

HOW THEY VOTED

Here's how area members of Congress voted on major issues in the week ending June 24. NV means "did not vote."

HOUSE

Libya funds cutoff

Voting 180-238, the House on June 24 defeated a bill (HR 2278) to cut off funding for the direct military aspects of U.S. involvement in the ongoing NATO-led air war over Libya. The resolution sought to permit continued U.S. participation in the international coalition providing support for Libyan rebels against the regime of Col. Moammar Gadhafi. But the involvement would be limited to search-and-rescue operations, aerial refueling, operational planning and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance activities, thus ruling out tactics such as missile strikes from naval vessels and unmanned aircraft.

A yes vote was to cut off military funding.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

Libya war authorization

Voting 123-295, the House on June 24 defeated a resolution (HJ Res 68) under which Congress would formally authorize for one year U.S. participation in the NATO-led coalition providing support to rebel forces in Libya's civil war. The measure barred deployment of U.S. ground forces except if that were necessary to rescue U.S. diplomatic personnel or troops from other NATO countries.

A yes vote was to authorize the Libyan action for a year.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

Patent-law overhaul

Voting 304-117, the House on June 23 approved the first overhaul of U.S. patent law since 1952, a bill (HR 1249) that would help the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office reduce its backlog of 700,000 applications. The bill switches from a "first to invent" to a "first to file" rule for giving priority to competing applications for patents. Additionally, the bill ends a requirement that judges on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the panel that hears patent appeals, live within 50 miles of court headquarters in Washington, D.C., broadening the pool of judicial talent available to handle complicated patent cases. Additionally, the bill authorized the patent office to set its own fees on patent applications and barred Congress from diverting fee revenues to other federal programs. The bill must now be reconciled with a similar one passed by the Senate.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

Election commission

Voting 235-187, the House on June 22 failed to garner a two-thirds majority needed to pass a bill (HR 672) abolishing the Election Assistance Commission. Congress established the EAC in 2002 in response to vote-counting debates in Florida and other states in the Bush-Gore presidential election of 2000. Directed by two commissioners from each party on an annual budget of \$38 million, the agency is charged with helping states and localities adopt modern technology and other "best practices" for running elections.

A yes vote was to abolish the commission.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

Arctic-drilling rules

Voting 253-166, the House on June 22 passed a bill (HR 2021) making it easier for energy companies to obtain permits for exploratory drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf off Alaska. The bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency to act within six months on applications for oil and gas exploration in the Arctic. It removes the Environmental Appeals Board from the permitting process, instead directing industry challenges to permit rulings to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. The bill is aimed primarily at advancing a long-stalled Shell Oil Co. project in the Arctic. In a provision that would affect other coastal states, the bill stipulates that, in determining whether drilling would violate the Clean Air Act, air quality is to be measured on shore rather than near the rig, where pollution is likely to be greater.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

State environmental rights

Voting 180-242, the House on June 22 defeated an amendment that sought to prevent the weakened environmental rules in HR 2021 (above) from overriding any stricter state or local laws against air pollution from offshore drilling, such as those on the books in California and Delaware.

A yes vote backed the amendment.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

Oil-industry subsidies

Voting 183-238, the House on June 22 defeated an amendment to HR 2021 (above) requiring that oil and gas companies seeking federal offshore-drilling permits publicly disclose in their application detailed information on the taxpayer subsidies they receive.

A yes vote backed the amendment.

Yes No NV

Brian Bilbray R
 Susan Davis D
 Bob Filner D
 Duncan Hunter R
 Darrell Issa R

SENATE

Economic development

Voting 49-51, the Senate on June 21 refused to take up a bill (S 782) to reauthorize the Economic Development Administration (EDA) through 2015 at funding levels of up to \$500 million annually.

Established in 1965, the EDA provides grants and loans to boost economic development in distressed urban and rural areas, with an emphasis on leveraging private-sector investment. The agency targets some of its aid to areas hit by natural disasters as well as communities that have lost military bases. This vote appeared to shelve the bill for the rest of this year or longer.

A yes vote was to advance the bill.

Yes No NV

Barbara Boxer D
 Dianne Feinstein D

Defense Secretary Panetta

By a unanimous vote of 100-0, the Senate on June 21 confirmed Leon E. Panetta as the nation's 23rd secretary of defense. Panetta, 72, has been director of the Central Intelligence Agency since 2009.

Executive branch czars

Voting 47-51, the Senate on June 23 defeated an amendment to block funding of any "czar" positions that presidents establish to circumvent the advice and consent of the Senate. Critics such as commentator Glenn Beck say President Barack Obama has wrongly appointed a large number of czars whose duties should be subject to the Senate confirmation process. In part, the president has named czars with responsibility over areas such as AIDS policies, climate change, domestic violence and the U.S. auto recovery. The amendment was proposed to a bill (S 679), still in debate, that would reduce by nearly 20 percent the number of presidential appointees subject to confirmation and streamline the Senate confirmation process.

A yes vote backed the amendment. Not voting: John Boozman, R

Yes No NV

Barbara Boxer D
 Dianne Feinstein D

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