

The Ehlers e-Newsletter

Monday, October 6, 2003

Last Week in the U.S. House of Representatives

HOUSE APPROVES PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN – U.S. House of Representatives Thursday approved legislation that would ban a late-term abortion procedure known as “partial-birth abortion” with the expectation that President George W. Bush would sign the legislation into law after several previous attempts to approve the legislation.

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

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/100203PartialBirth.html

DELEGATION SUPPORTS PROPOSAL TO CORRECT JUDICIAL CONFIRMATION PROCESS – Members of the Michigan Congressional Delegation Wednesday introduced an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to restore the constitutional balance between the President and the U.S. Senate regarding the confirmation of presidential appointees, preventing judicial appointment delays.

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

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/100203JudgeAmendment.html

THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2003

On Monday, the House will not be in session, in observance of Yom Kippur.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2003

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 (11 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. 1303 - To amend the E-Government Act of 2002 with respect to rulemaking authority of the Judicial Conference:** Requires the Judicial Conference of the United States to promulgate national rules to protect privacy and security concerns relating to the electronic filing of documents, and the public availability of documents filed electronically.
- 2) **H.Res. 234 - Condemning bigotry and violence against Arab-Americans, Muslim-Americans, South Asian-Americans, and Sikh-Americans.**
- 3) **H.R. 2655 - To amend and extend the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998:** Extends the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 for another two years, until October 1, 2008. It also makes a number of changes to the program. These changes are mainly designed to ensure that the aliens granted admission are those truly economically disadvantaged young adults the program was designed to help.
- 4) **H.R. 1900 - To award a congressional gold medal to Jackie Robinson (posthumously), in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation, and**

to express the sense of the Congress that there should be a national day in recognition of Jackie Robinson.

- 5) **H.R. 1985 - FHA Multifamily Loan Limit Adjustment Act of 2003:** Amends the National Housing Act to increase the maximum mortgage amount limit for Federal Housing Administration (FHA) -insured mortgages for multifamily housing located in high-cost areas. It changes the statutory maximum adjustment percentage for geographic areas from 110 to 170 percent, which changes HUD's maximum high cost percentage to 270 percent.
- 6) **H.Res. 3229 - To amend Title 44, US Code, to transfer authority over the individuals responsible for preparing indexes of the Congressional Record to the Public Printer, and for other purposes.**
- 7) **H.J.Res. 52 - Recognizing the Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution in Baltimore, Maryland, as the official national museum of dentistry in the United States.**
- 8) **H.Res. 355 - Commemorating the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Bulgaria.**
- 9) **H.R. 2264 - Congo Basin Forest Partnership Act of 2003:** *Information on this bill not available at time of publication.*
- 10) **H.Res. 372 - Expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives in response to the murder of Swedish Foreign Minister Anna Lindh.**
- 11) **H.Con.Res. 274 - Commending the National Endowment for Democracy for its contributions to democratic development around the world on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the National Endowment for Democracy.**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2003

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

Conference Report on H.R. 1474 - Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act: Modernizes the U.S. payments system by allowing check images to be transported electronically between financial institutions for payment, obviating the need for physical transfer of the original check. The legislation provides for the creation of a new negotiable instrument, the substitute check, which will facilitate electronic presentment of checks while also ensuring that individuals or banks that do not wish to accept electronic images can receive a paper check.

H.R. 3108 - Pension Funding Equity Act of 2003: Replaces the current standard that employers must use to determine their pension liabilities - the 30-year Treasury bond interest rate - with a corporate bond rate for two years through December 31, 2005. The bill gives the Treasury Department the flexibility to establish the interest rate based on a blend of corporate bond indexes. Plans will be allowed to calculate their pension funding liabilities using an interest rate within 90 - 100 percent of the rate established by the Treasury Department.

