

WASHINGTON REVIEW

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Michigan's Fifth District*

JERRY FORD

January 8, 1973

A NEW CONGRESS IS BORN

The 93rd Congress came to life last Wednesday with the swearing in of members-elect.

The opening day of a new Congress is always uniquely exciting although everyone knows just how the script will go.

The floor of the House is a scene of color and bustle. Members-elect stand in the aisles and in the well of the House shaking hands and swapping greetings. Newly-elected members usually sit sedately and expectantly. There are many youngsters sitting in the chairs normally occupied only by members of the House...because on opening day members are privileged to have their families sit with them. It is, in every sense of the word, an "occasion."

The "business" of the House on the opening day of the new Congress began last Wednesday, as it does every two years, with a roll call of the members-elect. This roll call is by states, alphabetically.

The roll call of the 435 members-elect of the House included the names of 69 new members--43 of them Republicans, 25 Democrats, and one Independent-Conservative.

One thing has not changed in Congress. The Democrats are in control, which is why Richard Nixon's tremendous victory last November has been called "a lonely landslide." The Democrats are in charge in the Senate, 57 to 43, a net increase of two Democratic seats. The numbers in the House are 240 Democrats, 192 Republicans and three vacancies, a net pickup of 13 for the Republican Party.

After the roll call of House members-elect last Wednesday, there was an election held for the office of Speaker of the House--just as though the outcome was not foreordained by the fact that Democrats greatly outnumber Republicans in the House.

Rep. Carl Albert of Oklahoma was the Democrats' candidate. I was nominated by the Republican members.

The vote, which was hardly unexpected, was 236 for Albert and 188 for me. The members, of course, vote their party affiliation.

House Republicans had chosen me as their floor leader on Wednesday morning, which means that I will be the chief spokesman for Republican members of the House for a fifth consecutive two-year term. I deem this a high honor, and I am most grateful for it.

SPEAKER TAKES THE CHAIR

For the fifth time I had the privilege of presenting a newly-elected Speaker to the House of Representatives.

With tongue in cheek, I told the House: "I am a little bit disappointed about losing this contest for the speakership, but after five defeats you learn to grit your teeth and smile."

In other remarks, I said to my colleagues: "Never before have we been under closer scrutiny by the public than today, with all the advances in communications and instant analysis, and with the liberalization of our own rules and procedures. So I urge you all, and particularly the new Members, to bear in mind that you represent the House itself in all that you do. I, for one, pray that we shall represent the House in the 93rd Congress with honor and with pride."

I then presented Carl Albert to the House as "one of my oldest and dearest friends...a Speaker of scrupulous honesty and fairness, a staunch champion of the rights and privileges of all Members and of the great traditions of this body."

In responding to my introduction, Speaker Albert said: "I know that my old friend, the distinguished minority leader, Gerald Ford, will stand with me and work with me to help make the House a forum for effective national leadership...and at the same time a responsible instrument of the people's will."

Albert continued: "Mr. Ford and I have differed in the past; no doubt we will differ from time to time in the future. But we have never differed on the conviction that the House of Representatives must always safeguard its constitutional role as a strong and influential branch of our National Government."

A STEP BACKWARD

Shortly after Speaker Albert took the oath of office, debate broke out in the House over a Democratic move to change the rules by which the House operates.

Republicans strongly challenged a proposal permitting legislation to be brought up on the House floor under suspension of the rules not only on the first and third Mondays of each month but also on the first and third Tuesdays. This is twice the amount of time allotted to suspensions in the last Congress.

Under this procedure--suspension of the rules--a bill can be debated only for 40 minutes, 20 minutes to a side, and is not open to any kind of amendment. However, it takes two-thirds of those present and voting to pass a bill brought up under suspension.

Republicans fought this rules change as an expansion of "gag rule," an attempt to pave the way for the ramming through of important pieces of legislation without adequate debate and without opportunity for amendment.

There have been times when enormously complex bills involving hundreds of millions of dollars have been brought before the House under suspension of the rules. Under this suspension procedure--or "closed rule" or "gag rule"--the Speaker of the House has absolute authority to bring a bill before the House.

Rep. John Anderson of Illinois, chairman of the House Republican Conference, pointed out that in the 92nd Congress the House took up such important legislation as the Strip Mining Reclamation Act, the Community Mental Health Centers Act, the Omnibus Rivers and Harbors and Flood Control Act, and the Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention Program under "suspension." These were measures involving more than \$1 billion in Federal expenditures.

I vigorously objected to the proposed rule change as "a step backward from reform" at a time when the American people are looking to the Congress to reform and reinvigorate itself. This, I said, was "retrogression from progress." We should be making the processes of the House more responsive to the will of the people, and this was a step in the opposite direction.

Despite the strenuous objections of Republicans, the House voted 208 to 204 to make this change in the House rules.

A TAX CREDIT FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL TUITION

On opening day I introduced a bill which would provide a tax credit of 50 per cent--up to \$200--for tuition paid by parents to send a child to a nonprofit nonpublic school.

This bill was one which was approved by the House Ways and Means Committee late in the last session of Congress--too late for any action last year.



THE BUREAUCRACY NIXON WANTS TO CONTROL

At latest official count--

- On the White House staff, including executive offices: 2,594 people.
- In 11 Cabinet departments: more than 1.7 million employes.
- In 82 independent agencies, commissions and boards: nearly 1.1 million people.

