

Congress split on war option

By Wayne Peal
staff writer

Congress may authorize the use of U.S. military force against Iraq, but one suburban Congressman indicates the vote won't be unanimous.

Rep. William Ford, D-Taylor, said he's already made up his mind to vote against authorizing an attack on Iraqi troops occupying Kuwait.

"I'm not voting to go to war in the Middle East. I can't find one shred of justification for spending even a dime of U.S. life," said Ford, whose district includes southern Livonia, Westland, Garden City and Canton.

"If I could talk to the president directly, I'd tell him: 'George, you've taken leave of your senses.'"

While no area Congressman issued a statement in favor of going to war, Ford's opinion appeared somewhat counterbalanced by that of William Broomfield, R-Birmingham.

Broomfield said he favored debate on military action in the region, but

feared a fractious debate would show a lack of U.S. resolve.

Broomfield, ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said a declaration of war "would be helpful but isn't absolutely necessary" to authorize military action. Broomfield's district includes most of Oakland County.

Dennis Hertel, D-Barber Woods, predicted a vote on military action will be "closer than most think. But the president will win."

Nonetheless, Hertel said he opposes an invasion and would give economic sanctions against Iraq more time for a withdrawal.

The blockade "is really air-tight," said Hertel, whose district includes a portion of Troy. "It also keeps our alliance together."

That multi-nation alliance forged by President Bush will dissolve if an invasion were launched, Hertel predicted. Some countries would agree to enter Kuwait, he said, but not Iraq.

"It becomes an American war against an Arab nation," Hertel said, adding that Iraq's defeat would leave Iran and Syria the dominant powers in the region.

"I DON'T trust them," he said.

Rep. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, said he favored negotiating, up to the deadline date.

"I think we're still in the negotiating mode," Pursell said. "One thing I wouldn't want to do is to undermine the president before the deadline."

Pursell said Congress could issue a resolution supporting the president, short of going to war, with the understanding the president would come before Congress on Jan. 15 seeking further authorization.

"But that's just speculation at this point," Pursell said. "It's hard to tell exactly what will happen."

Sander Levin, D-Southfield, was "withholding comment" in light of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's scheduled meeting with Iraqi officials Wednesday in Geneva.

"It's Sandy's feeling he couldn't comment until he sees how talks go," said Levin spokeswoman Cynthia Mann. Levin's district also includes Redford Township.

Last month, he favored giving sanctions more time.

President Bush has indicated military action could begin as soon as Tuesday, the United Nations-sanctioned deadline for removal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

Congress was expected to debate this week whether to authorize military force in accordance with the U.N. deadline.

Both administration and Congressional figures said war wouldn't necessarily begin on that date.

"What you've got is a UN resolution that says if you want to go to war, you can do it after Jan. 15," Ford said. "But it doesn't commit a single soldier or sailor."

A day of fasting and prayer has been called for Saturday by Chaldean Bishop Mar Ibrahim Ibrahim of Detroit. Some 60,000 people of Chaldean ancestry live in the metropolitan area, among the largest contingents outside Iraq. Chaldeans are a Christian minority group in Islamic Iraq.

At the same time, a coalition of activist groups is organizing area residents for a Jan. 19 march on Washington, D.C. in protest of the U.S. military presence in the Middle East.

The march was scheduled to coincide with the annual observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

"We had set our date even before the Jan. 15 deadline was set," said David Sole of the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East.

The Detroit-based organization estimates that between 1,200 and 2,000 area residents will participate in the march.

"I've never seen any reaction like this at so early a stage," Sole said.

Opposition is widespread, especially in the black community.

Recent polls have indicated 68 percent of the public approves of a quick, decisive strike against Iraq, though support drops to about 30 percent when weighed against the prospect of as many as 10,000 U.S. casualties.

Staff writer Judith Doner Berne and The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Engler names 2 as OU trustees

Former Oakland County prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson and Birmingham attorney Andrea Fischer were sworn in Wednesday as members of the Oakland University board of trustees by appointment of Gov. John Engler.

Birmingham attorney Nancy Edmunds was appointed to the Saginaw Valley board.

Engler, in his first week in office, wasted no time making trustee appointments to OU, Saginaw Valley and four other state university boards. Voters elect the boards of the three largest state universities, but the eight-member boards of the others are gubernatorial appointees. Trustees need not be alumni of the university on whose board they serve.

Achieving excellence in education is one of my key goals as governor," Engler said. "These appointments represent a significant step toward accomplishing that objective. Each one of these individuals is well-qualified to further my agenda of making Michigan's schools the finest in the nation."

PATTERSON, OF Drayton Plains, served four terms — 16 years — as county prosecutor. Engler's announcement noted he had directed a staff of 72 assistant prosecutors and a total staff of 132 with an \$8 million budget. Recently, he formed his own law firm, Patterson & Potter, P.C.

Patterson was appointed by President George Bush in 1989 as one of 12 members to the executive committee of the National Ad-

visory Council of the Small Business Administration, representing Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. Patterson is responsible for the formation of a children's charity called the Rainbow Connection and is chairman of its board. Patterson was also an adjunct professor of law at the University of Detroit for two years teaching trial advocacy.

ANDREA FISCHER, of Birmingham, also was named to the OU board. Fischer, of Birmingham, is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the George Washington University National Law Center.

She is currently an attorney at the law firm of Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone in Detroit.

Fischer was formerly an attorney, legislative and policy consultant at ALFco in Birmingham, an attorney at the firm of Patton, Boggs and Blow in Washington, D.C., and counsel and director of acquisition and planning in the office of the secretary of Defense. Fischer also served as deputy assistant to then-Vice President George Bush.

Nancy Edmunds, of Birmingham, was named to the Saginaw Valley State University board of control. Edmunds is presently a partner at the law firm of Dykema Gossett in its litigation section. She is a graduate of Cornell University, received her master of arts in teaching at the University of Chicago and her Juris Doctor at Wayne State University Law School in Detroit.

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