

NIGHT SESSION

HOUSE APPROVES CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM BILL IN LATE EVENING SESSION

The House approved its version of campaign finance reform legislation (Am. Sub. SB 46) late Wednesday evening with most of the provisions that were written into the bill by majority Democrats on the House State Government Committee intact. The vote was 83-10.

Senator Paul Matia, prime sponsor of the bill, said he does not expect the Senate to accept the House version. It will probably be considered in the Senate next week, he said.

Only one substantive change was made in the bill through an amendment offered by Rep. Michael Oxley (R-Findlay). His amendment deleted language that would have removed the prohibition against politicians who were disqualified from seeking office for five years because they failed to file campaign expense statements by the filing deadline. Mr. Oxley claimed that the provision was written to apply retroactively, which is explicitly prohibited by the Constitution. The vote was 64-29.

The House began debate on the legislation late in the afternoon following a caucus that lasted more than one hour. Debate was interrupted for another two and one-half hours when legislators recessed to attend a cocktail and dinner party.

Minority Republicans offered several amendments, most of which were rejected. Rep. Robert Levitt (R-Canton) submitted an amendment that would have prohibited political contributions by organized labor unions. His suggestion was tabled. He then delivered a tirade against the bill, calling it a "sham, a fraud, a hoax." Mr. Levitt then maintained that the bill "has so many loopholes that it could qualify for the swiss cheese champion of the world." A Republican amendment to allow corporations to make political contributions also was tabled.

Rep. John Johnson (D-Orrville) offered an amendment to place a \$1,000 limit on primary and general election contributions that could be given by an organization or any person to a candidate for the General Assembly. It lost by a 37-57 vote.

In its afternoon session, the House passed a bill (Sub. HB 867) to extend the prohibition on state issuance of permits or leases to take oil or gas from or under the bed of Lake Erie until July 1, 1978.

BOTH HOUSES ADJOURNED UNTIL THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1974, AT 11:00 A.M.