

ROLL CALL REPORT

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

HOUSE

Death Penalty: By a vote of 111 for and 314 against, the House refused to remove capital punishment from a crime bill (HR 4092) under debate. The amendment proposed mandatory life imprisonment as the bill's ultimate penalty. The vote retained language applying the death penalty to more than 60 federal crimes. Presently there are two federal offenses — murder in connection with airplane hijacking or drug trafficking — which carry the death penalty.

A yes vote was to remove the death penalty from HR 2092. Area representatives voting yes were: Dale Kildee, D-Flint, Sander Levin, D-Southfield, William Ford, D-Typhane. Voting no: Bob Carr, D-Pontiac and Joseph Knollenberg, R-Birmingham.

Repaying Student Loans: By a vote of 282 for and 136 against, the House passed a bill giving native American and predominantly black colleges more time to bring their student loan default rates down to levels deemed acceptable by Congress. The bill (S 2004) was sent to the White House.

Most institutions of higher education face the loss of taxpayer-backed student loans if their default rates go above 25 percent. Under the bill, historically black schools and tribally controlled community colleges have until mid-1998 to meet that standard. This

continues as exemption begun in 1990.

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

To Reject Cut: By a vote of 202 for and 216 against, the House refused to support \$26 billion in cuts in discretionary spending over the next five years. The Senate recently put the cuts in the Congressional budget resolution for FY '95 and later years. At issue on this vote was whether to accept the Senate cuts in an upcoming House-Senate conference on the budget measure (H Con Res 218). The Senate did not specify where the cuts would be made except that they would be in defense, international or domestic programs. A yes vote was to cut federal spending by an additional \$26 bil-

lion over five years. Area representatives voting yes were: Knollenberg. Voting no: Carr, Kildee, Levin and Ford.

SENATE

California Desert: By a vote of 69 for and 29 against, the Senate sent the House a bill (S 21) to set aside much of the California desert from commercial and recreational use. The bill authorizes \$125 million over five years to implement the legislation. It gives federal protection to 6.4 million of the approximately 25 million desert acres in southern California.

In part, the bill establishes a 1.3 million-acre Death Valley National Park and a 1.2 million-acre Mojave National Park, and safeguards 3.7 million relatively pristine wilderness acres. Certain mining and grazing operations can continue in the pro-

TECTED areas but hunting is outlawed. During debate, questions were raised about finding money to deliver on the bill's promises without taking funds away from already strapped units of the National Park Service.

Supporter Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., said: "California's unique and precious resources belong to this entire nation. The people know it, and they come there in droves to see the ocean and mountains, the wetlands, the plains, the rivers and the desert."

Calling the bill a "land grab," opponent Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., said it "will result in even greater cutbacks in services and funding for our existing national parks." Furthermore, land will be closed off to multiple use. Innocent people will suffer economically and will lose access to a recreational resource.

A yes vote was to pass the bill. Michigan Senators Carl Levin, D, voted yes. Donald Riegle, D, voted yes.

East Mojave Desert: The Senate refused, 35 for and 62 against, an amendment to S 221 (above) keeping 1.2 million acres of California's East Mojave Desert under Bureau of Land Management jurisdiction. The amendment sought to block transfer to the National Park Service, which by law is more protective of the environment than the BLM.

Sponsor Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., said Congress should not add national parks while it lacks funds to maintain existing ones. "We have become model slumlords" of national park facilities, he said.

Opponent Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said the proposed Mojave National Park "is the centerpiece of this bill, and to make it a BLM (unit) is in fact a bill killer."

A yes vote supported Bureau of Land Management rather than National Park Service control of the East Mojave Desert. Carl Levin and Donald Riegle both voted no.

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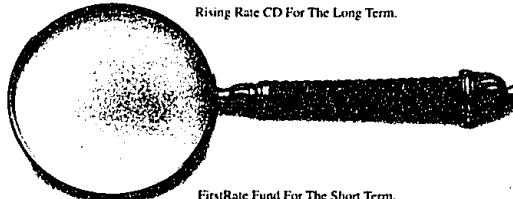
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