ALL TOLD: 2.8 million people are employed in the executive branch of Government. Of that total, President Nixon and his top aides have discretion over an estimated 2,800 jobs--with the rest comprised of career workers.

THE TASK CONFRONTING NIXON: controlling a vast bureaucracy with appointive power over only 1 in every 1,000 jobs.

Basic data: House-Senate Committee on Reduction of Federal Expenditures

Parents of nonpublic students pay taxes to support public education, and they pay tuition so their youngsters may receive the special spiritual guidance offered by a nonpublic school. I believe we should subtract at least part of what they pay in nonpublic school tuition from their income tax bills. That, I think, is only fair.

#

WASHINGTON REVIEW

A Report
From Your Congressman



Serving
Michigan's Fifth District

JERRY FORD

January 29, 1973

HOPE FOR A LASTING PEACE

The long nightmare of Vietnam is ending for Americans. I am very happy about the peace settlement. I am happy not only because the fighting has stopped and American POW's will be coming home--but because we have achieved the kind of peace which will give South Vietnam a chance to survive as a non-Communist entity. We have achieved an honorable peace, a peace that has a chance to stick, a chance to last. I became convinced of this when I learned the conditions of the peace agreement and heard Presidential national security advisor Henry Kissinger explain the provisions for members of the House last Friday afternoon.

There are some Americans, particularly those who wanted peace in Vietnam on any terms, who are saying we could have had peace long ago. Perhaps so, but surrender would not have solved anything. That attitude ignores our basic commitment in Vietnam--the fact that we went to South Vietnam's aid with the purpose of thwarting Communist aggression. Vietnam was actually the final and pivotal battle of the Cold War. It may prove to be one of the building blocks of a future generation of peace for all the peoples of the world.

NATION MOURNS LBJ

The body of former President Lyndon Baines Johnson lay in state in the rotunda of the Capitol last Wednesday while an estimated 40,000 mourners filed by the casket, paying their last respects to this most forceful Chief Executive. Betty and I attended the graveside services at the LBJ Ranch.

It was a curious coincidence--and most fitting--that President Nixon's announcement of a ceasefire in Vietnam and the scheduled signing of the Vietnam peace agreement should have come at a time when the Nation was grieving over Lyndon Johnson's death.



Although I disagreed with the military tactics Lyndon Johnson used in Vietnam, I admired him for his determination to stay the course. He and I were close friends--and I cherished that friendship.

HOUSE READY

The House is now ready for legislative business.

The President's Budget for fiscal 1974 will provide us with guidelines on fiscal matters and priorities. The State of the Union Message will sketch out broad goals and objectives.

CHINESE ACROBATS VISIT CAPITOL -- These members of the spectacular Shenyang acrobatic troupe chatted with me during their tour of the Capitol Building. Members of the Boggs-Ford group which visited China last summer saw the acrobats perform in Shenyang.

Committee assignments have been made. This year Barbara Bull of Casnovia, an intern from Mt. Holyoke College, helped my staff with this work and did an excellent job.

FIFTH DISTRICT FOLKS ATTEND INAUGURATION

More than 100 people from the Fifth Congressional District came to Washington to see Richard Nixon sworn in for a second term as the 37th President of the United States.

District visitors included 34 young Latvian dancers who performed during a Salute to America's Heritage program at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. These dancers, so colorful and dash-
ing in their native costumes, put on a show that was a smash. Mrs. Nixon was so entranced that she personally commended them.

The President set the tone for his second term in his inaugural address. He pointed up America's role as peacemaker to the world but noted that we will no longer make every other nation's conflict our own. His plea for peace was most moving. He offered America's help to those countries willing to help themselves, and he extended the hand of friendship to nations with ideologies vastly different from ours.

The President also warned Americans against a retreat into isolationism--and I strongly endorse that position.

As for the President's comments on the domestic scene, these clearly underscored the Nixon Administration's determination to shift the Federal Government from a role of paternalism to one of partnership with local officials and reliance on the American people. I fully subscribe to his call for new ways to meet our needs. Some of the old approaches have failed. As the President so eloquently said, we must seek solutions at the local level and we must renew our faith in ourselves.

I approve of the President's attempts to reduce the Federal Government's role in the daily lives of Americans and to hold down Federal spending.

Incidentally, House Speaker Carl Albert, House Majority Leader Thomas O'Neill, and I represented the House on the Joint House-Senate Committee which made plans for the inauguration.



LATVIAN DANCERS AT INAUGURAL

FARM BARGAINING BILL

Last Wednesday I introduced a bill I call the Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act of 1973.

This bill is aimed at eliminating the sad situation that arose last fall when Michigan apple growers felt compelled to picket fruit processors to get "living-income" prices for their apples.

The bill I have introduced would create a National Agricultural Bargaining Board. This board would set standards for the formation of associations of producers established for bargaining purposes and would generate the proper climate for good faith bargaining between farm producers and farm product processors.

I hope the Congress will see fit to adopt my legislation and that it will prove the answer to the woes of Michigan apple growers.

ELECTRONIC VOTING

The House last week used its new electronic voting system for the first time. It proved a success.

I am delighted that the House is modernizing its procedures.



