Senate Tightens Laws on Lobbyists

WASHINGTON

By Roy Gutman

The Senate Thursday overwhelmingly approved the most farreaching lobbyist-reform measure in a century, inclusion of provisions to tighten loophole-ridden registration laws and require lobbyists to disclose their clients' activities, discoveries, entertainment, trips and other gifts to lawmakers and their staffs.

Gripped by the fear of appearing insufficiently sensitive to voters' anger over special-interest influence in Washington, and determined to pass legislation later this year to ban virtually all gifts from lobbyists, lawmakers and their staffs.

"Public disgust was a welcome motivating factor" in overcoming decades of resistance to major reform of lobbying laws, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., author of the measure, said after passage of the bill by a vote of 95 to 2, with Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole, R-Kan., taking the vote in the absence of the floor leader.

The non-binding resolution urging passage of a provision on gifts worth more than $20 to lobbyists or their aides was approved, 94 to 1, with only Wallop voting no.

At the White House, communications director George Stephanopoulos said Clinton "is pleased that Congress took action on the legislation." It was a good idea. He said it was a good thing that they passed.

Clinton Agrees to Give Up Half Of Proposed Domestic Spending

WASHINGTON

By Timothy Clifford

In another major setback for President Clinton's economic program, the administration has agreed to give up half of its proposed deficit-reducing domestic spending cuts for next year.

The president's concession, which congressional sources said would total about $3 billion in new funds for domestic social programs, would end one of the most difficult issues facing Congress as it tries to keep within self-imposed spending limits. The remaining $3 billion in cuts that Congress has to come from somewhere else in the budget — a politically painful task for Congress.

Clinton's investment package is the latest casualty of a new attitude in Congress toward deficit reduction above new spending.

The retreat on the domestic investment mark the latest reversal for Clinton to drive the nation's spending priorities away from defense and with more emphasis on social programs as he promised to do during his election campaign.

The package is a $1.5 billion or approximately 50% of the $3 billion concession on investments in a move the president will likely make a major part of his political effort to forge a consensus for his economic program passing a bill this year.

The Appropriations committee chairmen have been pressing since Clinton in late May to adopt a "tough measure" to stop the brutal ethnic conflicts.

Saying the time has come "to unite and act quickly and decisively," Clinton warned, "America has made its position clear and is ready to do its part. But Europe must be willing to act with us. We must go forward together.

Before any military action can be undertaken, administration officials said, a number of actions must be completed to "reach a common front with the Europeans and to build support in Congress." The preparation faces an added challenge of time.

Sen. Dan Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., a member of Clinton's top military leaders, warned Thursday, "It's a close call to get a substantial majority in Congress to buy.

Clinton also stepped up his efforts to clear the way for U.S. military involvement in Bosnia at an increasingly concerned Congress.

The White House sent Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, various U.S. military officials and President Clinton himself to reach a common front with the Europeans and to build support in Congress.

But Thursday, foreign concerns dominated. Bracing the self-styled Serbian Bosnian parliament's decision to suspend supplies of the safe haven peace plan before holding a referendum on a peace agreement, the administration apparently is hoping it will appear to be a fighting balance of international concern. Clinton has said the agreement was a "welcome step" in overcoming the international community's "trade, quick and decisive action." The administration has said it would be "extremely painful" for Congress.

Clinton presses reduction of Kosovo's "tougher measures in Bosnia"

WASHINGTON

By Timothy Clifford and Myron S. Waldman

President Clinton, denouncing Bosnian Serbs in a Thursday meeting, gave up half of the plan as "a delaying tactic," called upon the European allies and Russia Thursday to help the United Nations take "tougher measures" to stop the brutal ethnic conflicts.

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Clinton-Urges alliances to take tougher measures in Bosnia

WASHINGTON

By Timothy Clifford

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