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*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: S1301

SPONSOR: Grassley (R-IA)

BRIEF TITLE: Consumer Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1997.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 11, U.S. Code, to provide for
consumer bankruptcy protection, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCED: 10/21/97

COSPONSORS: 2 (Dems: 1 Reps: 1 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: Senate Judiciary

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Considered and amended by the Senate. (CR p.

S10452-S10457, S10459-S10473, S10508-S10509)

09/17/98 GRASSLEY, R-Iowa, unanimous consent request, to resume

consideration of S1301 on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1998; to

immediately recognize KENNEDY, D-Mass., to offer his

amendment relative to the minimum wage law; and to ask

that at 2:15 on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 1998, there be five minutes equally divided to be followed by the vote on the motion to table that amendment, agreed to by unanimous consent. (CR p. S10455)

09/21/98 ** Scheduled action ** Senate floor: continue consideration

09/22/98 ** Scheduled action ** Senate floor: continue consideration

09/23/98 ** Scheduled action ** Senate floor: may continue consideration

2 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR3494

SPONSOR: McCollum (R-FL)

BRIEF TITLE: Child Protection and Sexual Predator Punishment Act of 1998.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 18, U.S. Code, with respect to violent sex crimes against children, and for other

purposes.

INTRODUCED: 03/18/98

COSPONSORS: 25 (Dems: 2 Reps: 23 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Judiciary

House Rules

Senate Judiciary

RELATED BILLS: See HRes465

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Committee consideration and markup session held by the
Senate Judiciary Committee. (CR p. D997)

09/17/98 Ordered to be reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee
with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (CR p.
D997)

09/17/98 Reported to the Senate with an amendment in the nature of
a substitute and without a written report by the Senate
Committee on the Judiciary and placed on the Senate
Legislative Calendar. (CR p. S10517)

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR4579

SPONSOR: Archer (R-TX)

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to provide tax relief for individuals, families
and farming and other small businesses, to provide tax
incentives for education, to extend certain expiring
provisions, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCED: 09/16/98

COSPONSORS: 0 (Dems: 0 Reps: 0 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Ways and Means

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Committee consideration and markup session held by the
House Ways & Means Committee. (CR p. D1000-D1001)

09/17/98 Ordered to be reported by the House Ways & Means
Committee. (CR p. D1000-D1001)

09/25/98 ** Scheduled action ** House floor: begin consideration

4 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR3303

SPONSOR: Hyde (R-IL)

BRIEF TITLE: Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act,
Fiscal Years 1999, 2000, and 2001.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to authorize appropriations for the Department of
Justice for fiscal years 1999, 2000, and 2001; to
authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1999 and 2000 to
carry out certain programs administered by the Department
of Justice; to amend title 28 of the U.S. Code with
respect to the use of funds available to the Department of
Justice, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCED: 03/03/98

COSPONSORS: 1 (Dems: 1 Reps: 0 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Judiciary

Senate Judiciary

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Committee consideration and markup session held by the

Senate Judiciary Committee. (CR p. D997)

09/17/98 Ordered to be reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee

with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (CR p.

D997)

09/17/98 Reported to the Senate with an amendment in the nature of

a substitute and without a written report by the Senate

Committee on the Judiciary and placed on the Senate

Legislative Calendar. (CR p. S10517)

5 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR3874

SPONSOR: Castle (R-DE)

BRIEF TITLE: Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Amendments of
1998.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend the National School Lunch Act and the
Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to provide children with
increased access to food and nutrition assistance, to
simplify program operations and improve program
management, to extend certain authorities contained in
those acts through fiscal year 2003, and for other
purposes.

INTRODUCED: 05/14/98

COSPONSORS: 2 (Dems: 0 Reps: 2 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Education and the Workforce

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Considered and amended by the Senate. (CR p.
S10537-S10544)

09/17/98 SANTORUM, R-Pa., unanimous consent request that the
Senate struck all after the enacting clause of HR3874 and
insert in lieu thereof the text of S2286, as amended, by
the Senate. (CR p. S10537-S10544)

09/17/98 Measure, as amended, passed Senate by unanimous consent.

(Text of bill, as passed by the Senate, appears on pgs.

S10538-S10544 of the Sept. 17, 1998, Congressional

Record.) (CR p. S10538)

09/17/98 SANTORUM, R-Pa., unanimous consent request that the

Senate insist on its amendments and request a conference

with the House, agreed to by unanimous request. (CR p.

S10538)

09/17/98 Senate conferees named: LUGAR, R-Ind.; COCHRAN, R-Miss.;

MCCONNELL, R-Ky.; HARKIN, D-Iowa; and LEAHY, D-Vt. (CR p.

S10538, S10544)

6 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: S2493

SPONSOR: Harkin (D-IA)

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow

a tax credit for the nutrient management costs of

animal feeding operations.

INTRODUCED: 09/17/98

COSPONSORS: 0 (Dems: 0 Reps: 0 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: Senate Finance

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Referred to Committee on Finance (CR p. S10517)

7 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR3610

SPONSOR: Greenwood (R-PA)

BRIEF TITLE: National Oilheat Research Alliance Act of 1998.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to authorize and facilitate a program to enhance

training, research and development, energy conservation

and efficiency, and consumer education in the oilheat

industry for the benefit of oilheat consumers and the
public, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCED: 03/31/98

COSPONSORS: 130 (Dems: 66 Reps: 64 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Commerce

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Subcommittee consideration and markup held by the House
Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Power. (CR
p. D999)

09/17/98 Approved for full committee action amended by the House
Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Energy and Power. (CR
p. D999)

8 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR2281

SPONSOR: Coble (R-NC)

BRIEF TITLE: WIPO Copyright Treaties Implementation Act.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 17, U.S. Code, to implement the
World Intellectual Property Organization Copyright Treaty
and Performances and Phonograms Treaty.

INTRODUCED: 07/29/97

COSPONSORS: 9 (Dems: 3 Reps: 6 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Judiciary
House Ways and Means
House Commerce

RELATED BILLS: See S1121

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Considered and amended by the Senate. (CR p. S10537)

09/17/98 SANTORUM, R-Pa., unanimous consent request that the
Senate struck all after the enacting clause of HR2281,
and insert in lieu thereof the text of S2037, as amended,
by the Senate. (CR p. S10537)

09/17/98 Measure, as amended, passed Senate by unanimous consent.

(CR p. S10537)

09/17/98 SANTORUM, R-Pa., unanimous consent request that the

Senate insist on its amendments and request a conference

with the House, agreed to by unanimous consent. (CR p.

S10537)

09/17/98 Senate conferees named: HATCH, R-Utah; THURMOND, R-S.C.;

and LEAHY, D-Vt. (CR p. S10537)

9 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR4472

SPONSOR: Johnson (R-CT)

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow

a deduction for the long-term care insurance costs of all

individuals who are not eligible to participate in

employer-subsidized long-term care health plans.

INTRODUCED: 08/06/98

COSPONSORS: 20 (Dems: 10 Reps: 10 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Ways and Means

RELATED BILLS: See S2492

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 *** Related measure (S2492) introduced in Senate. ***

10 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR4550

SPONSOR: Portman (R-OH)

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to provide for programs to facilitate a significant
reduction in the incidence and prevalence of substance
abuse through reducing the demand for illegal drugs and
the inappropriate use of illegal drugs.

INTRODUCED: 09/11/98

COSPONSORS: 16 (Dems: 3 Reps: 13 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Judiciary

House Small Business

House Transportation and Infrastructure

House Rules

House Government Reform and Oversight

House Commerce

Senate Judiciary

House Education and the Workforce

RELATED BILLS: See HRes538

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Referred to Senate Committee on the Judiciary. (CR p.
S10517)

11 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: S1645

SPONSOR: Abraham (R-MI)

BRIEF TITLE: Child Custody Protection Act.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 18, U.S. Code, to prohibit taking
minors across state lines to avoid laws requiring the
involvement of parents in abortion decisions.

INTRODUCED: 02/12/98

COSPONSORS: 24 (Dems: 0 Reps: 24 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: Senate Judiciary

RELATED BILLS: See HR3682

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 SANTORUM, R-Pa., unanimous consent request, to provide
for consideration of S1645, to amend title 18, U.S. code,
to prohibit taking minors across state lines to avoid
laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion
decision, on Friday, Sept. 18, 1998, agreed to by
unanimous consent. (CR p. S10533)

09/22/98 ** Scheduled action ** Senate floor: continue consideration
(cloture vote at 4:30pm)

09/23/98 ** Scheduled action ** Senate floor: may continue
consideration

12 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR1122

SPONSOR: Solomon (R-NY)

BRIEF TITLE: Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 1997.

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend title 18, U.S. Code, to ban partial-birth
abortions.

INTRODUCED: 03/19/97

COSPONSORS: 0 (Dems: 0 Reps: 0 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Judiciary

RELATED BILLS: See S6, HR481, HR929, HR1032, HRes100, HRes262

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Consideration of veto message. (CR p. S10474-S10499,
S10509-S10510)

09/17/98 LOTT, R-Miss., unanimous consent request, to provide for
further consideration of the veto message on Friday,
Sept. 18, 1998, with a vote on the question, "Shall the
bill pass, the objections of the president to the
contrary notwithstanding," to occur thereon at 9:30 a.m.,
agreed to by unanimous consent. (CR p. S10452)

13 of 13 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

*** SUMMARY REPORT -- LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND RELATED BILLS ***

MEASURE: HR4596

SPONSOR: Smith (R-MI)

OFFICIAL TITLE: A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to
provide that certain farming-related section 1231 gains
and losses shall not be taken into account in determining
whether a taxpayer is eligible for the earned income
credit.

INTRODUCED: 09/17/98

COSPONSORS: 1 (Dems: 0 Reps: 1 Ind: 0)

COMMITTEES: House Ways and Means

LEGISLATIVE ACTION:

09/17/98 Referred to Committee on Ways and Means (CR p. H8035)

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LEGISLATIVE WEEK -- WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21

House Legislative Week

(FLOORWATCH 09/21/98; 1580 lines)

Item Key: 1222

not get a majority in the House. See House Action Reports Fact Sheet
No. 105-15, Nov. 5, 1997.

* Tax Cut Bill -- HR4579, Taxpayer Relief Act (page 41). The bill
cuts federal taxes by a total of \$80 BILLION over five years. It
increases the standard deduction for married couples filing jointly,
provides a 100% deduction for health insurance for the self-employed,

exempts estates of up to \$1 million from the federal estate tax, expands
the current prepaid tuition program to private institutions, and extends
certain tax credits due to expire. The president has said he will veto
the bill because it uses the budget surplus to finance the tax cuts. A
House Action Reports Fact Sheet will be available prior to floor
consideration.

benefits under current law.)

* Children on SSI with Life-Threatening Conditions -- Under current
law, when tax-exempt organizations (such as the "Make-A-Wish"
Foundation) provide cash payments and travel expenses to children with

life-threatening conditions (such as sending a child with cancer to Disney World), the cash payment may be used to reduce or eliminate the

child's eligibility for SSI (and thus Medicaid). This bill excludes from SSI eligibility and benefit calculations cash awards of no more than \$2,000 made by tax-exempt foundations to children with life-threatening conditions.

* Nonresident Aliens Professional Licenses -- The measure permits nonresident aliens to obtain or renew U.S. professional licenses even if

vote (H Rept 105-235).

Judge Robert K. Rodibaugh served the Northern District of Indiana as a bankruptcy judge for over 30 years after his appointment in 1960.

SUMMARY: This bill designates the U.S. Courthouse in South Bend, Ind. as the "Robert K. Rodibaugh United States Bankruptcy Courthouse."

* * * * *

Taxpayer Relief Act (HR4579; a House Action Reports Fact Sheet will be available prior to floor consideration)

FLOOR SITUATION: The Ways and Means Committee is expected to

Estate & Gift Tax

The bill accelerates to 1999, eight years earlier than currently scheduled, the current-law phase-in of the \$1 million estate tax unified credit exemption, thus allowing a \$1 million estate to pass to a beneficiary tax free beginning in 1999. (Current law allows exemptions from federal estate and gift taxes through a reduction of the estate or

gift tax by a credit, known as the unified credit. The last year's tax law increased the unified credit from an exemption of \$600,000 in 1997 to a \$1 million exemption in 2006.)

