

HOW THEY VOTED

Here's how area members of Congress voted on major issues in the week ending Sept. 14. NV means "did not vote."

HOUSE

Government spy powers

Voting 301-118, the House on Sept. 12 sent the Senate a bill (HR 5949) to renew the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) through 2017. The law authorizes the National Security Agency to conduct surveillance without specific warrants of phone calls, emails and other contacts between foreigners that pass through telecommunications switching points in the U.S. Additionally, the bill authorizes a secret FISA court to issue blanket warrants for spying on communications between U.S. and foreign locations and continues the requirement that strictly domestic spying on Americans be authorized by the FISA court on a case-by-case basis. If FISA surveillance conducted without a specific warrant inadvertently picks up communications by an American, that information must be expunged or disregarded, although the law lacks transparency by which outsiders could see if corrective action is taken.

FISA was enacted in 1978 to govern the domestic collection of foreign intelligence with a goal of protecting Americans' civil liberties. The secret FISA court that issues blanket and specific warrants is comprised of sitting federal judges.

Lamar Smith, R-Texas, said the law is needed because "foreign terrorists continue to search for new ways to attack America. Foreign nations continue to spy on America, to plot cyberattacks and attempt to steal sensitive information from our military and private-sector industries."

Tom McClintock, R-Calif., said "We are told FISA is necessary to stop terrorist plots and that this protection trumps privacy or due process concerns. Well, Ben Franklin answered that argument years ago when he warned us that those who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

	Yes	No	NV
Brian Bilbray R	■	□	□
<u>Susan Davis</u> D	□	■	□
Bob Filner D	□	■	□
Duncan Hunter R	■	□	□
Darrell Issa R	■	□	□

Six months' stopgap

Voting 329-91, the House on Sept. 13 sent the Senate a measure (HJ Res 117) to fund the government for the first six months of fiscal 2013, through March 27, at an annual rate of \$1.047 trillion, which is less than 1 percent above 2012 spending levels. The bill extends a freeze on federal workers' pay into its third year while providing major increases for initiatives such as processing veterans' disability claims, fighting wildfires, modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal and securing federal computer systems. The stopgap measure is necessary because Congress failed to enact any of the 12 regular appropriations bills for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

No member spoke against the bill.

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

	Yes	No	NV
Brian Bilbray R	■	□	□
Susan Davis D	■	□	□
Bob Filner D	■	□	□
Duncan Hunter R	■	□	□
Darrell Issa R	■	□	□

Budget control, revisited

Voting 223-196, the House on Sept. 13 passed a Republican bill (HR 6365) directing President Obama to send

Congress specific spending cuts to replace \$110 billion in blind, across-the-board cuts in military, foreign-affairs and domestic spending scheduled for January under the 2011 Budget Control Act. A bipartisan deal that averted a government default, that law allowed the national debt ceiling to rise while mandating \$2.7 trillion in deficit reduction over ten years. In part, it required \$110 billion in across-the-board cuts next year, half from the Pentagon budget, if a temporary super-committee failed to structure a ten-year austerity plan. That panel failed in its task, leaving in place, in part, the \$110 billion in cuts for 2013 known as a "sequester" – that this bill seeks to avert.

Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., said "If the cuts in the sequester go forward, they will fundamentally weaken our current and long-term security. (They) will mean reductions in shipbuilding, aircraft and missiles, shrinking our current force to levels not seen since before World War II. And that means fewer defense-related jobs."

Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., said "To hear our Republican colleagues today, you'd think they had nothing to do with the Budget Control Act. We heard the chairman of the Budget Committee, (Paul) Ryan, on television the other

day not wanting to associate himself with that. The reality is he voted for it. The Speaker said he got 98 percent of what he wanted."

A yes vote was to pass the bill.

	Yes	No	NV
Brian Bilbray R	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Susan Davis</u> D	<input type="checkbox"/>	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Filner D	<input type="checkbox"/>	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duncan Hunter R	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darrell Issa R	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Democratic alternative

Voting 170-247, the House on Sept. 13 defeated a Democratic alternative to HR 6365 (above) that sought to replace \$110 billion in blind, across-the-board cuts next year with a combination of tax increases on the wealthy and targeted spending cuts. The alternative would enact the so-called "Buffet Rule," which sets a minimum tax rate of 30 percent on households with at least \$1 million in income from salaries and/or investments. It also sought to extend Bush-era tax cuts for income under \$250,000 while allowing them to expire on income above that threshold.

Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., said the president wants Congress "to immediately enact tax relief to 98 percent of the American people and our Republican colleagues say, 'No,

no. Nobody gets tax relief unless very wealthy people get a bonus tax break.'"

Scott Garrett, R-N.J., said "The American public is looking for leadership from Washington. They're not seeing it from the president, who has failed to present a budget that would get a single vote in either the House or the Senate."

A yes vote backed the Democratic plan.

	Yes	No	NV
Brian Bilbray R	<input type="checkbox"/>	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
Susan Davis D	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Filner D	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duncan Hunter R	<input type="checkbox"/>	■	<input type="checkbox"/>
Darrell Issa R	<input type="checkbox"/>	■	<input type="checkbox"/>