JOINT INAUGURAL COMMITTEE AND STAFF

WASHINGTON REVIEW

Office Copy

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Michigan's Fifth District*

JERRY FORD

February 5, 1973

NOT PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE

CONGRESS RECEIVES BUDGET, STATE-OF-UNION MESSAGE

The President has sent Congress his budget for fiscal 1974 and the first in a series of State of the Union messages.

The State of the Union message usually is a shopping list, calling for all kinds of new programs. It is appropriate that the President this year will be making his wishes known in a series of State of the Union messages because he is intent not on spending money but on saving it.

The budget sets guidelines for Federal spending for the coming fiscal year. It also proposes a set of priorities which Congress can accept, modify or reject.

The President has urged the Congress to set a rigid ceiling of \$268.7 billion and all fiscal 1974 outlays before considering any spending bills. That recommendation makes sense.

The Congress should adopt that spending limitation and then consider the budget proposals in the light of the goals and objectives that shaped the budget. Whatever action Congress then takes on the budget, all of the appropriations bills should fit under the \$268.7 billion ceiling.

SPENDING HOLD-DOWN CALLED FOR

The American people believe that Federal spending can and should be held down. The 1974 budget indicates some ways in which this can be done.



BUMPER CROP OF INTERNS -- No less than seven college students worked in my Washington office during the month of January. They are, left to right, John Zadvinskis and John Leonard, both of Grand Rapids and both from Aquinas College, Richard Hawke of St. Paul, Minn., from St. Olaf College, Barbara Bull of Casnovia, from Mt. Holyoke College, Richard Lorenz of Chicago, from Southern Illinois University, Vicki Wilson of Grandville, from Kalamazoo College, and Jeffrey Telego of Grand Rapids, from Olivet College. All but Hawke and Miss Bull will stay on until spring.

It is true that the President plans to reduce or terminate some Federal programs, but he also recommends continued and increased support of many effective and needed programs.

We've heard mostly about the cutbacks. There are also some increases, such as a 20 per cent rise in funding for cancer research and an 8 per cent jump in anti-crime spending.

Where cutbacks are called for, the course the President has outlined is difficult and painful. But consider what would happen if we do not make the kind of choices represented by the budget recommendations.

The Administration is currently holding Federal spending to \$250 billion for fiscal 1973, and he is proposing fiscal 1974 outlays totalling \$268.7 billion. Without the restraints currently being employed and those proposed in the 1974 budget, 1973 spending would be over \$10 billion greater

and 1974 spending would be almost \$20 billion more.

Most importantly, these higher spending levels would mean either an across-the-board personal income tax surcharge of at least 15 per cent or an added deficit which would fuel the fires of inflation.

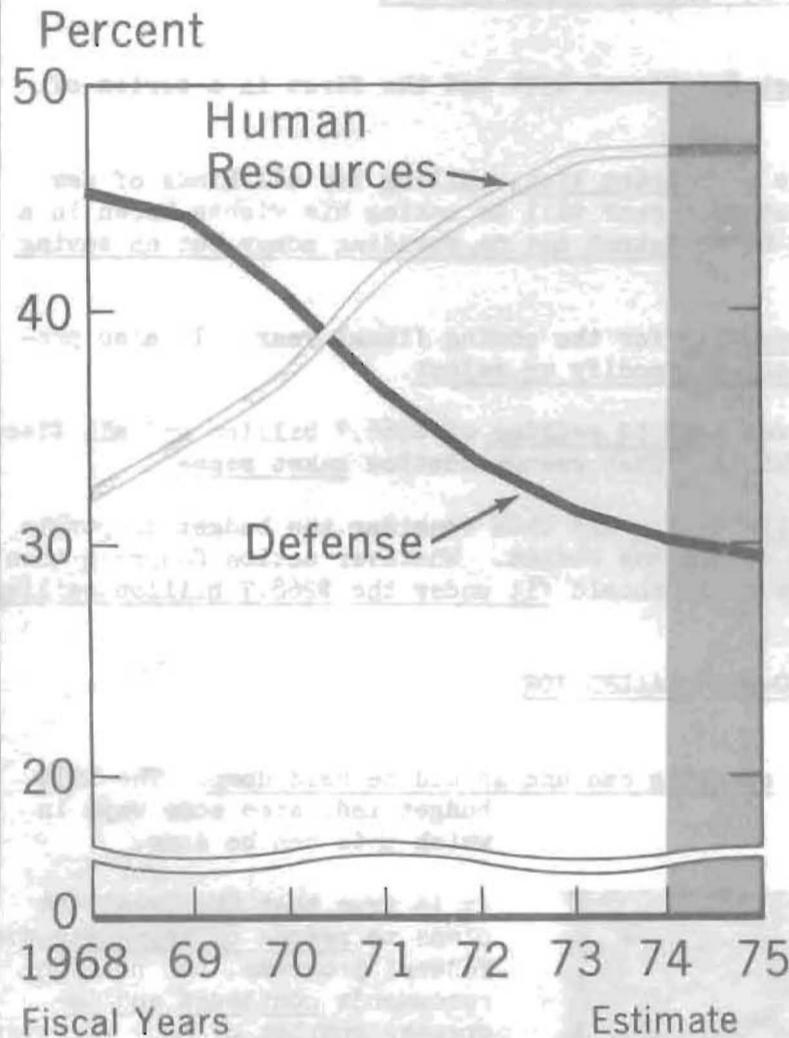
Yet the Democratic-controlled Congress is preparing for a direct confrontation with the President over the issue of spending.

