

Your Washington Review

by
Congressman
JERRY FORD



February 1, 1971

The 92nd Congress has convened. President Nixon has delivered his State of the Union Message. The Democrats in the House elected a new Speaker; Carl Albert of Oklahoma has become the 49th person in America's history to hold the third highest office in the federal government. Republicans in the House of Representatives re-elected your Congressman as their leader for the 4th two-year term. I am deeply grateful for this endorsement.

To the voters of Kent and Ionia Counties, I express my gratitude and appreciation for the opportunity to serve in the U. S. Congress. I welcome your observations and recommendations. If there is any way in which I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES: There was no business scheduled for the House last week but the Committee on Committees did get under way. As Minority Leader I serve as Chairman of this Committee which assigns Republican members to the various House committees. Such assignments are significant because it is the committees which first pass on and recommend bills for floor action.

Each state having at least one Republican Congressman is represented by one of its members on the Committee. But the member has votes equal to the number of Republicans from his state. Thus the member from Michigan casts 12 votes; California has 18 votes and Utah one.

Prior to the meeting of the Committee we had to work out with the Speaker and Majority Leader the number of minority members allocated to each legislative committee. This entailed a certain amount of bargaining.

THE SENIORITY RULE: Republicans in the House have modified their rules so that Chairmen or ranking minority members of committees will not automatically be determined by seniority. The Republican Committee on Committees will select the Chairmen (if Republicans control the House) or the ranking minority members. It is not required to designate the committee member with the longest consecutive service. The Committee's nomination must be confirmed by the entire Republican membership at a conference (caucus) meeting. Should the conference not endorse the Committee's selection, a new name will be submitted by the Committee.

I fully supported this change in the seniority system. The new method provides party responsibility and will insure capable and vigorous committee leadership.

The Democrats also modified the seniority rule on their appointments but adopted a slightly different approach.

THE 21-DAY OR 31-DAY RULE: The first floor fight of the new House involved an attempt to restrict the authority of the Committee on Rules. This committee acts as "the traffic cop of the House," scheduling legislation for floor action and sometimes refusing to permit certain legislation to come before the House. It is composed of ten Democrats and five Republicans but the Democratic leaders wanted to clip its wings even though they dominate it by a 2 to 1 margin.

They proposed that if the Committee on Rules does not report a bill within ten days, the Chairman of the legislative committee may file a request for action after 21 days. At the expiration of that time (which would be at least 31 days) the Speaker of the House, at his discretion, could bring the legislation to the floor for debate and a vote.

Following a lengthy discussion the House rejected the new proposal. The majority, and it was bi-partisan, felt that the Committee on Rules serves a useful purpose and that it would not be wise to give the Speaker dictatorial power over legislation held by the Rules Committee. It was also pointed out that this Committee had not abused its authority; in the past four years the Committee has refused to grant a "rule" on only four out of 493 bills referred to it.

When I first came to Congress I voted for a 21-day rule which was adopted. Two years later I voted against the rule when it was abolished. Experience has demonstrated the need for an effective Committee on Rules even when it is dominated by the opposition party.

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED: Among the bills I have introduced in the new Congress is legislation which would prohibit federal officers or employees from dumping dredgings or other refuse material into navigable water, and another bill modeled after the Sax law in Michigan which would permit suits by citizens against those who cause pollution of water, land, or air. This is called the "Environmental Rights Act of 1971."

I also introduced bills to require reflectors on railroad cars so that they may more readily be seen at night at all grade crossings; to change the tariff duty on certain leather work gloves; to provide for a Distinguished Citizens Award for those who do an outstanding job of helping to solve national problems; and to increase from \$140 to \$400 per month the amount a widow with children can earn without losing her social security benefits.

AT HOME: I'm scheduled to be home on Friday to speak at Grand Valley State College and to meet with County officers, the League of Women Voters, and Malta Lodge. Two weeks ago I was at the Cherry Street office for a number of appointments.



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February 8, 1971

HOUSE ORGANIZES FOR ACTION

The House of Representatives is ready for business.

Last week Democrats and Republicans finished handing out committee assignments for new members and made changes requested by holdover members. The House cannot begin dealing with legislation until this is done. It is in the committees that legislation is shaped before it is sent to the House floor for a vote.

Members of the Congress press hard to get assigned to certain committees--places where they feel they can do their people back home the most good.

I serve as chairman of the House Republicans' Committee on Committees, which makes the committee assignments for GOP members of the House. This is a most difficult task that requires lots of backup work in my office. This year two Grand Rapids interns from Aquinas College--Gail Wingard and Mark Marin--helped my regular staff and at the same time learned how the committee assignment process works.

Now that the House is organized, we can begin work on the legislative agenda outlined by the President in his State of the Union Message.

HEALTH A TOP PRIORITY

Both the President and the Congress are assigning top priority to health legislation this year.

In his State of the Union Message, the President declared: "America has long been the wealthiest nation in the world. Now it is time we became the healthiest nation in the world."

The emphasis in the President's new health care program is on expanding the supply of medical manpower and facilities. It does not make sense to talk about a national health insurance scheme when the manpower and facilities to meet such a demand do not even exist.

