented in the accompanying chart.

1. **AFL-CIO:** The collective, powerful voice of organized labor.
2. **Americans for Democratic Action:** A respected liberal lobby now in its fifth decade.
3. **Consumer Federation of America:** A left-of-center lobby that uses a broad definition of consumerism in picking issues for its voting report card.

	AFL/CIO	Americans for Democratic Action	Consumer Federation of America	National Council of Senior Citizens	American Security Council	American Conservative Union	Chamber of Commerce	Christian Voice
Carl Pursell R-2	20	20	36	40	50	55	71	64
Dennis Hertel D-14	100	88	100	100	10	0	13	9
William Ford D-15	100	92	64	100	10	0	0	0
Sander Levin D-17	100	84	93	100	20	0	13	0
William Broomfield R-18	0	0	29	40	100	96	93	100
Carl Levin, D	90	90	100	90	10	4	17	17
Donald Riegler, D	100	100	83	100	10	4	17	8

4. **National Council of Senior Citizens:** A labor-funded group that advocates federal programs for the aged.
5. **American Security Council:** A hawkish lobby whose National Security Voting Index authoritatively

6. **American Conservative Union:** A 24-year-old group that calls itself "the oldest and most influential conservative lobbying group in Washington."
7. **Chamber of Commerce of the**

8. **Christian Voice:** A right-of-center group that rewards lawmakers who vote conservatively on international issues and "key moral issues such as abortion, drug abuse and AIDS."

## Here are local congressmen

Here is the lineup of area members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

- 2nd District — Carl Pursell, 55, R-Plymouth, elected in 1978 after service on the Wayne County Board of Commissioners and state Senate. District includes northern two-thirds of Livonia.
- 14th District — Dennis Hertel, 39, D-Harper Woods, elected in 1980 after three terms in the Michigan House. District includes a corner of Troy.
- 15th District — William D. Ford, 60, D-Taylor, elected in 1966 after service in the state Senate and as a delegate to the state constitutional convention. District includes Garden City, Westland, Canton and southern third of Livonia.

- 17th District — Sander Levin, 56, D-Southfield, elected in 1982 after service in the state Senate and as Democratic state chairman. District includes Southfield and Redford Township.
  - 18th District — William Broomfield, 66, R-Birmingham, elected in 1956 after three terms in the Michigan House and one in the Senate. District includes Rochester area, Birmingham-Bloomfield area, West Bloomfield and Farmington area.
- U.S. Senators are Donald W. Riegler Jr., 56, a Democrat from Flint, elected in 1976 after five terms in the House; and Carl Levin, 53, Democrat from Detroit, elected in 1978 after two terms on the Detroit City Council.

## County's auction Saturday morning

Oakland County Saturday will host its annual spring auction of the Sheriff's Department's recovered stolen property and the county's surplus property.

The auction will begin at 10:30 a.m. behind the County Central Garage in the service center, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac.

The sale will feature a number of name brand tools, about 80 bicycles, stereo equipment, jewelry and other recovered stolen items.

**THE COUNTY** also will auction more than 50 office machines including IBM typewriters, 50 pieces of office furniture and a large quantity of commercial lands and grounds equipment.

There will be about 60 late model General Motors vehicles including

several Chevrolet patrol cars and several Lemans, Sunbirds, Phoenixes, Monte Carlos and Suburbans.

In addition there will be several GMC trucks, a 1949 Troop Carrier, a 3,500 gallon sludge tanker, a 23-passenger bus and a 20-passenger bus with a wheelchair lift.

"**THE AUCTION** is an excellent opportunity for people to get quality goods and desirable prices," said Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy.

The public may view and inspect the vehicles on Thursday and Friday, May 5 and 6, during regular business hours.

Gates will be open to the public to view the other auctions at 8:30 a.m. the day of the auction.

## Sports injuries first in OU series

Sports injuries will be the first subject in a topical series in Physical Therapy, offered beginning May 12 by Oakland University, Rochester.

Intended for the professionals, "The Role of the Physical Therapist in Sports Medicine" will be conducted May 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31, June 2 and 7 at Prescription Fitness Inc., 6889 Highland Road, Pontiac.

Speakers will provide an overview of the physical therapist's role in medicine, covering treatment of common sports-related injuries, exercise physiology and its relationship to physical therapy and fitness, common knee and shoulder injuries, the use of orthopedic appliances, preventive taping and protective pad fa-

brication, biomechanical analysis of the face and knee.

The special topics series, to be held on campus, includes lectures in cervical spine mobilization by Bjorn Svendsen on June 5 and 6, and Os Jackson, Ph. D., P.T., director of Oakland's program in physical therapy, June 18-19. A fourth class, "Basic Muscle Energy Principles," will be conducted June 10-13.

The series is presented by Oakland's program in physical therapy in cooperation with the Division of Continuing Education. Professional continuing education credits are awarded. For a brochure, call OU's Continuing Education office at 370-3120.

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