

The Ehlers e-Newsletter

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Monday, February 2, 2004

News from Congressman Ehlers ...

EPA HEAD SPOTLIGHTS FY 2005 FUNDING FOR EHLERS' GREAT LAKES BILL – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Mike Leavitt's announcement on Belle Isle in Detroit Thursday morning that the Bush Administration will ask Congress to budget \$45 million for cleanup of contaminated sediments in the Great Lakes is "extremely welcome news," said Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids.

For Congressman Ehlers' complete statement, please visit our website:

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/012904LegacyFunding.html

EHLERS' TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BILL MOTORS AHEAD – A comprehensive plan for federal transportation research and development (R&D) sponsored by Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers and expected to be part of the Congress' overall plan to reauthorize transportation programs this year was approved Wednesday by a House Science Subcommittee.

For more information, please read the press release on our website:

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/012804TransRDSubcmte.html

THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2004

On Monday, the House is not in session.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2004

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m.

Suspensions (6 Bills):

(Bills on suspension are generally considered non-controversial and have reduced debate time, but require a two-thirds majority vote to be passed.)

- 1) **H.Res. 157 - Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding several individuals who are being held as prisoners of conscience by the Chinese Government for their involvement in efforts to end the Chinese occupation of Tibet:** Resolves that it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should, as a gesture of goodwill and in order to promote human rights, immediately release all prisoners of conscience, including Phuntsog Nyidron.
- 2) **H.R. 2264 - Congo Basin Forest Partnership Act of 2003:** Authorizes appropriations to the President for FY 2004 and 2005 to carry out the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) program (which promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the forests of the Congo Basin by working to combat poaching, illegal logging, and other unsustainable practices, and giving local populations an

economic stake in the preservation of the forests, including through the development of ecotourism.

- 3) **H.Res. 507 - Expressing the profound sorrow of the House of Representatives on the anniversary of the accident that cost the crew of the Space Shuttle Columbia their lives, and extending heartfelt sympathy to their families:**
Resolves that the House of Representatives does offer its gratitude to the seven Space Shuttle Columbia astronauts and its heartfelt sympathy to their families on the anniversary of their loss, with the reassurance that this sacrifice will not have been made in vain, but will strengthen this Nation's resolve to continue their journey of discovery.
- 4) **H.J.Res. 84 - Recognizing the 93rd birthday of Ronald Reagan**
- 5) **H.Res. 274 - Honoring John Stockton:** Resolves that the House of Representatives honors John Stockton for an outstanding career. The bill congratulates John Stockton on his retirement and thanks him for his contributions to basketball, to the State of Utah, and to the Nation.
- 6) **H.R. 3724 - Energy Efficient Housing Technical Correction Act:** Allows developers that are constructing energy-efficient housing projects with more than 5 units to be eligible for FHA mortgage insurance subject to loan limits.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2004

On Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. The House Floor will be cleared immediately thereafter, in order to provide time for a security sweep of the House Chamber prior to the Spanish President's address. The House will reconvene at 11 a.m. in Joint Meeting with the Senate for the purpose of receiving His Excellency Jose Maria Aznar, President of the Government of Spain.

H.R. 3030 - Improving the Community Services Block Grant Act of 2003: Builds upon improvements made during the last authorization of Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to promote increased quality and accountability.

- * *Possible Motions to go to Conference*
- * *Possible Motions to Instruct Conferees*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2004 AND THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK

On Thursday and Friday, no votes are expected in the House.

Historical Tidbits

On Feb. 2 ...

1848 - The Mexican War was ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The treaty turned over portions of land to the U.S., including Texas, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, California and parts of Colorado and Wyoming. The U.S. gave Mexico \$15,000,000 and assumed responsibility of all claims against Mexico by American citizens. Texas had already entered the U.S. on December 29, 1845.

1980 - The situation known as "Abscam" began when reports surfaced that the FBI had conducted a sting operation that targeted members of the U.S. Congress. A phony Arab businessmen were used in the operation.

On Feb. 3 ...

1783 - Spain recognized the independence of the United States.

1913 - The 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified. It authorized the power to impose and collect income tax.

1917 - The U.S. broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, which had announced a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare.

1927 - The Federal Radio Commission was created when U.S. President Calvin Coolidge signed a bill.

1988 - The U.S. House of Representatives handed rejected U.S. President Reagan's request for at least \$36.25 million in aid to the Nicaraguan Contras.

On Feb. 4 ...

1783 - Britain declared a formal cessation of hostilities with its former colonies, the United States of America.

1789 - Electors unanimously chose George Washington to be the first president of the United States.

1964 - The Administrator of General Services announced that the 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution had been ratified. The amendment banned the poll tax.

1985 U.S. President Ronald Reagan's defense budget called for a tripling of the expenditure on the "Star Wars" research program.

On Feb. 5 ...

1783 - Sweden recognized the independence of the United States.

1937 - U.S. President Roosevelt proposed enlarging the U.S. Supreme Court. The plan failed.

2003 - U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell presented evidence to the U.N. concerning Iraq's material breach of U.N. Resolution 1441.

On Feb. 6 ...

1778 - The United States gained official recognition from France as the two nations signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance in Paris.

1933 - The 20th Amendment to the Constitution was declared in effect. The amendment moved the start of presidential, vice-presidential and congressional terms from March to January.

(Information from <http://www.on-this-day.com>)