

Farmington pols give tax reform little hope

Governor William Milliken's latest proposal concerning school financing will probably fail to get much support in Farmington, according to State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton (R-Farmington) and Board of Education Trustee Michael Spiece.

But the two legislative-minded men disagree whether the voters will have an opportunity to vote on the proposed constitutional amendment designed to

lower property taxes in communities opting for a two per cent local income tax.

"It's obviously an election year proposal," says Spiece, the legislative representative on the Farmington School Board. "I don't think it has much of a chance."

Brotherton gives the bill slightly better odds at 50-50.

"The only reason I give this as a 50-

50 chance is that it's optional and some outstate representatives favor it," says Brotherton.

However both men agree that the proposal would do little for Farmington area residents.

"Since income levels are fairly high, the two per cent income tax would probably return more money to the state than the property tax pay," Brotherton says.

Spiece believes taxpayers might pay as much as 200-300 per cent more in income taxes.

"The proposal allows the local community to lower their school property taxes by 22 mills and, in exchange, levy a local income tax of two per cent," Spiece explains, adding that

the proposal is not yet written in amendment form.

"Milliken guarantees that the revenue that would be brought in by the income tax would equal the revenue brought in by property tax. The state would take anything more than what the 22 mills would bring in or pay the difference if the income tax brought in less than the mills."

The proposal is designed to assist outstate, basically rural communities, says Brotherton.

"Those communities where the income level is low and property tax is high could opt for it," he says. "My impression is that it would not be a good move for Farmington."

"The 22 mills would represent a very nice cut for them, but most of

these people qualify for a property tax credit."

BOTH MEN see some future problems with the proposal, as well.

"We don't know if there's an inflation factor," Spiece says. "Ten years from now we could be talking about 1978-79 property taxes."

The idea of substituting an income tax for a property tax has been around for a long time, usually at the state level, Spiece adds.

"But first of all, the Milliken proposal is an all or nothing one—it's relatively easy to equate percentage of income tax paid to property tax, but Milliken doesn't do that at all."

"Once again, this proposal is aimed at pumping state money into rural areas."

Brotherton is concerned about long-range possible effects of the proposal.

"Even though it's kind of an unfair tax to the property owner, at least it's a fairly stable tax; but income taxes fluctuate wildly according to the economy, and especially in this state. We might be creating a funding problem in bad years, when there are increased demands on the state budget from welfare and all."

"I think what the governor's office is gambling on is that there would only be a few districts that would go this way. It could be trouble in the economically volatile areas."

Both the house and senate have to pass a proposed constitutional amendment by a two-thirds majority before the amendment can be placed on the ballot for voter approval.

Stitch, dance or strum in Y classes

A large variety of winter activities is being offered as an antidote to winter blues in the Northwest YWCA, 2940 Grand River, Redford Township.

Registration is open now for Saturday youth classes which will start Jan. 26, and for other youth and adult classes that will begin Jan. 30.

Saturday sessions include yoga, belly dance, physical fitness, guitar, ballet, modern dance, yellow jacket crafts, ballet, gymnastics, horseback riding and physical fitness.

Adult classes will be for those who want to pursue such interests as tennis, physical fitness, horseback riding, yoga, volleyball, fencing, powderpuff mechanics, driver training or photography.

Also available are classes in piano, guitar, tap, creative dance exercise, ballet, stitch knit sewing, needlecraft, general sewing, knitting or crocheting, and belly, disco, or ballroom dance.

Macrame is also on the agenda, along with decorating on a budget, ceramics, oil painting, water color and acrylic painting, creative needlecraft, self-discovery, weight control, self start, calligraphy, weaving and cake decorating.

For youths there are classes in gymnastics, tumbling, ballet, tennis, tap, piano, sewing, art, horseback riding and drivers training.

Ladies Day Out classes are held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and include knitting and crochet, leaded glass, cooking with a flair, water color, bridge, physical fitness, volleyball and figure drawing.

They may also sign up for tennis, needlepoint, knit sewing, macrame, needlecraft, arrangement, conversational French, ceramics, yoga, assertiveness training, weight control, rug hooking, folk art, modern dance, cake decorating and guitar.

Also included are ballet, china painting, painting and drawing, bowling, how to keep house efficiently, creative dance, exercise and the choral group sing-along.

An infant nursery is open on Ladies Day Out for infants and children up to 3, and a pre-school nursery for children from 3 to 5, for an additional fee.

The "parking meter" nursery will be available Monday and Friday at a small fee for class participants.

For further information call the Y at 537-8500.

CPA class is at OU

Certified public accountants can register until Monday, Feb. 6, for a full day of professional programs presented by the Division of Continuing Education at Oakland University.

To register for the classes, call the university at 377-3120.

CPAs will be able to take four of the eight offered classes and earn two continuing education credits per class toward mandatory state educational requirements.

Subjects range from trends in worker compensation, computer technology for small business, public utility rate-setting, the psychology of money, interpersonal relationships, promotion of the CPA profession and more.

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