The Senate has passed a \$593 million water project authorization identical with one vetoed by the President on economy grounds last year. Democratic leaders next will be trying to push it through the House.

The House Agriculture Committee has readied for floor action a bill to force the spending of \$225 million appropriated last year for the Rural Environmental Assistance Program.

Changing Priorities

Percent of Total Outlays



PRIORITY PICTURE REVERSED -- Although the President's budget calls for a rise in defense spending, this is due to increases in pay and prices. In 1968, 47 per cent of total Federal outlays went to defense and only 32 per cent to human resources. The Nixon budget allocates 30 per cent to defense and 47 per cent to human resources.

The President has put the tax and inflation monkey squarely on Congress's back. He has said, in effect: If there is a tax increase this year because of Federal spending in excess of my budget, Congress will be to blame. If there is no tax increase but a larger deficit, which adds to inflation, Congress will be to blame for the higher cost of living.

The budget reduces the Federal role in the daily lives of American citizens. And it puts the decision up to local units of government whether to continue such programs as Model Cities and Community Action.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

One budget highlight is a recommendation that Congress provide for \$300 million in tax credits to families sending their children to nonpublic schools. This ties in with my bill which provides a tax credit of 50 per cent or up to \$200 against the tuition paid for each child sent to nonpublic schools.

The budget includes \$5.7 billion for increased Social Security payments and an additional \$3.4 billion for Medicare and Medicaid. Antipollution spending and aid to college students also are up sharply.

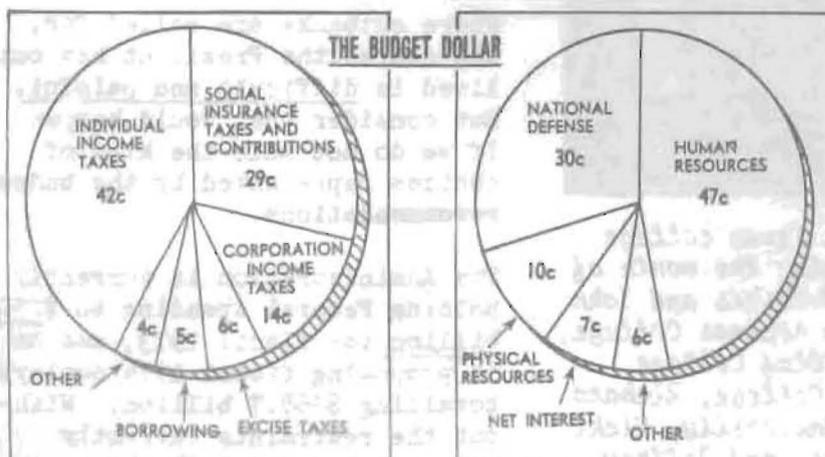
ECONOMIC REPORT

In the annual Economic Report sent to Congress last Wednesday, the President said 1972 was a very good year and 1973 can be a great year if Congress will hold down Federal spending.

The Council of Economic Advisers predicts a 10 per cent increase in Gross National Product to \$1.3 trillion; real growth in the economy--after inflation--of 6-3/4 per cent, and a reduction in unemployment to about 4-1/2 per cent by the end of this year.

DISTRICT ASSISTANT VISITS

Gordon Vander Till, my district assistant, will be at the village hall in Sparta on Feb. 19 and at the City Council Room in Belding on Feb. 26. Hours will be from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Vander Till will answer questions on my behalf.



WHERE IT COMES FROM WHERE IT GOES

*A Report
 From Your Congressman*



*Serving
 Michigan's Fifth District*

JERRY FORD

March 5, 1973

BATTLE OF THE BUDGET RAGES

The battle of the budget is on in earnest. Democrats in the Congress are deliberately setting up a series of dollar impoundment challenges involving the fiscal 1973 budget while lobbyists for various groups are swarming all over Capitol Hill protesting the spending hold-down in the fiscal 1974 budget.

The following actions have been taken by Congress in attempts to force the President to spend impounded fiscal 1973 funds:

- * The House on Feb. 14 voted 251 to 142 to require the Secretary of Agriculture to spend \$225 million on the Rural Environmental Assistance Program by next July 1--\$210 million more than the Administration has paid out in REAP funds.
- * The Senate on Feb. 20 passed by an 82-9 roll call vote a bill to increase substantially services for the elderly, after voting to keep in the bill two manpower sections particularly opposed by the Administration.
- * The Senate on Feb. 21 by a 69-20 roll call vote passed a bill to restore direct, 2 per cent rural electric and telephone loan programs which would cost \$455 million more than the Administration has paid out.
- * The House on Feb. 22 voted 269 to 95 to restore temporarily and retroactively disaster loans with a \$5,000 forgiveness feature and a one per cent interest rate.
- * The House on March 1 voted 297 to 54 to force the Administration to spend the full amount appropriated for rural water and sewer grants for fiscal 1973--\$150 million--\$120 million more than the Administration has spent.

TO BE SPENT BY JULY 1?

In trying to reinstate programs terminated by the President at the end of 1972, the Democratic-controlled Congress is seeking to force the spending of billions of dollars during the next four months.

The President has impounded roughly \$11 billion in fiscal 1973 appropriations and is simply refusing to spend the money. By this action he is hoping to hold Federal spending this fiscal year to \$250 billion. Even with these impoundments, the Federal deficit for this fiscal year is estimated at \$25 billion.

