## 'Economic damper' — GOP

## Dems rescue 'prevailing wage'

staff writer

Democrats in the Michigan Senate last

mak heat down a Republican attempt week beat down a Republican attempt to wipe the "prevailing-wage" require-ment out of construction contracts fi-nanced with local-government help, "The prevailing wage is really put-

## Short courses for all tastes at 'Ridge'

Wine tasting, time management and close-up photography are among the topic of non-credit short courses being offered this fall at Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

Farmington Hills.

Courses, beginning mid-September, will be held during a variety of time period through December. Minimal fees are charged. Senior citizens, however, will be admitted to one short course per semester with a 50-percent discount.

Registration for non-credit leisuremes the courses is in progress and will continue through the first class meeting.

will continue through the first class meeting. For a complete listing of short courses and registration information, call the Department of Community Ser-vices at 476-9400.

ting a damper on economic develop-ment," argued Sen. Robert Vander-Laan, R-Kentwood, author of the amendment.

"To eliminate the notion of prevail-

ing wage," answered Sen. Doug Ross, R-Southfield, "all of us will find our-selves buying from companies which pay the lowest wages."

IN AN 18-13 vote — two sby of the ment Act," said VanderLaan, arguing needed 20 — the Senate rejected VanderLaan's amendment to a bill aimed at giving the state Labor Department authority to enforce the prevailing-wage requirement. Seven senators were absent.

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The main bill requires that the prevailing wage be paid by all contractors and sub-contractors working on projects financed by local economic development corporation (EDC) bonds. No vote was taken on the main bill, HB 4719, sponsored by Rep. Joe Conroy, D-Flint.

Flint. Supporting the VanderLaan amend-ment were Republicans Donald Bishop of Rochester and R. Robert Geake of Northville. Opposed was Ross. Missing for the yote were Democrats Jack Faxon of Southfield, William Faust of Westland and Dana Wilson of Ferndale.

VANDERLAAN said the Michigan definition of "prevailing wage" is about 20 percent higher than the federal defi-nition.

The Senate GOP leader contended

the state prevailing wage is "adding I5 to 25 percent to the cost of construction, especially outstate." He said five projects were halted in Midland and againaw bocause companies balked at the state prevailing wage, which is largely a union-contract wage rather than an average wage.

"The prevailing wage has negated the effect of the Economic Development Act," said VanderLaan, arguing that the money saved by using lower-interest EDC bonds is eaten up by labor costs.

SEN. JOHN KELLY, D-Detroit, was first to reply.

"Labor costs are only 16 percent of total construction costs in the country."

Kelly said. On that basis, Michigan's revailing wage may be 20 percent higher than other states, but as a percentage of total construction costs, the wage differential is only 3-4 percent. "The entire EDC act hasn't served its purpose," he said, citing national re-

changes.

Kelly said EDC bonds, which are ex-

Kelly said EDC bonds, which are ex-empt from federal income taxation, and tax breaks for new businesses shift the burden of taxation from corpora-tions to people. VanderLaan shot back: "To create a dicholomy... to conjure up anti-business feeling... is out of date. To dredge up class warfare is to beat a dead horse."

ROSS APPROACHED the issue from

ROSS APPROACHED the issue from the beginning.
"In private contracts, wages are determined by people buying and sell-ing labor;" he said, with government's role limited to determining a minimum wage.
But government acquired an interest when it became a major purchaser. Ross said the federal government de-veloned its concept of prevailing wage

veloped its concept of prevailing wage because it wanted to pay neither the very highest nor the very lowest wages.

## O & E advertising managers promoted

Two advertising managers have been promoted at Observer & Eccentric Nowspapers.

Dan Chovanec was appointed advertising director, according to general manager Dick Isham. Chovanec will oversee the entire retail and classified advertising staffs of the 12 semi-week-lyonecomparts.

advertising staffs of the 12 semi-week, presspapers. Chowanee, 36, has worked for the 0 & newspapers since March 1979 as assistant advertising director and retail advertising manager. Prior to his work for section advertising director and retail advertising manager.

Prior to his work for section and retail advertising manager.

Prior to his work for chowanee worked weeks of the panage companies of the panage companies of the panage companies and promotion for The Globe and Advertiser in Fairfax, Va.

He is a 1989 graduate of Eastern

veruser in Fairfax, Va.

He is a 1969 graduate of Eastern
Michigan University.
Chovanec announced the promotion



of J. Kevin Curley, 37, to Oakland County retail advertising manager. County retail advertising manager. Curley, 37, had been national advertising manager of O & E since January

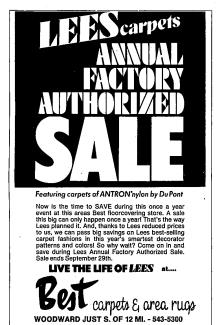
Prior to that, he worked for The De-troit Free Press in the national and re-tail advertising departments.





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