The President also will propose a plan to help those who cannot afford even basic health care.

The President's approach would cost less than one-twentieth of what a cradle-to-grave national health insurance plan would cost.

It seems obvious that if national health insurance were put into effect, the demand for doctors' and hospital services would be so great it would push medical costs out of sight. And we all know that medical costs are extremely high now.

The proper approach, it seems to me, is to increase the supply of medical manpower and facilities and make more efficient use of those which now exist--rather than create a vastly expanded demand for more health services.

SHOWDOWN TIME ON TRANSPORTATION STRIKES

It is time the Congress quit running away from the question of what to do about national emergency labor disputes in the transportation industry.

That is what I told my colleagues in the House when the President again--as he did last year--sent the Congress his proposed Emergency Public Interest Protection Act.

The Emergency Public Interest Protection Act would bring the railroads and the airlines under the Taft-Hartley Act and would amend Taft-Hartley to give the President three additional options for handling national emergency labor disputes in transportation. The bill would give the President vital new authority to deal with such disputes.

Under the bill, the President could extend the initial 80-day cooling off period for another 30 days. Or he could order partial operation of the industry instead of allowing a strike to shut it down completely while negotiations continued. Or he could turn to the "final offer" alternative. Under that procedure, the final offers of labor and management would be turned over to a neutral board. That board ~~then would pick one offer or the other as being more reasonable and would order the~~ dispute settled on that basis.

Two months ago the nation was drawn to the edge of a crippling railroad shut-down because management and the unions could not reach agreement in the allotted time. A few weeks from now another railroad strike is a distinct possibility.

I don't know whether even two members of the House agree at this moment on how new legislation should read to improve the handling of national emergency labor disputes in transportation. But I think it is a shameful shirking of responsibility that the Congress has not even held hearings on the President's proposal.

I think this year hearings should be held promptly, and that Congress should then formulate a solution to the problem.

AGED TO GET HELP

The first bill introduced in the House this year--and rightly so--is legislation to increase Social Security benefits.

This bill would increase benefits 10 per cent across the board, retroactive to Jan. 1. For instance, the minimum would go from \$64 a month to \$70.40 for an individual and \$106.60 for a family. The maximum would rise from ~~\$176.70~~ to \$194.40 for an individual and \$322.40 for a family. 195.00

At present a retired person suffers a loss of some Social Security benefits if his earnings exceed \$1,680. Under the new bill, H.R. 1, the earnings limitation is increased to \$2,000.

Widows also would benefit under the new bill. Where a widow now is entitled only to 82.5 per cent of her late husband's Social Security benefits, she would receive 100 per cent under the new legislation at age 65.

Early action is expected on H.R. 1, which includes President Nixon's Family Assistance Program as well as Social Security changes.

We must act to help our elderly. Their crisis is growing. Recent figures show that the aged have less than half the income of those under 65 years of age. Only among the aged did the number of people living in poverty actually increase in the past two years. Medical costs have risen 20 per cent in the last two years, while Medicare continues to cover only half of all these costs.

A WAY TO STOP SMUT

Now, under a new law, the Post Office will put your name on an anti-obscenity list aimed at keeping "sexually oriented" mail out of your mailbox. All you need do is go to the Post Office and fill out a form which includes your name and address. A list is compiled of those who fill out the no-smut forms and is offered for sale to smut peddlers. If they send sexually oriented advertising to anyone whose name has been on the list for 30 days they will face severe criminal and civil penalties.

1971 CALENDARS

Many of you have received our 1971 calendars. Because of an additional printing we have about 200 more copies of this pictorial calendar. Written requests to Room H-230, The Capitol, Washington, D.C., 20515, will be honored as long as the supply lasts.

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February 15, 1971

PRESIDENT AIDS MICHIGAN POLLUTION FIGHT

Michigan would continue to move out front under a presidential recommendation for funding water pollution control in fiscal 1972.

President Nixon's budget asks \$2 billion for municipal sewage plant construction. Not all of the federal money would be used for new plants. Twenty-five per cent of it would be earmarked to reimburse states which have gone ahead with sewage plant construction in the absence of Federal contributions. This includes Michigan.

The State has advanced \$100 million, and our local communities some \$80 million.

President Nixon has proposed a \$12 billion three-year program of sewage plant construction, with the cost shared 50-50 by the Federal Government and the states and local communities.

Under this plan, Michigan would be eligible for \$120 million a year for three years in reimbursements for money advanced to cover Federal cost-shares. This would be more than enough to repay Michigan for its extra-ordinary water pollution control efforts and would put the state way out ahead of the rest of the nation.

BOATER POLLUTING UNDER ATTACK

Members of the State Legislature's Conservation and Recreation Committee recently met with Michigan's congressional delegation to talk over sewage plant cost reimbursement and other water pollution problems.

As a result of that meeting, the Federal Water Quality Administration (FWQA) is under fire from the Michigan delegation.

Michigan has a new law which requires all boats moored or operating on Michigan waters to retain all sewage wastes until they can be disposed of at an approved on-shore facility.

