

roll call report

Area reps back delay of auto exhaust enforcement

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes Sept. 9-15.

AUTO EXHAUST — By a vote of 200 for and 184 against, the House adopted an amendment to give states another year before they must require mandatory vehicle inspections in metropolitan areas having dirty air.

The emission-control inspection program, a part of the 1970 Clean Air Act, now is scheduled to be in full force by 1983. It affects areas of 29 states, some of which already have begun mandatory inspection.

However, most affected states have delayed their programs, and the Environmental Protection Agency recently threatened Michigan, Ohio and 12 others with enforcement action if they do not soon begin inspecting vehicles.

The amendment, which prohibits the EPA from spending money for this purpose during fiscal 1983, was attached to an appropriations bill for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the EPA, and other agencies. The measure (H.R. 6956) was passed and sent to the Senate.

Sponsor Doug Walgren, D-Pa., said

"there is no question that automobile emission inspection, in the eyes of the public, is an extremely unpopular program," and he added the responsibility for exhaust control should lie with automakers, not drivers.

Opponent William Green, R-NY, said it was wrong to use an appropriations bill to make substantive changes in the Clean Air Act, and he called the inspection program "a very important part of the process of cleaning up our air."

Members voting "yes" wanted to further delay mandatory emission-inspection programs required by the EPA.

Reps. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, William Ford, D-Taylor, William Brodhead, D-Detroit and William Brodhead, R-Birmingham voted "yes."

Rep. David Bonior, D-MI, Clemens voted "no."

Rep. James Blanchard, D-Pleasant Ridge, did not vote.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS — By a vote of 250 for and 132 against, the House failed to achieve the two-thirds majority needed to pass a bill designed primarily to give drug manufacturers longer patents on drugs they discover.

One effect of the bill would have been to delay competition from generic drug manufacturers, who after the expiration of a patent generally market popular drugs at lower costs.

The bill (H.R. 6444) required a two-thirds majority for passage because it was considered under a short-cut procedure that prohibited floor amendments. It sought to give manufacturers of federally regulated products up to seven additional years on their patent. The current patent term is usually 17 years.

Sponsor Robert Kastenmeier, D-Wis., said the bill protected consumer interests while assuring "more rapid technological innovation in the pharmaceutical and chemical industries."

Opponent Barney Frank, D-Mass., said the bill would put generic drugs "further out of the reach of consumers."

Members voting "yes" favored long-

er patent terms for pharmaceuticals and other federally-regulated products.

Republicans Pursell and Broomfield voted "yes."

Democrats Bonior, Ford and Brodhead voted "no."

Democrat Blanchard did not vote.

BOAT SAFETY — The House defeated a bill (H.R. 6813) to apply the user's fee mechanism to the funding for the federal-state safety program for recreational boaters.

Revenue from the four-cents-a-gallon motorboat fuel tax was to have been used to pay the program's \$20 million annual price tag. The vote was 258 for and 137 against.

Sponsor Gerry Studds, D-Mass., said that the ten-year-old safety program has been a success, but that it has not

been funded lately. This bill would insure funding, he said.

The Reagan Administration opposed the bill because it removed the boat safety program from the normal appropriations process, thus denying it power to control its costs.

Members voting "yes" favored a user's fee method of funding the safety program for recreational boaters.

Pursell, Bonior, Ford, Broadhead and Broomfield voted "yes."

Blanchard did not vote.

ABORTION — By a vote of 47 for and 46 against, the Senate tabled and

then killed an amendment banning the use of federal funds for abortions and setting the stage for challenges to the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that permits abortions during the first three months of pregnancy.

Senators voting "yes" wanted to derail the tough anti-abortion measure. Sens. Carl Levin and Donald Riegle, Michigan Democrats, voted "yes."

The amendment had been proposed to a bill increasing the national debt limit (H.J. Res. 520), and its defeat signalled an end this year to efforts by conservatives to enact tough anti-abortion legislation.

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