If the Democratic-controlled Congress had its way, the Federal deficit for fiscal 1973 would total about \$36 billion.

The Democrats--and the lobbyists--also are attacking the President's fiscal 1974 budget of \$268.7 billion. That budget is nearly \$19 billion larger than the budget ceiling the President has set for fiscal 1973. And it involves a Federal deficit estimated at \$13 billion.

THE PRESIDENT WILL WIN

The President will win the battle of the budget. He will win because the American people support his efforts to hold back on Federal spending. He will win because the people know that if Federal spending is not checked the inevitable result will be either a Federal income tax increase or a fresh surge of inflation caused by deepening Federal deficits.

(over)

Last week I journeyed to Paris to witness the signing of the nine-point agreement reached by the International Conference on Vietnam on ensuring a lasting peace. I feel this agreement is a big step forward toward the generation of peace we are all seeking.

TAX REFORM PROMISED

The President has promised to send Congress some tax reform proposals, and the House Ways and Means Committee has started a series of panel discussions on general tax reform.

I am pleased that the President has made tax reform a priority item because it ranks at the top of my list of things for Congress to do.

It is true that 15,200 Americans with adjusted gross incomes of \$200,000 or more paid taxes averaging 59 per cent in 1970, but 108 paid no tax at all--and something must be done about that.

BILLS INTRODUCED

Many people do not know that the military pay accumulated by American POW's while they were in captivity is exempt from Federal income tax.

There are, however, other Vietnam service income tax problems that are not covered by existing law. So I have introduced a tax bill which would resolve several problems that have arisen for servicemen, their families, and the families of deceased servicemen.

The proposed legislation would permit hospitalized servicemen to continue to treat their military pay the same as combat pay up to the month hospitalization ends even if all combat activities have terminated.

The bill also would forgive any income tax liability until the date the serviceman's missing status is terminated in cases where that date occurs later than the date of death.

In other action, I reintroduced along with all Michigan Republican congressmen a bill which allows auto manufacturers to cooperate in perfecting anti-pollution emission control devices without fear of anti-trust suit.

DISTRICT ASSISTANT VISITS

My district assistant, Gordon Vander Till, will be at the Middleville City Hall March 5, the voting room in the Ionia City Hall basement March 12, and the Lowell City Council Room on March 19 to answer questions on my behalf. Hours in each case will be from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

CALENDARS AVAILABLE

I have a limited supply of hardback 2-year calendars. Those requesting them will receive them on a first-come, first-served basis.

Over Three-Year Period . . .

HOW NIXON AIMS TO SAVE \$45 BILLION

Cutbacks in projected spending by ending or reducing programs previously planned or authorized by Congress, as proposed by President Nixon—

	Savings in years ending June 30—		
	1973	1974	1975
	(millions of dollars)		
National defense	\$ 90	\$2,701	\$2,767
Foreign affairs	\$ 242	\$ 62	\$ 170
Space	\$ 179	\$ 251	\$ 219
Aid to agriculture.....	\$1,209	\$1,984	\$2,372
Natural resources, environment.....	\$ 544	\$2,765	\$3,434
Transportation, aid to business.....	\$ 408	\$ 417	\$ 170
Housing, community development.....	\$ 121	\$ 640	\$1,747
Education	\$ 77	\$ 591	\$ 671
Manpower, job aid	\$ 179	\$1,095	\$1,021
Health	\$ 567	\$1,554	\$2,486
Social Security, welfare	\$2,500	\$3,939	\$6,021
Veterans' benefits	\$ 5	\$ 505	\$ 533
All other programs	\$ 394	\$ 389	\$ 128
TOTALS	\$6,515	\$16,893	\$21,739

A Closer Look at Specific Programs . . .

Included among the savings the President proposes are some that involve major programs or projects that are expected to stir widespread opposition in Congress. A sampling of those programs—and the proposed savings over the three-year period:

Reducing armed forces, civilian workers in defense.....	\$1.6 bil.
Cutbacks in buying of missiles, other weapons.....	\$2.0 bil.
Reducing farm price-support aid.....	\$3.1 bil.
Guaranteeing rural-electrification loans rather than making direct federal loans.....	\$1.2 bil.
Cutting federal grants for soil-conservation practices.....	\$600 mil.
Delaying public-works projects.....	\$1.5 bil.
Increasing sales of oil leases.....	\$1.6 bil.
Holding back funds for fighting water pollution.....	\$3.2 bil.
Freezing new commitments for housing subsidies.....	\$1.0 bil.
Ending "model cities," other community-development programs	\$800 mil.
Reforming manpower-training programs.....	\$700 mil.
Phasing out public-service jobs.....	\$1.4 bil.
Making medicare patients pay more of their hospital bills	\$1.9 bil.
Tightening up on medicare costs.....	\$1.1 bil.
Tightening public-assistance standards.....	\$1.6 bil.
Limiting grants to States for social-services programs to low-income groups.....	\$9.7 bil.
Reducing veterans' pensions.....	\$500 mil.

Office Copy

A Report
From Your Congressman



Serving
Michigan's Fifth District

JERRY FORD

NOT PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSE

March 12, 1973

HOUSE GOP SEEKS TO EXTEND, STRENGTHEN 'REHAB' PROGRAM

House Republicans last Thursday moved to extend and strengthen the Nation's vocational rehabilitation program, which expired last June 30.

