

New redistricting plan 'saves the incumbents'

By Tim Richard
staff writer

All state House District boundaries are changed by the "compromise" reapportionment plan which the Michigan Legislature passed late in December.

It was characterized as a "save the incumbents" plan, and that appears to be true.

In general, Democratic lawmakers saw fewer changes in their districts than Republicans.

REP. ROBERT MCGEE, R-Union Lake, seems to have the biggest chunk of new and unfamiliar territory, but his new 24th District is unlikely to switch into the Democratic column.

Remaining in the 24th District are the city of Orchard Lake and West Bloomfield and Commerce townships. Added are a chunk of Bloomfield Township, all of Keego Harbor and Sylvan Lake, and the southwest corner of White Lake Township (below M-59). Subtracted is Wixom.

McGee has substantially his old district if he seeks a second term.

Here is a rundown on other House districts in the Observer & Eccentric area of Oakland County.

63rd DISTRICT — Rochester and Avon Township remain, but the boundary is changed through the middle of

analysis

Troy. Starting on the western city limits, the new line will run west on Watline (17 Mile), south on Coolidge, east on Big Beaver, north on Rochester Road and east on Waukegan.

The change should be minor to freshman Rep. Gordon Sparks, R-Troy. Southern Troy will be in the 68th House District, now held by Rep. Shirley Johnson, R-Royal Oak. Johnson retains enough of her old stamping ground that she could be difficult to dislodge.

The 64th House District, represented by Rep. Wilfred Webb, D-Hazel Park, is moved out of Troy.

64th DISTRICT — It will change so little that no one except a handful of Berkley residents is likely to notice the difference. Southfield and Lathrup Village will continue to be the bulk of the district.

Freshman Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southfield, has her old territory back. Berman is Southfield's first "own" state representative in two decades, and the reapportionment plan keeps it that way.

65th DISTRICT — It is likely to re-

main solidly Republican territory. Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills stay. So does most of Bloomfield Township, except for a western chunk that moves into the 34th District. The villages of Southfield Township — Franklin, Birmingham Farms and Beverly Hills — join it. The only remaining portion of Pontiac Township will be the corner south of M-59.

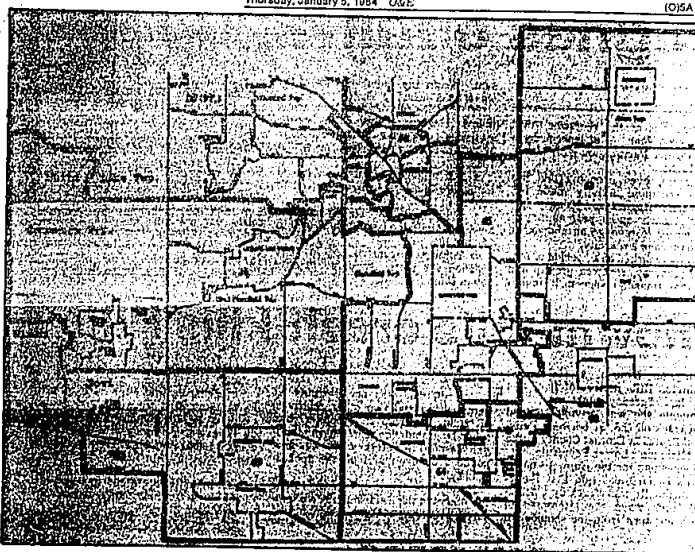
Rep. Ruth McNamee, R-Birmingham, should feel comfortable if she decides to seek a sixth term.

68th DISTRICT — It has changed several times over the years, but always Farmington and Farmington Hills remain. In the 1970s, it included part of Southfield. In 1982, it picked up the three villages of Southfield Township. This time it moves westward to pick up Wixom and the portion of Novi northeast of a line running along 12 Mile, I-96, Novi Road and 10 Mile.

It will continue to be safely Republican. There could be a whining of a primary if Rep. W.V. (Sandy) Brotherton, R-Farmington, decides to call it quits after five terms.

THIS IS the second time in two elections voters will face reapportioned legislative districts.

After the 1980 census, the bipartisan state Apportionment Commission was unable to agree on new maps, sending the dispute to the Michigan Supreme Court.



Oakland County's new state House of Representative districts, as compiled from several overlapping maps drawn by the legislative staff. The villages of Southfield Township are shifted out of

the 69th District and into the 65th. The 69th swings west to pick up Wixom and parts of Novi. The 24th was massively redrawn.

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