FWQA has drafted some preliminary regulations which would allow boats to make pollutional discharges into the water if they use certain so-called pollution control devices.

State legislators understandably are very disturbed about the inferior Federal standard in such cases. I am backing a protest which has been filed with the FWQA. Where states have more stringent standards than the Federal Government, their standards should prevail.

DREDGE POLLUTION AT CRITICAL POINT

I have long sought to ban the dumping of polluted material dredged up from Lake Michigan harbors back into the open waters of the lake.

Last December the Congress passed legislation which provides for on-shore disposal of such polluted material. But it requires local communities in the Great Lakes region to pay 25 per cent of the cost plus providing the land and the necessary easements. This is a tremendous problem for our local communities.

One answer is that the Army Corps of Engineers has the power to waive the 25 per cent cost-sharing requirement where local communities are engaged in water pollution abatement programs. Further study of this problem is needed.

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Legislatively, nothing much will happen in Congress over the next few weeks because the wheels are just starting to turn. But meantime the President is busy sending the Congress messages spelling out his legislative goals.

Chief among these were messages calling for sharing of Federal revenue with the cities and states and a far-ranging program to enhance the quality of our physical environment.

The President's program is so broad that he will be sending the Congress 14 bills to implement it.

I anticipated one of the President's recommendations with my own bill to permit suits by citizens against polluters. The Clean Air Amendments of 1970 have already provided such authority in connection with air pollution. But there remains a need to give citizens the power to sue in cases involving water pollution. My bill to provide this power already is in the hopper.

One of the environment-enhancing actions taken by the President has special significance for Michigan.

All but a few Michigan paper manufacturers use recycled waste materials in their products and are finding the competition tough because their costs are higher than the users of virgin fibers.

Now the President has ordered that the Government buy paper products--where possible--with 3 to 50 per cent of recycled materials in it.

ECONOMY REBOUNDS

The economy clearly is making a comeback from the doldrums of 1970.

Not only is auto production setting a rapid pace, but housing starts have spurred ahead nationally.

In December, housing starts climbed to a 20-year high. On an annual basis, December starts reached 1,987,000 units. This was a 17 per cent jump over November.

Single family starts rose to an annual rate of 1,204,000 units from 930,000 units in November--up 29 per cent. Multi-family starts rose to 679,000 units, up 5 per cent from the November rate of 647,000 units.

The issuing of building permits in December was even more spectacular. It reached an all-time high of 1,737,000 units, topping the November rate by 17 per cent and running 48 per cent above the rate for December 1969.

What happens to housing is the key to expansion in the economy in 1971 and 1972. The upsurge in housing can be counted on to help reduce unemployment throughout the nation.

MOON FLIGHTS ALREADY PAID FOR

Considerable attention has been focused on the cost of the Apollo 14 flight--\$400 million. What apparently is little known is that most of the spacecraft and rockets necessary for the Apollo program have already been paid for.

Spending for the Apollo program has dropped by more than \$1 billion since 1970.

Three Apollo flights have been cancelled. There are three more to come after Apollo 14, but the launching dates for these missions have been stretched out. The final flight will be in December 1972.

Space program emphasis now is on the orbital space shuttle--the idea of developing a reusable spaceship that will blast into orbit like a rocket but return to earth like an airplane. Because the spaceship would be reusable, there would be substantial cost savings.



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February 22, 1971

REVENUE SHARING WOULD HOLD DOWN TAXES

Michigan taxpayers have many good reasons for supporting President Nixon's plan to share \$5 billion and more in income tax revenue each year with the states and cities.

One of the best reasons came to light in Governor Milliken's recent radio-television report on Michigan's fiscal 1972 budget.

The Governor proposed a tax increase, to be delayed until Jan. 1, 1972. Then he said the amount of the tax increase would be reduced by the state's allocation under Federal revenue sharing.

Michigan's slice of the tax sharing pie is estimated at \$229 million. Of that sum, the State would get roughly half, and the other half would go to local units of government. That means the State tax hike would be reduced by about \$115 million.

This, of course, depends on whether the Democratic-controlled Congress approves revenue sharing.

It can be assumed that local units of government also would seek to hold back on tax increases if Federal revenue sharing became reality.

There are other good reasons for revenue sharing. If states and local units of government get Federal funds without strings attached, they will have the freedom to make more of their own decisions and pick their own priorities. This is government as our forefathers intended it--government that is closest to the people.

This is "Power to the People" in its best sense.

MORE RESEARCH ON PROBLEMS

More attention is being paid to solving society's problems--health, pollution, the need for new sources of energy, crime and transportation.

That is reflected in the new Federal Budget for fiscal 1972. The budget calls for much stronger support of research and development work at colleges and universities.

The budget would provide \$16.7 billion for total Federal research and development in fiscal '72, up 7.6 per cent from the \$15.5 billion in fiscal '71.

The research breakdown includes:

Civilian research-----	\$2.89 billion, up 13.8%
Defense Department research and development--	\$8.3 billion, up 12.3%
National Science Foundation research-----	\$468 million, up 44.5%
National Institutes of Health R&D-----	\$1.18 billion, up 11.8%
College and university R&D-----	\$1.9 billion, up 14.7%

Besides the additional emphasis on social problems, these proposed outlays for research focus on the need to increase U.S. eminence in basic research through the National Science Foundation. The budget also points up the necessity to rely more heavily on increased research and development to maintain our defense capability.

