



The Ehlers e-Newsletter

For the Week of September 26, 2005

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News from Congressman Ehlers ...

HOUSE APPROVES EHLERS MANUFACTURING BILL – Seeking to aid the ailing U.S. manufacturing economy, the U.S. House of Representatives Wednesday approved legislation sponsored by Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, that would provide grants, encourage research, establish scholarships and strengthen an important program that helps small and medium-sized manufacturers.

For a complete report on this vote, please read the press release on our website:

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/092105ManuBillPassesHouse.html

THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MONDAY, SEPTEMBER, 26, 2005

On Monday, the House will meet at 2 p.m. in a Pro Forma session.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2005

On Tuesday, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m.

Suspensions (6 bills):

(Bills on suspension are generally considered non-controversial and have reduced debate time, but require a two-thirds majority vote to be passed.)

- 1) H.R. 3863 - Natural Disaster Student Aid Fairness Act:** Allows the Secretary of Education to waive, for institutions of higher education located in areas affected by a Gulf hurricane, matching requirements for non-federal funds provided for the campus based aid programs: Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study Programs, and Federal Perkins Loans. The bill also allows the Secretary to provide the same waiver to institutions accepting affected students. The bill extends the deadline by which the Department of Education must reallocate funds to institutions of higher education from September 30, 2005 to September 30, 2006, and allows for the reallocation of funds to institutions which participate in the program for which excess allocations are being reallocated, are located in an areas affected by a Gulf hurricane, or have accepted affected students for enrollment.
- 2) H.J.Res 66 - Supporting the goals and ideals of "Lights On Afterschool!", a national celebration of after school programs**

- 3) **H.R. 3703** - Staff Sergeant Michael Schafer Post Office Building Designation Act (*Spring Hill, Florida*)
- 4) **H.R. 2062** - Randall D. Shughart Post Office Building Designation Act (*Newville, Pennsylvania*)
- 5) **H.R. 438** - Maudelle Shirek Post Office Building Designation Act (*Berkeley, California*)
- 6) **H.Con.Res. 209 - Supporting the goals and ideals of Domestic Violence Awareness Month:** Resolves that it is the sense of Congress that Congress should raise awareness of domestic violence in the Nation by supporting the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005 AND THE BALANCE OF THE WEEK

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business.

Suspensions (3 bills):

- 1) **H.Con.Res. 245 - Expressing the sense of Congress that the United States Supreme Court should speedily find the use of the Pledge of Allegiance in schools to be consistent with the Constitution of the United States:** Expresses the sense of Congress that judicial rulings by the United States Court of Appeals for the 4th and 9th circuits have split on the issue of whether the Constitution allows the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in schools. The ruling by the United States Court of Appeals for the 4th circuit correctly finds the Constitution does allow such a recitation and the United States Supreme Court should at the earliest opportunity resolve this conflict among the circuits in a manner which recognizes the importance and Constitutional propriety of the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance by school children.
- 2) **H.Res. 388 - Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the July, 2005, measures of extreme repression on the part of the Cuban Government:** Resolves that the House of Representatives condemns the gross human rights violations committed by the Cuban regime. The House calls on the Secretary of State to initiate an international solidarity campaign on behalf of the immediate release of all Cuban political prisoners. It supports the right of the Cuban people to exercise fundamental political and civil liberties, including freedom of expression, assembly, association, movement, the press, and the right to multiparty elections. The House calls on the European Union to reexamine its current policy toward the Cuban regime, before June of 2006. Finally, it calls on the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and other international organizations, to work with the member countries of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) throughout the 62d session of the UNCHR in Geneva, Switzerland, to ensure a resolution that includes the strongest possible condemnation of the July 2005 measures of extreme repression on opposition activists and of all the human rights violations committed by the Cuban regime.
- 3) **H.R. 3200 – Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance Enhancement Act of 2005:** Permanently increases the maximum amount of SGLI and VGLI coverage to \$400,000. The bill also permanently increases the allowable increments of

SGLI coverage to \$50,000. H.R. 3200 requires the service Secretary concerned to notify, in writing, the spouse of a servicemember who elects to decline coverage, elects less than the maximum amount of coverage or subsequently reduced amount of coverage, or lastly, whether the beneficiary is someone other than spouse or child.

