

roll call report

House bill raises U.S. debt ceiling

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the days before the current House and Senate recess.

HOUSE
DEBT — By a vote of 208 for and 202 against, the House passed a bill (HR 5953) raising the government's legal borrowing limit by \$53 billion, to \$1,573 billion of \$1.57 trillion. The new ceiling will hold through August. The Senate also approved the measure, but refused to hold a record vote on the politically embarrassing issue.

Debate revealed that interest on the national debt will cost taxpayers \$164.5 billion next fiscal year, and that the agency that manages the debt has 2,500 employees and an annual budget of \$159 million.

Supporter Ed Jenkins, D-Ga., said, "If we want to cut down federal spending we should do that before the debts are incurred."

Opponent George Miller, D-Calif., called it "obligatory" to reject the bill. "If the House is going to stand up for reducing our outrageous national deficit..."

Members voting yes wanted to raise the national debt ceiling.

Voting yes: Carl Parnell, R-Plymouth, William Ford, D-Taylor, William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

Voting no: Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods, Sander Levin, D-Southfield.

EX-PRESIDENTS — By a vote of 180 for and 232 against, the House rejected an amendment to cut \$890,000 from the \$1.17 million appropriation for supporting former presidents Carter, Ford and 1908.

The outlay covers their \$83,000 pensions, Secret Service protection, staff allowances and other expenses.

The vote occurred during debate on HR 5798, later sent to the Senate. On a separate vote, the House cut the \$1.17 million figure by \$147,000.

Sponsor Andrew Jacobs, D-Ind., noted that former presidents can parlay their governmental experience into huge lecture, book and corporate fees. "If you are making \$1 million a year, you ought to at least be able to pay your secretary..."

Opponent Silvio Conte, R-Mass., told Jacobs that "fighting for the little guy, toppling the kings of our day, makes great press," but overlooks the legitimate expenses faced by Carter, Ford,

and Nixon as former chiefs of state.

Members voting no were opposed to the proposed 76 percent cut in 1985 outlays for former presidents.

Voting yes: Parnell, Hertel, Ford, Levin.

Voting no: Broomfield.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET — The House approved, 253 for and 157 against, the conference report on a bill (HR 5753) appropriating \$1.55 billion to run the House, Senate and congressional agencies in fiscal 1985.

Conspicuously missing was a 2-percent, across-the-board cut the House had inflicted the first time it considered the bill. This was knocked out by the Senate (below) and replaced by lesser cuts. The bill increases House and Senate spending for salaries; travel, per diem and other congressional expenses by \$77 million over 1984 levels. Since 1970, Congress has quadrupled spending on itself.

Supporter Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., said the House should refrain from "self-flagellation" over a bill that represents only a tiny fraction of total federal spending.

Opponent Bill Frenzel, R-Minn., said defenders were using a "somewhat deceptive" arithmetic in justifying the bill as fiscally responsible.

Members voting yes favored a \$1.55-billion 1985 budget for congressional operations.

Voting yes: Hertel, Ford, Levin.

Voting no: Parnell, Broomfield.

SENATE

CUT — The Senate voted, 59 for and 36 against, to eliminate a House-approved, 2-percent across-the-board cut in the fiscal 1985 legislative branch budget. As later signed into law, the bill (HR 5753) raises spending for the House, Senate and congressional agencies by 5 percent over 1984 levels, to \$1.55 billion.

Jake Garn, R-Utah, said he favors item-by-item spending cuts rather than an indiscriminate across-the-board approach.

Opponent Don Nickles, R-Okla., said: "For crying out loud, people have been telling us to get our house in order... we have to make some sacrifices as well."

Senators voting yes were opposed to a 2-percent across-the-board cut in the legislative branch budget.

Michigan Democrat Carl Levin voted no and Democrat Donald Riegle voted yes.

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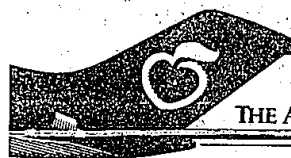
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