Education & Infrastructure

The bill expands the qualified prepaid tuition program enacted in

Expiring Provisions & Technical Corrections

The bill also extends a number of expiring provisions -- including the research tax credit and the work opportunity tax credit through -- Feb. 29, 2000.

Finally, the bill includes several technical corrections to current

law including clarifying the definition of the net worth limitation from certain revocable trusts in determining when the Treasury Department

bears the burden of proof in actions against taxpayers. Another provision in the bill clarifies that otherwise deductible qualified education loan interest is not treated as nondeductible personal interest.

2 of 3 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

SENATE FLOOR FORECAST FOR SEPT. 21, 1998

SenateWatch

(FLOORWATCH 09/21/98; 160 lines)

Item Key: 1221

By Andrew D. Beadle, CQ Staff Writer

SCHEDULED ACTION: SENATE TO RESUME DEBATE OF BANKRUPTCY BILL

The Senate will resume consideration today of the bankruptcy law revision bill (S1301), with several amendments expected to be offered. No roll-call votes are scheduled.

income, to provide a warning about credit debt if a card is issued;

-- A proposal by Russell D. Feingold, D-Wis., that would reduce the legal fees required to file for bankruptcy;

-- A proposal by Phil Gramm, R-Texas, that would change the percentage of a home's value a debtor can exempt when determining total

assets. Anything more than \$100,000 of a residence purchased within one year or \$1 million of a home purchased within three years of a bankruptcy filing would be considered among a debtor's assets; and

-- A proposal by Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., that would exempt certain assets when determining a debtor's income level, including money placed in a college savings account.

intended to prevent wealthy debtors from buying expensive homes in an effort to protect their money.

The bankruptcy bill would allow judges to transfer debtors who file for financial protection under Chapter 7 to Chapter 13 bankruptcy, which requires that debts be paid off incrementally. Judges also would be able to dismiss a bankruptcy filing if the individual can repay 20 percent or

more of the debt.

Bill sponsor Charles E. Grassley, R-Iowa, says under his legislation each bankruptcy case would be examined individually and, unlike related House bills (HR2500, HR3150), judges would not use numerical income formulas to determine the ability of debtors to pay off their debts.

Grassley said the bill includes provisions that would protect debtors from creditors who may try to harass them into repaying debts or switching bankruptcy status.

ACTION SUMMARY:

Noon:	Morning business.
2 p.m.	Senate resumes consideration of bankruptcy bill, S1301.

SCHEDULED ACTION: SENATE MAY DEBATE MINIMUM WAGE AMENDMENT TOMORROW

Under an earlier unanimous consent agreement, Kennedy will be allowed to take to the floor for two hours to debate his amendment to the bankruptcy bill, which would raise the hourly wage by \$1 -- to \$6.15 per hour by the Year 2000. He is scheduled to take the floor at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

will proceed to other amendments to the bill. However, if the Kennedy

amendment is successful, another agreement will have to be negotiated that will lead to completion of the bill. If a new agreement cannot be reached, the Senate GOP leadership may opt to pull the bankruptcy bill from the floor.

3 of 3 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

FOREIGN AID APPROPRIATIONS

House Floor Summary

(FLOORWATCH 09/18/98; 87 lines)

Item Key: 1220

House agreed to the following four amendments.

An amendment by REP. WOLF, R-Va., (agreed to by voice vote) to establish a 15-member National Commission on Terrorism to review counter-terrorism policies regarding the prevention and punishment of international acts of terrorism directed at the United States. The amendment provides that five of the members shall be appointed by the

There are no more items to excerpt.

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! Using the Committee List RJONES

1 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT: POSTAL SERVICE REVIEW

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 14

CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT: POSTAL SERVICE REVIEW

By Rebecca Adams, CQ Staff Writer

A bill aimed at revamping the U.S. Postal Service will be marked up Thursday by the House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Postal Service.

The legislation would make significant changes to the nation's mail system, which was established in its current form 25 years ago.

The bill (HR22) would give the Postal Service more authority to set stamp prices and permit it to make a profit for services in which it has direct competition.

While loosening other financial restrictions on the Postal Service, the bill also would strip some of its perks in controlling the market in basic mail delivery and subject the agency to tighter oversight in some areas.

The bill would create two categories for postal rates. A non-competitive group would include regular letters, postcards, magazines and other basic mail for which no real delivery alternative exists. A competitive category would include priority mail, international mail, parcel post and other special mail services also done by a number of private competitors.

For basic mail and non-competitive services, the bill would set a five-year price cap on stamp prices and allow the Postal Service to adjust them each year within the cap.

Currently, stamp prices can be changed only to reflect higher prices in the cost of delivering mail. Under the bill, the Postal Rate Commission could set the five-year price caps according to projections of the Gross Domestic Product and other national economic figures.

The bill would give the Postal Service more flexibility to borrow money and make investments and other financial decisions, many of which currently are controlled by the Treasury Department.

It would establish a pilot project to allow private carriers to use U.S. mailboxes, something current law prohibits.

Federal assistance for Postal Service to the blind and disabled, and for voter registration, would end. The bill also would establish two inspector general offices to oversee internal operations.

[ThisWeek]

2 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

SOCIAL POLICY: PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 27

SOCIAL POLICY: PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE

By Bob Gravely, CQ Staff Writer

A bill that seeks to prevent physicians from prescribing drugs for the purpose of assisted suicide is back on this week's House floor agenda.

The measure (HR4006), originally set for action last week, requires the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to revoke the prescription-writing license of any doctor who "has intentionally dispensed or distributed a controlled substance with the purpose of causing or assisting in causing the suicide or euthanasia of any individual."

It would exempt doctors whose patients die accidentally from drugs prescribed to relieve pain.

Last year, the DEA concluded that dispensing drugs used in an assisted suicide had no "legitimate medical purpose" and prohibited doctors from doing so. But Attorney General Janet Reno overturned that ruling in June, saying it did not fall under the DEA administrator's jurisdiction.

Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill., the bill's

sponsor, said it seeks to "address the culture of death that seems to have taken over this country at both ends of life." The bill would indirectly overturn an Oregon law -- which voters approved twice -- that allows physician-assisted suicide in some circumstances.

Opponents argue that the legislation would interfere with a doctor's ability to prescribe pain-relief drugs for dying patients and could expose physicians to undue civil and criminal liability.

Democrats are expected to offer an amendment to clarify that doctors could not face criminal charges for distributing drugs covered by the bill.

[ThisWeek]

3 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

CAPITOL HILL SHAPES UP FOR SOME SHOWDOWNS

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 1

CAPITOL HILL SHAPES UP FOR SOME SHOWDOWNS

By CQ Staff

Congress will get a slow start this week, then probably work into the weekend in a bid to make some of the biggest decisions it will face this fall.

Climactic votes on domestic spending, the defense budget, tax cuts and trade are all expected in the next six days. But all the while, the vast majority of Americans outside the Beltway will be under the impression that there is only one thing Capitol Hill is focused on: the latest move in the congressional review of Independent Counsel Kenneth W. Starr's case against President Clinton.

By order of the House Judiciary Committee, the world may be viewing sometime today a four-hour videotape of Clinton being questioned by Starr's prosecutors about the details of his sexual encounters with Monica Lewinsky. After that, House Republicans will have to decide what to do next in the increasingly partisan inquiry.

Republicans are also setting up election-year legislative showdowns with the president. They plan a vote this week on several bills the president has vowed to veto, the House's \$80 billion five-year tax cut principal among them. Clinton has also promised to reject the high-technology worker immigration measure the House plans to take up, as well as legislation before the Senate that would criminalize the transport of a girl across state laws for an abortion in a bid to evade

state parental notice or consent laws.

Congressional Democrats, meanwhile, have their own election-year fights to pick -- and the Senate rules allow them to do so.

To keep his agenda moving, Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., has agreed to allow a vote tomorrow on raising the minimum wage as an amendment to the bill that would tighten the consumer bankruptcy law. But he has drawn the line at allowing the Democrats an opening to get a vote on their managed-care medical insurance regulation bill. Unless Lott and Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., resolve their longstanding impasse on this issue, it could thwart efforts to pass the Interior appropriations bill or much else in coming days.

The Interior spending measure is one of many that may yet end up in a package designed to put all the difficult spending decisions into one bundle, ship it to Clinton and dare the president to use his veto by the adjournment date of the 105th Congress.

But a final decision on such a strategy is at least three weeks away, because Congress last week cleared a measure to keep federal spending on autopilot until Oct. 9, nine days into fiscal 1999, and also the target adjournment date.

SPENDING BILL PUSH

The GOP this week wants to push toward enactment five of the dozen

remaining spending bills. Conferees will be pressed to cut deals on the measures for energy and water, agriculture and the Treasury and Postal Service. The legislative branch conference agreement of last week may be pushed toward the White House. And by Saturday, the House may be ready to debate a defense appropriations conference report.

During the week, Congress will also work on several measures that Clinton would sign: the annual Pentagon authorization measure, a reauthorization of higher education programs and a revival of presidential authority to cut trade deals that Congress may then either approve or reject, but not amend.

But that fast-track measure still faces an uphill climb. And it was that very same legislation that collapsed in November, the last time there was a weekend session.

Then, both chambers were open all weekend in a bid to push themselves into adjournment. It did not work.

[ThisWeek]

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 12

COMMERCE AND LABOR: HIGH-TECH VISA PROGRAM

By Bob Gravely, CQ Staff Writer

Despite uncertainty about its chances for passage, a bill that would increase the number of visas available for foreign workers with high-tech expertise is on the House floor agenda later this week.

Lined up against the bill (HR3736) are the Clinton administration, Democrats worried about displacing American workers, and some anti-immigration and labor-friendly Republicans. But proponents say that computer and other high-tech companies are suffering because of a shortage of skilled workers. The measure was bumped from last week's floor schedule.

This year's allotment of 65,000 visas, known as "H1-B" visas, expired in May. The bill would grant an additional 20,000 visas for the rest of the year; increase the number of six-year H1-B visas to 95,000 in fiscal 1999; and bring the number up to 115,000 during fiscal 2001 and fiscal 2002.

The bill slated for the floor is a different version than a

compromise fashioned by the Judiciary Committee. That measure contained requirements that U.S. companies seeking to hire H-1B workers promise that no American worker would be laid off to accommodate a foreign employee and that the companies had made good-faith efforts to recruit domestic employees before looking abroad.

The new version, which represents a compromise with the Senate, narrows those requirements to apply only to companies that employ large numbers of H-1B workers, and would place the burden on workers to file complaints about alleged violations.

Melvin Watt, N.C., ranking Democrat on the Immigration and Claims Subcommittee, intends to offer the committee-passed proposal as a substitute amendment. Watt has added one provision to the substitute -- a requirement that applicants for the visas pay an additional \$500 to contribute to training programs for American workers.

[ThisWeek]

5 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

SOCIAL POLICY: AID TO IMMIGRANTS

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 28

SOCIAL POLICY: AID TO IMMIGRANTS

By Emily Church, CQ Staff Writer

The House is slated to consider a measure Wednesday that would enable about 12,000 mostly poor, elderly immigrants to retain Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid benefits that were scheduled to be terminated Oct. 1.

The bill (HR4558), approved last week by a Ways and Means subcommittee, is set for action under the expedited suspension of the rules procedure, which allows no amendments and requires a two-thirds vote for passage.

The 1996 welfare overhaul (PL 104-193) and the 1997 budget-balancing legislation (PL 105-33) mandated terminating benefits for immigrants who could not prove they were in the United States lawfully prior to a specific date.

The bill covers those who have lived here for many years but have lost documents needed to prove it.