The GOP vehicle for extending the "rehab" act was a substitute for an overly ambitious bill sent to the House Floor by the House Education and Labor Committee. As Rep. Earl F. Landgrebe, the author of the substitute, pointed out, the GOP measure was a sound extension of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

In Landgrebe's words, the Republican substitute would have "made a strong vocational rehabilitation program even stronger by building upon the record of achievement in vocational rehabilitation so painstakingly made over the decades by the joint action of the Congress and the Executive." There is no question that an extension of the Act is badly needed.

HOUSE APPROVES UNREALISTIC REHAB BILL

Unfortunately, the House rejected the Republican substitute, 165 to 113, and approved the Education and Labor Committee's bill, H.R. 17, by a rollcall vote of 318 to 57.

H.R. 17 is virtually identical with H.R. 8395, which was vetoed by the President last Oct. 27. It contains nearly all the defects that marred H.R. 8395. The House is inviting another veto.

There are many reasons why H.R. 17 is bad legislation. It is unrealistic. It promises far more than it can deliver. It authorizes a total of \$2.595 billion over a three-year period, with the first year's outlay set at \$905 million.



HIGH SCHOOL INTERN -- Miss Sallie Edmunds, of 2754 Pioneer Club Road, Grand Rapids, was an intern in my office for three weeks earlier this year under sponsorship of the Washington Workshops Foundation of Mt. Vernon College. Sallie is a senior at Ottawa Hills High School.

To set the authorizations at these levels is a cruel hoax. Neither appropriations or actual outlays will come close to those figures.

The President's fiscal 1974 budget request is \$650 million for the basic rehab program, an increase of 62 per cent over the \$403 million spent in 1969. That is a realistic figure and hardly niggardly. As Landgrebe said in opposing H.R. 17 as fiscally irresponsible, "It is time for Congress to stop promising what it can't deliver." It is cruel to raise false hopes in our disabled citizens.

Another chief defect of H.R. 17 is that it would extend vocational rehabilitation services to the severely handicapped. This turns the thrust of the vocational rehabilitation program away from its ostensible purpose of employment and substitutes medical and social goals.

LOPSIDED VOTE

There was a lopsided vote for H.R. 17 on

final passage because all members of the House want to see the Vocational Rehabilitation Act extended. With the Republican substitute having been rejected, members who favored that legislation generally voted for H.R. 17 because there was no other way to be on record as favoring continuation of the rehabilitation program.

HOUSE VOTES TO ENCOURAGE OPEN MEETINGS

With some doubts as to how well the setup will work, the House last Wednesday voted 370 to 27 for a rules change aimed at encouraging open meetings. I voted for the new rule.

In general, the new rule declares that all House committee meetings shall be open unless the committee, with a quorum present and by a rollcall vote in public, votes to close them.

The rule also requires that all House committee hearings shall be open unless the committee decides by the same procedure that a hearing should be closed because testimony to be taken involves the national security or might defame somebody's character.

Several House committees had adopted the anti-secrecy rule prior to House adoption of it. Now all House committees are bound by the new procedure. The House Appropriations Committee, on which I served for 14 years before becoming Republican leader of the House, was one of the committees approving the anti-secrecy rule before the House acted.

As the anti-secrecy rule was brought to the House Floor, it required that any vote on closing a meeting for reasons of national security or otherwise be taken on the day of the meeting, with a quorum present. Several Appropriations Committee members, notably ranking Republican Elford Cederberg of Michigan, protested that a committee should be able to announce in advance whether a particular meeting would be open or closed. This, Cederberg pointed out, would be a convenience to the public and the press.

After much discussion, the House agreed by voice vote to permit committee votes on closing a meeting to be taken in advance but with the vote limited to a specific hearing or meeting.

OPEN MEETINGS NOT GUARANTEED

The new rule does not guarantee that all House committee sessions will be open, since each committee does have the privilege of voting in open session to close a particular meeting. In fact, a vote to close could cover more than one day's session. It could apply to a whole series of meetings devoted to "marking up" a piece of legislation in final form.

Most members of the House do not like to have markup sessions open to the public because lobbyists then can come into the meetings and figuratively peer over members' shoulders while they are hammering a bill into shape for presentation on the floor.

The House Education and Labor Committee has open markup sessions, but that committee is the exception and not the rule. It can be expected that the present situation will continue with regard to markup meetings.



AT VIETNAM PEACE GUARANTEE SIGNING -- Congressional leaders had the privilege of witnessing the signing of the Vietnam peace guarantee agreement March 2 in Paris. Right behind the action, second row, left to right, are: Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott, Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield, myself, and House Democratic Whip John McFall. Front row, left to right, are: China's Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei, China deputy foreign minister Chang Wen-chin, William Porter, chief of the U.S. peace talks delegation, and Secretary of State William Rogers.

In any case, the new anti-secrecy rule is a breath of fresh air in the House because it creates a presumption of open meetings as opposed to closed sessions. It places on each committee the burden of voting to close meetings and sets up the hypothesis that the reason had better be a good one.

SCHOOL LUNCH BILL

The House voted 352 to 7 last Monday to assure that Federal financial assistance for the school lunch program is maintained at the level budgeted for this fiscal year. I voted for the bill.

DISTRICT VISIT

My district assistant, Gordon Vander Till, will be at the Lake Odessa Village Hall from 2:30 to 5 p.m. March 26 to answer queries.

