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1991 U.S. House payroll up 9 percent

By Randy Wynn Special Writer

While many paychecks back home shrank or disappeared during the tough recession year of 1991, the floure of Representatives staff payroli hit record levels.

A survey of public records by Roll Coll Report Syndicate shows that House members' staff salaries to the staff of the staff salaries to the salaries to the salaries to the salaries to the salaries that the salaries the salaries that the s

Survey results

The survey revealed that no House member spent his or her full salary allotment, although several approached the cap.
Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif, had the highest payroll at \$574,824, and Rep. William H. Natcher, D - Ky, the lowest at \$203,681.
Following Waxman were Democrats Tim Johnson of South Dakuta (\$567,309,), Barbara Boxer of California (\$559,057), Patricia Schroed-

er of Colorado (\$558,211) and Marty Russo of Illinois (\$559,22), and Republican James H. Quillen of Tennesses (\$553,897). Following Natcher were Republicans Diek Nichols of Kansas (\$354,140) and Larry J. Hopkins of Kentucky (\$355,365), Democrat Jamie L. Whitten of Mississippi (\$377,840), and Republicans Dave Camp of Michigan (\$389,303) and Toby Roth of Wisconsin (\$388,504). Lawmakers defend their payroll regardless of the level. "I have a good staff, I pay well, and I think that they deserve it," said Quillen. "Some of them go to work at six o'clock in the morning and work until real late in the night. ."We do a lot of constituent service. We've been known for that for the past 30 years, and I'm proud of it."

Johnson noted his congressional

the past 30 years, and I'm proud of it."

Johnson noted his congressional district, covering all of South Dakote, is the nation's largest in both population and territory.

Michigan's Camp, a freshman, said of his low payroll, "It take very seriously that these are public funds and I try to spend them very carefully."

The House psyroll allotment of \$515,760 has been in place since May 1991 when a \$40,700 lucrease was quietly put into effect. A similar increase was rejected months acalifer when opponents forced a record vote on the House floor.

Cost of supporting your congressman

The figures below, from Clork of the House reports, show the sums House members spent on personal staff salaries in 1991. The typical House member nationwide employs 15 to 20 aides.



TANNE GRAVESTATE AND

Also in May 1991, the amount members can transfer from office expenses to payroll was hiked from \$50,000 to \$75,000.

Payrolls increase

Largely because of those increases, most staff payrolla rose significantly as the year progressed. For example, a look at payrolls of the top six members listed above shows the following increases.

first and fourth quarter expendi-tures; Waxman 30 percent, Johnson 29 percent, Boxer 12 percent, Schroeder 21 percent, Russo 17 per-cent and Quillen two percent. The Roll Call Report Syndicate survey did not cover Senate staffs or House committee staffing or exam-ine what individuals are paid. Each House member can hire up to 18 full-time and four part-time staffers, with \$105,000 the maxi-num salary. The typical lawmaker has 15 to 20 aldes. The House employs more than

mum salary. The typical lawmaker
has 15 to 20 dides.
The House employs more than
7,500 sides on personal staffs, and
the Senate more than 4,000. Altogether, the legislative branch has
about 35,000 employees.
Lawmakers who hold leadership
positions or chair committees and
subcommittees preside over many
more employees. The Appropriations Committees, preside over many
more employees. The Appropriations Committees, preside over many
more employees. The Appropriations autocommittees nides
as a result of chairing an appropriations subcommittee. This supplementa a personal staff of nine that
may be the smallest in the House.
"I don't have an administrative assistant, a press side, a legislative
assistant or an office manager," he
said. "I don't need them."

Criticizing the congressional pay-

Criticizing the congressional pay-roll is a tried and true way to make Congress look bloated and out of touch. But whether or not lawmakers have too much help depends on who's counting.

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