

Tax protestors invite others to join march

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

More than 1,000 demonstrators are expected in Lansing March 1 to show state legislators they won't buy Gov. Blanchard's proposal to raise income taxes by 38 percent.

"We're a grass-roots organization of concerned taxpayers," said Julie Kopriva of Redford Township, coordinator for a district that includes Livonia, Westland, Garden City, Dearborn Heights, Wayne and Taylor in addition to Redford.

"We'll see to it that anyone who wants to join us in Lansing on Tuesday has a ride," she said.

The group, which calls itself Tired of

Taxes, plans a motorcade to Lansing from several points across the state, converging at 1 p.m. at a site near the Capitol building for a walk to the center of state government.

"WE'RE GOING to take over state government where lobbyists have done damage all these years," said Dan Powers, coordinator from Sterling Heights.

"The legislators have a misconception that they are a privileged class. We're going to do a little arm twisting and be lobbyists for a day," he said.

Although Blanchard has refused to meet with the group, Powers said, demonstration organizers plan to present the governor's aides with advisory petitions with the signatures of 20,000

persons opposed to the tax hike.

"Blanchard has said that 66 percent of the people of Michigan are in favor of the hike," Powers said. "This obviously isn't the case. I've seen figures that show as little as 3 percent to 8 percent support the hike."

Kopriva and Powers, like most of the demonstrators, heard about the protest via a local radio station call-in program. They credited a Romeo woman, Ellen Myers, with coming up with the idea. In the past few weeks, interest has spread beyond the metro-Detroit area to include contingents from Saginaw, Flint, Kalamazoo and Ann Arbor.

"IT'S REALLY GROWN by word of mouth," Kopriva said. "Interest is very

strong in this area. People are calling in every day."

The group plans to lobby representatives all afternoon in Lansing.

"We've all contacted our legislators, and they know we're coming," Kopriva said.

"We're going to bring tea bags with us," Powers said. "We're just not going to take it anymore."

They figure the governor's stance is immovable, so they plan to sway legislators to kill the plan.

"We have vowed to remove any legislator who votes for it from office by initiating recall petitions," Kopriva said.

"If we don't get what we want, we'll go back," Powers added. "We're urging

all citizens to write their representatives. It's imperative."

The group is opposed to any tax hike — permanent or temporary.

"I'm opposed to raising taxes to balance the budget," Kopriva said. "I read that \$85,000 is being spent to re-do Blanchard's office and home. And there are proposed raises next year for the legislators, that's what really got to me. They just have to learn they can't balance the budget by raising taxes."

"WE'RE WILLING TO look at any kind of cuts," Powers added. "We have suggestions, and we're willing to let (legislators) know what they are. I think there's a lot of fat in the budget."

Powers added the organization called Tired of Taxes will probably support a constitutional amendment drafted by Dr. Walter Averill of Saginaw. The amendment would give taxpayers the right to vote on any tax hike retroactive to Dec. 31, 1981.

"That would cut out the gas tax and any other local taxes," he said. "We have to look at the constitutional avenue because we can't trust the people in Lansing anymore. They've perverted the meaning of the word 'representative.' Responses from representatives have been mixed."

"Some are entirely for us, and others think they know more and we can't comprehend what needs to be done," Powers said.

BLANCHARD HAS ASKED for a two-part 1.75-percent hike in income tax: 1.5 percent for current operations and a .25 percent debt surcharge to pay off the state's \$800 million long-term deficit.

He expects the 1.5-percent hike to bring in \$675 million coupled with a proposed \$225 million in spending cuts to erase the debt. The governor said the debt surcharge will expire as soon as the debt has been erased.

Although Blanchard said he will abolish 30 programs, boards, and commissions, he rejects any notion to cut the state's welfare spending.

Anyone wishing a ride to Tuesday's demonstration in Lansing should call Julie Kopriva at 531-6866.

Now this is some kind of pizza place

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"Elvira... My heart's on fire for Elvira..."

Besides pizza, the menu includes hot dogs, sub-marines, roast beef and ham-and-cheese sandwiches, nachos, a salad bar, soft drinks, beer and chablis, ice cream cones and cotton candy. Carry-out orders are taken as well.

A deluxe cheese pizza costs \$4.80 and \$5.50 for the small and large sizes, respectively. The most expensive pizza, the "aloha delight" (with cheese, ham, pineapple and toasted almonds), costs \$6.40 for a small size and \$11.50 for a large.

THE VIDEO games at the Farmington Hills ShowBiz include Pac-Man, Popeye and Donkey Kong. Younger visitors are drawn to kiddie rides and a machine that inflates a balloon and presents it with a string already attached. The balloon device, rides and games are played with "tokens" that

come in groups of five, for \$1, or 28 for \$5.

A variety of gifts — including T-shirts, dolls and hats — is also available.

Some visitors may be attracted to the "Sports-rooms," a separate, 100-capacity section with a large-screen television. Soap operas and situation comedies are shown there during the day, and sporting events at night, Flattery said.

"Usually the parents like it just as much," he said.

There are 153 ShowBiz entertainment centers across the country. The establishment in Farmington Hills, with a building area of 10,200 square feet, will employ some 70 full- and part-time workers. It will be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and from 11 a.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday.

Monday wasn't any less busy for being the first day the business was open. Five batches of dough were used by mid-afternoon, according to Flattery. There was a mixture of ages on hand. Men in

business suits played video games alongside teens in blue jeans. Children and parents wandered around the rides and into the show room.

Jordan Beltman, 6 1/2 years old, gave her appraisal after she watched the Rock-Affire Explosion perform.

"It's fun and there's lots of games to play," she said.

Marge Wigodski, who said her 12-year-old son liked such places as ShowBiz, visited the "Sports-room." "I think it's very much family entertainment," she said. "You can control what they're doing. It's a nice night out, or day out."

Steve Tunney, 12, and Ross Green, 11, both of Farmington Hills, had the same answer when asked why they stopped in. "Games," they said.

"It's new, and I've never been to a ShowBiz," Ross added.

Was it what they expected?

"More," Steve said.

"You say it's your birthday..."

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Continued from Page 1

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