"We are ensuring that every elderly or disabled non-citizen already dependent on benefits will remain eligible," said Human Resources

Chairman E. Clay Shaw Jr., R-Fla. The extension would cost the government about \$80 million.

The bill would make other, minor changes to federal statutes, including a permanent extension of a state unemployment insurance program created under the North American Free Trade Agreement (PL 103-182).

[ThisWeek]

6 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE: PROJECTED BUDGET SURPLUS

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 10

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE: PROJECTED BUDGET SURPLUS

By Matthew Tully, CQ Staff Writer

Hoping to blunt criticism of their tax bill, House Republican leaders this week will bring up for a vote legislation (HR4578) that

would place 90 percent of the projected budget surplus into a reserve account until Congress adopts plans to shore up the Social Security trust fund.

The trust fund is projected to go bankrupt in 2032 as the last of the Baby Boomers are entering retirement. President Clinton has urged Congress to steer clear this year of spending the surplus, which is expected to hit \$1.6 trillion over the next decade, and use all of it to fix Social Security. He has pledged to veto a Republican tax plan that would take \$80 billion from that surplus.

House Republicans, however, say their plan seeks to protect Social Security while making sure taxpayers receive some benefit from the surplus. They have suggested the money will be frittered away on government programs if it is not returned to taxpayers. The remaining surplus, they say, could be used to create Individual Retirement Accounts.

Last week, Democrats in the Ways and Means Committee unsuccessfully offered an amendment to the bill that would have walled off 100 percent of the surplus for the trust fund.

[ThisWeek]

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE: TAX CUT BILL

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 9

ECONOMICS AND FINANCE: TAX CUT BILL

By Matthew Tully, CQ Staff Writer

Despite a veto threat from President Clinton, House Republican leaders say they will move forward this week with a floor vote on a bill that seeks to cut taxes by about \$80 billion over the next five years.

The bill (HR4579) has drawn sharp criticism from Clinton and other Democrats because it would be funded in large part by a projected budget surplus. Critics say the entire surplus should be used to secure the solvency of the Social Security trust fund, which is projected to go bankrupt in 2032.

Supporters of the plan say it would tap only 10 percent of the surplus -- which is expected to hit \$1.6 trillion over 10 years -- and leave the remainder in a reserve account until a plan is devised the shore up Social Security.

The showdown between Clinton and the GOP has been expected all year, as Republicans worked to develop the largest tax plan they could pass before members head home for the November elections. Earlier plans ranging from cuts of \$101 billion over five years to \$700 billion over 10 years were scaled back in order to win the support of Senate Republicans.

The House bill, which was approved largely down party lines by the Ways and Means Committee last week, seeks to grant tax relief to farmers, married couples, small businesses, people with savings accounts and students saving for private colleges. It primarily would benefit households earning between \$40,000 and \$100,000 a year.

The bill would reduce the so-called marriage penalty by increasing the standard deduction married couples can claim on their federal income tax forms. It would expedite the phase-in of increased exemptions of the estate tax and would exempt from taxes the first \$400 married couples earn in interest, and the first \$200 in interest individuals earn. It also would allow self-employed individuals to deduct all of the cost of their insurance plans.

Two parts of the bill are paid for without using the surplus: the extension of some tax breaks for big businesses and a section accelerating planned increases on how much working Social Security recipients can earn before their benefits are cut. Together, the two measures cost about \$6.7 billion over five years

[ThisWeek]

8 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

COMMERCE AND LABOR: FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

Schedule highlights

(SCHEDULE 09/21/98)

Item Key: 11

COMMERCE AND LABOR: FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

By Matthew Tully, CQ Staff Writer

The House is scheduled to consider fast-track trade legislation on Friday, but a vote on the measure could be delayed until next week because supporters of the legislation indicated they are from six to eight votes short of the number needed for passage.

The bill (HR2621) would allow the president to negotiate trade agreements with other countries, then present his deal to Congress for a straight up-or-down vote with no amendments. While a scheduled vote this week has been on the agenda for some time, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Ga., said next week also is an option.

On Friday, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, Texas, left open the possibility that the bill could be considered on Saturday if a weekend session is scheduled.

Labor unions have opposed the bill and predict they will be able to block the legislation for a second consecutive year. Democratic leaders agree the bill will be defeated.

Backers, including farming and business groups, are urging their rank and file to lobby members of Congress. Republican leaders say agriculture groups will bolster their efforts for passage given current farm prices and will argue that more markets are needed to sell their crops.

But the bill is receiving no lobbying support from the White House, which sought the legislation last year but now fears it will divide Democrats and anger constituents less than two months before the midterm elections. White House officials have accused Republicans of political gamesmanship for pursuing the legislation.

The Senate Finance Committee has approved an omnibus trade bill that includes the fast-track language, but a vote on that measure is not expected before next week.

[ThisWeek]

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT NOMINATIONS

Future Senate committees

* New *

(SCHEDULE 09/23/98; Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs)

Item Key: 41

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT NOMINATIONS * New *

Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee (Chairman D'Amato, R-N.Y.) will hold a confirmation hearing on pending nominations.

Sept. 23 11:00 am SD-538 Dirksen Bldg.

Nominations:

John D. Hawke, Jr to be comptroller, Office of the

Comptroller of the Currency Department of the Treasury

Saul N. Ramirez to be deputy secretary of Housing and Urban
Development

William C. Apgar to be assistant secretary of Housing and
Urban Development

Cardell Cooper to be assistant secretary of Housing and

Urban Development

Harold Lucas to be assistant secretary of Housing and Urban
Development

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

10 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

TAX ISSUES

Full Committee Markup

Future Senate committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Finance)

Item Key: 56

TAX ISSUES

Full Committee Markup

Senate Finance Committee (Chairman Roth, R-Del.) will mark up draft
proposals relating to taxes.

Date TBA Time TBA SD-215 Dirksen Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

11 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

INFORMATION SECURITY

Future Senate committees

* Revised *

(SCHEDULE 09/23/98; Governmental Affairs)

Item Key: 61

INFORMATION SECURITY * Revised *

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee (Chairman Thompson, R-Tenn.) will hold the third in a series of hearings on information security.

Sept. 23 10:00 am SD-342 Dirksen Bldg.

Witnesses scheduled:

PANEL:

James Huse - acting inspector general, Social Security

Administration; Ed Ryan - special agent in charge, New York

Field Office, Office of the Inspector General, Social

Security Administration

PANEL:

Gene L. Dodaro - assistant comptroller general, Accounting and Information Management Division, General Accounting Office; Robert F. Dacey - director, Consolidated Audits and Computer Security Issues, Accounting and Information Management Division, General Accounting Office; Keith Rhodes - technical director for computers and telecommunications, Accounting and Information Management Division, General Accounting Office

PANEL:

Harold Gracey - acting assistant secretary Veterans Affairs for information and technology; John Dyer - principal deputy commissioner, Social Security Administration

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

12 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

SAFETY OF FOOD IMPORTS

Future Senate committees

* Revised *

(SCHEDULE 09/24/98-09/25/98; Governmental Affairs -- Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation and Federal Services)

Item Key: 60

SAFETY OF FOOD IMPORTS * Revised *

Permanent Investigations Subcommittee (Chairman Collins, R-Maine) of Senate Governmental Affairs Committee will continue its series of hearings on the safety of food imports.

Sept. 24, 25 9:30 am SD-342 Dirksen Bldg.

Witnesses scheduled:

Sept. 24

PANEL:

Sen. Paul Coverdell, R-Ga.; Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md.

PANEL:

Raymond W. Kelly - deputy commissioner for policy, Food and Drug Administration; Thomas J. Billy - administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture; Sanford A. Miller - Committee to Ensure Safe Food from Production to Consumption, National Academy of Sciences

Sept. 25

PANEL:

Timothy M. Hammonds - president and CEO, Food Marketing Institute; Stacey Zewel - director of scientific affairs, Grocery Manufacturers of America; Dane T. Bernard - vice

president, Food Safety Programs, National Food Processors
Association; Nancy Nagle - senior advisor for food safety,
United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association

PANEL:

Mohammad K. Akhter - executive director, American Public
Health Association; Carol Tucker Foreman, Safe Food
Coalition; Ruth Kava - director of nutrition, American
Council on Science and Health; Robert Hahn - director, Legal
Affairs and Research, Public Voice for Food and Health
Policy

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

13 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

TRACKING COSTS & BENEFITS OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Future Senate committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Governmental Affairs)

Item Key: 59

TRACKING COSTS & BENEFITS OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Senate Governmental Affairs Committee (Chairman Thompson, R-Tenn.) will

hold a hearing on pending legislation.

Date TBA Time TBA SD-342 Dirksen Bldg.

Agenda:

S2161 - A bill to provide government-wide accounting of regulatory costs and benefits, and for other purposes.

S1675 - A bill to establish a Congressional Office of Regulatory Analysis.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for July 29.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

14 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

BP/AMOCO OIL COMPANY MERGER

Future Senate committees

* Revised *

(SCHEDULE 09/22/98; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on Antitrust, Business Rights and Competition)

Item Key: 68

BP/AMOCO OIL COMPANY MERGER * Revised *

Antitrust, Business Rights and Competition Subcommittee (Chairman DeWine, R-Ohio) of Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on the merger between BP and Amoco.

Sept. 22 2:00 pm SD-226 Dirksen Bldg.

Witnesses scheduled:

David Freitag - president, Ohio Petroleum Retailers and Repair Associates; Steven Percy - CEO, BP America Inc.; George Spindler - Amoco Corp.; Philip Verleger - Brattle Group

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

15 of 33 items CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION

Future Senate committees * New *

(SCHEDULE 09/29/98; Judiciary)

Item Key: 67

RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION * New *

Senate Judiciary Committee (Chairman Hatch, R-Utah) will hold a hearing to review the effectiveness of the radiation exposure compensation act which reimburses some individuals who contract certain diseases due to their exposure to radioactive material.

Sept. 29 2:00 pm SD-226 Dirksen Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

16 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

2ND AMENDMENT RIGHTS GUN CONTROL

Subcommittee Hearing

Future Senate committees

(SCHEDULE 09/23/98; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on the Constitution, Federalism and Property Rights)

Item Key: 66

2ND AMENDMENT RIGHTS GUN CONTROL

Subcommittee Hearing

Constitution, Federalism and Property Rights Subcommittee (Chairman Ashcroft, R-Mo.) of Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on the second amendment individual rights in regards to gun control.

Sept. 23 2:00 pm SD-226 Dirksen Bldg.

Witnesses scheduled:

Charlton Heston - president, National Rifle Association;
Robert J. Cottrol - George Washington University,
Washington, D.C.; Eugene Volokh - UCLA School of Law, Los
Angeles, Calif.; Joyce Lee Malcolm - Bentley College,
Waltham, Mass.; Stephen Halbrook - lawyer, Fairfax, Va.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

17 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

FINANCIAL CONTROLS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Future Senate committees

(SCHEDULE 09/28/98; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on Administrative

Oversight and the Courts)

Item Key: 69

FINANCIAL CONTROLS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Administrative Oversight and the Courts Subcommittee (Chairman Grassley, R-Iowa) of Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on the effectiveness of financial controls in place within the Department of Defense in light of several recent internal fraud cases.

Sept. 28 1:00 pm SD-226 Dirksen Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

18 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD

Oversight Hearing

Future House committees

* Revised *

(SCHEDULE 09/24/98; Banking & Financial Services -- Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Securities and Government-Sponsored Enterprises)

Item Key: 79

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD * Revised *

Oversight Hearing

Capital Markets, Securities and Government Sponsored Enterprises
Subcommittee (Chairman Baker, R-La.) of House Banking and Financial
Services Committee will hold an oversight hearing on a General
Accounting Office study of the Federal Housing Finance Board. The board
supervises the regional Federal Home Loan Banks, whose members are local
savings associations and other institutions that make long-term
home-mortgage loans. The GAO study reviews the board's role as a
regulator of the safety and soundness of member institutions.