WASHINGTON REVIEW

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Michigan's Fifth District*

JERRY FORD

PRINTED AT GOVERNMENT EXPENSES 10

April 9, 1973

TAXPAYER WINS ONE

In what was a surprise for most people, the Senate last week sustained the President's veto of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1972 (S. 7) and thus made it unnecessary for the House to vote on the question.

Had the Senate not upheld the President's action, the House would have done so--by a comfortable margin.

The bill was abandoned because it was fiscally irresponsible, calling for spending \$1 billion above the budget during fiscal years 1973-75. I hope, now, that the Congress will pass a new vocational rehabilitation bill which continues the existing sound and effective program. I am deeply committed to efforts to make the handicapped capable of supporting themselves. However, I am also committed to the curbing of wasteful Federal spending and unnecessary duplication of Federal programs. We must avoid a tax increase or a new surge of inflation.

Federal outlays under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act have risen from \$371 million in fiscal 1969 to \$650 million budgeted for fiscal 1974, an increase of 75 per cent. In Kent County, Federal grants for vocational "rehab" have climbed steadily--from \$600,642 in fiscal 1969 to \$861,971 in fy 1970, to \$925,424 in fy 1971 and \$1,112,643 in fy 1972.

REPUBLICAN REA EFFORT FAILS

House Republicans last Wednesday sought to improve on a House Agriculture Committee rural electrification bill by offering a substitute aimed at getting away from the approach of the depression era.

The Republican substitute would have reduced the amount of 2 per cent REA loans to \$31 million, would have made REA payments out of the Rural Development Insurance Fund, and would have given the President and the REA administrator flexibility to manage the monies involved, with most loans at 5 per cent.



INSTALLED -- Elton R. Smith, of Caledonia, president of the Michigan Farm Bureau, last week was installed as a member of the 13-man Federal Farm Credit Board. Here I congratulate Mr. Smith immediately after his installation.

The House rejected the GOP substitute 162 to 244 and adopted the committee bill instead, 317 to 92. I voted for the substitute and against the committee bill.

The committee bill:

- * Sets up an REA revolving fund.
- * Requires the Administrator to loan these assets.
- * Calls for \$90 million in 2 per cent loans to telephone and electric distribution borrowers annually--from funds borrowed by the Government at about 6 per cent.
- * Permits electric generation and transmission loans at 2 per cent under certain criteria.

I support a viable and effective rural electrification and telephone program. But the committee REA bill would tie the hands of program administrators and remove huge sums of money from proper budgetary control. The "backdoor spending" revolving fund it would create is unnecessary and unsound. It was for these reasons that I opposed the bill.

DEATH PENALTY SHOULD BE RESTORED

On March 22 I introduced the Administration bill providing for the death penalty for wartime treason and for murder committed under certain circumstances.

I believe the death penalty can be a deterrent to crime. I was therefore dismayed when the Supreme Court on June 29, 1972, ruled out capital punishment. The court's decision called into question existing Federal statutes which give a judge or jury discretion in imposing the death penalty. This left the possibility that a new statute providing for the death penalty under specific circumstances would be upheld.

My bill would impose the death penalty for wartime treason and for murder if the murder occurred during an aircraft hijacking or a kidnapping, or if the person murdered was the President or a member of Congress, or if the defendant had previously been convicted of an offense for which the death penalty was imposable.

However, the death penalty could not be imposed under my bill in the event of mitigating factors such as the youth of the offender or mental incapacity.

MORE REVENUE SHARING FUNDS

The Treasury Department has announced that \$2,989,890,000 in revenue sharing money will be distributed for the first half of 1973, with each state to get more money than last year.

Michigan's allocation is \$126,718,539, up 12.9 per cent from 1972. Half was paid April 6; the other half will be paid in July.

The 1973 allocations are greater because the Treasury Department is using more recent population data and is basing calculations on actual rather than estimated 1972 state income tax collections.

INFORMATION FOR VETS

Veterans may obtain helpful information by attending a Veterans Benefit Day program between the hours of 2 and 8 p.m. May 2 at the Michigan National Guard Armory on 44th Street in Wyoming. The event is sponsored by the Red Cross Service-to-Military-Families-and-Veterans Committee headed by my district assistant, Gordon Vander Till.

Representatives from all levels of government will be there to advise veterans as to their potential benefits, and industry and business people will be there to provide career information.

Also, my district office has a limited number of copies (50) of a Veterans Administration booklet entitled "Summary of Benefits for Veterans with Military Service before Feb. 1, 1955, and their Dependents." Please call 456-9607.

Questions of Vietnam vets also will be answered.

PANEL REJECTS DIVERSION

The House Public Works Committee has voted down a move in committee to permit use of Federal Highway Trust Fund money for mass transit.



SENIOR CLASSES VISIT WASHINGTON -- Two groups of Kent County seniors visited the Nation's capital recently. Above is the senior class of Caledonia High School, 51 strong, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Harrison and Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Heth. Below are the 58 seniors from Godfrey Lee High School in Grand Rapids, with eight adults headed by Henry Shisler, who has made the Washington trip 16 times. I spoke to the groups and answered their questions.



