

**TWO MEN WHO FASHIONED IMMIGRATION BILL AND LED IT THROUGH
CONGRESS;
ROMANO MAZZOLI DEVOTED FOUR YEARS OF QUIET, RELENTLESS
WORK TO MEASURE**

The New York Times

June 21, 1984, Thursday, Late City Final Edition

Copyright 1984 The New York Times Company

Section: Section D; Page 22, Column 5; National Desk

Length: 814 words

Byline: By STEVEN V. ROBERTS

Dateline: WASHINGTON, June 20

Body

The ordeal was almost over and Representative **Romano** L. **Mazzoli** was all but spent. "I was at my mother's this weekend and I almost fell asleep into the spaghetti," he said.

The Kentucky Democrat lost 12 pounds along with his sleep, and his face took on a gaunt look. But he won a **four-year** battle in the House over altering the nation's **immigration** laws when the House voted today to approve legislation that Mr. **Mazzoli** and Senator Alan K. Simpson, Republican of Wyoming, wrote. The Senate passed a slightly different version last **year**.

Profile of Rep **Romano** L. **Mazzoli**, one of chief sponsors of **immigration bill**; photo (M)

"I'm going to carve a very modest role around this place," said Mr. **Mazzoli**, a 14-**year** veteran of the House who seems to believe in his own obscurity. "But I wanted to prove to the country and to the leadership that we could deal with an emotionally laden and divisive subject in a way that brought credit to the House."

Immigration is one of the most emotional issues **Congress** ever considers, and the Simpson-**Mazzoli bill** contains **two** sections that rankle large numbers of voters. The House and Senate versions give legal status to aliens who came here illegally but have been here for a number of **years**, and both impose penalties on employers who knowingly hire illegal workers.

Assailed From Both Sides

Accordingly Mr. **Mazzoli** has been assailed from both sides and the 51- **year**-old lawmaker jokes: "I used to be 6 foot 7 until they kept pounding me down. Then I became 5 foot 9."

In an unusual tribute to the lawmaker some of his colleagues took the floor at one late-night session to praise his stewardship of the **bill**. Representative Abraham Kazen Jr., Democrat of Texas, said Mr. **Mazzoli** had taken criticism "bordering on abuse," but in the end he "has really withstood one of the sternest tests" ever faced by a Congressman.

The most common criticism of the **bill** is that it would cause employers to discriminate against Hispanic and other foreign-looking workers.

TWO MEN WHO FASHIONED IMMIGRATION BILL AND LED IT THROUGH CONGRESS; ROMANO MAZZOLI DEVOTED FOUR YEARS OF QUIET, RELENTLESS WORK TO MEASURE

"He doesn't understand the importance of the bill in the Hispanic community," said Representative Bill Richardson, Democrat of New Mexico whose mother was born in Mexico. "It's a blind spot with him, but an honest blind spot. He's a very fair man."

'A Conservative Guy'

A liberal Democrat on the Judiciary Committee added, "Remember he's a conservative guy. He votes with the Republicans as much as with the Democrats."

Representative Don Edwards, Democrat of California, who opposed the bill, said Mr. Mazzoli "plays hardball" when it comes to legislation but plays it well. "He just very skillfully overcame all the roadblocks," Mr. Edwards said.

Mr. Mazzoli's father left Northern Italy 70 years ago and settled in Louisville where he worked as a tile setter. The younger Mazzoli was first elected to Congress by 211 votes and has had, by his own testimony, a "constant struggle" to keep his seat against Republican challengers.

He made few ripples in his first 10 years in the House and says of himself: "Some people are flamboyant and some are not. I'm one of the are nots." But in 1980 Elizabeth Holtzman, the New York Democrat who headed the subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and International Law, left Congress to make an unsuccessful run for the Senate.

Bill Blocked in House

As a result of this "purely accidental" development, Mr. Mazzoli inherited the post and began what he calls his "roller-coaster odyssey." The Simpson-Mazzoli bill passed the Senate twice in the next three years but was repeatedly blocked in the House when Hispanic groups convinced Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., the Speaker of the House, that it would harm their constituents.

The three surviving Democratic Presidential contenders opposed the bill because of its employer sanctions. The measure received another blow when Representative Kent Hance, Democrat of Texas, almost won his party's Senatorial nomination by attacking the bill's plan to legalize millions of aliens.

That race revealed the political pitfalls in the bill and Mr. Mazzoli says the Hance campaign "broke my heart." Indeed, Mr. Mazzoli's Republican foe this year is attacking him for spending so much time trying to legalize undocumented workers.

Speaker O'Neill eventually agreed that the House should debate the measure, but the Speaker was so cool to the bill that the sponsor felt he was trying to "kill it with apathy." Mr. Mazzoli was on his own and when the bill first came to the floor last week the Kentuckian had so few allies he was constantly scurrying around lobbying his colleagues to support his bill.

But after a day or two the House came to realize that the Simpson- Mazzoli bill was going to pass. Four years of quiet but relentless effort were coming to a climax.

"Mazzoli was enormously effective at building coalitions and getting votes," conceded Mr. Richardson. "He whipped us good."

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (90%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (90%); US REPUBLICAN PARTY (89%); POLITICAL

TWO MEN WHO FASHIONED IMMIGRATION BILL AND LED IT THROUGH CONGRESS; ROMANO MAZZOLI DEVOTED FOUR YEARS OF QUIET, RELENTLESS WORK TO MEASURE

PARTIES (89%); US DEMOCRATIC PARTY (89%); LIBERALISM (77%); HISPANIC AMERICANS (76%); LEGISLATION (76%); **IMMIGRATION** LAW (76%); FOREIGN LABOR (76%); APPROVALS (71%); FINES & PENALTIES (71%); RECRUITMENT & HIRING (69%); EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION (64%)

Person: **BILL** RICHARDSON (79%); CHET EDWARDS (58%); DONNA F EDWARDS (58%); LAURA RICHARDSON (58%)

Geographic: NEW MEXICO, USA (79%); TEXAS, USA (79%); KENTUCKY, USA (79%); CALIFORNIA, USA (79%)

End of Document