Sept. 24 11:00 am 2128 Rayburn Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

19 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

LOAN PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED BUSINESSES

Future House committees

* New *

(SCHEDULE 09/23/98; Banking & Financial Services)

Item Key: 80

LOAN PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED BUSINESSES * New *

House Banking and Financial Services Committee (Chairman Leach, R-Iowa)

will hold a hearing on the role of the microenterprise industry in the U.S. economy and the impact that pending legislation would have on the industry.

Sept. 23 Noon 2128 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR4179 - A bill to authorize qualified organizations to provide technical assistance and capacity building services to microenterprise development organizations and programs and to disadvantaged entrepreneurs using funds from the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, and for other purposes.

Witnesses scheduled:

PANEL:

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass.; Rep. Bobby L. Rush, D-Ill.; Diana DeGette, D-Colo.

PANEL:

Michael Barr - deputy assistant secretary of the Treasury
for community development policy; Ellen Lazar - director,
Community Development Financial Institutions Fund; John Gray
- associate deputy administrator, Capital Access, Small
Business Administration

PANEL:

Jason Friedman - vice president, Institute for Social and
Economic Development; Gene Severens - executive director,
Nebraska Microenterprise Partnership Fund; Peggy Clark -
executive director, Economic Opportunities Program, The
Aspen Institute; Michael Maroney - chairman, Association for
Enterprise Opportunity

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

20 of 33 items CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

CIVIL SERVICE REVISION

Subcommittee Markup

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on
Civil Service)

Item Key: 93

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CIVIL SERVICE REVISION

Subcommittee Markup

Civil Service Subcommittee (Chairman Mica, R-Fla.) of House Government Reform and Oversight Committee will mark up pending legislation.

Date TBA 9:00 am 2247 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR- - - A bill to revise long-term health care insurance for federal employees.

HR--- - A bill to overhaul several aspects of civil service employment, including the merit system, performance management, employee compensation and benefits, and retirement benefits.

Note: This markup was originally scheduled for July 16.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

YEAR 2000 COMPUTER PROBLEM

Joint Hearing

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE 09/24/98; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on
Government Management, Information and Technology)

Item Key: 94

YEAR 2000 COMPUTER PROBLEM

Joint Hearing

Government Management, Information and Technology Subcommittee (Chairman
Horn, R-Calif.) of House Government Reform and Oversight Committee and
Technology Subcommittee (Chairman Morella, R-Md.) of House Science
Committee will hold a joint hearing on the year 2000 computer problem.

Sept. 24 1:30 pm 2154 Rayburn Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

22 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

VETERANS HEALTH CARE OVERSIGHT

Future House committees

* Revised *

(SCHEDULE 09/25/98; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on
Human Resources)

Item Key: 95

VETERANS HEALTH CARE OVERSIGHT * Revised *

Human Resources Subcommittee (Chairman Shays, R-Conn.) of House
Government Reform and Oversight Committee will hold an oversight
hearing on the health care programs of the Department of Veterans
Affairs.

Sept. 25 10:30 am 2203 Rayburn Bldg.

Witnesses scheduled:

PANEL:

Thomas Garthwaite - deputy under secretary of Veterans
Affairs for health; Denis Fitzgerald - network director,
Veterans Integrated Service Network, Boston, Mass.; Nancy
Wilson - former director, Office of Performance Management,
Department of Veterans Affairs

PANEL:

Bruce Woolette - Department of Dentistry, Veterans Health

Administration Medical Center (VAMC) Togus, Maine; Jack
Bachman - Department of Dentistry, VAMC, Togus, Maine; Neal
Williams - disabled Vietnam veteran and member, Military
Order of the Purple Heart; Robert Hite - national field
representative, American Legion; Linda Schwartz - president,
Project Partnership

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

23 of 33 items CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

FEDERAL HEALTH BENEFIT RATE INCREASES

Future House committees
(SCHEDULE 09/24/98; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on
Civil Service)
Item Key: 96

FEDERAL HEALTH BENEFIT RATE INCREASES

Civil Service Subcommittee (Chairman Mica, R-Fla.) of House Government
Reform and Oversight Committee will hold a hearing on rate increases for
federal employee health benefits.

Sept. 24 9:00 am 2203 Rayburn Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

24 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Government Reform & Oversight)

Item Key: 97

CAMPAIGN FINANCE INVESTIGATION

House Government Reform and Oversight Committee (Chairman Burton, R-Ind.) will hold a hearing on the political donations and White House access of Johnny Chung, a Democratic fundraiser who has told federal authorities he acted as a conduit for illegal foreign money to the Clinton campaign from a Chinese aerospace firm. This is the second in a series of hearings on this matter.

Date TBA Time TBA 2154 Rayburn Bldg.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for Sept. 10.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

25 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

ANTI-TERRORISM PROGRAMS

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE 10/02/98; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on
National Security, International Affairs and Criminal Justice)

Item Key: 98

ANTI-TERRORISM PROGRAMS

National Security, International Affairs and Criminal Justice

Subcommittee (Chairman Hastert, R-Ill.) of House Government Reform and

Oversight Committee will hold a hearing on the status of the Defense

Department's domestic preparedness programs in response to the recent
attacks on U.S. embassies in East Africa.

Oct. 2 10:00 am 2154 Rayburn Bldg.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for Sept. 23.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

26 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

POSTAL SERVICE OVERHAUL

Subcommittee Markup

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE 09/24/98; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on the Postal Service)

Item Key: 99

POSTAL SERVICE OVERHAUL

Subcommittee Markup

Postal Service Subcommittee (Chairman McHugh, R-N.Y.) of House Government Reform and Oversight Committee will mark up legislation that would make substantial changes to the United States Postal Service, including allowing the postal service more freedom in setting postal rates, the ability to offer volume discounts and the flexibility to borrow money and make investments.

Sept. 24 10:00 am 2154 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR22 - A bill to reform the postal laws of the United States.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

27 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR BY JUSTICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on Commercial and
Administrative Law)

Item Key: 108

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR BY JUSTICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Commercial and Administrative Law Subcommittee (Chairman Gekas, R-Pa.)

of House Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on legislation that
would protect citizens from unfair, abusive and unethical conduct by
employees of the Department of Justice and would insure that the

department is not able to exempt its attorneys from state laws and rules of ethics. The panel also will consider a measure that would call for the appointment of an independent counsel if employees were found to have behaved illegally.

Date TBA Time TBA 2237 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR3396 - A bill to establish standards of conduct for Department of Justice employees, and to establish a review board to monitor compliance with such standard.

HR692 - A bill to amend the independent counsel provisions of title 28, U.S. Code, to authorize the appointment of an independent counsel when the attorney general determines that Department of Justice employees have engaged in certain conduct.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for July 30.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

Subcommittee Markup

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on Commercial and
Administrative Law)

Item Key: 109

COMMERCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE BILLS

Subcommittee Markup

Commercial and Administrative Law Subcommittee (Chairman Gekas, R-Pa.)
of House Judiciary Committee will mark up pending legislation.

Date TBA Time and room TBA

Agenda:

SJRes 51 - A joint resolution granting the consent of Congress to the
Potomac Highlands Airport Authority Compact entered into
between the states of Maryland and West Virginia.

NOTE: This was previously on the agenda for Sept. 17.

HR4049 - A bill to amend titles 5 and 28, U.S. Code, to provide for a
limitation on sanctions imposed by agencies and courts in
certain circumstances.

NOTE: This was previously on the agenda for Sept. 17.

HR4096 - A bill to amend title 5, U.S. Code, to provide for

Congressional review of rules establishing or increasing taxes.

NOTE: This was previously on the agenda for Sept. 17.

HR -- - A bill clarifying that the limitation on state income taxation of governmental pension income applies to possessions of the United States.

NOTE: This was previously on the agenda for Sept. 17.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

29 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

FOREIGN STUDENT EXCHANGES NORTHERN IRELAND PROGRAMS

Future House committees

* New *

(SCHEDULE 09/25/98; Judiciary -- Subcommittee on Immigration and Claims)

Item Key: 110

FOREIGN STUDENT EXCHANGES NORTHERN IRELAND PROGRAMS * New *

Immigration and Claims Subcommittee (Chairman Smith, R-Texas) of House

Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on pending legislation.

Sept. 25 9:30 am 2226 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR4416 - A bill to provide a limited waiver for certain foreign students of the requirement to reimburse local educational agencies for the costs of the students' education.

HR4293 - A bill to establish a cultural and training program for disadvantaged individuals from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

30 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

RELEASE OF EVIDENCE IN CLINTON CASE

Future House committees

* New *

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Judiciary)

Item Key: 111

RELEASE OF EVIDENCE IN CLINTON CASE * New *

House Judiciary Committee (Chairman Hyde, R-Ill.) will meet to consider and vote on the release to the public of evidence turned over to

Congress by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr that was collected during his investigation of possible wrongdoing by President Clinton.

Time TBA 2141 Rayburn Bldg. CLOSED WEEK OF SEPT. 21

Note: The committee met on Sept. 17 & 18 and voted to release selected portions of the evidence submitted to them. Members will continue meeting this week to decide what further evidence should be released.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

31 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

JUDICIARY BILLS

Full Committee Markup

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Judiciary)

Item Key: 112

JUDICIARY BILLS

Full Committee Markup

House Judiciary Committee (Chairman Hyde, R-Ill.) will mark up pending legislation.

Date TBA Time TBA 2141 Rayburn Bldg.

Agenda:

HR4264 - A bill to establish the Bureau of Enforcement and Border Affairs within the Department of Justice.

NOTE: This bill was originally on the agenda for Sept. 10.

HR4019 - A bill to protect religious liberty.

NOTE: This bill was originally on the agenda for Sept. 10.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

32 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

YEAR 2000 PROBLEM

Joint Hearing

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE 09/24/98; Science -- Subcommittee on Technology; Government Reform & Oversight -- Subcommittee on Government Management, Information and Technology)

Item Key: 131

YEAR 2000 PROBLEM

Joint Hearing

Technology Subcommittee (Chairman Morella, R-Md.) of House Science Committee and Government Management, Information, and Technology subcommittee (Chairman Horn, R-Ca.) of House Government Reform and Oversight Committee will hold a joint hearing on the Year 2000 computer problem.

Sept. 24 1:30 pm 2318 Rayburn Bldg.

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

33 of 33 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/21/98

EFFORTS TO PREVENT SSI FRAUD AND ABUSE

Future House committees

(SCHEDULE date TBA; Ways & Means -- Subcommittee on Human Resources)

Item Key: 137

EFFORTS TO PREVENT SSI FRAUD AND ABUSE

Human Resources Subcommittee (Chairman Shaw, R-Fla.) of House Ways and Means Committee will hold a hearing on proposals to prevent fraud and abuse in the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, which provides \$25 billion in annual cash benefits to more than 6.5 million aged, blind, and disabled individuals. Since 1997, the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) has included SSI on its list of government programs at "high risk" for waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. This session will focus on proposals that would prevent continued SSI benefits for recipients who have died, prevent prisoners from receiving federal benefits by requiring the sharing of prisoner information among federal agencies, stop those falsely claiming residence in the United States from collecting SSI benefits, improve the collection of mispayments especially to former prisoners and individuals receiving other benefits, and bar doctors and attorneys who commit fraud from participating in the SSI program and require restitution.

Date TBA Time TBA B-318 Rayburn Bldg.

