

The Post-Register

The political pulse

Idaho Falls, Idaho, Wednesday, October 14, 1981 Section D

Hansen defends fund cut vote

BY BEN J. PLASTINO
Post-Register political editor

An aide for Rep. George V. Hansen, R-Idaho, Tuesday defended as justified Hansen's vote against veteran health care and elderly housing.

Lawrence Arlen Withers, Hansen's executive assistant, issues the reply in answer to a charge from Evan Zeppos, Washington, of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee that "despite a bipartisan compromise and urging from his Republican colleagues, Hansen recently voted against funding veterans health care, elderly housing, environmental protection programs and consumer services."

Zeppos said in a news release Hansen's roll call vote appeared in the Sept. 15 Congressional Record on a routine funding bill for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Administration, EPA and Office of Consumer Affairs and other federal agency.

Zeppos alleged the "compromise bill had been agreed to in a bipartisan conference committee. The final bill included spending cuts in a variety of programs, and it was more than \$2.5 billion below the original budget estimates for the bill and nearly \$2 billion below the original House version."

Zeppos added the bill that Hansen voted against were for housing for the elderly and handicapped, major and minor veterans construction projects, and funding for veterans health care and medical research programs.

"Those voting against the measure claimed that the legislation was too costly, but even House Republicans disputed Hansen's positions," Zeppos said.

He then quoted two Republican congressman, Paul Hammerschmidt, of Arkansas, and Bill Green, of New York, lauding compromises in the bill.

The bill passed 209-197.

Hansen, however, took a different view.

A statement from Withers said "Congressman Hansen hates to dignify cheap-shot news releases from the Democratic National Committee's pork barrel machine. This big eastern Democrat operation just lost an election on this kind of baloney and is obviously trying to lose another one with the same old New Deal promises and raw deal results."

"The housing and veterans votes were included in a Democratic budget-buster that was not only opposed by Congressman Hansen, but by 197 congressmen, including the House Republican leadership who were fighting a bill \$620 million over the Reagan budget earlier approved by Congress.

"This bill also contained programs harmful to Idaho under the Environmental Protection Act and other authorities which would have caused problems for agriculture and industry, even to the loss of thousands of jobs, such as the closure of huge operations like the Bunker Hill smelter.

"Hansen has served on the House Veterans Committee and has a very high rating among veterans and veterans organizations. He is also a member of the committee which handles housing programs and rates 100 percent among senior citizens groups trying to cut wasteful federal spending which is ruining senior citizens and everyone else with inflation and higher interest rates."