

The yeas and nays.

Here’s how Maine’s congressional delegation voted last week

TARGETED NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON — Here’s a look at how area members of Congress voted over the previous week.

Along with roll call votes this week, the House also passed the Career-Ready Student Veterans Act, to improve the approval of certain Department of Veterans Affairs educational assistance programs; the American Heroes COLA Act, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments in rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the veterans’ survivors; the Failing VA Medical Center Recovery Act, to establish within the VA an Office of Failing Medical Center Recovery; and the Female Veteran Suicide Prevention Act, to identify VA mental health care and suicide prevention programs for treating women veterans.

The Senate also passed the Directing Dollars to Disaster Relief Act, to direct the administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop an integrated plan to reduce administrative costs; a resolution, calling on Iran to deliver on its repeated promises of assistance in the case of Robert Levinson, a U.S. citizen missing in Iran since 2007; and the Judicial Redress Act, to extend Privacy Act legal remedies to citizens of certified countries.

House votes

House vote 1
WORLD TRADE CENTER MEMORIAL: The House has passed the National 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center Act, sponsored by Rep. Thomas MacArthur, R-New Jersey. The bill would designate the Sept. 11 memorial in New York City as a national memorial, and it would direct the Interior Department to provide up to \$25 million of annual funding to operate and maintain the memorial.

MacArthur said that while private donors have thus far sustained the memorial, “now it is our solemn duty, I believe, to honor the fallen and to protect the living” by having the federal government operate the memorial.

The vote was 387 yeas to 12 nays. Both Reps. Chellie Pingree, D-1st District, and Bruce Poliquin, R-2nd District, were among the yeas.

House vote 2
UNSAFE DRINKING WATER NOTIFICATIONS: The House has passed the Safe Drinking Water Act Improved Compliance Awareness Act, sponsored by Rep. Daniel T. Kildee, D-Michigan. The bill would require the Environmental Protection Agency to develop a plan for communicating with local governments, utilities and the general public when there are dangerously high levels of lead in municipal drinking water supplies.

Kildee said the requirement sought to avoid a recurrence of the water supply crisis in Flint, Michigan, by giving the public in other cities notice of any similar future problems as they develop rather than after the fact.

The vote was 416 yeas to 2 nays. Both Pingree and Poliquin were among the yeas.

House vote 3
REVIEWING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH GRANTS: The House has passed the Scientific Research in the National Interest Act, sponsored by Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas. The bill would require the National Science Foundation to provide a written justification showing that any grants it issues to fund scientific research meet criteria for determining that the research is in the national interest.

Smith cited several examples of projects of dubious merit being funded by the foundation, and said such



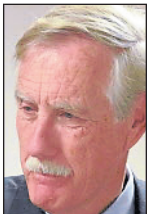
Poliquin



Pingree



Collins



King

funding meant less money to support worthwhile scientific research on an array of technologies that promise to improve public health and boost the economy.

A bill opponent, Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, called its justification requirement part of “a relentless and pernicious campaign against research grants with silly or odd sounding titles” that has failed to find evidence that grants are being awarded for frivolous research.

The vote was 236 yeas to 178 nays. Pingree gave a nay vote, and Poliquin gave a yeas vote.

House vote 4
PAYMENTS ON THE FEDERAL DEBT: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Sean P. Duffy, R-Wisconsin, to the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. The amendment would require the Treasury Department to notify Congress of its ability to make payments on only the principal and interest on the national debt in the event that the government reaches its debt limit.

Duffy said that by clarifying the government’s ability to prioritize debt payments over other types of spending, the amendment would reassure creditors that America will not default on its debt.

An opponent, Bill Pascrell Jr., D-New Jersey, said the amendment was misleading because the Treasury in fact would not be able to prioritize between different types of payments if the debt limit were reached, resulting in an immediate debt default.

The vote was 240 yeas to 176 nays. Pingree gave a nay

vote, and Poliquin gave a yeas vote.