Note: This hearing was originally scheduled for July 21

Information verified as of 07:08pm 09/18/98

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1 Highlights of the House Tax Bill

Banking/Economics/Labor

Trade/Transportation/Commerce

(HR4579; WR 09/19/98 p. 2478; 109 lines)

Item Key: 3801

2 House Pushes Juvenile Crime Legislation

Law/Judiciary/Supreme Court

(HR3, S2073, HR1818, S10; WR 09/19/98 p. 2498; 87 lines)

Item Key: 3781

3 Ten Worth Watching on the Judiciary Committee

Government Operations/Exec Branch

Law/Judiciary/Supreme Court

(WR 09/19/98 p. 2472; 112 lines)

Item Key: 3794

4 Archer's Tax Bill Moves in House; Democrats Dig In on Social Security

Banking/Economics/Labor

(HR4579, HR4578; WR 09/19/98 p. 2477; 166 lines)

Item Key: 3800

5 Embassy Fund Request Taking Shape

Foreign Policy

(HR4569; WR 09/19/98 p. 2507; 88 lines)

Item Key: 3770

6 Dole Loan Not Needed, Gingrich Says

Inside Congress/Lobbies

(WR 09/19/98 p. 2479; 43 lines)

Item Key: 3785

7 Differences Grow Between Senate, House Bankruptcy Bills

Banking/Economics/Labor

(S1301, HR3150; WR 09/19/98 p. 2497; 75 lines)

Item Key: 3761

8 Senate Votes 273, 274, 275, 276

Inside Congress/Lobbies

Senate Vote Charts

(S1301; WR 09/19/98 p. 2528; 258 lines)

Item Key: 3793

9 Conferees Finish Defense Bill

Defense

(HR3616; WR 09/19/98 p. 2504; 38 lines)

Item Key: 3788

10 On-Line Smut Curb Criticized As Too Tough

Environment/Science

Trade/Transportation/Commerce

(HR3783; WR 09/19/98 p. 2499; 45 lines)

Item Key: 3786

11 Senate Narrowly Sustains Veto Of 'Partial Birth' Abortion Ban;

Alternative Bill Introduced

Law/Judiciary/Supreme Court

Health/Education/Welfare

(HR1122; WR 09/19/98 p. 2491; 118 lines)

Item Key: 3756

12 House Enables Harsher Methamphetamine Sentences

Law/Judiciary/Supreme Court

(HR3898; WR 09/19/98 p. 2500; 22 lines)

Item Key: 3763

13 Rescuer of Embattled Economies Is Now Under Siege Too

Trade/Transportation/Commerce

Foreign Policy

(HR4569; WR 09/19/98 p. 2462; 180 lines)

Item Key: 3755

14 Status of Major Legislation

Inside Congress/Lobbies

(HR10, HR3150, S1301, HCONRES284, HR3616, HR2621, S1269, S2400,

HR6, S1882, S462, HR4194, HR2676, HR4105, S442, HR4250, S644,

HR1122, HR1757, HR2727, S8, S1415HR2400; WR 09/19/98 p. 2539; 111

111 lines)

Item Key: 3783

15 What's Ahead

Inside Congress/Lobbies

(HR4579, HR2621, HR3736, HR3616, HR6, S1301, S2237; WR 09/19/98

p. 2451; 30 lines)

Item Key: 3772

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COMMERCE: MEASURES AIMED AT 'SLAMMING,' 'SPAMMING' AND INTERNET ACCESS

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 41 lines)

Item Key: 15465

COMMERCE: MEASURES AIMED AT 'SLAMMING,' 'SPAMMING' AND INTERNET ACCESS

By CQ Staff

The House Commerce Committee today will mark up eight bills that cover a range of consumer, privacy and business issues.

One measure (HR3888) would address a practice in the long-distance telephone industry known as "slamming" -- when a long-distance provider switches a customer into the service without notification or permission. The bill would require companies to verify that subscribers agreed to switch their long-distance carrier and that the new long-distance provider notify consumers of the change. Under the measure, violators could face a fine of up to \$40,000 for the first offense.

The legislation also aims to curb the sending of unsolicited e-mail, known as "spamming." The bill would require those who send unsolicited e-mail to provide their name, mailing address and e-mail address.

The measure would require an unsolicited e-mail message to say that it is "unsolicited commercial e-mail" and that further unsolicited

transmissions may be stopped by replying to the message and placing the word "remove" in the subject line.

The Senate passed its version of the bill (S1618) on May 12.

INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY: The panel also will consider a bill (HR3783) aimed at cracking down on commercial adult Internet sites that do not block access to minors. The bill would require web sites containing material "harmful to minors" to use an adult verification method -- such as a credit card, an access code or a personal identification number -- to keep minors off their sites. Failure to make a good faith effort to do so could result in fines up to \$50,000 and a six-month prison term.

The measure would call on the FCC to meet every two years to determine which methods web sites could use to comply with the adult verification requirements.

The Senate incorporated the companion measure (S1482), sponsored by Daniel R. Coats, R-Ind., into its version of the fiscal 1999 Commerce, Justice, State spending bill (S2260).

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 43 lines)

Item Key: 15466

LAW/JUDICIARY: BILL WOULD CRIMINALIZE THEFT OF PRIVATE FINANCIAL
DOCUMENTS

By CQ Staff

It would become a federal crime to use fraudulent methods to obtain an individual's financial records under legislation (HR4321) to be marked up in the House Commerce Committee.

Under the bill, violators would face up to five years in prison for a first offense, with fines of \$250,000 for individuals and \$500,000 for companies. The penalties could be doubled for repeat offenders. The bill would subject a person or company that knowingly receives such information to identical penalties.

Jim Leach, R-Iowa, said the legislation responds to so-called information brokers, who use a variety of means to collect personal financial data, then sell it. Some Democrats complained that the bill should allow consumers to sue banks that improperly or negligently allow the release of financial information.

INTERNATIONAL BRIBERY: Another bill (HR4353) before the panel would

modify U.S. law to implement an international agreement barring bribery of foreign officials. The measure would make current U.S. law conform to a 1997 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development treaty by extending existing U.S. anti-bribery laws to non-U.S. citizens, foreign corporations and international organizations. The treaty was signed by 33 developed countries and ratified by the Senate on July 31.

One provision that could generate opposition would make officials at two intergovernmental satellite organizations -- Intelsat and Inmarsat -- liable for accepting bribes to give unfair advantages to private companies competing for global mobile satellite services. Ranking Democrat John D. Dingell, Mich., hinted he may offer an amendment to strip that provision. Dingell said the language was added without consultation of the Senate, the Clinton administration or officials at either satellite organization.

Intelsat and Inmarsat, which are controlled by 140 countries, are insulated from competition by law and are free from regulatory authority, tax liabilities and antitrust restrictions. The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee approved similar legislation (S2375) June 25.

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 30 lines)

Item Key: 15467

LAW/JUDICIARY: COMMITTEE TO MARK UP BILLS ON COUNTERFEITING, GRANTS

By CQ Staff

The Senate Judiciary Committee will mark up a bill (S2099) that would increase penalties for counterfeiting if computer technology is used.

With increased use of personal computers, scanners, digital imaging software, full color copiers and laser and inkjet printers, bill sponsor Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., said that small amounts of counterfeit cash are produced more easily.

The bill would change sentencing guidelines so that increases are determined by the amount of counterfeit bills produced and a point system based upon the offender's criminal record.

The bill would raise the sentence by two levels for any conviction involving \$2,000 in counterfeit currency or less. For offenses involving more than \$2,000 in counterfeit money, increases already are in place depending upon the amount. Beyond those guidelines, the bill would add a sentencing enhancement of at least two levels for counterfeiting

offenses that involve the use of a computer printer or a color photocopier.

Bill supporters argue that counterfeiters with no prior record and who produce small amounts of phony cash often are given probation rather than a prison sentence. The legislation would make it easier for a criminal to reach a sentencing level that would require a prison sentence of 12-to 18-months.

4 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

LAW/JUDICIARY: MEASURE WOULD EXPAND SCHOOL-BASED POLICE GRANT PROGRAM

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 36 lines)

Item Key: 15468

LAW/JUDICIARY: MEASURE WOULD EXPAND SCHOOL-BASED POLICE GRANT PROGRAM

By CQ Staff

The Senate Judiciary Committee will mark up a bill (S2235) to build upon a school-based partnership grant program administered by the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Grants are given to encourage the use of school resources officers. The legislation would require school resources officers to be career law enforcement officers directed by their agencies to collaborate with schools in educating students about crime and violence prevention. Resources officers would be encouraged to focus on gangs and drug-related activities, as well as to educate potential school-age victims in crime prevention and personal safety.

The bill would expand the range of programs that could receive grants. The current program gives money to specific youth crime prevention programs.

BULLET-PROOF VESTS: The committee also will consider a bill (HR2253) that would build upon a grant program to help law enforcement agencies purchase bulletproof vests for their officers. The bill would expand the program to include bullet-resistant equipment for officers' vehicles, shields and other equipment.

The bill would provide a \$40 million matching grant program for state, county, local and tribal law enforcement agencies. Jurisdictions that do not receive any funding under another grant program, the local law enforcement block grant program, would be given preference. At least half of the funds available would be awarded to jurisdictions with less than 100,000 residents.

The bill also authorizes \$3 million over 3 years for the Justice Department to conduct research and development of new bullet-resistant

technologies, such as bonded acrylic, polymers and polycarbons.

5 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: ONE AGENCY CONSIDERED FOR COMPILING GOVERNMENT
DATA

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 77 lines)

Item Key: 15469

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: ONE AGENCY CONSIDERED FOR COMPILING GOVERNMENT
DATA

By CQ Staff

The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee today will consider legislation that would consolidate the government's statistics gathering operation by creating a commission to examine how the current disparate agencies can share information and avoid duplication.

Under the bill (S1404) the panel would recommend if and how federal statistical agencies -- such as the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis -- should be streamlined into one agency.

The bill would establish uniform confidentiality protections and encourage data-sharing among federal agencies for statistical analysis. Sponsor Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., cited the need for such legislation because "the current federal statistical system is in disarray."

Because more than 70 federal agencies are responsible for gathering and analyzing statistics, Brownback said many expend resources "attempting to gather the same information from the same sources. This duplication is unnecessarily burdensome on both taxpayers and respondents."

At a hearing in March, Rep. Steve Horn, R-Calif., who also supports such consolidation, said, "Cost savings from either organizational consolidation or data-sharing is a real possibility. This could be a double victory -- higher quality and lower costs."

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

A House Government subcommittee today will mark up a bill aimed at revamping the U.S. Postal Service that includes proposals for more financial flexibility to encourage profits and stricter administrative oversight.

While loosening financial restrictions on the Postal Service, the bill (HR22) before House Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Postal Service it also would eliminate the agency's exclusive control

over some aspects of basic mail delivery. The bill would give the service more authority to set stamp prices and permit it to make a profit for services in which it has direct competition. The bill also would establish two inspector general offices to oversee internal operations.

Democrats are expected to offer amendments that would require the Postal Service to study such issues as diversity in the workplace and worker dislocation caused by increased automation. Subcommittee ranking Democrat Chaka Fattah, Pa., may request that one seat on the governing board that oversees the Postal Service be reserved for a representative of labor unions.

The underlying bill would allow the agency to borrow money and grant it flexibility in other financial decisions that currently are controlled by the Treasury Department.

The bill would create two categories for postal rates. A non-competitive group would include regular letters, postcards, magazines and other basic mail for which no real delivery alternative exists. A competitive category would include priority mail, international mail, parcel post and other special mail services also provided by private competitors.

For basic mail and non-competitive services, the bill would set a five-year cap on stamp prices and allow the Postal Service to adjust them each year within the cap. Currently, stamp prices can be increased

only to reflect higher prices in the cost of delivering mail.

Under the bill, the Postal Rate Commission would be able to set the five-year price caps according to economic assessments such as the gross domestic product and other financial indicators.

Current federal assistance to the Postal Service for providing special services to the blind and the disabled would end, along with assistance to expedite voter registration in post offices.

6 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: SENATE PANEL WILL TRY AGAIN TO MARK UP PRINTING MEASURE

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 43 lines)

Item Key: 15470

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: SENATE PANEL WILL TRY AGAIN TO MARK UP PRINTING MEASURE

By CQ Staff

The Senate Rules and Administration Committee will mark up a

controversial bill today that aims to overhaul the government's system for printing and disseminating information to the public.

Since a markup last week was canceled abruptly, lawmakers have been negotiating intensely to revive the bill (S2288). However, details of any compromise remain elusive.

