

Area Votes in Congress (Philadelphia Inquirer)

THOMAS VOTING REPORTS

WASHINGTON - Here is how Philadelphia-area members of Congress were recorded on major roll-call votes last week:

House

Combustible-dust rules. Voting 247-165, the House passed a bill (HR 5522) directing the Occupational Health and Safety Administration to adopt rules for controlling combustible dust at factories. The regulations would preempt any state rules that do less to protect workers from dust explosions and fires. The federal rules would be in addition to existing OSHA regulations for grain silos. The bill would require interim rules within 90 days of enactment and final ones within 18 months. President Bush has threatened to veto the bill, which is now before the Senate.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Robert A. Brady (D., Pa.), Michael N. Castle (R., Del.), Chaka Fattah (D., Pa.), Tim Holden (D., Pa.), Frank A. LoBiondo (R., N.J.), Patrick Murphy (D., Pa.), Allyson Y. Schwartz (D., Pa.), Joe Sestak (D., Pa.), and Christopher H. Smith (R., N.J.).

Voting no: Charles W. Dent (R., Pa.), Jim Gerlach (R., Pa.), Joseph R. Pitts (R., Pa.), and H. James Saxton (R., N.J.).

Not voting: Robert E. Andrews (D., N.J.),

Regulations delay. Voting 178-237, the House refused to delay action on new federal dust regulations until after completion of a government probe into causes of an explosion Feb. 7 at the Imperial Sugar refinery near Savannah, Ga., that killed 13 workers. The amendment was offered to HR 5522 (above).

A yes vote was to delay the bill.

Voting yes: Castle, Dent, Gerlach, Pitts and Saxton.

Voting no: Brady, Fattah, Holden, LoBiondo, Murphy, Schwartz, Sestak and Smith.

Not voting: Andrews.

Highway, transit spending. Voting 358-51, the House sent President Bush a bill (HR 1195) that would speed the release of billions of dollars previously authorized for highway and transit projects. The bill gives a green light to hundreds of earmarked projects and makes technical changes to expedite spending on other projects.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Brady, Castle, Dent, Fattah, Gerlach, Holden, LoBiondo, Murphy, Pitts, Saxton, Schwartz, Sestak and Smith.

Not voting: Andrews.

Senate

Federal aviation budget. Voting 88-0, the Senate took a preliminary step toward debating a bill (HR 2881) authorizing \$51 billion for Federal Aviation Administration programs through fiscal 2012. A threatened GOP filibuster rooted in disputes over amendments then delayed the bill. The Senate conducted no other votes during the week.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Thomas Carper (D., Del.), Bob Casey (D., Pa.), Robert Menendez (D., N.J.), and Arlen Specter (R., Pa.).

Not voting: Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D., Del.) and Frank Lautenberg (D., N.J.)

This week. The House will take up bills to ease the U.S. housing crisis, while the Senate will continue to debate federal aviation programs. Both chambers may vote on the farm-bill conference report.