

# Opinion

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## Yes to seniority

### oral quarrel

This week's Oral Quarrel question asked Farmington and Farmington Hills residents: What do you think about the Supreme Court decision by which seniority supersedes affirmative action program?

Following are the responses:

Although the Supreme Court decision may not seem fair, it certainly is just.

The Supreme Court did a wonderful job. I agree with them.

It is about time they made a decision to support the average American.

I think it is one of the greatest decisions made by the Supreme Court.

I agree. Somebody should be hired because they are the best not just because they are white, black or because they are women.

Yes, I agree with the Supreme Court decision. Seniority should take preference.

My nationality is Yugoslav and as

far as affirmative action goes, I don't believe in it. There are a hundred thousand Yugoslavs in the Detroit area. Nobody ever gave us anything. All our hard work and sweat put us where we are today. We worked our way through high school, college etc. and now we are responsible people in the community. Everybody in the country at this time and age has an opportunity to get educated and can stand in line with all people. Whoever is qualified will have the opportunity. That's the way it should be. Color, religion or anything else has got nothing to do in the American system.

Before we rush to applaud the Supreme Court decision in its defense of innocent workers, let us not forget that whites are all guilty of participating in the system which has systematically oppressed blacks for 300 years. No white can truly be considered innocent.

Affirmative action is not needed in America. Just people who want to work.

I think seniority is the answer, however, it should also be based on the merits and qualifications for the job as well. Not only the number of the years they've worked. They should be re-

viewed periodically to see if they are still able to do the job.

Seniority should always come first. Nothing else matters. Those people have worked for their seniority, and they should have it.

I am in favor of what the courts said. They are the law. We gotta listen to the law. It took a lot of years for a guy to work 25 years and all of a sudden say you're all through on the job, because somebody else gotta have it.

The Supreme Court made the right decision in which seniority supersedes affirmative action.

Hurrah for the Supreme Court. Thank goodness they realize that seniority stands for something. Seniority should always supersede affirmative action.

Yes, I agree with the Supreme Court decision that they made by which seniority supersedes affirmative action.

## Geake lights a candle

THE KENNEDYS used to be fond of quoting a Chinese proverb: "It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

State Sen. R. Robert Geake has lit a candle. I'm not sure it is a 100-watt bulb, but it is a candle, at least. And the Northville Township Republican is finding himself the target of political curses.

Geake won Senate passage of a social services budget amendment to remove able-bodied persons in the 18-54 age bracket from a category of aid known as "general assistance" for six summer months. That would save \$80 million.

That's only 4 percent of a \$2-billion budget. Geake would use part of the savings to boost benefits for Medicaid providers, so there is no overall cost savings. For those reasons, Geake's effort is likened to a candle rather than a light bulb.

BUT CONSIDER who is politically cussing Geake — Agnes M. Mansour, director of the blighted state Department of Social Services.

I say "blighted" because DSS spending has soared from 12 percent of the state budget in 1969-71 to around 40 percent in the current year. Historically, in every recession the DSS figure has leaped forward several points, but somehow it never seems to retreat when good times return. Growth of the DSS budget is cancerous and continuous.

Well, if Bob Geake's idea of knocking able-bodied persons (64-percent men) off general assistance is so horrible, what does Dr. Mansour offer as an alternative? Nothing.

During a Senate subcommittee hearing, Sen. Joe Conroy, D-Flinn, expressed some frustration at the string of excuses some welfare recipients had for being unable to get to jobs. "Why can't emergency needs (program) come up with \$500 for a used car?"

Answered one of Mansour's aides: "Transportation is covered only by the basic grant. I don't think it's practical."

Conroy shot back: "You think it's a dumb idea. Well, don't make fun of it. Make a proposal."

NATURALLY, Mansour and her staff made no proposal. Instead they figuratively cursed the Senate's alleged darkness, saying a new Senate should be elected, rather than light any kind of candle.

If anything, Mansour seems to want to add more folks to the welfare lists.

"If you give a man a fish, you make him a slave. If you teach him how to fish, you set him free." Mansour would rather distribute fishes than teach folks how to fish.

Under past policy, a college student may obtain general assistance if enrolled in a program that will lead to a job in a year. But Mansour's new Program Policy Bulletin 84-9 tells county DSS directors that as of June 1 college students attending more than part-time classes may, if otherwise eligible, receive GA for two years.

Mansour doesn't buy Plato's line about the philosopher-king governing the state with even-handed temperance and justice. During her confirmation hearings last year, the former president of Mercy College of Detroit characterized herself as an "advocate" for the poor. That should have been the signal she intended to find more excuses to give more money to more people rather than help the deserving and cut off the rest.

WHEN GEAKE's subcommittee discussed taking \$13 million from the social-services budget and placing it in Project Self-Reliance, in which 7,000 persons on welfare would trade in their grants for minimum-wage jobs, Mansour shook her head and scowled. "I want the whole thing," she said.

That's what you call trying to blow out candles rather than light them.

There is a study of what actually happens to able-bodied adults who are cut off general assistance. It was done in Massachusetts in 1975. Instead of an explosive riot, Massachusetts found a year later:

- 31 percent were employed.
- 47 percent were employed but found places to live with friends and relatives.
- 18 percent were not working but were living alone and receiving food stamps and/or non-governmental income.
- 3 percent were in institutions such as the armed forces or prison.

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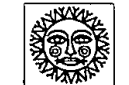
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