At issue is how the Government Printing Office (GPO) will move to adopt new technologies, and ensure that government publications are widely available and that private companies have a chance to bid on printing contracts. The bill sets up procedures and requirements to ensure public access to government publications. It also changes procurement rules but retains competitive private-sector bids for printing government documents. And it calls for agencies, courts and other government entities to make documents available to the GPO for electronic posting on the Internet.

Representatives from the information technology and printing industries have protested that the bill changes too many of the government's procurement rules and enlarges the GPO bureaucracy. At the hearing last week, Xerox executive Mike Farren, representing the Information Technology Industry Council, said the legislation is "at odds" with fast-paced technological changes. A less centralized system, he said, would serve the public and taxpayers better. Spending \$26 billion annually, the federal government is largest consumer of information technology, Farren said.

Another company, ABC Advisors Inc., a private information company that disseminates bid solicitations to a national clientele, opposes the legislative language for the bid solicitation process. Currently, ABC pays the GPO \$54,000 to receive faxed copies of the urgent solicitations or hard copies that their courier shuttles for non-immediate bids. It then scans the documents, codes the information and relays it to its clientele either by fax or a proprietary online service. The company would like the bill to ensure that the GPO will charge an access fee if it posts calls for bids on the Internet. Some see the idea, backed by Rep. Bud Shuster, R-Pa., as "private relief legislation."

7 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

HOUSE FLOOR: HIGH-TECH VISA BILL SCHEDULED BUT MAY BE BUMPED FOR STUDY

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 30 lines)

Item Key: 15464

HOUSE FLOOR: HIGH-TECH VISA BILL SCHEDULED BUT MAY BE BUMPED FOR STUDY

By CQ Staff

House leaders have included on today's floor schedule a bill to increase a special class of visas for foreign workers that is pitting

the high-tech industry and business interests against organized labor and the Clinton administration.

But the bill may be bumped from the agenda so House members can have a chance to review the results of negotiations between the administration and the legislation's prime backer in the Senate, Spencer Abraham, R-Mich.

The bill (HR3736), which also was pushed from last week's floor agenda, would increase the number of "H-1B" visas available for foreign workers with high-tech expertise.

This year's allotment of 65,000 high-tech visas expired in May. The bill would grant an additional 20,000 visas for the rest of the year, and increase the number of six-year H1-B visas to 95,000 in fiscal 1999 and then up to 115,000 during fiscal 2001 and fiscal 2002.

Opponents of the bill, including some Republicans, argue that employees who enter the United States under the program could displace U.S. workers. However, Majority Leader Dick Armey, Texas, yesterday predicted the bill would pass.

The business community is complaining about a shortage of high-tech workers and is pushing the measure vigorously.

HOUSE FLOOR: CHAMBER TO MULL CONFERENCE REPORT ON DEFENSE SPENDING

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 29 lines)

Item Key: 15463

HOUSE FLOOR: CHAMBER TO MULL CONFERENCE REPORT ON DEFENSE SPENDING

By CQ Staff

House floor action is scheduled today on the conference report on the fiscal 1999 defense authorization bill, which contains compromises worked out last week concerning satellite exports to China and gender-integrated training in the armed forces.

Reacting to recent reports that U.S. satellite exports to China have helped Beijing develop its ballistic missile capability, conferees agreed to several changes in U.S. policy that are included in the \$270.5 billion measure (HR3616).

It would shift jurisdiction for licensing U.S. satellites from the Commerce Department back to the State Department, where it had been until President Clinton changed the policy in 1996.

It also would force the president to get congressional approval

before granting satellite export waivers to American companies, and it would ban exports of missile equipment or technology to China unless the president pledges that they will not undermine the U.S. space launch industry or bolster China's weapons capabilities.

On military training, conferees agreed to house male and female recruits separately but effectively left to the service chiefs the question of whether to train them separately. Conferees also agreed on non-binding sense of Congress language that the sexes should be separated during training.

9 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

HOUSE FLOOR: ADOPTION LIKELY FOR LEGISLATIVE BRANCH CONFERENCE REPORT

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 28 lines)

Item Key: 15462

HOUSE FLOOR: ADOPTION LIKELY FOR LEGISLATIVE BRANCH CONFERENCE REPORT

By CQ Staff

The House today is expected to adopt the conference report on the fiscal 1999 legislative branch appropriations bill.

The measure (HR4112) would provide about \$2.35 billion for the House, Senate and various congressional agencies and offices, such as the Library of Congress, General Accounting Office and Congressional Budget Office.

The total is 2.7 percent above fiscal 1998 levels and includes \$83 million for the Capitol Police, a 12 percent increase. For the first time, it provides enough money to allow additional pay for officers who work nights, holidays and Sundays.

The vote comes a day after Russell Eugene Weston Jr. appeared in court for the first time since being charged in the deaths of two Capitol Police officers during a July 24 shootout at the Capitol.

The conference agreement does not include funding for additional security improvements, including the construction of a visitors' center, that have been requested by the police and the Architect of the Capitol. That funding likely will be considered in a supplemental "emergency" funding bill that could move before Congress adjourns.

The conference report will not be open to amendments on the floor.

SENATE FLOOR: REPUBLICANS HOPE TO DISSIPATE WAVE OF 'ACTING' APPOINTEES

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 45 lines)

Item Key: 15461

SENATE FLOOR: REPUBLICANS HOPE TO DISSIPATE WAVE OF 'ACTING' APPOINTEES

By CQ Staff

The first order of Senate business this morning will be a vote at on invoking cloture and proceeding to legislation (S2176) that would specify which individuals could be appointed by a president on an "acting" basis to jobs requiring Senate confirmation and set strict limits on their tenure.

Republicans assert that President Clinton has been naming people to serve in acting capacities longer than the 120-day limit set by the 1868 Vacancies Act.

Bill sponsor Fred Thompson, R-Tenn., says 64 positions in the administration subject to confirmation are filled by temporary appointees, about two-thirds of whom have served more than 120 days -- without any nomination being submitted to the Senate for consideration. The 120-day limit does not apply once the name of the person is officially sent to the Senate.

Senate concern was ignited last December when President Clinton appointed Bill Lann Lee acting assistant attorney general for civil rights after Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee blocked floor action on his nomination. Lee is still serving, but, because the full Senate has not acted on his nomination, he is not in violation of the Vacancies Act.

The Justice Department has argued that its officials are not covered by the Vacancies Act -- a position Senate GOP leaders reject. S2176 would clarify that all executive branch positions that are not explicitly governed by other statutes fall under the Vacancies Act.

The measure would allow a federal department's top deputy to fill a vacancy on an acting basis for 150 days, up from the current 120. Any other official already confirmed by the Senate for another position could hold an acting appointment for a similar period. Unless a permanent nomination is submitted, the post would be vacated after 150 days and no one could exercise the duties of the position until a nominee was formally selected and submitted.

Many Democrats, including Minority Leader Tom Daschle, S.D., argue that the legislation is unnecessary. Daschle said acting officials need to be used in some offices because the Senate has been slow in confirming nominations.

FAA DEBATE RESUMES BUT MANAGED CARE LOOMS

Scheduled Events

(NEWS 09/24/98; 56 lines)

Item Key: 15460

FAA DEBATE RESUMES BUT MANAGED CARE LOOMS

By CQ Staff

The Senate likely will resume work today on a bill (S2279) debated briefly yesterday to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration for four years and provide \$10.1 billion in fiscal 1999.

The House passed its version (HR4057) to reauthorize FAA programs at \$10.1 billion in fiscal 1999.

As of last night, nearly 50 amendments -- many related to regional airport concerns -- were filed, but Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz., said the list should be reduced dramatically by midafternoon and an effort will be made to finish work tonight.

McCain said the measure needs to be signed into law by the end of the month, warning that not doing so would delay billions of dollars in

airport improvement grants for every state.

Both the House and Senate bills would increase funding for airport safety and security efforts. The measures would authorize \$5.6 billion for FAA operations, \$2.1 billion for the Facilities and Equipment program and roughly \$2.3 billion for the Airport Improvement Program.

The bill before the Senate would reauthorize agency operations for four years at a \$42.4 billion funding level.

Prospects for the bill heightened earlier this week after Charles S. Robb, D-Va., dropped objections related to language increasing the number flights out of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and permitting some to exceed the existing 1,250-mile "perimeter." The bill would permit 12 daily flights that could exceed the limit and additional 12 daily flights inside the perimeter.

On the perimeter rule, Robb may offer an amendment that would delay expansion of flights from the airport until the local airport authority reviews the issue. Opponents might argue that waiting for a review would only delay a reasonable expansion of service.

INTERNET TAXATION: If leaders make progress on negotiations about managed care legislation, the Senate could try again to take up a bill (S442) establishing a moratorium on Internet taxation.

In a bid to pressure Republicans to allow debate on their managed

care legislation (S1890), Democrats yesterday objected to a GOP attempt to bring up the Internet bill. Majority Leader Trent Lott, Miss., has said he has already made "fair and reasonable" offers for considering managed care legislation, but he says he cannot afford to allow the Senate to debate it for more than a few days at most given other pressing work.

Democrats have pledged to force the issue one way or another. Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., said the managed care issue is "hovering ... like a circling bird" over all legislation on the floor.

12 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

HOUSE FLOOR: REAUTHORIZATION OF GREAT LAKES RESTORATION PROGRAM APPROVED

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 26 lines)

Item Key: 15476

HOUSE FLOOR: REAUTHORIZATION OF GREAT LAKES RESTORATION PROGRAM APPROVED

By Bob Gravely, CQ Staff Writer

By voice vote, the House yesterday passed legislation that would authorize \$40 million through fiscal 2003 for wildlife, conservation and

other restoration projects in and around the Great Lakes.

The bill (HR1481) would reauthorize and amend a 1990 law (PL 101-596) that sought to revitalize the five lakes and more than 10,000 miles of shoreline that constitute the largest system of surface freshwater on Earth. It also would implement the recommendations of a 1995 Great Lakes resources study and create a committee to review restoration proposals.

The 1995 study found that the problems facing the Great Lakes region include chemical contamination, over-exploitation of fish and wildlife resources and the introduction of non-indigenous species. The bill would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to annually request from states and Indian tribes restoration proposals for the region. It would set up a committee, composed of representatives of all the affected states and tribes, to review the proposals.

The Fish and Wildlife Service then would select proposals to be funded under the bill. At least 25 percent of the cost of each project must be funded with non-federal money.

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 51 lines)

Item Key: 15477

APPROPRIATIONS: CONFEREES REACH AGREEMENT ON \$250.5 BILLION DEFENSE
MEASURE

By Pat Towell, CQ Staff Writer

House-Senate conferees yesterday settled on a \$250.5 billion compromise version of the defense appropriations bill for fiscal 1999 (HR4103), skirting the politically contentious issue of whether to pay for operations in Bosnia by agreeing that the Pentagon should be given more money than the ceiling set by the balanced-budget law.

Unlike the Senate version of the defense bill, the compromise measure did not include \$1.9 billion for Bosnia operations that President Clinton wanted to exempt from the budget limits as "emergency funding." Instead, the Bosnia funds and as much as \$2 billion to \$3 billion to increase combat readiness will be included in a supplemental appropriations bill now being hammered out.

Apart from the supplemental funding, the bill agreed to yesterday would give the Pentagon \$2.8 billion more than the corresponding legislation provided for fiscal 1998; But it would provide \$485 million less than Clinton requested.

The bill would provide \$202 million more than was requested for military pay, so the troops could get a 3.6 percent raise instead of the 3.1 percent hike the administration requested.

The bill would provide \$2.77 billion as requested for 30 Navy F/A-18 E and F model jet fighters. The House had cut three planes from the request. It also would give the Marines only seven V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor transport aircraft requested by the budget. The House had added an eighth plane.

As a down payment on a new helicopter carrier that will cost upwards of \$1.3 billion, the conferees added \$45 million to the request. The Pentagon had planned to renovate an older ship for about \$1 billion, rather than buy the new one, which would be built by Litton Industries in Pascagoula, Miss., home town of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott.

