

# McNamee kills con-con plan

It would have been nice to call smoothly out of office.

But in her final days in the Michigan Legislature, Rep. Ruth McNamee, R-Birmingham, faced one of the biggest challenges of her career.

The five-term lawmaker's decision was such a tough one that U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, a Democrat, pointed to it as an example of courage. Speaking to the Michigan Municipal League last Friday, Levin said public officials must speak out on their beliefs.

"We must have the courage to do what is right, despite the risk — the courage of a former mayor of Birmingham who cast a very difficult vote in the legislature yesterday."

LIKE OTHER Republicans, the Birmingham legislator supports a mandate to balance the budget.

## Speechreading classes to start

A speechreading class will start at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3, and continue for four more Wednesdays in Sinal Hospital's Goldin Health Care Center, 8450 Farmington, just north of Maple Road, West Bloomfield Township.

The course is aimed at increasing one's knowledge of hearing and hearing loss and helping persons to establish better communications strategies. Instructor is audiologist Ellen Sarb.

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But she objected to the idea of a national constitutional convention and the "political atmosphere" with special interests that would come into play there.

"That Constitution is flexible and there is a procedure for amending it," explained McNamee.

"I don't believe in tampering with the Constitution."

McNamee drew both praise and criticism for her committee vote which killed a resolution calling on Congress to hold a constitutional convention to draw up an amendment requiring a balanced federal budget.

"The pressure up here was tremendous," said the legislator.

Michigan would have been the 33rd state to pass a resolution demanding a balanced budget. Thirty-four states are needed to force Congress either to call a convention or start the approval process itself.

McNamee parted company with other Republicans — including President Ronald Reagan — on the issue when it came before the House Constitutional Revision and Women's Rights Committee.

Earlier in the year, the state Senate had passed it 23-15. If approved by that committee, the measure would have gone to the full House for action.

House Minority Leader Michael Busch, R-Saginaw, talked of seeking a discharge petition to force the measure out of committee. Such measures are frequently discarded, rarely tried and even more rarely successful.

THE MICHIGAN Legislature drew national attention over the Labor Day weekend as the committee vote drew near.

Democrats, who generally oppose the balanced-budget amendment, control the committee by a 4-1 vote. The National Tax Limitation Committee targeted a Democrat, Rep. Jerry Bartnik of Monroe County, as a "swing" vote who might join the Republicans.

In nationwide radio commercials, the group gave Bartnik's home telephone number, urging listeners to call him and urge him to vote for the balanced-budget amendment.

As it turned out, however, they guessed wrong, and Republican McNamee cast the deciding vote against it.



Rep. Ruth McNamee no tampering

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