PS to the NEWS

RELEASE: June 18

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LEONOR SULLIVAN

Among the Congressmen who will be retiring at the end of this year is me of the most conscientious and capable ever to serve: Leonor K. Sullivan, now completing her 24th year representing the people of st. Louis. She has built her record in Congress and big majorities among the voters by diligent devotion to her constituency and by capable craftsmanship in the art of legislation.

Mrs. Sullivan has been duly recognized by her peers in a highly competitive Congress. She served for 14 years as chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Panama Canal and is now chairman of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee - only the third woman in the history of the House to serve as chairman of a major legis lative committee. She has been an articulate opponent of what she has aptly called the "sustained campaign by the State Department since 1964 to erode u.s. sovereign rights, power and authority" over the u.s. Canal in Panama. She has warned that continued u.s. ownership and control are essential not only to the fate of the Canal itself, but also to the entire Caribbean area which, in her words, "is already well on its way to becoming a Red lake."

The test of an effective legislator is how much he gets accom plished in spite of our cumbersome committee and Congressional processes. Mrs. Sullivan successfully pioneered in consumer legis lation long before it became fashionable. She introduced and guided to passage the 1968 Consumer Credit Protection Act known as the Truth-in-Lending Act. She introduced and helped to pass the 1970 Fair Credit Reporting Act to enable consumers to protect the■selves against arbitrary and erroneous information. She was instrumental

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i.n the passage of the 1958 Food Additives Act, which requires pre-testing of chemical additives in foods, the 1960 Color Additives Act, and the 1961 Hazardous Substances Labeling Act.

As the ranking member of the Banking and Currency Committee, Mrs. Sullivan deserves much of the credit for raising Federal insurance coverage on bank and savings and loan deposits from $10,000 to $15,000 and then to $40,000.

It is too bad that Congress failed to take Mrs. Sullivan's good advice about housing legislation, another of her longtime interests. She has opposed high-rise public housing for families with children, stressing the superiority of garden-type buildings and the need for regulations to require public housing tenants to be responsible for the maintenance of their units.

Le^{0}p.or Sullivan is a strong advocate of women's rights, and therefore worked actively for the provisions against sex discrimina tion in the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and increased social Security benefits for women. For the same reasons she voted against the Equal Rights Amendment when it passed Congress in 1971.

In her eloquent speech to the House spelling out the harmful effects ERA would have on women, especially homemakers, Mrs. Sullivan said: ^{11}1 do not wish to see -- and to vote for - a constitutional amendment which would require all women to be equally obligated with their husbands to support the family, even though millions of women may choose to do so."

'When Leonor Sullivan retires from Congress at the end of this year, it will probably be a long time before her unique place in our government can be filled.

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