

Knollenberg votes no on deficit spending bill

Here's how *Observer & Eccentric* area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the week ending Feb 4.

HOUSE

Disaster Aid: By a vote of 337 for and 74 against, the House sent the Senate a \$9.72 billion emergency spending bill (HR 3759) that includes \$7.78 billion to help the Los Angeles area recover from last month's earthquake. The spending will be added to the FY '94 deficit rather than offset by cuts (see next issue). Illegal aliens can receive funds under the bill only for emergency medical care and sustenance.

The bill provides \$1.2 billion for the Defense Department, along with \$410 million for recovery from last summer's Midwest floods and \$315 million related to the San Francisco area's 1989 earthquake. For Los Angeles, the bill provides \$4.7 billion for temporary housing and infrastructure repairs, \$1.4 billion for highways, \$1.1 billion for loans to individuals and small businesses, a \$500 million White House contingency fund, \$250 million for urban grants, \$225 million for rent subsidies, \$165 million for general school expenses, \$80 million for grants to low-income college students whose means were reduced by the earthquake and \$21 million for veterans' health care.

Supporter Julian Dixon, D-Calif., said Los Angeles residents "deserve to be beneficiaries of the same goodwill and swift emergency relief that the Congress has demonstrated in the face of the nation's other recent natural disasters."

Opponent John Boehner, R-Ohio, said: "For the last five years, Congress has passed over \$20 billion in disaster assistance, most of that not paid for, but simply added to the debt."

A yes vote was to pass the bill. Area representatives voting yes were: Bob Carr, D-Pontiac, Dale Kildee, D-Flint, Joseph Knollenberg, R-Birmingham, Sander Levin, D-Southfield and William Ford, D-Ypsilanti.

Deficit Issue: By a vote of 178 for and 240 against, the House rejected an amendment to offset the \$9.72 billion cost of HR 3759 (above) with equivalent cuts in a wide range of federal programs. This vote preserved the bill as an emergency measure whose outlays for earthquake recovery and other purposes will be added to the FY '94 deficit.

Supporter Sam Johnson, R-Texas, said Congress "has to realize there are two emergencies facing this nation. One of them is the devastating earthquake that hit Southern California, and we need to help them now. The other and more important, I think, is the emergency facing the nation of our national debt. The current debt stands at over \$4 trillion, and the interest alone is \$213 million."

Opponent Richard Durbin, D-Ill., said inflicting budget cuts "in the name of helping earthquake victims is dead wrong. It is morally wrong for us to create this choice... Somewhere in Southern California in some shelter there sits a homeless person watching this debate wondering if this Congress will ever finish all this hot air in time to deliver the kind of assistance they need to put their lives back in order."

A yes vote was to put HR 3759 on a pay-as-you-go rather than deficit-spending basis. Area representatives voting yes were: Joseph Knollenberg. Voting no: Bob Carr, Dale Kildee, Sander Levin and William Ford.

Defense Funds: By a vote of 158 for and 260 against, the House refused to remove Department of Defense funding from a California earthquake disaster relief bill (HR 3759). The vote preserved \$1.2 billion in the bill for DOD humanitarian and peacekeeping operations in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and Iraq.

Sponsor Barney Frank, D-Mass., said: "It makes a mockery of the fiscal discipline we have begun to subject ourselves to, to simply say that because there was an earthquake in California we will give the military an additional \$1.2 billion."

Opponent Robert Livingston, R-La., said peacekeeping missions are weakening defense preparedness. "What we are doing is feeding hundreds of thousands of people all over the world and the U.S. armed forces are sucking up the cost of this great humanitarian effort," he said.

A yes vote was to remove Pentagon money from the disaster-recovery bill. Area representatives voting no were: Carr, Kildee,

Knollenberg, Levin and Ford.

SENATE

State Department Budget: By a vote of 92 for and eight against, the Senate sent to conference with the House a bill (S 1281) authorizing \$12.5 billion for the fiscal 1994-95 budgets of the State Department, United States Information Agency, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and several other foreign affairs agencies and missions.

The bill takes a step toward consolidating Cold War-era international broadcasting operations, while keeping news operations of Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and the new Radio Free Asia relatively free of government control. It

orders studies into streamlining the foreign affairs bureaucracy, but also increases the number of assistant Secretaries of State from 15 to 20. The bill offers President Clinton sense-of-the-Senate advice for dealing with Bosnia, North Korea, China, Russia, Cuba and other problem spots.

A yes vote was to pass the bill. Michigan Senators Carl Levin, D,

voted yes, and Donald Riegle, D, voted yes.

School Prayer: The Senate adopted, 75 for and 22 against, an amendment in behalf of "constitutionally permitted" school prayer. The vote occurred during debate on a bill (S 1150) setting voluntary nationwide educational standards

and providing \$420 million in grants to induce public schools meet those goals. To receive money under the amendment, schools must permit prayer to the extent it is permitted by the Supreme Court. While the court says officially organized prayer is unconstitutional, it has not specifically outlawed informal prayer initiated by students.

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