

Lundine's Voting Record Not All Abdella Contends

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An investigation by The Post-Journal into Rep. Stanley N. Lundine's voting record on defense bills has failed to show a continuing line of anti-defense stances.

James Abdella, Republican challenger in the 39th Congressional District, has repeatedly accused the incumbent Lundine of misrepresenting his voting record on defense.

Based on research done by the Republican National Committee and Abdella's son, Peter, Abdella accused Lundine of voting in the liberal company of other Democrats in the House against defense measures.

Lundine said he voted against a number of defense bills because they included funding for research or development of the MX Missile, which he has criticized as being too costly and wasteful.

Ensuing research by Abdella's staff, according to Abdella, revealed that 17 of the original 40 votes by Lundine that the Republicans said were anti-defense did not contain the MX Missile.

In cross-matching Abdella's statements and research with information from Lundine's Washington staff and the Congressional Record, it appears that Lundine's votes — 17 were specifically cited by Abdella — are not typical of anti-defense votes.

In fact, two of the bills contained the MX Missile — one budgeting for and the other cutting money from — and one was for a Nimitz-style aircraft carrier, which Lundine has opposed as indicative of the defense department's penchant for "big-ticket" items. Lundine has supported more conventional defense weapons and fewer large, expensive items.

Another 13 of the 17 bills were for essentially blanket increases in the Defense Department's budget authority, the amount of money from which it could draw. The bills that

Lundine voted against in this category would have increased the defense budget authority by between \$3 billion and \$11 billion, depending on the bill, and they were introduced by congressmen with large military contractors in their districts.

Further, they were attempts by those congressmen to increase the defense budget by more than the House budget committee wanted to, according to debate on the House floor and recorded in the Congressional Record. In essence, Lundine's votes against these amendments, according to Mary Ann Richardson, one of his staff workers in Washington, were actually in favor of balancing the budget and still reflected an increase in funds for defense.

The bulk of the bills were introduced when requests from the president and the secretary of defense were pared down by the House budget committee. Those amendments, Lundine has said, sought to circumvent the work of the budget committee and allocate the amount of funds requested by the administration, or close to it.

Lundine categorically voted against these measures on the grounds that they were for funds above the limit allowed by the budget committee, which, according to his staff, would have led to an unbalanced budget.

The budget eventually went out of balance anyway, due to increases in other budgets.

The only apparently questionable defense vote found in the information provided by Abdella centers on a blanket cut of \$2.3 billion from defense outlays. The purpose of that bill, according to floor debate reported in the Congressional Record, which constitutes published minutes of congressional action and debate, was to direct the Defense Department to trim waste from its budget.

That bill would have reduced the amount approved by the budget committee, based on information that the defense department had some \$84 billion in funds that had not been obligated.

According to Rep. Robert Giaimo, D-Conn., sponsor of the bill, the cut could be absorbed by the unobligated funds, without affecting the operations of the Defense Department.

The record does show that Lundine has voted against all measures that includes funding for the MX Missile.

In explaining, Lundine outlined the steps in the federal budget process, saying that first the budget committee makes its recommendations, then the House votes a budget authority for the department, in this case defense. Following that, specific allocation bills are approved for specific projects.

According to Lundine, when budget authority bills come up, they include a number of different items for the same department. When the MX Missile is included in one of those authority bills, he said he votes against the entire authority bill, even though there may be other items included which he considers essential for defense.

When asked during The Post-Journal's Great Debate why he did not vote for such bills, and then vote against the allocation bill for the MX Missile, Lundine had no response other than he automatically votes against the MX Missile whenever it appears.

Lundine has called the proposed missile program, which would set up missiles on trolleys traveling through underground tunnels in western states, too costly and wasteful. The focus of the movable missiles is to play hide-and-seek with Soviet attempts to discern American domestic missile locations.