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Body

The House approved rules for moving negotiated trade pacts quickly through <u>Congress</u>. The <u>bill</u> (HR 3005) bars amendments and allows an up or down <u>vote</u> only. Due for Senate debate next year, the <u>bill</u> would resume fast-track authority that lapsed in 1994.

Supporters said presidents must be armed with the authority because trading partners are reluctant to negotiate twice -- first with the administration and then with <u>Congress</u>. Foes said <u>Congress</u> deserves more influence over agreements that weaken or alter U.S. laws and cede sovereignty to the World Trade Organization.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

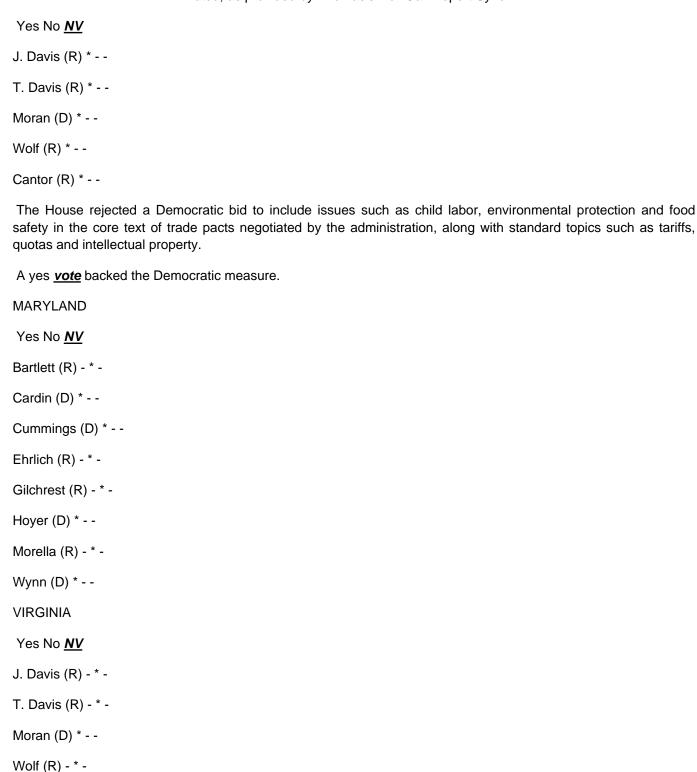
MARYLAND
Yes No <u>NV</u>

Bartlett (R) - *
Cardin (D) - *
Cummings (D) - *
Ehrlich (R) * -
Gilchrest (R) * -
Hoyer (D) - * -

Morella (R) * - -

Wynn (D) - * -

VIRGINIA



The Senate passed a <u>bill</u> (HR 10) allowing the Railroad Retirement System to invest assets totaling about \$ 15.6 billion in stocks and bonds. At present, the fund can invest only in Treasury bonds. The <u>bill</u> lowers the retirement age for full pensions from 62 to 60, reduces the vesting period from 10 to five years, lowers employer and employee payroll taxes and allows widows and widowers to fully inherit a spouse's pension.

Cantor (R) - * -

The system had about 750,000 beneficiaries and 250,000 active workers in 1997, according to the General Accounting Office. With three beneficiaries for every worker, it requires taxpayer subsidies to supplement employer and employee contributions. The system has an unfunded liability of \$ 40 billion, according to the Senate Republican Policy Committee. The *bill* anticipates an 8 percent return on the fund's private investments. Critics said that if the investments go awry, large employer infusions or a taxpayer bailout will be needed.



The Senate refused to require that more generous Railroad Retirement System benefits be paid out of interest earned on the fund's \$ 15.6 billion investment on Wall Street, <u>not</u> from principal. The amendment was offered to a <u>bill</u> (HR 10, above).

A yes vote was to require certain pension benefits to be paid only from earned interest.

MARYLAND

Yes No NV

Mikulski (D) - * -

Sarbanes (D) - * -

VIRGINIA

Yes No NV

Allen (R) - * q

Warner (R) - * -

The Senate approved the conference <u>report</u> on a <u>bill</u> (HR 2299) appropriating \$ 59.6 billion for the Department of Transportation and other agencies in fiscal 2002, up 2.5 percent from 2001. More than \$ 500 million in the <u>bill</u> was earmarked for pet projects of individual lawmakers.

The <u>bill</u> requires Mexican trucks to meet tough safety standards for gaining the access to long-haul U.S. routes granted them by the 1993 North American Free Trade Agreement. Carriers must be insured by U.S.-licensed companies, and Mexican drivers will be subject to random license checks.

A yes **vote** was to approve the conference **report**.

MARYLAND

Yes No <u>NV</u>
Mikulski (D) *
Sarbanes (D) *
VIRGINIA
Yes No <u>NV</u>
Allen (R) *
Warner (R) *

The Senate failed to get a three-fifths majority needed to advance a Democratic bid for \$ 15 billion in immediate spending for homeland security and Sept. 11 recovery. The supermajority was required to declare the spending an emergency under <u>congressional</u> budget rules. The \$ 15 billion is in addition to \$ 40 billion that <u>Congress</u> approved in October in response to the attacks. President Bush has asked <u>Congress</u> to wait until next year before adding to the \$ 40 billion. The <u>vote</u> occurred during debate on the fiscal 2002 defense appropriations <u>bill</u> (HR 3338).

A yes vote backed \$15 billion in immediate spending.

MARYLAND

Yes No <u>NV</u>

Mikulski (D) * - -

Sarbanes (D) * - -

VIRGINIA

Yes No <u>NV</u>

Allen (R) - * -

Warner (R) - * -

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RETIREMENT PLANS (66%); FOOD SAFETY (51%)

Person: BEN CARDIN (59%); STENY HOYER (58%); ERIC CANTOR (58%)

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