

The Ehlers e-Newsletter

Thursday, April 17, 2003

Due to Congress' Spring Recess, you are receiving this week's Ehlers e-Newsletter a little later than normal. Also, there will be no Ehlers e-Newsletter published next week. We will resume our normal weekly publishing schedule on April 28.

Last Week in the U.S. House of Representatives

NATIONAL ALERT LEVEL REDUCED TO "YELLOW" STATUS – Following a review of intelligence and an assessment of threats by the intelligence community, the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Homeland Security Council, has made the decision to lower the threat advisory level to an elevated risk of terrorist attack, or "yellow level," Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge announced Wednesday.

HOUSE APPROVES TAX PROVISIONS FOR ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL –

In an effort to help members of the U.S. armed forces, especially those serving in Iraq, the House of Representatives, including Congressman Ehlers, unanimously approved a package of tax legislation that extends filing deadlines, clarifies certain tax law provisions as they relate to military personnel and makes certain government payments tax-free. The legislation also extended tax relief to the victims of the Space Shuttle Columbia accident.

COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY LEGISLATION OK'D BY HOUSE –

Congressman Ehlers joined with the majority of the House of Representatives Friday as it approved the Energy Policy Act of 2003, which covers a wide range of energy issues, including conservation, research and development and exploration issues. The congressman said he supported the bill because it is strong on renewable and alternative fuel research, development, and deployment and it contains good provisions for developing hydrogen fuel cell technology, and incentives for increased energy efficiency and conservation measures as well. The bill also included increased funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Weatherization Assistance Program. Congressman Ehlers supported a provision that would have barred oil exploration in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and another that would have increased Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards for the auto industry, but both amendments failed to pass. However, he believed the overall bill is positive and that some of his concerns will be addressed as it is conferenced with the Senate. The bill was approved by a 247-175 vote.

THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House of Representatives is currently in its Spring Recess. The House is scheduled to resume its work the week of April 28.

(Please do not respond to this e-mail. To send a message to Congressman Ehlers, please visit our website at <http://www.house.gov/ehlers> and click on "Write Your Rep.")