The research program at the National Science Foundation will give new emphasis to work in such fields as oceanography, the social sciences and engineering. The Foundation's national and special research programs will be more than doubled in fiscal 1972.

FIGHT AGAINST DISEASE STEPPED UP

The fiscal 1972 Federal Budget not only provides an extra \$100 million for the fight against cancer but additional funds for research into heart disease, sickle cell anemia and tooth decay.

Other major studies will be directed at lung diseases, the effects of environmental pollutants on health, a better understanding of mental disease and drug addiction, and prevention of the disabilities and diseases of infancy and early childhood.

To help meet the need for more health manpower, the budget includes \$95 million for a new initiative in support of health profession schools, plus funds to shorten the curriculum, expand medical school enrollments, train primary care physicians, and increase the use of physician assistants and other such personnel.

MY 'RUNAWAY PAPPY' BILL

I am going to try again. Back in 1949, when I first took my seat in Congress, I introduced a piece of legislation I called my Runaway Pappy Bill. This is a bill which gives fathers who have abandoned their families and fled to another state a choice of supporting their children or going to jail. I was unsuccessful in 1949, so I reintroduced the bill in 1950, and again in 1951. Now I am once more introducing it.

Judges like the late Circuit Judge Dale Souter of Kent County were strongly in support of the bill but the Judicial Conference, as such, was opposed. So was the Council of State Governments. So I gave up. But the number of letters from abandoned wives and mothers has increased lately, and it may be that the prospect for such legislation has improved. I am going to give it another try.

My Runaway Pappy Bill would do two things. It would make it a crime for a man to move out of a state to avoid obeying a State court order for the support of his family. It also would make family support orders enforceable in federal court in the state to which a man has fled. It would not be necessary to bring him back.

So the idea is to deter a man from skipping the state in the first place or to force him to pay up if he has gone on the lam. As the late Judge Souter used to say, a man who abandons his children is perpetrating a more serious crime against society than the individual who steals an automobile.

The opposition to this bill has come from those who contend that the states are handling the problem. Experience indicates that this is just not true. We need the help of the Federal Government to get at husbands and fathers who refuse to support their children and who flee to another state to escape their responsibilities. We must throw the forces of the Federal Government into pursuit of fathers who run off and leave their families without means of support.

Not only does a fugitive father make life miserable for his former wife and his children, but such families usually wind up on public assistance and the taxpayer has to carry the load. It's a good guess such welfare costs hundreds of millions a year.

FOREIGN STUDY SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

In cooperation with the American Institute for Foreign Study, I am offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a high school junior for six weeks of study and travel in Europe this summer. I have sent complete information regarding this scholarship to every high school principal in Kent and Ionia Counties. Any 11th grader in Kent and Ionia who is interested may obtain further information from the school principal.



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March 1, 1971

BATTLES OVER ISSUES TAKING SHAPE

The issues are coming into focus. Battle lines are being drawn in the Congress over several key public issues.

In a Senate subcommittee, Sen. Kennedy, D-Mass., has zeroed in on the Nixon Administration's health insurance proposals. Sen. Kennedy has introduced his own massive health insurance bill.

The Nation's governors met in Washington last week and did some lobbying for revenue sharing on Capitol Hill.

The President asked Congress for consumer protection legislation--as he did last year--and immediately the Democratic congressional leadership speeded up plans to move its own bill.

DIFFERENCES POINTED UP

There are sharp differences between the Administration's health insurance plan and Kennedy's.

The Administration would build on the present health insurance system by requiring all employers to pay most of the cost of premiums for their workers. There would be payments as high as \$50,000 for catastrophic illness. The program also includes a Government-supported family health insurance plan for low income families with children, not covered by the employer plan. There would be prepaid employer-employee contributions for Medicare to provide one-half the cost, with general revenue providing the other half. The Medicaid program for the aged, blind and disabled would continue.

The Kennedy plan would substitute a massive Federal program for all of the private health insurance plans now in existence. It would cost \$70-\$77 billion a year.

The Nixon proposal would draw primarily on the private economy for financing. The Kennedy proposal would draw on the Federal Treasury for 50 per cent of its financing. The rest would come from a 3.5 per cent payroll tax on employers, plus a 1 per cent tax on employees earning up to \$15,000 a year and 2.5 per cent on those earning more.

The health insurance industry would be regulated under the Nixon plan.

BUYER'S BILL OF RIGHTS VS. NEW AGENCY

President Nixon has set up a new Office of Consumer Affairs in the Executive Office of the President and has asked Congress to enact a Buyer's Bill of Rights. This legislation would ban hazardous consumer products, regulate warranties, and quickly stop allegedly deceptive advertising and sales practices.

The Democrats have proposed creation of an independent consumer protection agency. They plan fast congressional action on their measure, sponsored by Rep. Benjamin Rosenthal, D-N.Y.

