

Brotherton fights for county reform

State Rep. Sandy Brotherton (R-Farmington) has introduced legislation which incorporates changes in the County Executive Act.

The bill would abolish the road and parks and recreation commissions and put these activities under the direct control of the county executive.

It would give the board of commissioners the authority to set up departments to handle functions currently handled by these commissions. The board would also set policies under which the county executive would be expected to administer the activities of these two departments.

This would give the county the same kind of organization and administrative control which has been followed by major cities where they have a department of public works and department of parks and recreation, both of whom report either to a city manager or to a mayor.

"While both the Oakland County Road Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission have been doing a good job, it is impossible to have the accountability and provide the coordination required as long as they continue to operate independent of the county executive's direction," says Brotherton.

"I realize abolishing the road commission and the parks and recreation commission will meet with great resistance," says Brotherton.

"I am convinced, however, that if the taxpayers of those counties who wish to adopt the county executive form of government are to get the kind of efficiency and accountability they want, the county executive must be given the responsibility and authority over all major functions of the county, and certainly that includes maintenance of our roads and parks systems," he said.

Recommendations incorporated into this bill were made by the Oakland County executive and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Although the voters of Oakland County seem generally satisfied with the decision to adopt the county executive form of government, some portions of the original act were unclear with respect to the role of the county executive and the role of the board of commissioners, according to Brotherton.

Brotherton's bill attempts to clarify those areas as well as provide language which more clearly spells out action to be taken when the county executive is unable to serve out his full term.

The County Executive Act was enacted by the legislature to give counties the opportunity to adopt a unified form of county government with an appointed manager or an elected county executive.

The main purpose of the act was to establish an executive or administrative head for the county departments and thereby establish clear cut lines of authority, says Brotherton.

He pointed out that while Oakland County has made impressive strides in this direction since adopting the county executive form of government, failure of Public Act 139 to abolish the road and parks and recreation commission make it impossible for the residents of Oakland County to hold the county executive accountable for these two functions.

The present law also is unclear as to when a newly elected county executive begins his term. The legislation introduced by Brotherton would make the term begin Jan. 1 following the election—the same time the term of the other county executive officers begin.

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Seminar handles job relations

Personnel practices, legal contracts, grievances, arbitrations and other topics related to employee relations will be the theme of several workshops offered at Madonna College in Livonia during March and April.

The four meetings will include a discussion of non-union employers, personnel practices and legal contracts on March 3-4, and negotiating a labor contract on March 17-18.

Administering contracts, grievances and arbitration will be discussed April 7-8 and equal employment opportunity programs will be on the agenda April 21-22.

The sessions will be 6-10 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday in room 115 in the academic building.

Registration can be completed before the workshop at the student service center.

Attorney David Sarkozy, the instructor, has had industrial relations and employee management positions in several large corporations and is currently a National Labor Relations Board attorney.

The non-credit fee for each session is \$25. Students enrolled at Madonna can apply for one credit for each workshop.

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