The conferees also added to the amount requested \$30 million for an Air Force F-16 fighter, \$50 million to upgrade the existing fleet of 21 B-2 stealth bombers, and \$36 million for components to be used to buy one more Joint STARS radar ground surveillance plane than the administration plans to purchase.

Citing the failure of all five test flights to date of the THAAD long-range, anti-missile interceptor, conferees approved only \$445 million of the \$821 million requested.

The House tentatively is slated to vote on the defense funding bill
Saturday.

14 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

DEFENSE: CLINTON CALLS FOR A BOOST IN SPENDING FOR DEFENSE

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 49 lines)

Item Key: 15478

DEFENSE: CLINTON CALLS FOR A BOOST IN SPENDING FOR DEFENSE

By Pat Towell, CQ Staff Writer

President Clinton has suddenly called for an unspecified boost in military spending, above the spending caps set by the balanced budget law -- both in the bill now before Congress and the budget he will send Capitol Hill next February.

In a Tuesday letter to Defense Secretary William S. Cohen that the Pentagon released yesterday, Clinton said the added funds would pay for modernizing weapons and retaining top-quality people stay in the force.

"Readiness is a perishable commodity and requires our serious

attention," Clinton wrote. He asked Cohen and Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to work with the White House to develop revised budget proposals for fiscal 2000. But for next year, he said, "we need to examine options with Congress" for last-minute spending boosts for spare parts, Navy manpower and Army training. Spokesman Michael McCurry said Clinton intends to send a similar letter to congressional leaders.

The letter comes one week after the nation's top military leaders warned Clinton at a closed meeting that the projected budgets could not keep the force combat-ready given their very high tempo of deployments. The service chiefs reportedly want to hike the annual budgets, projected to run in the range of \$270 billion, by \$10 billion to \$15 billion annually.

House National Security Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman C.W. Bill Young, R-Fla., who has called for such increases for years, applauded Clinton's willingness to lift the cap on defense spending, but warned that such a move would meet fierce opposition from deficit hawks in the House.

"There are going to be an awful lot of people who are going to try to hold the caps," Young predicted.

But House National Security Committee Chairman Floyd D. Spence, R-S.C., another fervent supporter of higher defense spending, was more sanguine: "If the president leads on this issue, I believe he will have

bipartisan support in Congress and the support of the American people."

Backers of a Pentagon budget hike hope their cause will get a boost next Tuesday, when the Joint Chiefs of Staff appear before the Senate Armed Services Committee to testify on the effect of the current budget on combat readiness: "People around here, after they hear those readiness hearings, are going to conclude that we've got a problem," predicted House Appropriations member Norm Dicks, D-Wash.

15 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

TRADE: HOUSE GOP PURSUES UPHILL FIGHT TO PASS FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 49 lines)

Item Key: 15479

TRADE: HOUSE GOP PURSUES UPHILL FIGHT TO PASS FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

By David Hosansky, CQ Staff Writer

House GOP leaders, who are pledging a floor vote this week on fast-track trade legislation (HR2621), remain so critically short of votes that some business lobbyists are hoping they withdraw the bill at the last minute.

House Majority Leader Dick Armey, R-Texas, vowed yesterday to take up the legislation on Friday or Saturday, regardless of whether supporters have the votes for passage.

The bill, which would expand the president's trade-negotiating authority, was pulled from the floor last November as the White House and GOP leaders sought to avert a sure defeat that they feared would send negative signals to the world about Congress' commitment to free trade.

"It is remarkably different attitudinally than it was a year ago," Armey said in his weekly news briefing. He added that supporters still are trying to round up votes.

The measure appears to be at least 10 votes shy of a majority, according to its supporters' most optimistic vote counts. Business lobbyists estimate they have the support of about 170 Republicans and between 20 and 40 Democrats; their opponents say those estimates may be inflated.

Either way, the measure appears to be doomed. "There's no way they can win," said Rep. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio. "I'm surprised it has gone this far."

Some lobbyists think the GOP leadership will pull the bill at the last minute if they fail to pick up the necessary votes, rather than

risk spooking the jittery world economy with a defeat of the high-profile trade measure. But House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., and other top GOP leaders hope to turn that argument on its head. They have told supporters in the business community that this is a good time for a showdown vote because House members who have been leaning against the bill will be under enormous pressure to support it or face disastrous consequences.

Election-year maneuvering also is playing a big role. By pressing for the bill, GOP leaders are advancing a top priority for businesses that are major campaign contributors. Democrats, who need a big turnout on Election Day to hold their seats, are siding with labor and environmental foes of the measure. "I think what this does is energize the Democratic base," Brown said.

16 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS: GREENSPAN HINTS AT FED VOTE TUESDAY TO CUT INTEREST RATES

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 39 lines)

Item Key: 15480

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS: GREENSPAN HINTS AT FED VOTE TUESDAY TO CUT INTEREST

RATES

By Rebecca Adams, CQ Staff Writer

Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan hinted yesterday the board and its regional directors will vote next Tuesday to cut interest rates for the first time in nearly three years.

While discussing the world financial crisis before the Senate Budget Committee, Greenspan said that developments since August "increased the possibility that the slowdown in the growth of the American economy will be more than sufficient to hold inflation in check." With inflation held at bay, the Fed would be more likely to lower rates.

"I do think that we have to bring the existing instabilities to a level of stability reasonably shortly," Greenspan said. "But I really would suggest to you that I think we know where we have to go. I do not think we underestimate the severity of the problems with which we are dealing."

The Federal Reserve has not lowered interest rates since January 1996 and rates have been unchanged since March 1997, when policy-makers brought them up a quarter-point to stave off inflation.

Earlier yesterday, the Senate voted, 71-27, to kill an amendment to consumer bankruptcy legislation offered by Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, urging the Fed to cut the federal funds rate. Opponents said it was

inappropriate for Congress to meddle in monetary policy.

Greenspan said he favors restructuring the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) policies in lending money to countries with troubled economies. "But that is something which I think could appropriately be addressed after we get beyond this crisis," he said. "It's far better to have what we have and to fund the IMF than to have nothing at all."

He supported greater oversight and changes in the IMF structure, saying that such improvements "and a transition to a more effective and stable international financial system will take time."

17 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: SENATE LABOR RECOMMENDS HENNEY FOR FDA CHIEF

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 27 lines)

Item Key: 15481

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS: SENATE LABOR RECOMMENDS HENNEY FOR FDA CHIEF

By Emily Pierce, CQ Staff Writer

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee yesterday approved by

voice vote the nomination of Dr. Jane E. Henney to serve as the first female commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Only Michael B. Enzi, R-Wyo., objected to the nomination based on Henney's support for approval of the controversial "morning after" abortion drug known as RU-486. Enzi opposes approval of the drug, he said, because it would conflict with the FDA's mission to "protect public health by ensuring that human drugs are safe and effective" and RU-486 would be "fatal to the baby."

However, Enzi said he would not attempt a filibuster on the Senate floor to block the nomination and would settle for a voice vote. Still, his reservations could force Senate leaders to negotiate a time agreement for debate instead of simply confirming Henney by unanimous consent.

If confirmed, Henney would replace David A. Kessler, who resigned last year to become dean of the Yale School of Medicine. Since 1994, Henney has been vice president of health sciences at the University of New Mexico. Before that, she spent two years as deputy commissioner under Kessler. From 1980 to 1985, she was deputy director of the National Cancer Institute.

CONGRESS: WESTON IN COURT FOR FIRST TIME SINCE DEATHS OF CAPITOL POLICE

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 26 lines)

Item Key: 15482

CONGRESS: WESTON IN COURT FOR FIRST TIME SINCE DEATHS OF CAPITOL POLICE

By CQ Staff

Russell Eugene Weston Jr. appeared in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia yesterday for the first time since being charged in the deaths of Capitol Police officers Jacob J. Chestnut and John M. Gibson.

After a six-minute hearing, Magistrate Judge John M. Facciola ordered Weston held without bond at least until the next preliminary hearing, which was scheduled for Oct. 14.

Confined to a wheelchair, his left leg and right arm in casts -- reminders of the gunshot wounds he suffered in the July 24 shootout on the ground floor of the Capitol -- Weston conferred with his court-appointed attorney, federal public defender A.J. Kramer, before answering each question posed by the magistrate. Asked if he had trouble understanding the proceeding, Weston replied, "No." Asked if he understood that the charges he faces, killing federal law enforcement officers, are punishable by death, he answered, "Yes, sir."

Weston has been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic, but Kramer declined to comment to reporters about his client's mental condition. He said Weston was scheduled to return to the hospital, where he has undergone surgery four times since the shootout.

19 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

EDUCATION: OFFSETS FINAL STICKING POINTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION MEASURE

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 34 lines)

Item Key: 15483

EDUCATION: OFFSETS FINAL STICKING POINTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION MEASURE

By Rebecca Adams, CQ Staff Writer

Student groups balked yesterday at an offset proposed by conferees on the Higher Education Act reauthorization (HR6) to pay for new subsidies to commercial lenders and a consolidated loan repayment plan.

Among their objections is a proposal to make it harder for individuals to discharge their student loans through bankruptcy. Student loans typically are discharged two basic ways: if a bankruptcy filer can

show that full repayment would impose undue hardship, or if a filer has been repaying a student loan for more than seven years. The potential offset would remove the latter option.

"This provision would hit the poorest students hardest," said Ivan Frishberg, a spokesman for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

A separate offset proposal would effectively reduce loan subsidies to commercial lenders. Another potential offset would change a housing mortgage fee.

Offsets are the main issue remaining before the conferees. A House Education and the Workforce Committee spokesman predicted that the bill could still come to the floor tomorrow or Saturday. A Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee spokesman estimated the report could see floor action there next week.

The underlying legislation would reauthorize student aid and other higher education programs for five years. Other changes in the bill include a different rate for new student loans. Borrowers would be charged a rate of the T-bill plus 2.3 percent, while lenders would receive a subsidized, slightly higher rate. The new loan subsidy would cost about \$1 billion over five years.

ENVIRONMENT: SENATE PANEL OKS BILLS ON BORDER SMOG, STORAGE TANKS

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 50 lines)

Item Key: 15484

ENVIRONMENT: SENATE PANEL OKS BILLS ON BORDER SMOG, STORAGE TANKS

By Sumana Chatterjee, CQ Staff Writer

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee yesterday gave voice-vote approval to a House-passed measure designed to reduce air pollution caused by commuter vehicles at the U.S.-Mexico border.

The legislation (HR8) would authorize Customs officials to deny entry to foreign-registered cars and trucks that do not meet state or local emissions standards. Officials say a chief cause of increased vehicle air pollution in Southern California stems from U.S. citizens and legal migrant workers registering their cars in Mexico to avoid stricter U.S. emissions standards.

Supporters say the bill would reduce smog by 13 percent in the San Diego area, where 40,000 to 45,000 vehicles cross the border each day. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has estimated that vehicle inspection and maintenance programs reduce pollution at a cost of \$500 per ton, as opposed to \$2,000 to \$10,000 per ton for stationary sources.

Under the bill, vehicles could enter freely if the border state certifies they meet that state's emissions standards. It calls for fines and penalties when repeated attempts are made to enter the United States with a non-documented vehicle. One entry would be granted to obtain certification.

States may choose to develop their own compliance programs, but those are subject to the president's approval. States along the Canadian border would not be required to check for emissions compliance but could opt into the program.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS: The committee also approved, by voice vote, a substitute version of a bill (S555) designed to speed the cleanup of leaking underground storage tanks. It would require the EPA to transfer at least 80 percent of federal funds that normally go to the Leaking Underground Storage Tank trust fund directly to the states.

The trust fund was created in 1986 to assist states in cleaning up petroleum storage tanks, which can leak into groundwater and soil and pose a public health risk. The fund was financed by a one-tenth of a cent gas tax that expired Dec. 1, 1995, and has a balance of \$1 billion.