Suspensions (13 Bills):

- 1) **H.R. 3182 - Adoption Promotion Act of 2003:** Reauthorizes the Adoption Incentives program, which was created as part of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. Currently, the Adoption Incentives program provides awards to States of \$4,000 per child adopted above prior year levels, and an additional \$2,000 per special needs child adopted above prior year levels. To promote adoption of older children who are most at risk of spending their childhood years in foster care, H.R. 3182 also adds an additional incentive award to States of \$4,000 per child age 9 or older adopted above prior year levels.
- 2) **H.Res. 342 - Supporting the National Railroad Hall of Fame, Inc., of Galesburg, Illinois, in its endeavor to erect a monument known as the National Railroad Hall of Fame.**
- 3) **H.R. 2297 - Veterans Benefits Act of 2003:** Expands the Montgomery GI Bill program by authorizing educational assistance for on-job training in certain self-employment training programs; extends the delimiting date for survivors' and dependents' education benefits when the eligible individual is involuntarily ordered to full-time National Guard duty; and other issues.
- 4) **H.R. 3159 - Government Network Security Act of 2003:** *Information on this bill not available at time of publication.*
- 5) **H.R. 2452 - Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building Designation Act** (*Bethpage, N.Y.*).
- 6) **H.Con.Res. 71 - Recognizing the importance of Ralph Bunche as one of the great leaders of the United States, the first African-American Nobel Peace Prize winner, an accomplished scholar, a distinguished diplomat, and a tireless campaigner of civil rights for people throughout the world.**
- 7) **H.R. 3054 - District of Columbia Military Retirement Equity Act of 2003:** Allows current and former police officers, firefighters, U.S. Park Police officers, and U.S. Secret Service employees in the District of Columbia to "buy back" military service time to avoid reductions in their monthly benefit payments.
- 8) **H.Res. 262 - Supporting the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.**
- 9) **H.R. 2755 - To authorize the President to issue posthumously to the late William "Billy" Mitchell a commission as major general, United States Army.**
- 10) **H.R. 2998 - To amend title 10, United States Code, to exempt certain members of the Armed Forces from the requirement to pay subsistence charges while hospitalized:** Permanently eliminates the requirement for certain persons to pay for their meals while hospitalized. The persons exempted from the payment requirement would be 1) retired enlisted personnel, and 2) officers and enlisted personnel hospitalized as a result of combat or combat related injuries.
- 11) **H.R. 408 - To provide for expansion of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore:** protects the National Lakeshore along northern Lake Michigan from development by authorizing the National Park Service to acquire land from the willing seller and bars the Park Service from exchanging any land that is within the National Lakeshore.
- 12) **H.R. 3062 - To amend the Mineral Leasing Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue separately, for the same area, a lease for tar sand and a**

lease for oil and gas: Amends the Combined Hydrocarbon Leasing Act (CHLA) and allows the Secretary to issue separate leases for tar sands and for oil and gas development. The bill promotes the development of the natural gas and oil resources in the region. Under H.R. 3062, no environmental regulations will be modified or circumvented in any way, nor will there be any change to existing wilderness designations.

13) H.R. 708 - To require the conveyance of certain National Forest System lands in Mendocino National Forest, California, to provide for the use of the proceeds from such conveyance for National Forest purposes.

** Possible Motions to go to Conference*

** Possible Motions to Instruct Conferees*

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 AND 10, 2003

On Thursday and Friday, no votes are expected.

Historical Tidbits

On Oct. 6 ...

1949 - U.S. president Harry Truman signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Act. The act provided \$1.3 billion in the form of military aid to NATO countries.

On Oct. 7 ...

1765 - Nine American colonies send a total of 28 delegates to New York City for the Stamp Act Congress. The delegates adopt the "Declaration of Rights and Grievances."

1956 - A U.S. House subcommittee began investigations of allegedly rigged TV quiz shows.

1963 - U.S. President Kennedy signed a nuclear test ban treaty with Britain and the Soviet Union.

1994 - The U.S. dispatched an aircraft carrier to the Persian Gulf when Iraqi troops were spotted moving toward Kuwait. The U.S. Army was also put on alert.

2001 - The U.S. and Great Britain began airstrikes in Afghanistan in response to that state's support of terrorism and Osama bin Laden. The act was the first military action taken in response to the terrorist attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001.

On Oct. 9 ...

1781 - The last major battle of the American Revolutionary War took place in Yorktown, VA. The American forces, led by George Washington, defeated the British troops under Lord Cornwallis.

1888 - The public was admitted to the Washington Monument for the first time.

1994 - The U.S. sent troops and warships to the Persian Gulf in response to Saddam Hussein sending thousands of troops and hundreds of tanks toward the Kuwaiti border.

On Oct. 10 ...

1845 - The United States Naval Academy opened in Annapolis, MD.

1973 - U.S. Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned after being charged with federal income tax evasion.

1991 - The United States cut all foreign aid to Haiti in reaction to a military coup that forced President Jean-Claude Aristide into exile.

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

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