

House votes to allow military base closings

Here's how Observer & Eccentric area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the week ending April 21.

HOUSE

MILITARY BASE CLOSINGS By a vote of 43 for and 381 against, the House refused to block a Pentagon commission's plan to close 86 do-

mestic military bases and realign 59 others. This failure to approve HJ Res 165 means the sweeping base reductions will begin taking effect next year.

Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., who voted to kill the plan, termed the debate "a profile in congressional cowardice" because the House and Senate left to a commission the job of targeting bases for extinction.

Ted Weiss, D-N.Y., said the plan "could save between \$600 to \$700 million a year from the defense budget without reducing our capability at all."

Members voting yes wanted to block the base-closing plan.

No Michigan members voted yes. Voting no were Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods, William Ford, D-Taylor, Sander Levin, D-Southfield, William Broomfield, R-Lake Orion.

TO CHANGE HATCH ACT By a vote of 297 for and 90 against, the House passed a bill (HR 20) amending the 1939 Hatch Act to permit federal employees to engage in politics in their private lives.

The measure retains the law's ban on on-the-job political activity by civil servants and certain other executive branch workers. It was sent to the Senate.

Supporter Frank Horton, R-N.Y., said federal employees "ought not be second-class citizens."

Opponent Frank Wolf, R-Va., said "We do not need legislation that will hurt public confidence in the federal workforce."

Members voting yes supporting the bill were Pursell, William Ford and Levin.

Members not voting were Hertel and Broomfield.

SENATE

SAVINGS AND LOAN BAILOUT
The Senate passed, 91 for and 8 against, a bill (S 774) to bail out hundreds of insolvent or teetering savings and loans and revamp federal S&L oversight so that the ongoing crisis in the thrift industry does not recur.

Bonds floated by a new federal financing entity would fund what is by far the most costly bailout ever imposed on U.S. taxpayers, a rescue es-

estimated to cost \$50 billion initially and at least \$157 billion in its first ten years. The Congressional Budget Office says taxpayers will cover

MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY By a vote of 305 for and 84 against, the House passed and sent to the Senate a bill (HR 1385) to begin federal funding of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission and make the panel a permanent agency.

When established in 1984 to promote a new national holiday honoring King's birthday, the panel was given on April 20, 1989, expiration date and required to raise its own budget.

Supporter Connie Morella, R-Md., said federal funding of the panel is needed because "private donations have been declining over the years."

Opponent William Dannemeyer, R-Calif., asked "What . . . will these members of this commission do indefinitely in the future by chewing up a half a million dollars of taxpayers' money?"

Members voting yes supporting the bill were Pursell, Hertel, William Ford and Levin.
Not voting was Broomfield

[illegible]

termines that visitation is in the best interests of the grandchildren," Honigman said.

The circumstances include during pending actions for divorce, separate maintenance or an annulment; when the grandparent's child who was the parent of the grandchild had died; when legal custody had been given to someone other than the grandchild's parent; if the grand-

parent had provided a home at any time during the grandchild's life; when a parent has denied visitation as retaliation for the grandparent reporting child abuse or neglect; if a parent had been living away from the other parent and grandchild for more than one year; or if the parents had never married and were not living in the same household.

The bill also would allow grand-

parents to seek visitation rights during the pending step-parent adoption proceedings.

Grandparents win new visiting rights

The state House recently passed bills to allow grandparents greater visitation rights with their grandchildren whose parents have divorced or separated.

State Rep. Dave Honigman, R-West Bloomfield, sponsor of one of the bills, views the legislation as necessary to maintain the important link between grandparents and grandchildren.

Currently, grandparents can ask for visitation rights only when divorce or a child custody dispute is pending. The present system does not give the courts authority to award a grandparent-grandchild visitation order where divorced but remarried parents succumb to their new mate's desire to prevent the children from contact with their ex-spouse's parents.

"Our legislation allows the grandparents to seek visitation under broader circumstances, if a court de-

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