The bill would: require states to set up cooperative agreements with the EPA to schedule allocations from the trust fund; require the EPA to distribute the money based upon the number of leaking tanks and the amount of state contributions to the fund; and call for the EPA to

examine the problem of leaking storage tanks located on tribal lands.

The House passed its version (HR688) in April 1997.

21 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

ENVIRONMENT: SENATE PANEL OKS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION FUND

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 39 lines)

Item Key: 15485

ENVIRONMENT: SENATE PANEL OKS HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION FUND

By Emily Church, CQ Staff Writer

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee yesterday gave voice-vote approval to a bill (S2257) that would reauthorize the Historic Preservation Fund through fiscal 2004.

The Senate panel approved the bill along with with three dozen other resource-related measures. However, it left untouched three controversial mining reform bills and a contested authorization of a water project in Colorado.

Half of the money that finances the fund comes from royalties paid to the federal government on certain oil-drilling leases. State governments provide the remaining funds.

The bill would reauthorize the deposit of \$150 million in royalties annually through the designated fiscal year. The authorization for the deposits expired Sept. 30, 1997.

The panel also adopted, by voice vote, an amendment by bill sponsor Mary Landrieu, D-La., that would reauthorize the advisory council to the historic preservation fund through 2004.

Landrieu said the fund underwrites the identification of historic places, negotiations with private property owners, education programs and community revitalization projects. She said the fund provided \$1.7 billion in 1997 for construction and rehabilitation projects.

OFF THE AGENDA: Committee spokesman Derek Jumpers said the panel is unlikely to take up the mining bills (S1102, S327 and S326), the Colorado water project transfer (S725) or a bill (S624) to increase competition for concessions contracts in national parks before Congress adjourns in October.

He said the bulk of the concessions bill was incorporated into a larger parks reform bill (S1693) the Senate passed in June and the House Resources Committee approved on July.

SOCIAL POLICY: MEASURES WOULD COMPENSATE HEMOPHILIACS INFECTED WITH HIV

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 39 lines)

Item Key: 15486

SOCIAL POLICY: MEASURES WOULD COMPENSATE HEMOPHILIACS INFECTED WITH HIV

By Emily Pierce, CQ Staff Writer

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee yesterday approved two bills that would compensate hemophiliacs who contracted the AIDS virus through contaminated blood products in the 1980s.

By voice vote, the panel approved a House-passed measure (HR1023) and a broader, unnumbered Senate bill, offered by Chairman James M. Jeffords, R-Vt. The Jeffords bill would compensate not only people with blood-clotting disorders but also non-hemophiliacs who contracted AIDS through blood transfusions in the 1980s.

Committee approval of both reflects a compromise between Jeffords and most other committee members, who balked at adding nearly \$1 billion to the original \$750 million authorization in order to include infected

non-hemophiliacs. Senate Majority Trent Lott, R-Miss., will have to decide which measure to bring to the Senate floor, Jeffords said.

The legislation's chief House supporter, Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill., wrote Jeffords two weeks ago to urge approval of the narrower House version. Jeffords said today he may accept Hyde's suggestion to compensate hemophiliacs this year and work on a separate compensation bill for non-hemophiliacs next year.

In an effort to make the Jeffords bill more palatable to House and Senate opponents, the panel adopted by voice vote a Jeffords amendment that would give priority to hemophiliacs' petitions for payment during the first 180 days of the program. Each recipient would receive about \$100,000 if they were infected with the AIDS virus between July 1, 1982, and Dec. 31, 1987.

During the 1980s, nearly half of the nation's 16,000 hemophiliacs contracted HIV from contaminated blood products, such as plasma. Nearly 10,000 non-hemophiliacs who underwent emergency care or elective surgery during that time also contracted the disease. Regulations were put in place nearly a decade ago to mandate that the blood supply be tested thoroughly.

HOUSE FLOOR: HOUSE OKS SPECIAL GROUP OF IMMIGRANTS RETAINING BENEFITS

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 28 lines)

Item Key: 15475

HOUSE FLOOR: HOUSE OKS SPECIAL GROUP OF IMMIGRANTS RETAINING BENEFITS

By Bob Gravely, CQ Staff Writer

The House passed yesterday, by voice vote, a bill that would allow about 12,000 mostly poor, elderly immigrants to retain Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid benefits that are scheduled to be terminated Oct. 1.

The bill (HR4558), which has broad bipartisan support, affects certain immigrants who were receiving SSI benefits when the major welfare overhaul law (PL 104-193) was passed in August 1996. That law and the 1997 budget-balancing legislation (PL 105-33) mandated terminating benefits for immigrants who could not prove they were lawfully in the United States prior to a specific date.

The measure covers those who have lived in the United States for many years but have lost the documents needed to prove it.

The bill would make other, minor changes to federal statutes, including a permanent extension of a state unemployment insurance

program created under the North American Free Trade Agreement (PL 103-182).

Another provision would ensure that children with life-threatening conditions could receive cash awards and travel payments from tax-exempt foundations, such as the "Make-A-Wish Foundation," without the payments being used to reduce or eliminate the child's eligibility for SSI.

24 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

HOUSE FLOOR: HOUSE CONDEMNS SERBIA FOR ATROCITIES IN KOSOVO

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 23 lines)

Item Key: 15474

HOUSE FLOOR: HOUSE CONDEMNS SERBIA FOR ATROCITIES IN KOSOVO

By Bob Gravely, CQ Staff Writer

The House yesterday voted to condemn atrocities and war crimes allegedly committed by Serbian police and military forces against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

The measure (HCONRES315) which was adopted, 410-0, asserts that

the Serbian government is primarily responsible for the loss of life and destruction of property in Kosovo -- an area in southern Yugoslavia where ethnic Albanians make up 90 percent of the population -- and that Serbia should compensate victims' families and pay to rebuild destroyed areas.

The resolution also urges the president to work with Congress to draft legislation to permit ethnic Albanians from Kosovo who have been affected by the fighting to make claims against Yugoslav assets that are under U.S. control.

The action comes one week after the House passed another measure (HCONRES304) that calls for Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to be declared a war criminal.

25 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

A WEB OF SLANDER ENVELOPS THE SANCHEZ-DORNAN REMATCH

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 61 lines)

Item Key: 15489

A WEB OF SLANDER ENVELOPS THE SANCHEZ-DORNAN REMATCH

By Marc Birtel, CQ Staff Writer

Although most political Internet sites are run by candidates to spread their own positive news, some people worry about the unregulated medium's potential to be used on the attack.

Case in point: a World Wide Web site set up anonymously and filled with vicious slander against freshman Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-Calif., who is in a rematch of her controversial 1996 race with former Republican Rep. Robert K. Dornan.

Rife with racial and sexual epithets, the web site (www.loretta98.org) purportedly was set up by "Hispanics for Truth," which describes itself as a group of Hispanic Democrats and former Democrats from Sanchez's 46th District.

The site's Internet address is nearly identical to that of Sanchez's official campaign web site (www.loretta98.com).

Riddled with misspellings, the sole purpose of the attack site appears to be to insult and denigrate Sanchez, whose name appears in a ball of flames on the home page. For example, it accuses her of making California's Hispanic community look like "dirty, thieving liars" and claims she is "honored by sodomites, lesbians and abortionists."

Although this purported group sought attention by sending an e-mail to Congressional Quarterly and other organizations, no individual took

responsibility for the site. "We prefer our anonymity for fear of excommunication from the church for some of the things we post on this web site," read the message.

Glen Christiansen, who was identified as the web site's "administrative contact" when it was registered, declined to discuss his involvement in the site's development or content. Christiansen operates an Internet hosting company in Santa Ana, the hub city in the 46th District, and his own web site (www.amphibiouszone.com) contains numerous pages of anti-Sanchez and pro-Dornan material.

Within an hour of Congressional Quarterly's call to Christiansen, the web site was disabled. Instead of directly linking to the "Hispanics for Truth" message, it jumped to another site, "The Ultimate Pro-Life Resource List."

Federal Election Commission records show that Christiansen has worked as a consultant to the Dornan campaign, receiving \$1,000 in June, \$750 in April and \$250 for "computer services" in March.

But Dornan's campaign denied having anything to do with the anti-Sanchez site.

"This campaign does not condone any personal attacks," said Dornan's campaign manager and son, Mark. "Who needs to call her a 'bimbo' when we have her record to campaign against?"

Sanchez defeated Dornan, a conservative firebrand, by 984 votes in 1996. Dornan protested that illegal voting by Hispanic non-citizens cost him the election, spurring a long, politically charged investigation by the Republican-controlled House. But the House voted earlier this year to dismiss Dornan's challenge based upon insufficient evidence.

26 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

WISCONSIN: GOP'S GREER SKIPS 2ND DISTRICT WRITE-IN BID

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 35 lines)

Item Key: 15490

WISCONSIN: GOP'S GREER SKIPS 2ND DISTRICT WRITE-IN BID

By Gregory L. Giroux, CQ Staff Writer

Two weeks after narrowly losing the Republican primary in Wisconsin's 2nd District, conservative minister Ron Greer announced yesterday that he would not pursue a write-in campaign for the seat left open by retiring four-term Republican moderate Scott L. Klug.

This was welcome news to Republican nominee Josephine Musser, a GOP moderate who could ill afford a split in her party base. She faces a

tough battle against liberal Democratic state Rep. Tammy Baldwin in a district that normally has a distinct Democratic lean.

Mike Maxwell, Greer's campaign manager, said that Greer -- after meeting Tuesday night with his campaign staff and supporters and last weekend in Washington with national conservative groups -- "felt like he received enough encouragement and backing to begin a write-in candidacy." But Greer declined to pursue it, Maxwell said, because he thought "there wasn't a clear sense that if he did this, he could definitely win."

Greer has sharp disagreements with Musser, a former state insurance commissioner. Most prominently, Musser opposes legislation, vetoed by President Clinton, that would have banned a procedure opponents call "partial-birth" abortion; Greer, an anti-abortion activist, strongly favors the bill.

Greer surpassed expectations with his runner-up performance in the six-candidate primary on Sept. 8. The former firefighter lost to Musser by about 400 votes out of more than 48,500 cast.

Maxwell said Greer would focus this fall on campaigning for conservatives -- including GOP Senate nominee Mark W. Neumann -- but will not campaign for Musser. He hinted Greer may run again in 2000.

DEFENSE CONTRIBUTIONS AIMED MAINLY AT GOP

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 25 lines)

Item Key: 15491

DEFENSE CONTRIBUTIONS AIMED MAINLY AT GOP

By Derek Willis, CQ Staff Writer

Like many political action committees, those related to the defense industry tend to favor whichever party controls Congress.

That certainly has been the pattern during the current election cycle: 67 percent of defense PAC contributions have gone to Republicans. Since Jan. 1, 1997, defense PACs have given Republican candidates \$754,116, compared with \$371,548 to Democrats.

Typical of this pattern is Lockheed Martin, the nation's largest defense contractor; its PAC gave 63 percent of its contributions to Republicans. GOP recipients also benefited from 65 percent of the donations made by the PAC associated with another industry giant, General Dynamics.

Several other contractors have been favoring Republicans even more,

according to Federal Election Commission data. Newport News Shipbuilding, which makes nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, has given 90 percent of its \$64,000 in congressional contributions to GOP candidates. Alliant Techsystems Inc. and Cubic Corp. are two other defense PACs that have topped the 90 percent mark in giving to Republicans over Democrats.

28 of 47 items

CQ's WASHINGTON ALERT 09/24/98

SENATE FLOOR: SENATE PASSES BILL TOUGHENING CONSUMER BANKRUPTCY RULES

Hill News Highlights

(NEWS 09/24/98; 67 lines)

Item Key: 15473

SENATE FLOOR: SENATE PASSES BILL TOUGHENING CONSUMER BANKRUPTCY RULES

By Richard Sammon, CQ Staff Writer

The Senate yesterday passed legislation designed to make it harder for consumers to declare bankruptcy and walk away from their debts.

The vote was 97-1. The only dissenter was Paul Wellstone, D-Minn.

Despite that overwhelming vote, it will be a challenge in the