



## The Ehlers e-Newsletter

For the Week of March 29, 2004

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### *News from Congressman Ehlers ...*

**EHLERS BILL TO STIMULATE MANUFACTURING INNOVATION AND JOB CREATION APPROVED BY SUBCOMMITTEE** – The Subcommittee on Environment, Technology, and Standards of the House Science Committee Thursday unanimously approved legislation that would create new – and strengthen existing – programs that support manufacturing research, development and innovation, and would provide technical extension services to small- and medium-sized manufacturers. The Manufacturing Technology Competitiveness Act (H.R. 3598), sponsored by Subcommittee Chairman Vernon J. Ehlers, also would foster innovation in the manufacturing sciences by creating a mechanism for coordinating federal manufacturing research and development.

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

[http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03\\_ehlers/032504MEPsubcmte.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/032504MEPsubcmte.html)

**EHLERS ANNOUNCES STAFF CHANGES IN GRAND RAPIDS OFFICE** – Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers announced the following changes to his staff in his Grand Rapids district office:

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

[http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03\\_ehlers/032604StaffChanges.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/032604StaffChanges.html)

### **THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2004**

*On Monday, 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 (3 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.R. 2584 - To provide for the conveyance to the Utrok Atoll local government of a decommissioned National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ship.**
- 2) **H.R. 3723 - Vaughn Gross Post Office Building Designation Act (Dallas, Texas)**

- 3) **H.R. 3917 - Maxine S. Postal United States Post Office Designation Act**  
*(Copiague, New York)*

**TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2004**

*On Tuesday, the House will convene at 10 a.m. for morning hour and 12 noon for legislative business.*

**Suspensions (7 bills):**

- 1) **H.Res. 558 - Welcoming the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):** Resolves that the House of Representatives welcomes with enthusiasm the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The resolution reaffirms that the process of NATO enlargement enhances the security of the United States and the entire North Atlantic area. It agrees that the process of NATO enlargement should be open to potential membership by any interested European democracy that meets the criteria for NATO membership as set forth in the 1995 Study on NATO Enlargement and whose admission would further the principles of the Washington Treaty of 1949 and would enhance security in the North Atlantic area and recommends that NATO heads of state and government should review the enlargement process, including the applications of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia, at a summit meeting to be held no later than 2007.
- 2) **H.R. 3036 - Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2004 through 2006:** Authorizes \$19.2 billion in appropriations for the Justice Department for FY 2004; \$20.1 billion for FY 2005; and \$20.4 billion for FY 2006, generally tracking the President's budget requests for FY 04 and 05. These figures are actually slightly less than the \$22.5 billion authorized for comparable programs in FY 2003 primarily because of the transfer of the functions of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service to the Department of Homeland Security. The department receives appropriations through the annual Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary appropriations bill. Before the legislation that became law in the 107th Congress, the last legislation reported out of the Judiciary Committee authorizing spending for DOJ was in 1979.
- 3) **S. 2231 - A bill to reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant program through June 30, 2004:** Extends through June 30, 2004 the program of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which is currently authorized only through March 31, 2004. The extension will continue TANF grants to states, territories, and Indian tribes, supplemental grants provided to certain states, as well as other related provisions. It also will extend funding for mandatory child care, abstinence education, and transitional medical assistance (TMA) for this period.
- 4) **S. 2241 - To reauthorize certain school lunch and child nutrition programs through June 30, 2004:** Extends provisions in the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and Commodity Distribution Reform Act that are due to expire on March 31, 2004. These provisions ensure that low income children have access to safe and nutritious food in school, after school, and during the summer months.

- 5) **S. 2057 - To require the Secretary of Defense to reimburse members of the United States Armed Forces for certain transportation expenses incurred by the members in connection with leave under the Central Command Rest and Recuperation Leave Program before the program was expanded to include domestic travel:** Requires the Secretary of Defense to retroactively fund and reimburse domestic airline tickets to the final destination for service members returning under the R&R program from the Iraqi Theater. The cost is \$13 million in direct spending in FY 2005 due to the retroactive nature of the payments.
- 6) **H.R. 3104 - To provide for the establishment of campaign medals to be awarded to members of the Armed Forces who participate in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom**
- 7) **H.Con.Res. 386 - Congratulating the United States Air Force Academy on its 50th Anniversary and recognizing its contributions to the nation**

**H.R. 3966 - ROTC and Military Recruiter Equal Access to Campus Act of 2004:** Amends both the Homeland Security Act and the so-called "Solomon law" in title 10, U.S. Code, to improve the ability of Department of Defense (DOD) to establish and maintain ROTC detachments and to ensure military recruiters have access to college campuses and students that is at least equal and quality and scope to that provided to other employers.

### **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2004 AND THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK**

*On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the House will meet at 10 a.m.*

**H.Con.Res. 581 - Pay Parity Resolution:** *A detailed summary of this legislation was not available at the time of publication.*

**H.R. 3550 - Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users:** This legislation would authorize federal spending on transportation projects over the next six years. *A detailed summary of this legislation was not available at the time of publication.*

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

#### ***Historical Tidbits***

##### **On March 29 ...**

- 1961** - The 23rd amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified. The amendment allowed residents of Washington, D.C., to vote for president.
- 1973** - The last U.S. troops left South Vietnam.
- 1979** - The Committee on Assassinations Report issued by U.S. House of Representatives stated the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was the result of a conspiracy.
- 1995** - The U.S. House of Representatives rejected a constitutional amendment that would have limited terms to 12 years in the U.S. House and Senate.

##### **On March 30 ...**

- 1867** - The U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million dollars.

**1870** - The 15th amendment, guaranteeing the right to vote regardless of race, was passed by the U.S. Congress.

**1981** - U.S. President Ronald Reagan was shot and wounded in Washington, D.C., by John W. Hinckley Jr. Two police officers and Press Secretary James Brady were also wounded.

**On March 31 ...**

**1917** - The U.S. purchased and took possession of the Virgin Islands from Denmark for \$25 million.

**1918** - For the first time in the U.S. Daylight Savings Time went into effect.

**1933** - The U.S. Congress authorized the Civilian Conservation Corps to relieve rampant unemployment.

**1998** - For the first time in U.S. history the federal government's detailed financial statement was released.

**On April 1 ...**

**1789** - The U.S. House of Representatives held its first full meeting in New York City. Frederick Muhlenberg of Pennsylvania was elected the first House Speaker.

**1953** - The U.S. Congress created the Department of Health Education and Welfare.

**1982** - The U.S. transferred the Canal Zone to Panama.

**1987** - U.S. President Reagan told doctors in Philadelphia, "We've declared AIDS public health enemy No. 1."

**On April 2 ...**

**1792** - The U.S. Congress passed the Coinage Act to regulate the coins of the United States. The act authorized \$10 Eagle, \$5 half-Eagle & 2.50 quarter-Eagle gold coins & silver dollar, dollar, quarter, dime & half-dime to be minted.

**1917** - U.S. President Woodrow Wilson presented a declaration of war against Germany to the U.S. Congress.

**1987** - The speed limit on U.S. interstate highways was increased to 65 miles per hour in limited areas.

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