

The Ehlers e-Newsletter

Monday, June 16, 2003

Last Week in the U.S. House of Representatives

EHLERS URGES FAA TO FIGHT FPI DECISION – Seeking to win back a \$6 million office furniture contract for West Michigan office furniture manufacturer Steelcase after it was taken away by the Federal Prison Industries (FPI) program, Congressmen Vernon J. Ehlers and Pete Hoekstra are urging officials at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to seek reinstatement of the winning bid. “This is an example of the Federal Prison Industries program at its worst,” said Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids. “Steelcase and its dealer won a fair and open bid process only to see a major contract snatched from its grasp by FPI. By its actions, FPI is seeking to take jobs away from Steelcase workers and also cheat the American taxpayers and FAA employees by providing the FAA with an inferior product.”

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

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/061003FPIlettertoFAA.html

MICHIGAN’S ‘NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND’ PLAN APPROVED – The U.S. Department of Education announced June 9 that it has approved Michigan’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability plan, building upon the number of states whose plans have been approved to 33. U.S. House Education & the Workforce Committee Chairman John Boehner (R-OH) joined Congressman Ehlers, a member of the committee, in marking the occasion. Department approval gives states the green light to begin implementing their plans to ensure that every child learns.

THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2003

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 (4 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. 2254 - Bruce Woodbury Post Office Building Designation Act** (Boulder City, Nev.)
- 2) **S. 858 - Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Extension Act:** Extends the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission until 2010, which will allow it to continue its valuable work through the celebration of the 200th anniversary of President Lincoln’s birth in 2009.
- 3) **H.Con.Res. 220 - Commending Medgar Wiley Evers and his widow, Myrlie Evers-Williams, for their lives and accomplishments:** Supports the establishment of a “Medgar Evers National Week of Remembrance.”
- 4) **S. 703 - Carl T. Curtis National Park Service Midwest Regional Headquarters Building Designation Act** (Omaha, Neb.).

TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2003

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 10:30 a.m. for morning hour and 12 noon for legislative business.

Suspensions (3 bills):

- 1) **H.R. 658 - Accountant, Compliance, and Enforcement Staffing Act of 2003:** Provides the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with the ability to hire certain professional staff on an expedited basis, without having to undergo the time-consuming procedures that have applied to the hiring of those staff positions in the past. This enhanced authority will enable the SEC to fill a large number of new positions during the current fiscal year, and to adequately respond to future staff attrition.
- 2) **S.Con.Res. 43 - Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that Congress should participate in and support activities to provide decent homes for the people of the United States.**
- 3) **H.Res. 171 - Commending the University of Minnesota Duluth Bulldogs for winning the NCAA 2003 National Collegiate Women's Ice Hockey Championship.**

Conference Report on S. 342 - Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003:

Reauthorizes and makes amendments to the current Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Adoption Opportunities program, the Abandoned Infants Assistance Act, and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA). This agreement is aimed at preventing child abuse and family violence before it occurs and protecting and treating abused and neglected children.

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, JUNE 18 AND 19, 2003

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for legislative business.

H.R. 8 - Death Tax Repeal Permanency Act of 2003: Repeals the sunset provision in the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act, making permanent the repeal of the estate tax once it is effective in 2010.

H.R. 1528 - Taxpayer Protection and IRS Accountability Act of 2003: Contains provisions that will assist taxpayers by reforming the penalty and interest sections of the Internal Revenue Code and provides new safeguards against unfair IRS collection procedures. The bill improves the efficiency of tax administration and increases confidentiality of taxpayer information.

H.R. 660 - Small Business Health Fairness Act: Addresses both the access and cost issues at the heart of the health care reform debate, giving uninsured working families new hope for a solution that can give them access to quality health care. More than 41 million Americans currently have no health insurance. Many of these Americans – 60 percent or more, by some estimates – work for or depend on small employers who lack the ability to provide health benefits for their workers. H.R. 660 will change this, opening the doors of health care access to millions of uninsured families and allowing quality health coverage for millions of Americans who currently have no health coverage at all.

FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2003

On Friday, no votes are expected in the House.

Historical Tidbits

On June 16 ...

1858 – In a speech in Springfield, IL, U.S. Senate candidate, Abraham Lincoln, said the slavery issue had to be resolved. He declared, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

On June 17 ...

1930 - The Smoot-Hawley Tariff Bill became law. It placed the highest tariff on imports to the U.S.

1932 - The U.S. Senate defeated the bonus bill as 10,000 veterans massed around the Capitol.

1963 - The U.S. Supreme Court banned the required reading of the Lord's prayer and Bible in public schools.

On June 18 ...

1778 - Britain evacuated Philadelphia during the U.S. Revolutionary War.

1812 - The War of 1812 began as the U.S. declared war against Great Britain. The conflict began over trade restrictions.

1979 - In Vienna, U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) 2.

1983 - Dr. Sally Ride became the first American woman in space aboard the space shuttle *Challenger*.

On June 19 ...

1912 - The U.S. government established the 8-hour work day.

1934 - The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration was established.

1958 - In Washington, DC, nine entertainers refused to answer a congressional committee's questions on communism.

1964 - The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was approved after surviving an 83-day filibuster in the U.S. Senate.

On June 20 ...

1782 - The U.S. Congress approved the Great Seal of the United States.

1863 - West Virginia became the 35th state to join the U.S.

(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.")