President Nixon is opposed to setting up a separate Federal agency on consumer protection. He believes advocacy is needed, however, on such matters as fraud and utility rates. He will send Congress a specific proposal after April 20.

REVENUE SHARING VS. WELFARE TAKEOVER

Some opponents of Federal revenue sharing are talking about a complete Federal takeover of welfare costs instead.

I personally do not believe that a Federal takeover of welfare would be good for the country, nor is it politically feasible.

First of all, if the Federal Government took over all welfare costs, just three states--New York, California and Massachusetts--would get 51 per cent of the dollar benefit. This would come from your federal taxes.

Second, a Federal takeover of welfare would not serve to bail out local governments now in financial distress and it would move the center of political power even more forcibly to Washington.

We need both welfare reform and revenue sharing. But we do not need--and we must not have--complete Federalization of the welfare system.

KENT, IONIA REVENUE SHARES ANNOUNCED

The Administration has broken down the estimated first-year \$229 million Michigan allocation under proposed revenue sharing into State and local shares. I sponsored the legislation and will do all possible for its enactment but we have some rough legislative hurdles ahead, including the opposition of the House Democratic leadership.

Of the \$229 million, the State would get \$128,883,405 and Michigan's local units of government \$100,265,427.

The cities would receive \$66,193,735; the counties, \$29,707,252; and the townships, \$4,365,050.

Kent County's share would be \$1,363,217, and Ionia County's would be \$90,308.

Cities in Kent County would receive funds as follows: Grand Rapids, \$2,215,551; East Grand Rapids, \$101,494; Grandville, \$44,977; Lowell, 16,366; Sparta Village, \$15,777; Wyoming, \$381,602; and Walker, \$29,436.

Cities in Ionia County would get the following amounts: Belding, \$36,265; Ionia, \$144,587; and Portland Village, \$15,895.

Townships in Kent County would share as follows: Ada, \$4,121; Alpine, \$2,590; Byron, \$10,597; Caledonia, \$1,531; Cannon, \$235; Cascade, \$5,887; Gaines, \$2,002; Grand Rapids, \$4,003; Paris, \$53,219; Plainfield, \$9,773; Sparta, \$3,061.

Townships in Ionia County would benefit as follows: Berlin, \$235; Easton, \$4,121; Lyons, \$706; Odessa, \$1,060; and Portland, \$2,826.

BILLS I HAVE SPONSORED

I have introduced a bill to make Pine Rest Christian Hospital eligible for Federal staffing grants. I have also co-sponsored a bipartisan package of four campaign financing reform bills and a bill to create a national cemetery at Fort Custer, Mich.

Pine Rest now is ineligible for Federal staffing money because it takes into consideration a person's religion in deciding whether such a person may practice in its facilities or be employed on its staff. This is considered a bona fide occupational qualification in this instance.

The bipartisan campaign financing reform bills are intended to place a meaningful ceiling on campaign expenditures. This package would overhaul a 46-year-old law which is completely unrealistic. In 1966 and again in 1967, I sponsored comprehensive legislation to replace this out-of-date federal campaign financing law.

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March 8, 1971

HOUSE PASSES FIRST LEGISLATION

The House last week passed its first legislation of this session--two veterans bills and a debt limit increase bill.

I joined other members in a unanimous voice vote for the two veterans bills.

One measure extends from six months to nine the length of time community nursing home care may be provided a veteran at Federal Government expense.

The other provides home mortgage insurance, up to \$30,000, for service-connected paraplegic and quadriplegic veterans. The eligible veteran will pay 10% of the premiums.

The Administrator of Veterans Affairs raised questions in both instances. The Administrator now has the discretionary power to extend the nursing home care period beyond six months, and he wanted it left that way. He felt that the mortgage insurance bill discriminates against those disabled veterans who are not eligible for specially adapted housing grants from the Government and therefore are not eligible for mortgage insurance under the new bill.

HOUSE ACTS ON DEBT

The House approved a bill which increases the permanent national debt limit by \$20 billion and the temporary debt limit by \$15 billion. The bill puts the debt limit temporarily at \$430 billion but provides that it drop down to \$400 billion after June 30, 1972.

The House Ways and Means Committee declared that the debt limit had to be increased so the U.S. Treasury could pay all the government's bills during the time when demands on the Treasury are the heaviest. Since the Federal Government is operating at a deficit, borrowing is necessary to pay some of the bills. The amount of borrowing is circumscribed by the debt limit.

The last Congress overspent the President's budget by \$6.6 billion--due to action and inaction. When the President sought to hold down congressional spending, the Democratic-controlled Congress overrode his vetoes.

The vote on raising the debt limit was 227 to 112. I voted for it as an action that had to be taken.

The real fight of the day came on an Administration proposal to waive the 4.25 per cent interest rate ceiling on longterm U.S. Treasury bonds so that up to \$10 billion worth of such bonds can be sold.

The powerful Ways and Means chairman, Rep. Wilbur Mills, D-Ark., backed the Administration's position because sticking with the 4.25 per cent interest limitation makes management of the Federal debt costly and inefficient. This artificial limitation drives up the rate on the Government's short-term securities.

