

# New Evidence Rules Hit Snag

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The House yesterday approved, 398 to 1, a bill to prevent new rules of evidence for federal courts, which have been approved by the Supreme Court, from taking effect until approved by Congress.

The House Judiciary Com-

mittee said the proposed new rules would narrow the husband-wife and doctor-patient privilege against testifying in court, would expand the right of the government to withhold information sought in court actions, and would narrow other individual rights.

The rules would, under existing law, take effect July 1 unless Congress acts to delay them. The Senate has passed a bill, sponsored by Sen. Sam J. Ervin (D-N.C.), that would delay the effective date until the end of this session of Congress, unless Congress approves them earlier.

The House bill was sponsored by Rep. Elizabeth Holtz-

man (D-N.Y.), and has the support of Ervin.

Mrs. Holtzman told the House that nine of the proposed 77 rules of evidence were changed by the Judicial Conference of the United States at the request of the Justice Department after the deadline for public comment on changes had expired. This meant that neither the American Bar Association nor any other element of the public had an opportunity to comment, she said.

Rep. William L. Hungate (D-Mo.) said there is no intention of trying to delay implementation of all the new rules, which are the result of eight

years of work by leading lawyers and federal judges.

He said his judiciary subcommittee will begin voting next week on the proposed rules and hoped his unit could complete work on a bill incorporating them several weeks before July 1. If some rules are so controversial as to require more time for consideration, a bill approving the others could be passed separately, he said.

The only vote against the bill was cast by Rep. Harold V. Froehlich (R-Wis.).