

House, budget panel pass spending cuts

WASHINGTON — Majority Republicans pushed \$17 billion in spending cuts through the House and \$100 billion more through its budget committee Thursday.

But furious Democrats accused them of renegeing on a deal and using phony, double-counted savings.

The House voted 227-200 for a GOP plan slicing \$17 billion out of already enacted programs, including public housing, summer jobs for youths and aid for the arts and public broadcasting. The cuts were the first the House has cleared in the Republican campaign to balance the budget.

The White House noted the occasion by vowing to veto it.

"There is no question that if the bill is in its present form, the president would veto it," said President Clinton's chief of staff, Leon Panetta. He called the reductions

"irresponsible and mean spirited."

Shortly afterward, the GOP muscled a plan through the budget panel that would make another \$100 billion in reductions over the next five years to help pay for the Republican tax-cut package. The vote was 24-11, and like the House roll call, it was nearly party-line.

The votes were almost drowned out by a raucous, finger-pointing row between the parties over whether Republicans had attracted conservative Democratic support for their spending cuts with a promise they later abandoned.

The dispute concerned the \$17 billion in House-approved savings and an arcane question of budget calculations: When you cut a program, do you measure savings for just one year or for several years into the future?

To get some Democratic votes

for the \$17 billion in cuts, Republicans said they agreed they would use the immediate savings from the reductions for deficit reduction.

The conservative Democrats said they believed the deal called for all the money saved — now and in the future — to be used for deficit reduction. But Republicans said they believed the deal allowed them to use future year savings to pay for tax cuts.

But Democrats insisted that a provision the House approved reflecting that deal forbade even the future savings from being used to pay for tax cuts. Republicans reluctantly agreed.

The Budget Committee's \$100 billion in cuts was to pay for part of the tax cut legislation moving through the House, now expected to cost \$190 billion over five years.



News... in a Minute

Anita Hill resigns

NORMAN, Okla. — Anita Hill is resigning as a law professor at the University of Oklahoma.

No reason was given for her resignation, which was announced in a March 9 memo to law professors.

"The University has in no way requested or encouraged the resignation," Josh Galper, spokesman for university President David Boren, said Thursday.

Hill, who now lives in Laguna Beach, Calif., is on leave while she writes two books. She could not be reached for comment; her number is unlisted.

Hill focused national attention on sexual harassment in the workplace with her allegations against her former boss Clarence Thomas. Thomas denied the allegations and was confirmed to the Supreme Court.

One of her harshest critics, state Rep. Leonard Sullivan, said he was elated to get "the cancerous growth off the OU campus." The Republican said that donors stopped contributing to the school because of Hill.

State votes to abolish slavery

JACKSON, Miss. — Mississippi Thursday accomplished what the rest of the nation did 130 years ago; it ratified the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery.

Without debate, the state House of Representatives approved a resolution ratifying the 13th Amendment. The state Senate had acted earlier.

Clerks of the two chambers will notify Congress of the action and it will be noted in congressional records. No action by Gov. Kirk Fordice is required.

Most current members of the Legislature were unaware that Mississippi had never ratified the amendment.

Sen. Hillman Frazier, a Democrat from Jackson, learned of the shortcoming while searching historical records earlier this year and convinced lawmakers it was time to put the matter to rest.

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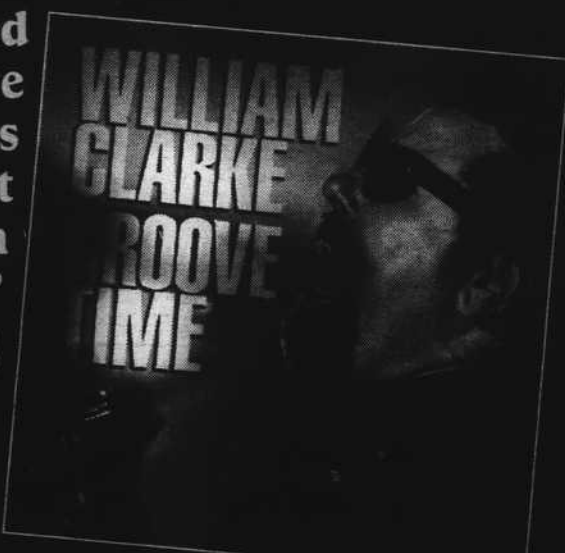
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