

The yeas and nays.

Here’s how Maine’s congressional delegation voted this 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 Senate also passed the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, to authorize appropriations for government agencies through Dec. 16; the Child Nicotine Poisoning Prevention Act, to require special packaging for liquid nicotine containers; the Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act, to facilitate collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment and substance abuse systems; and the Foreclosure Relief and Extension for Servicemembers Act, to temporarily extend protection against foreclosure and eviction for members of the military.

The House also passed the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act, to require the president to establish guidelines for foreign development and economic assistance programs; and the Coast Guard Authorization Act, to authorize Coast Guard appropriations for fiscal 2016 and 2017.

House votes

House vote 1

REQUIREMENTS FOR VISA REVIEWS: The House has passed the Visa Waiver Program Improvement Act, sponsored by Rep. Candice S. Miller, R-Michigan. The bill would require the Homeland Security Department to consider terrorism risks when reviewing a foreigner’s application for a visa to the U.S., adopt tighter application reviews for travelers from Syria, Iraq, Sudan and Iran, and require a Homeland Security report on measures to improve the electronic system for travel authorization by foreigners to better safeguard against terrorism.

Miller said the bill worked to give the government more of the information it needs to ensure that visa applications are not a threat to national security.

A bill opponent, Rep. John Conyers Jr., D-Michigan, called the tighter reviews for travelers from Sudan and the Middle East “arbitrary across-the-board judgments” that would “do nothing to enhance our security and only cast a cloud of suspicion over entire communities here in our country.”

The vote was 407 yeas to 19 nays. Both Reps. Chellie Pingree, D-1st District, and Bruce Poliquin, R-2nd District, were among the yeas.

House vote 2

TRAINING FOR RESPONSE TO TERRORIST

ATTACKS: The House has passed the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Reform and Improvement Act, sponsored by Rep. Buddy Carter, R-Georgia. The bill would change the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers program by authorizing its use to train federal, state and local law enforcement to prevent and deal with terrorist attacks.

Carter said the expanded authority “supports FLETC’s mission of providing world-class, expert training that can quickly adapt to emerging threats and training needs.”

The vote was 420 yeas to 2 nays. Both Pingree and Poliquin were among the yeas.

House vote 3

INDIAN TRIBES AND RED RIVER LAND: The House has passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Tom Cole, R-Oklahoma, to the Red River Private Property Protection Act. The amendment would state that Indian tribes in Oklahoma and Texas have the right of first refusal to purchase lands along the Red River to be sold by the government, and that tribes would maintain surface and mineral interests no matter the result of the sale.

Cole said preserving tribal surface and mineral interests was critical for ensuring funding for tribal government programs, and it would ensure the preservation of tribal property rights.

An amendment opponent, Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, said landowners next to the lands being sold should have the right of first refusal, and approving the amendment would disrupt the process of working to properly survey and sell the lands in question.

The vote was 246 yeas to 183 nays. Pingree gave a yea vote, and Poliquin gave a nay vote.

House vote 4

TERRORISM AND FIRST RESPONDERS: The House has passed the First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations Act, sponsored by Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas. The bill would require the Government Accountability Office to submit a report to Congress on how policies at state and local governments could affect the ability of first responders to be available to deal with terrorist attacks.

Lee said the evaluation of how an attack could harm a first responder’s family should help governments take “measures to ensure first responder families are safe and the availability of personal protective equipment is there” for the families.

The vote was 396 yeas to 12 nays. Both Pingree and Poliquin were among the yeas.

Senate votes

FINALIZING EDUCATION REFORM BILL: The Senate has agreed to the conference report for the Every Student Succeeds Act, sponsored by Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tennessee. The bill would reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and expand flexibility for states to develop their own education policies, including measurements of student, teacher and school performance.

Alexander said that by repealing the trend toward federal control of schools, the bill promised to “unleash a flood of innovation and excellence in elementary and secondary education” as state and local governments gain more freedom to develop the best methods for educating children.

The vote was 85 yeas to 12 nays. Both Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Angus King, I-Maine, voted yea.

For a longer discussion of this week’s votes, go to bangordailynews.com.

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