

# Vote fails to halt funding for arts endowment

Here's how *Observer & Eccentric-area members of Congress* were recorded on major roll call votes in the week ending OCT. 15

## HOUSE

**Arts Funding:** By a vote of 103 for and 326 against, the House refused to abolish the National Endowment for the Arts. The House then passed a bill (HR 2351) authorizing \$174.5 million in fiscal 1994 for the agency, which is controversial because of sexually explicit art it has funded.

Supporter Robert Doman, R-Calif., said: "I think we can do what the Constitution gives us as a guide — leave the funding of the arts to private citizens, who put up \$9.32 billion. God bless them. We don't have to take \$174 million out of middle America, which doesn't understand this garbage. It repels them and it should."

Opponent Sherwood Boehlert, R-N.Y., said: "Let's not pander to some of the interests that are shortsighted and refuse to deal with facts. Arts are good for America and we ought to proudly support them in this Congress which is a representative body for the American people."

A yes vote was to abolish the

National Endowment for the Arts. Area representatives voting yes were: Joseph Knollenberg, R-Elmingtonham, Votting no: Dale Klidde, D-Flint, Bob Carr, D-Pontiac, Sander Levin, S-Southfield and William Ford, D-Ypsilanti.

**Education Bill:** By a vote of 307 for and 118 against, the House passed a bill (HR 1804) to spend \$425 million in fiscal 1994 grants to states for improving elementary and secondary education in public schools. The bill sets national goals to be reached by 2000 in areas such as curriculum content, teacher competence and student achievement. States and localities choosing to receive the federal money would use it to begin restructuring their systems. The program would be overseen by a National Goals Panel appointed by the White House, governors, congressional leaders and state legislators.

Supporter Tom Sawyer, D-Ohio, said the bill sets up "a framework that will enable us to refashion the entire federally supported K-12 delivery system to improve teaching and learning in all schools for all students."

Opponent Cass Ballenger, R-N.C., said "simply throwing more money at the problem is not the answer to our education woes... we should be voting to allow for

real school reform" such as empowering parents to choose among private, parochial and public schools.

A yes vote was to pass the bill. Area representatives voting yes were: Bob Carr, Dale Klidde, Sander Levin, William Ford. Voting no: Joseph Knollenberg.

**'School Choice':** By a vote of 130 for and 300 against, the House rejected an amendment enabling communities to allocate some of their money from HR 1804 (above) to private and parochial education. The "school choice" amendment sought to make the generally better learning environment of non-public schools affordable to parents wishing to transfer their children out of the public system.

Supporter Newt Gingrich, D-Ga., said the amendment holds "that parents are better than bureaucrats, that students are more important than teachers" unless, that learning is more important than regulation if the local community wants to voluntarily make that decision."

Opponent Gene Green, D-Tex., said the amendment would cause "the erosion of much-needed public funds for education. Private schools today are doing their jobs just fine, and do not need public funds to continue."

A yes vote supported diverting a portion of federal education money to private and parochial education. Area representatives voting yes were: Knollenberg. Voting no: Carr, Klidde, Levin and Ford.

**Jobless Benefits:** By a vote of 239 for and 150 against, the House agreed to the rule for debating a bill (HR 3167) providing an additional four months in which the long-term unemployed can apply for more weeks of unemployment checks, after their initial 26-week allotment expires. This extends until Feb. 2, 1994, an emergency program that was supposed to expire on Oct. 1. The legislation will benefit an estimated 750,000 workers, giving them seven or 13 weeks of additional checks, depending on the unemployment level in their state.

Controversy centered over how to pay the estimated \$1.1 billion cost. Backers of the rule said the spending would be offset, primarily by the bill's requirement that states do a better job of retraining the unemployed for quicker re-employment. But critics, mainly Republicans, called that approach wishful thinking and said they preferred the certainty of specific spending cuts.

A yes vote was to debate the bill providing additional unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless.

Area representatives voting yes were: Carr, Klidde, Levin, Ford. Voting no: Knollenberg.

## SENATE

**Somalia:** By a vote of 76 for and 23 against, the Senate set a March 31, 1994, deadline for removing U.S. forces from Somalia, providing that any missing troops are accounted for and prisoners returned. The amendment to the fiscal 1994 defense appropriations

bill (HR 3116) puts the Senate in basic agreement with President Clinton's timetable for withdrawal. House members now take up the issue.

A yes vote was to pull American forces from Somalia by March 31, 1994. Michigan Democratic Senators Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted yes.

**Quicker Troop Pullout:** By a vote of 61 for and 38 against, the Senate tabled (killed) an amendment requiring the soonest possible removal of American forces from Somalia, after any U.S. troops held captive have been freed and missing-in-action accounted for.

Backed mainly by Republicans, the measure repudiated the more distant March 31, 1994, deadline set by President Clinton and later endorsed by a Senate majority (above).

A yes vote was to kill the amendment urging quicker withdrawal from Somalia. Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted yes.

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Artwork: Sarah Kabbal '94