

Roll Call Report

WASHINGTON — Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes in the week ending April 20.

HOUSE:

PRICE-FIXING ISSUE — By a vote of 235 for and 157 against, the House sent to the Senate a bill to help plaintiffs win lawsuits against vertical price-fixing, which occurs when manufacturers seek to enforce a minimum product price. The bill (HR 1236) eases Supreme Court-set standards of evidence that make it

easy for judges to dismiss such suits. It gives plaintiffs a better chance of advancing their case to a jury.

The bill is backed by discounter's union Burlington Coat Factory and K-Mart, and opposed by business groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and National Association of Manufacturers, according to floor debate.

Supporter Dan Glickman, D-Kan., urged colleagues to "vote for your constituents who can't afford to shop at full-price retailers."

Opponent Sonny Montgomery, D-

Miss., said the bill's defeat would "preserve the freedom of manufacturers . . . to determine how their products are marketed and served."

Members voting yes supported the bill.

Local congressman voting yes were: Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods; William Ford, D-Taylor; and Sander Levin, D-Southfield.

Voting no were: Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth; and William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

SUBSTITUTE BILL — By a vote of 155 for and 242 against, the House rejected a substitute version of the bill (above) to combat vertical price-

fixing. The amendment sought to preserve exacting standards of evidence that plaintiffs, such as discounter's union manufacturers, must satisfy under 1984 and 1988 Supreme Court rulings. It also attempted to codify the 1911 court ruling that vertical price-fixing is illegal.

Sponsor Chuck Douglas, R-N.H., said Congress should "not fool around with Supreme Court decisions" that have evolved over the decades.

Opponent Lawrence Smith, D-Fla., said the amendment "would kill this bill."

Members voting yes supported the substitute. The lone local member doing so was Broomfield.

Voting no were: Pursell, Hertel, Ford and Levin.

STANDARDS OF EVIDENCE — By a vote of 192 for and 204 against, the House rejected an amendment to HR 1236 (above) toughening the standards of evidence in vertical price-fixing cases. This retained the bill's objective of making it easier for plaintiffs to avoid dismissal by judge, and gain a jury trial, of their suits accusing manufacturers and distributors of conspiring against them because of their low prices.

Supporters said the amendment would protect manufacturers who cut off discount dealers for reasons other than pricing policies. Foes said anti-trust policy is best served when

vertical price-fixing cases are decided by juries.

Members voting yes wanted to make it easier for judges to dismiss vertical price-fixing cases for lack of evidence.

Yes votes were cast by: Pursell and Broomfield.

Voting no were: Hertel, Ford and Levin.

SENATE:

TARIFF ISSUE By a vote of 90 for and 3 against, the Senate agreed to allow the president to suspend tariffs on certain imports if the product is uncontroversial and Congress has gone at least one year without acting on a request for suspension.

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Weight Loss Pill 'Baffles' Scientists

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