House vote 5
REPORTS ON FEDERAL DEBT LEVELS: The House has passed the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act, sponsored by Rep. Kenny Marchant, R-Texas. The bill would require the Treasury Department to provide reports to Congress and the public detailing the federal government’s historic, current and projected future debt levels, as well as information about when the debt will reach its statutory limit.

Marchant said the reports would provide early and accurate information about the debt and debt limit, creating a budgeting process “that is more transparent, accountable and timely.”

A bill opponent, Rep. Sander M. Levin, D-Michigan, said the bill should have required the reports to “focus on the dire consequences of default,” including damage to the economy, veterans and health care, but instead the bill sought to divert attention away from Republican inability to take responsible action on the debt by blaming President Barack Obama’s administration.

The vote was 267 yeas to 151 nays. Pingree gave a nay vote, and Poliquin gave a yeas vote.

Senate votes

Senate vote 1
IOWA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Rebecca Goodgame Ebinger to serve as a U.S. district judge on Iowa’s southern district court.

A supporter, Sen. Chuck

Grassley, R-Iowa, praised Ebinger for her experience as a special assistant U.S. attorney in Iowa, appeals court clerk and district judge on Iowa’s state court.

Grassley called Ebinger “a highly qualified, well-respected judge.”

The vote was unanimous with 83 yeas. Both Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Angus King, I-Maine, were among the yeas.

Senate vote 2
SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA: The Senate has passed the North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act, sponsored by Rep. Edward R. Royce, R-California. The bill would require the president and his administration to apply sanctions against groups that provide forbidden aid and goods to North Korea, and report to Congress on U.S. efforts to use mass media to topple North Korea’s government and on North Korea’s cyberterrorism efforts.

A supporter, Sen. Benjamin A. Cardin, D-Maryland, said the bill sent the message “that we will not tolerate North Korea’s proliferation of weaponry, its intimidation of its neighbors, its human rights violations, and that we will use the strongest possible measures to ensure that we contain that type of nefarious conduct.”

The vote was unanimous with 96 yeas. Both Collins and King were among the yeas.

Senate vote 3
FINALIZING TRADE BILL: The Senate has agreed to the conference report with the House for the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, sponsored by Rep. Tom Reed, R-New York. The bill would promote fast-track consideration of trade agreements with Asian countries, automate the processing of certain trade documents by the Customs and Border Protection agency, and establish processes for investigating whether for-

eign countries are directly or indirectly manipulating their currency to subsidize their exports.

A supporter, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, said the currency provision would strengthen U.S. companies by stopping importers from undercutting their prices, and he called the bill “a tougher approach to enforcing trade laws that start moving our nation to a policy that I call getting trade done right.”

A bill opponent, Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tennessee, criticized a provision that repeals state and local taxes on Internet access for violating the principle of state control over tax policy.

The vote was 75 yeas to 20 nays. Both Collins and King were among the yeas.

Senate vote 4
SECOND IOWA DISTRICT JUDGE: The Senate has confirmed the nomination of Leonard Terry Strand to serve as a U.S. district judge on Iowa’s northern district court.

A supporter, Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, cited Strand’s 25 years of experience as a prominent and acclaimed private practice lawyer and recent experience as a magistrate judge for the northern district court in calling Strand a very well-qualified nominee.

The vote was unanimous with 93 yeas. Both Collins and King were among the yeas.

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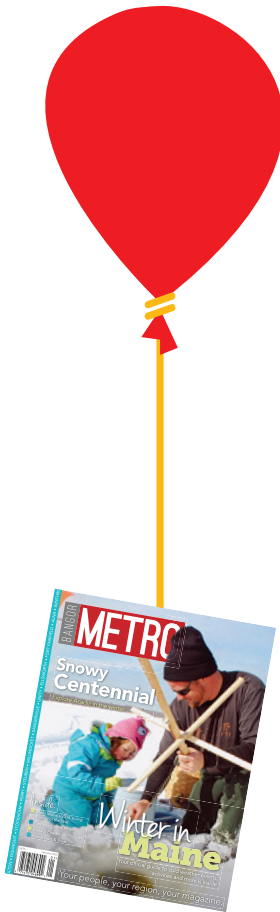
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