

Nader Rates Congressmen

By Joel Connelly

Washington's two U.S. senators scored high marks in a new congressional rating by Ralph Nader's "Public Citizen" organization, but several of the state's congressmen received low ratings and reprimands.

The consumer group gave Rep. Jack Cunningham, R-Seattle, a rating of 10 (out of a possible 100), one of its lowest scores for any member of Congress.

Rep. Tom Foley, D-Spokane, received a score of 53 but was nominated for one of Public Citizen's five "Biggest Disappointment of the Year" awards.

Public Citizen charged that Foley had backed off from previous support of a federal consumer protection agency.

Its report said: "Three days after the election of a reactionary Republican from Seattle (Cunningham), Foley suddenly released an intemperate press statement denouncing the consumer office in language largely indistinguishable from Chamber of Commerce propaganda."

Nader himself had harsh words for Cunningham, who was elected last May. Nader said in a statement accompanying the ratings that the congressman "consistently voted the anticonsumer, big business position on crucial consumer legislation."

Cunningham could not be reached for comment. Foley confirmed last night that he did switch sides on creation of the consumer agency.

"I feel there should be a clear case for the establishment of any new federal agency," said Foley.

"In this case, the Carter administration has energetically protected the consumer and put dozens of consumer activists in positions of influence.

"The legislation provided few guidelines as to how the agency would operate. The standards were so vague that the agency would decide by itself how the consumer was to be protected."

Two other state congressmen received low ratings. Rep. Joel Pritchard, R-Seattle, scored a 35 (up from 26 in 1976) and Rep. Mike McCormack, D-Richland, received a 33 rating (compared with 49 in

1976.)

Rep. Don Bonker, D-Ridgefield, fell from a 77 to a 70, and Rep. Lloyd Meeds, D-Everett, dropped from 75 to 58. Rep. Norm Dicks, D-Bremerton, Washington's other first-term congressman, was rated at 55.

Washington's senators were a different story. Sen. Henry M. Jackson scored a 70 while Sen. Warren G. Magnuson was given a favorable 65 rating.

Public Citizen praised the senators for votes against oil industry tax loopholes, support of low-cost electrical rates for the elderly, and an unsuccessful Jackson-

sponsored amendment which would have rebated revenue from President Carter's crude oil tax to consumers rather than oil companies.

Nader's group marked down different congressmen for different reasons. Pritchard was praised for votes against pork barrel water projects, but was labeled as "opposing the pro-consumer position" on taxation and regulation of oil and gas producers.

McCormack was given a low rating for his votes to weaken strip mining legislation and

auto emission standards, and fighting Carter's plan to eliminate the Clinch River, Tenn., nuclear breeder reactor program.

Public Citizen described Congress' overall performance as "disappointing."

Public Citizen rated senators and congressmen on the basis of about 40 votes. The issues included consumer protection, government reform (such as publicly financed campaigns), energy policy, tax reform, nuclear power, ecology and waste in government.

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