

Vote Act Filibuster Winding Down

The Active Consumer

WASHINGTON — The first stage of a filibuster against extending key provisions of the 1965 Voting Rights Act wound toward a close Wednesday, but final approval appeared at least a week away.

"Why are we not moving on this matter?" asked a plainly frustrated Sen. Jennings Randolph, D-W.Va., a supporter of renewing enforcement sections of the law which expire August 6.

"There is no action here in this body," Randolph said.

More than three-fourths of the Senate has endorsed a voting rights compromise supported by both President Reagan and major civil rights organizations.

But a small group of ultra-conservatives led by Jesse Helms, R-N.C., has successfully blocked the Senate from even beginning formal consideration of the extension, said by its supporters to be the most important civil

rights legislation to go through the Senate in the 87th Congress.

At issue is whether all or part of 22 states should continue to be required to come to the Justice Department to change voting laws which might affect minority voting patterns.

A small group of diehard conservatives want to make it easier for those states to avoid continued Justice Department scrutiny.

The Senate voted 86 to 8 on Tuesday to curb a preliminary filibuster which had been preventing actual debate on the voting rights measure.

That leaves a theoretical 100 hours of debate — one hour for each senator — but since Helms has few followers, opponents of the extension were running out of time by Wednesday afternoon.

When time runs out, the Senate must vote to actually bring the bill to the floor, opening up new opportunities for a second stage of the Helms' filibuster.

"Make no mistake about it," said Majority Leader Howard Baker. "We will pass this bill."

Nonetheless, Helms is known for his ability to turn Senate rules to his own purposes, and a continuing battle appears certain.

On Wednesday, Helms' ally Jeremiah Denton, R-Ala., said the voting rights compromise approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee would set racial progress in the South backward, not forward.

He said the enforcement provisions which would be extended for 25 years if the compromise is enacted are punitive, and will harden racial attitudes in Alabama and other southern states.

But another southern senator, Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., said the voting rights measure has "worked and worked well" over the last 17 years.

He said a tough extension is needed to make sure that racial progress already made will be continued.

Many consumers are taking action to help the American economy. They are writing their legislators in the House of Representatives protesting a proposed bill that could affect jobs here and our ability to compete with foreign companies.



The bill, H.R. 5158, passed by the House Telecommunications Subcommittee, which is chaired by Representative Timothy Wirth of Colorado, would override the proposed Consent Decree AT&T signed with the Justice Department last January.

The bill is designed to place more restrictions on AT&T than any legislative proposal advanced by the Congress in a nearly decade-long attempt to revise national telecommunications policy. Those restrictions could cost some of the nearly one million telephone company workers their jobs.

While supposedly enhancing competition in the telecommunications industry, the bill increases regula-

Consumers are taking an active part in trying to prevent a law that would restrict some communication services.

tory control of AT&T, leaving that company's competitors—both domestic and foreign—free.

What's more, AT&T is curbed by the bill in the application of its own technology developed at Bell Laboratories in relation to providing Information Age services. That could delay or prevent scientific discoveries that might have made life better for us all.

MEDIA SPECIALIST MEET

The Robeson County School Media Specialists (Librarians) met at the Western Steer on Tuesday, June 8 at 12 noon.

The occasion was to honor two retiring media specialists Mrs. Iola Burns with 25 years of devoted service and Mrs. Dorothy Oxendine with 40 years of devoted service.

After the dinner, Mrs. Edith Sawyer, media specialist at Green Grove and Deep Branch, gave the address. Her topic was "Enjoy the Trip. You May Not Reach the Station." She also presented each with an engraved silver plate, compliments of the media specialists and certificates of recognition, compliments of the Robeson County Board of Education.

Mrs. Bertha M. Chavis is coordinator.

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