

## Disputes poll findings

## Tax cut lieutenant denies desertions

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI  
Is support for the Tisch property tax cut proposal waning?

Not in metropolitan Detroit, according to several area Tisch organizers. "I wish those pollsters would come down here," said Tisch representative Laura Wofford about a poll released last week which showed Tisch support slipping.

"We've got 50 to 75 persons coming here three nights a week," said the Wayne County organizer for Tisch. "People are still backing the tax cut."

The poll, conducted by Market Opinion Research of Detroit, showed that those who say they'll vote for the Tisch amendment to cut property taxes in half and allow increases in the personal income tax, dropped from 41 per cent during the summer to 34 per cent.

In addition, the poll says the number opposing the adoption of the state constitutional amendment increased from 31 per cent to 36 per cent.

"LIKE MOST information that's published in the newspapers, that's false," said Ms. Wofford, a Westland businesswoman.

"If people continue to hear the lies long enough, they'll believe them," said Larry McKenna of Clinton, director of Tisch's southeastern Michigan organizing.

"The real fight is going to be in southeastern Michigan."

As supporters for the various constitutional amendments rally down the backstretch to the Nov. 7 election, McKenna said Tisch backers in southeastern Michigan are trying to expand their support beyond blue-collar workers and small business owners.

While McKenna acknowledges Market Opinion's poll, he said he could come up with his own figures to show support was increasing.

"The polls," he predicted, "are going to shift very rapidly."



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—Tisch organizer  
Laura Wofford

"Just wait until the ballots are counted," Ms. Wofford added. "Everybody'll be shocked, just like they were when we got the petition signatures."

She called the passage of the Tisch tax plan "inevitable."

WHILE THE MARKET Opinion poll showed Tisch losing support, it showed stability for the more moderate Headlee tax limitation proposal.

"Support is hardly waning as far as we're concerned," said a spokesman for Taxpayers United for Tax Limitation, the group pushing the Headlee proposal.

According to the poll, support for the amendment that would limit state spending to a fraction of personal income has held steady at 44 per cent.

Only 17 per cent, said the pollsters, are opposing the limitation plan. About 28 per cent of the voters, they say, are undecided.

WHEN THE AMENDMENTS are formally adopted, the county executive will no longer be able to veto board decisions concerning its organizational structure, board appointments, policy decisions concerning pending legislation and a board decision to abolish the county executive form of government.

Enrollment is booming at Oakland Community College (OCC). The multi-campus college registered 20,037 persons for fall semester classes. That represents a 1,175 person increase over last fall's enrollment and surpasses the previous record of 18,876 set in 1975.

Farmington Hills' Orchard Ridge campus remains the OCC system's largest with 6,309 students. The Auburn Hills campus in Auburn Heights enrolled 6,194 students and the Southeast Campus System registered 3,803 students at its Oak Park, Royal Oak and Madison Heights locations. The Highland Lakes campus enrolled 3,131 students.

New and expanded programs accounted for much of the increase. More than 80 students registered for



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## Diesel tax splits area lawmakers

By TIM RICHARD

The Michigan Senate put off to this week a decision on whether to raise gasoline and diesel fuel taxes and vehicle weight taxes.

But on one point it agreed last Thursday: if gasoline taxes are going to rise two cents a gallon, diesel fuel taxes will rise with them.

The senate beat down a finance committee amendment to leave the diesel fuel tax at seven cents a gallon, despite arguments that instead of truckers would fuel up in Ohio and Indiana to beat the increase.

THE FINAL vote, after hours of maneuvering, was 14-16.

Voting to keep the diesel fuel tax as part of the \$188.5 million "total transportation package" were Sens. William Faust (D-Westland), R. Robert Geake (D-Norville) and Bill S. Huffman (D-Madison Heights).

Voting to remove the diesel hike from the bill were Sens. Daniel S. Cooper (D-Oak Park) and Donald Bishop (D-Rochester).

Geake, however, will oppose the total tax bills when—and if—they come up for a final vote this week. He said his mail from private citizens had

## Fear of truckers' backlash fails to snap cap on fuel levy

been running almost unanimously against it.

One notable exception: Edward H. McNamara, who as mayor of Livonia wants to see cities' road funds beefed up 25 per cent and as chairman of the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority would like to see public transit funding hiked the same proportion.

Said Geake: "We can fund the transit funding (\$20 million) out of existing revenue. I don't think we need new revenue."

THAT ILLUSTRATED the dilemma many senators found themselves in last week. Cities and road commissions (with the exception of Oakland County's) were sold in seeking new road funds.

But many suburban and outstate legislators were hostile to SEMTA and its rapid transit plans, some of which include a subway in the Woodward Avenue corridor.

Democratic Floor Leader Faust

called a party caucus in the middle of Thursday afternoon to see if he could put together enough votes for passage. He couldn't, so the bills were put off until this week.

Democrats reportedly wanted Republicans, under pressure from Gov. Milliken, to put up at least six of their 14 votes for the tax part of the package.

But only three Republicans support it—Gilbert Bursley of Ann Arbor, Richard Allen of Alma and Hal Ziegler of Jackson.

Republicans offered a deal the Democrats refused: If certain "swing" district senators such as Jerome Hart of Saginaw would back the tax hikes, the GOP would find six votes from its caucus.

The apparent strategy is that Democrats wanted only senators from "safe" districts to support the tax hikes while the GOP sought to use those votes as a weapon against senators they might pick off Nov. 7.

## Commissioners get impatient to clip county executive wings

Changes are coming slow for the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

For the past year, the board has been trying to convince the state legislature to curtail the powers of the county executive. Changes are expected, but according to many members of the board, they are too little, too late.

The proposed amendments to state law that created Oakland's county executive form of government, limit the executive's heretofore unlimited veto powers.

The house of representatives recently approved the changes. The next step is the state senate's.

County Executive Daniel T. Murphy can now veto any board action.

The legislature's proposed changes also call for the county parks and recreation department to be merged under the county executive's administrative umbrella.

MANY BOARD Democrats said last week that the proposed changes don't go far enough.

Commissioner Alexander Perinoff (D-Southfield) chided his fellow commissioners. "How can we sit here sipping just like sheep?" he asked.

He and other Democrats suggested the executive's veto powers be limited to county ordinances, line items in the annual budget and board appropriations.

Such a change will bring Murphy's powers in line with those of Michigan's governors.

EVEN SOME POWERFUL Republicans agreed that the legislature's amendments do not go far enough. "It's not an answer to all our prob-

lems," said Commissioner Wallace Gabler (R-Royal Oak), chairman of the board. "We'll have to work on it next year and the year after and probably the year after that."

"But we're slowly improving a bad piece of legislation."



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