I joined Mills in supporting the proposal. Six former secretaries of the Treasury, Democrats and Republicans, have favored this proposal as a means of saving tax dollars. They recognized that it is the marketplace which determines interest rates, not the Congress.

House members favoring a temporary lifting of the 4.25 per cent bond interest rate prevailed, 212 to 179.

(more)

CENTER WORKS ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

As a person who is intensely interested in restoring our environment, I was encouraged recently by a visit from Peter Wege of Grand Rapids.

Pete is president of the Center for Environmental Study in Grand Rapids, a non-profit organization devoted to a study of environmental problems of the Grand Rapids area. Pete stopped by my Washington office to bring me up to date on the Center's activities.

The Center was formed after a six-month study by the Wege Foundation. It now is getting financial support from the Kellogg Foundation for a three-year study of environmental needs in the Grand Rapids Area.

The Center has task forces working on various environmental problems. These task forces will develop information and propose constructive programs for community action.

You may have seen the Center's report on Kent County's solid waste problem. It is an excellent report which spells out possible courses of action. Local officials should find it useful.

The Center's aim is to coordinate the efforts of industry, government and private citizens to improve the environmental quality of Kent County. I most heartily endorse this project and will do everything I can to help.

Pete Wege brought to my attention the Center's moves to adapt the systems approach to environmental quality management.

I was so impressed by the work the Center has done that I sent the Center's reports to Russell Train, chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality. The work being done by the Center in Grand Rapids may prove useful as a model for other communities throughout the nation.

I INSPECT CAPITOL BOMBING SITE

The day of the bombing on the first floor of the U.S. Capitol Building, Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott and I toured the area damaged by the explosion.

My office is on the second floor of the Capitol at the rear of the building, otherwise known as the West Front. The scene of the bombing was an area just off the small rotunda, which is directly below the large second-floor rotunda immediately beneath the Capitol dome.

The Capitol bombing was an outrage--the act of a sick mind. Whatever the motivation, an act of this kind is senseless.

Although security at the Capitol must be tightened, the building must be kept fully open to the public. To shut out the public would be to take an action which would be applauded by today's revolutionaries. They would like to see the American people alienated from their government.

VISITS TO THE DISTRICT

I have been in the Fifth District (Kent and Ionia Counties) 10 days since the beginning of the year while the new Congress has been organizing.

My visits took place on Jan. 11, 12, 18, and 19, and on Feb. 5, 6, 18, 19, 20, and 27. I met with various groups in the District and held office hours for individuals with personal problems.

In addition, I will be in Ionia March 11 for a Lincoln Day Dinner and in Grand Rapids March 26 for an Advertising Club luncheon and a meeting with a Senior Citizens group at the XYZ Center.

WASHINGTON REVIEW

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Kent and Ionias Counties*

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March 15, 1971

SST DECISION FACES HOUSE

The House shortly will vote on whether to provide an additional \$134 million to finance development of the U.S. supersonic transport (SST) from March 30 through June 30.

The overall program calls for the Government to spend \$1.342 billion to build two prototypes (test models) of the SST and pay for prior research and development.

To date, \$864 million has been spent on developing the plane.

If the Federal Government cancelled the SST, it would have to pay contract penalties of \$119 million.

So the basic decision now facing the House is whether to write off nearly \$1 billion and wind up with nothing or to spend an extra \$300 million and produce two prototypes of the world's finest commercial airplane.

WHY A FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN THE SST?

The Government is initially putting up most of the money for the SST prototypes because no single company or joint private enterprise can afford the project. Besides, the Government funds are a loan.

The full cost of the prototypes, including prior research and development, is \$1.7 billion. The Government is providing \$1.3 billion plus. This must be repaid in royalties from sale of the plane. Private industry is supplying the rest of the funds. The aircraft manufacturer has invested \$228 million; the engine manufacturer, \$94 million; and others, including commercial airlines, \$81 million.

Every plane sold will return a royalty to the Government. The Government will recover its investment of \$1.3 billion when the 300th plane is delivered. Already 122 are on order, with down payments totaling \$81 million. Boeing, the manufacturer of the SST airframe, estimates SST sales at more than 500. If 500 are sold, the Government will net a \$1 billion profit.

The SST program is unique. It will make money for the Government, not take money from the Government.

There are those who claim the SST is a bad priority. But the opposite is true. SST jobs and profits will generate tax revenues that can be used for social purposes. And if the SST returns the Government a \$1 billion profit, that money could build 100 large hospitals, 400 schools, and 100,000 units of housing.

THE SST WILL BOOST THE ECONOMY

The SST will help the economy in a number of ways. It will:

*Generate 150,000 direct and indirect jobs

*Produce tax revenues of between \$6 and \$10 billion

*Generate between \$22 and \$50 billion in balance of trade between 1978 and 1990

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS ANSWERED

I am as much concerned about the environment as anyone else. But there is no valid evidence that SST operations would be environmentally harmful.

(more)

There is no sonic boom problem.

The SST will fly at subsonic speeds over land, and then accelerate to 1,800 miles an hour when it is well out over the ocean.