H.R. 3402 - Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2006 through 2009: Establishes the direction and spending levels of programs within the Department of Justice for fiscal years 2006 through 2009. It also authorizes programs for fiscal years 2006 through 2010. The bill provides the authorizations for appropriations for the various activities and operations of the Department of Justice (DOJ). It reforms various Department of Justice grant programs such as Byrne, Local Law Enforcement Block Grants (LLBEG), and Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). Some of the programs, such as the COPS grants program were modified and updated to address the new priorities affecting state and local governments since the program was established.

H.R. 3824 - Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act of 2005: Updates and improves the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The bill provides for the use of the best available scientific data in all decisions. H.R. 3824 replaces the critical habitat program with a more integrated recovery planning process that includes the identification of specific areas that are of special value to the conservation of the species which are then given priority in recovery efforts. The measure provides for active implementation of recovery plans through implementation agreements between the Secretary and other federal agencies where the federal agency agrees to implement programs and projects identified in the recovery plans. The bill increases the role of states, Indian tribes, counties and local governments by ensuring that a Governor and responsible State agencies, as well as the county and local governments, are provided full notice and opportunity to comment on ESA decisions affecting their States and regions.

H.J.Res. XXX - Making continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2006, and for other purposes: *A summary of this legislation was not available at time of publication.*

** Possible Motions to go to Conference*

** Possible Motions to Instruct Conferees*

Historical Tidbits

On Sept. 26 ...

1789 - Thomas Jefferson was appointed America's first Secretary of State. John Jay was appointed the first chief justice of the U.S. Samuel Osgood was appointed the first Postmaster-General. Edmund Jennings Randolph was appointed the first Attorney General.

1914 - The U.S. Federal Trade Commission was established.

1986 - William H. Rehnquist became chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court following the retirement of Warren Burger.

1991 - The U.S. Congress heard a plea from Kimberly Bergalis concerning mandatory AIDS testing for health care workers.

2000 - The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act. The act states that an infant would be considered to have been born alive if he or she is completely extracted or expelled from the mother and breathes and has a beating heart and definite movement of the voluntary muscles.

On Sept. 27 ...

1779 - John Adams was elected to negotiate with the British over the American Revolutionary War peace terms.

1964 - The Warren Commission issued a report on the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy in November of 1963. The report concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald had acted alone.

1973 - U.S. Vice President Spiro Agnew said he would not resign after he pleaded "no contest" to a charge of tax evasion. He did resign on October 10th.

1979 - The Department of Education became the 13th Cabinet in U.S. history after the final approval from Congress.

1986 - The U.S. Senate approved federal tax code changes that were the most sweeping since World War II.

1991 - U.S. President Bush eliminated all land-based tactical nuclear arms and removed all short-range nuclear arms from ships and submarines around the world. Bush then called on the Soviet Union to do the same.

On Sept. 28 ...

1787 - The U.S. Congress voted to send the new Constitution of the United States to the state legislatures for their approval.

1991 - In response to U.S. President Bush's reduction of U.S. nuclear arms Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev promised to reciprocate.

2000 - The U.S. Federal Drug Administration approved the use of RU-486 in the United States. The pill is used to induce an abortion.

On Sept. 29 ...

1789 - A regular army was established by the U.S. War Department with several hundred men.

1962 - U.S. President John F. Kennedy nationalized the Mississippi National guard in response to city officials defying federal court orders. The orders had been to enroll James Meredith at the University of Mississippi.

1983 - The War Powers Act was used for the first time by the U.S. Congress when they authorized President Reagan to keep U.S. Marines in Lebanon for 18 more months.

1994 - The U.S. House voted to end the practice of lobbyist buying meals and entertainment for members of Congress.

On Sept. 30 ...

1777 - The Congress of the United States moved to York, PA, due to advancing British forces.

1971 - The Soviet Union and the United States signed pacts that were aimed at avoiding an accidental nuclear war.

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