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SEMCOG says no to commerce prison

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments has come to the aid of Commerce Township in its battle against a state plan to locate a prison in the Proud Lake Recreation Area of western Oakland County.

SEMCOG's executive committee, in a pair of voice votes Friday, opposed using open space recreation land for state institutions and amended its 1990 open space plan to reinforce the prohibition.

SEMCOG is a voluntary association of governments in seven counties engaged in land use, water and other types of long-range planning.

The resolution was passed at the request of Commerce Township and introduced by Supervisor James Reid of White Lake Township.

THE RESOLUTION which passed unanimously, cited the 1990 plan which

"calls for retention of land within state recreation areas and acquisition of additional land contiguous with such areas."

It went on, "Activity center development should not take place in areas not proposed for sewer service, which areas include all state recreation areas."

The resolution opposed all non-recreational development, without specifying a prison, on recreational land "unless an equal amount of land with equal or greater resource amenities and accessibility to the people" is made available.

The state legislature's joint capital outlay committee ordered the bureau of facilities to evaluate 14 sites in Oakland County as possible locations for a prison. Ten were recreation areas, including the Pulletier unit of the Proud Lake Recreation Area. An

Army Nike missile base was once located there.

THE LAND USE plan amendment, adopted by voice vote with a scattering of no's, said open space recreation land "should not be converted to use for non-recreational development" without a trade for equal or better land.

"It often appears cost-effective, on a short-term basis, to locate public developments, such as highways, schools, hospitals or prisons on recreational lands which are already in public ownership," said SEMCOG group, decrying the short-term thinking.

"Therefore, conversion of regional or state recreation lands to non-recreational uses should not take place without the provision of an equivalent set of recreational opportunities in an equally accessible location."

Name I-275 after Hart, Faust urges

Senate Majority Leader William Faust (D-Westland) has introduced a concurrent resolution urging the Michigan State Highway Commission to designate I-275 as the Philip A. Hart Memorial Highway.

"Phil Hart served the people of Michigan and America as a United States senator in a truly inspirational manner. It is altogether fitting and proper that this state act to establish a tribute to his memory," Faust said.

"By naming this expressway the Philip A. Hart Memorial Highway, we will be showing the high esteem in which this man is held by the people of this state," Faust said.

I-275 runs from I-275 north of Monroe to Novi. Hart represented Michigan in the senate from 1968 until his death in 1976. Before his death, he was honored by his colleagues by having a new Senate Office Building in Washington named after him, the first time this distinction was ever given to a living person.

"This man was courageous crusader for human dignity and freedom," Faust said. "By paying tribute to him, we will be recognizing his numerous achievements and contributions."

Andrews is chief judge of circuit

Judge Steven N. Andrews has been elected by his 10 colleagues on the Oakland Circuit Court bench to be chief judge effective Jan. 1.

Andrews, of Bloomfield Township, succeeds Judge Robert B. Webster.

The group also elected Robert L. Templin as alternate chief judge and Richard D. Kuhn as second alternate.

Andrews will serve as official spokesman for the Oakland circuit, Michigan's second largest.

Besides his public, administrative and financial responsibilities, he will represent the court in its relations with the Michigan Legislature, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, state and local bar associations, the Michigan Supreme Court and other governmental agencies.

Andrews was a practicing attorney for 16 years, including eight years as Clawson city attorney, prior to his appointment to the bench by Gov. William G. Milliken. He is a past president of both the Oakland and South Oakland bar associations.

Andrews is a graduate of Adrian College and received his JD degree from Cumberland University Law School.

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