There is no noise problem.

The SST will make half as much noise for airport neighbors as present jumbo jets because it will be over the community a much shorter time due to steep angle takeoffs and landing approaches. Also, General Electric has redesigned the engine so that airport noise--noise on the ground--will be less than the strict standard set by the Federal Aviation Administration.

There is no oil problem.

One of the myths promoted by opponents of the SST is that it will use huge quantities of the world's oil and spur oil production, thus contributing to pollution. The truth is that in 1990, all commercial aviation together will account for some 2 per cent of the world's oil consumption. The world's SST's will be using only a fraction of this 2 per cent or about 1/300th. This figure is based on an estimate that SST's will be carrying some 80 million passengers a year by 1990.

The ozone question presents no problem.

There are theories that the SST may disrupt the stratospheric ozone layer which shields us from harmful ultraviolet rays. However, the weight of scientific opinion refutes such theories. This opinion is based on 20 years of experience with supersonic military flight. Most people do not realize that the U.S. has flown thousands of military supersonic flights with no identifiable impact on the world's atmosphere. Reputable scientists have just testified before Congress that tests can provide the authoritative answer in about two months. The Department of Transportation currently is researching the ozone question. Dr. William W. Kellogg, who headed up a 70-man M.I.T. study of the SST, stated that "nowhere have we indicated (in our report) that we believe SST development should be held up pending the results" of studies such as that now under way.

THE SST'S ARE FLYING

The Russians, the French and the British are already flying their SST's. The Russians were first. They plan to inaugurate commercial flights between Moscow and Calcutta with their TU-144 SST in October 1971 and they are already promoting the TU-144 for sale to the airlines.

The British and French are test-flying their supersonic transport, the Concorde. Reports are that it is meeting or exceeding most of the performance specifications.

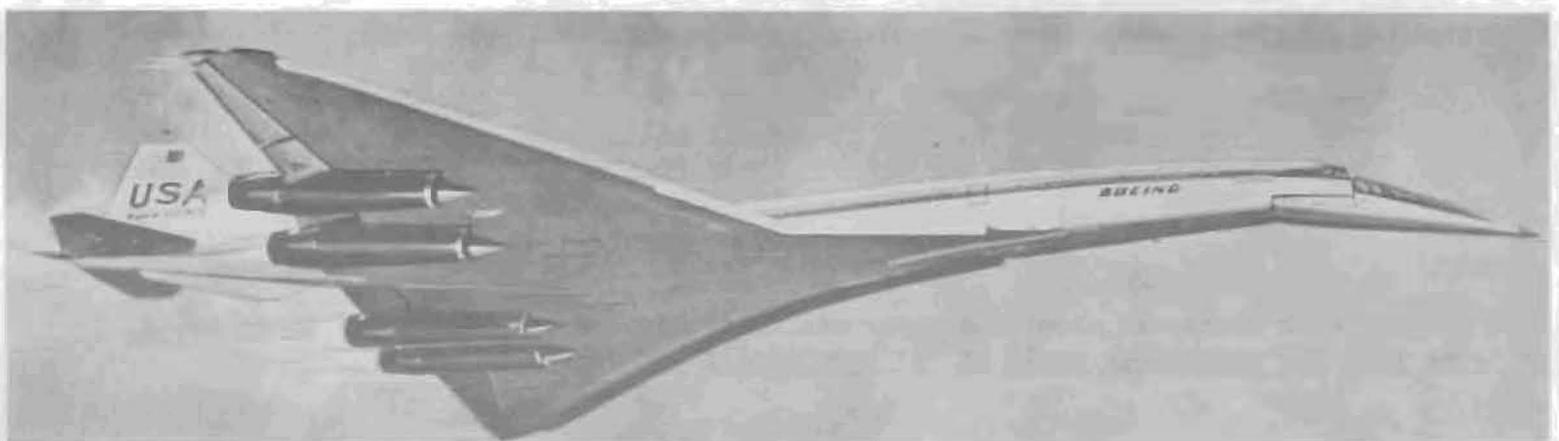
However, the U.S. SST is a better plane than both the TU-144 and the Concorde--and the world will buy our version if we build it. If the Congress grounds the SST, it means the Russians or the French and British supersonic commercial aircraft will take over the skies of the world.

MY POSITION

It's not just intercontinental airline travelers who need the SST. Actually, we all need it--because it will help our economy tremendously. This is why George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, has strongly endorsed the program.

But despite the boost to our economy I would be opposed to the SST if I seriously believed it would be environmentally offensive.

I think we should build the prototypes, then decide whether to proceed with production.



WASHINGTON REVIEW

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Kent and Ionia Counties*

JERRY FORD

March 22, 1971

HIGHER SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS UPCOMING

More than 26 million Americans who rely on Social Security benefits will be getting a 10 per cent across-the-board increase in payments, retroactive to last Jan. 1. The House approved the increase Tuesday, 358 to 3. The Senate had acted earlier, and the President has signed the bill into law.

The increase first will show up in the June checks. There also will be a separate check in June, covering the amount retroactive to Jan. 1.