WASHINGTON REVIEW

M OFFICE COPY

*A Report
From Your Congressman*



*Serving
Michigan's Fifth District*

JERRY FORD

April 23, 1973

HOUSE VOTES TO EXTEND WAGE-PRICE CONTROL AUTHORITY

The House voted overwhelmingly last Monday to extend the President's wage and price control authority for one year after turning down all moves to freeze or roll back prices.

The action was not a partisan one. On the initial key vote to lay aside House Banking and Currency Committee price rollback legislation and take up the simple one-year extension of wage and price control authority, 76 Democrats joined hands with 182 Republicans to sidetrack the rollback measure. The vote to eliminate consideration of this legislation was 147 to 258.

Opponents of a rollback pointed out it would cause a host of inequities and thus create chaos in the economy. They condemned the committee bill as impractical and unworkable.

Congress cannot act on a day-to-day basis to deal with the complexities of our economic system. Giving the executive branch the authority to act quickly on economic questions makes a great deal of sense. The rollback legislation failed to provide the flexibility necessary to meet changing economic conditions and to handle specific inequities certain to arise. Such action also would have produced shortages and, probably, black markets.

The vote on final passage of the one-year extension of wage-price control authority to April 30, 1974, was 293 to 114.

The Economic Stabilization Act, as the wage-price control authority is known, has been on the books since June 2, 1970. It was not used until August 15, 1971, when the President imposed a freeze on wages, prices, rents and salaries. The freeze remained in effect until Oct. 15, 1971, when it was replaced by Phase II, a set of mandatory controls administered by a Price Commission and a Pay Board. On Jan. 11, 1973, the President replaced Phase II with Phase III, a program of largely voluntary guidelines. On March 29, 1973, in the face of rising prices, the President clamped a ceiling on the price of meat.

In retrospect, it seems obvious that the move from Phase II to Phase III was premature.

With the flexibility given him under the Economic Stabilization Act, the President should tighten up on Phase III price controls until such time as restraints can safely be loosened and we can return to free markets.

I think our chances for lower food prices due to expanded supplies are greater under the extension of wage-price control authority than would have been true under a price rollback.

Meantime, the President has acted wisely in seeking to sell \$6 billion worth of metals and minerals from our national strategic stockpile. This should have a favorable impact on industrial prices.

I also applaud the Administration request that banks hold down interest rates on loans to home buyers, consumers, small businessmen and farmers. This should be helpful.



PART-TIME INTERN -- Ronald J. Posthuma of Grand Rapids, Hope College junior, is working part-time in my office as an intern under the Washington Semester Program of American University. An outstanding student and campus leader, Ron will be with me until May 5.

The final shape of the wage-price control authority legislation was left uncertain until April 30, the day the present authority is due to expire.

The Senate bill provides for a one-year extension of the existing controls authority wielded by the President but differs from the House bill in other respects. When conferees from both houses sought to compromise the differences, they wound up with a bill which House Republican conferees oppose.

The Senate adjourned Wednesday until April 30 after refusing to send the legislation back to conference with the House--and the House on April 30 may refuse to accept the current conference report. So the fate of the legislation is left hanging until E-day (expiration day).

CONGRESS VOTES COLLEGE STUDENT AID FOR '73-74

The House and Senate last Wednesday agreed on a \$1.36 billion supplemental appropriation bill which included \$872 million for aid to college students.

The total amount for student aid was the figure requested by the Administration but the House rearranged the sums under that total in line with pleas from the colleges and universities.

The Administration had placed primary emphasis on the new Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) program, asking \$622 million for that purpose. But the House, with the Senate later concurring, allotted only \$122.1 million for the BEOG program. This may be too little for BEOG even to get started next school year.

As finally approved, the appropriation bill provides \$210.3 million for the established Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grants program (SEOG), \$269.4 million for direct low-interest student loans--together with \$26.6 million already available for that purpose, and \$270.2 million for college work-study programs (CWS).

The emphasis in the SEOG program is on especially needy students. The new BEOG program would provide grants up to \$1,400 to each student, depending on family need. The idea is to give some help to students from middle-class families.

The House passed the appropriation bill unanimously by a rollcall vote of 367 to 0.

HOUSE PASSES HIGHWAY BILL

The House last Thursday approved a \$7 billion-a-year highway construction bill that also provides \$1 billion annually for mass transit capital improvements and gives cities the option of getting additional general revenue money for mass transit in lieu of receiving Highway Trust Fund urban highway dollars.

House members passed the bill after rejecting, 215 to 190, an attempt to tap the Highway Trust Fund for mass transit capital improvements. The vote was on an amendment giving states and cities the option of using up to \$700 million a year from the Trust Fund for rail and bus systems, new highways or a combination of the two.



THIEU VISITS CAPITOL HILL -- South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu recently conferred with Congressional leaders at the Capitol. Here he is, second from right, with Vice-President Agnew, myself, Rep. Spark M. Matsunaga of Hawaii, and House Speaker Carl Albert.

The bill as passed would make additional funds available for mass transit--over and above the regular \$1 billion annual authorization--without dipping into the Highway Trust Fund.

I opposed tapping the Highway Trust Fund for mass transit because the Fund already is insufficient for highway needs.

Besides, to use Trust Fund monies for mass transit would be to break faith with highway users whose gasoline, tire and truck tonnage taxes go into the trust to finance the nation's road system.

Tapping the Highway Trust Fund for mass transit capital improvements would lead to Trust Fund outlays for operating subsidies--and this would be a bottomless pit.