I strongly favored the Social Security increase. Those on fixed incomes suffer the most from inflation. They need help. They are struggling to maintain a decent standard of living.

Now we must prepare to enact other improvements in the Social Security Act--a provision which automatically raises benefits whenever the cost of living rises substantially, and a provision increasing the outside earnings limitation.

FULL ENFRANCHISEMENT NEEDED FOR 18-YEAR-OLDS

The U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of allowing 18-year-olds to vote in national elections. Now it is only logical and right that we make 18-year-olds eligible to vote in state and local elections.

The House is expected to vote Tuesday on a constitutional amendment which will fully enfranchise 18-year-olds. I cosponsored that amendment. The Senate has already approved such an amendment on a unanimous vote.

I favored the 18-year-old voting amendment last year when the Congress sought to give 18-year-olds the vote in all elections by statute instead of by amending the constitution. Now that the Supreme Court has upheld that statute only as it applies to national elections, the result is chaos. We must remedy the situation.

I feel certain the House will overwhelmingly approve the 18-year-old voting amendment. I hope three-fourths of the states (38 are needed) then will ratify it in time for the 1972 elections. And I hope Michigan is the very first state to do so.

The proposed constitutional amendment offers today's young people a great opportunity to make their voices heard at all levels of government. They deserve that opportunity.

Today's young people are better educated and better informed than I was at their age. I believe the vast majority of them are looking for a chance to work through the system to improve the quality of life in America.

It is not enough to allow our young people to vote in national elections. They must be fully enfranchised.

HOUSE KILLS THE SST

The House Thursday made what I consider to be a grievous error. By a vote of 215 to 204 the House adopted an amendment withholding funds for continued development of the United States supersonic transport plane.

I voted against the amendment. I favored continued funding aimed at building two SST test models (prototypes).

(more)

In voting to kill the SST program, the House literally threw away nearly \$1 billion. The Federal Government has already invested \$864 million in development of the SST prototypes, and it will cost the Government at least an additional \$119 million in contract penalties to drop the project. Total, \$983 million.

The issue Thursday was whether to provide an additional \$134 million to keep the SST project going through June 30.

Total cost of developing the two SST prototypes was \$1.7 billion, with the Federal Government investing \$1.3 billion and private industry \$400 million. I favored building the two test models and then deciding whether private interests should proceed with production. Under the financing arrangements, the Government would have received a royalty on each plane sold. The Government would have recovered its investment with delivery of the 300th plane, and would have made a profit of \$1 billion if 500 planes were sold.

I was shocked and dismayed by the vote killing the SST. It means that the United States will be second best in many lines of scientific endeavor and will fall behind the Russians, the British and the French in commercial aviation. We will be buying from foreign nations, not building and selling, the commercial airplane of the future.

The House has taken a tragic action, a catastrophic action. I hope the Senate will show better judgment. If the Senate votes to reverse this action, it will be sustaining the position of three Presidents--John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon.

If the House decision stands, the Congress will be giving layoff slips to 13,000 aircraft workers--many in Michigan--who have been employed in building the SST prototypes. It will also mean the loss of 150,000 jobs that would have been created in the United States for a 10-year period if the SST had gone into the production stage.

I favored building the SST prototypes for good and sound reasons. Objections to the SST on environmental grounds were being met. SST production would have given the economy a lift, creating up to 150,000 jobs, generating \$6 to \$10 billion in tax revenue, and generating between \$22 and \$50 billion in favorable balance of trade between 1978 and 1990.

Grounding of the SST will hurt the economy and result in an estimated \$17 billion balance of trade deficit.

I INTRODUCE KENTWOOD HOUSING BILL

I am introducing a bill which would make possible a 150-unit housing project in Kentwood, which Michigan Consolidated Gas Company planned to build until barred from doing so by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Under present law, the SEC ruled last June 22, a public utility holding company like Michigan Consolidated Gas cannot engage in housing activity. My bill would permit such companies to participate in government-assisted low and moderate income housing programs.

If my bill is enacted, Michigan Consolidated Gas will be able to go ahead with a 175-unit project in Muskegon and a 213-unit project in Romulus as well as the Kentwood project. It also is expected that the Kentwood project ultimately would be expanded to 302 homes.

We need the Kentwood project, both to help meet low income housing needs in our area and to provide additional employment.

I COSPONSOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BILLS

I have cosponsored, with Rep. Guy Vanderjagt of Cadillac, a bill aimed at getting junked automobiles off our streets and out of our countryside. Besides removing eyesores, the bill would recycle otherwise wasted steel and other metals.

The measure would earmark \$19 million of Federal auto excise tax receipts to aid the states in financing collection programs. The bill also would offer rapid tax writeoffs to scrap producers who install modern equipment to reduce old cars to reusable scrap.

I have also cosponsored four Administration water pollution control bills. One would provide grants to states to develop improved water pollution control programs. Another revises the Federal aid formula for sewage plant construction to better meet local needs. A third empowers the Environmental Protection Agency to set national water and effluent standards and to enforce them. And the fourth would set up an Environmental Financing Authority to make sure that no local community is unable to finance its cost-share of a sewage disposal plant.