Abortion foes win 'clean' Medicaid cutoff

It was a foregone conclusion that the state House of Representatives would vote last week to ban Medicald funding of abortions.

The big battle in Lansing was over amendments to case the impact of cutting off 36 million in state Medicald abortion funds for women on welfare. All four amendments lost.

"The whole thing was orchestrated They wanted a 'clean' bill ... no amendments,' said Rep. Gordon Sparks, R-Troy. By "they," Sparks meant Right to Life, an anti-abortion group, and Rep. Michael Griffing, D-Jackson, sponsor of House Bill 4097.

SPARKS VOTED with the majority.

SPARKS VOTED with the majority as the House last week passed, 77:32, the one-sentence bill cutting off medicald abortions. It provides that "an abortion shall not be a service provided

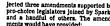
abortion shall not be a service provided to a recipient of medical assistance under this act unless the abortion is necessary to save the life of the mother."

But unlike most supporters of the funding cutoff, Sparks also supported four amendments to provide replacement services or to modify the bill's effect.

Gov. James J. Blanchard has promised to yet other the measure, as he

Gov. James J. Blanchard has promised to veto the measure, as he and former Gov. William C. Milliken have done 13 times earlier. This year, however, a number of pro-cholee lawmakers have been replaced. The House is expected to muster the 74 votes necessary to override the veto, according to House Speaker Gary Owen, D-Ypsilanti.

THE HOUSE overwhelmingly re-



jected three amendments supported by pro-choice legislators joined by Sparks and a handful of others. The amendments would have provided:

the form the cutoff cooled that effect, the mendments would have to consider the support of couples or single adults contracting with licensed agencies to adopt children equals at least half the number of Medicaid abortions were performed. Thus, the demand for adoptive bables — regardless of race, see or handleap — would have to be at least \$6.00 before the Medicaid cut could take effect.

Sponsored by Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southleid, it was defeated \$9.30.

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care because of the additional caseload created by the abortion fund cut. Despite bipartisan aponsorship, the amendment lost 62-33.

• A Medicald abortion would be allowed in cases of rape or incest. The amendment lost 63-36. The pro-choice bloc was joined by Sparks and James Kosteva, D-Canton.

Defeat of this amendment cost Right to Life the support of Rep. Marvin Knight, D-Muskegon. "If this amendment had been adopted, I would have voted 'yes." Certainly a poor woman made pregnant as the result of rape or incest should not be forced to bear the child of her assailant simply because she is poor," Knight said.

A FOURTH amendment barely lost, 52-51,

It would have appropriated \$6.3 million on "alternatives" to abortion "
"including teer-age parent alternative
school programs, counseling for preg-nant persons and programs dealing
with adoption, family planning, prena-tal and postnatal care."

Joining the pro-choice group were
Sparks, Kosteva and Gregory Gruse, R-Troy.

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Kosteva, a freshman Democrat from Canton, said there was only "one chance in 10" he will vote to override Blanchard's veto. But he said "the only argument! I haven't heard is the gover-nor's."

nor's arms said he opposes a U.S. consti-tutional amendment to prohibit abor-tion because "that choice should be left to the individual. But I am opposed to Medicald funding" of abortions. He

REP. LYN BANKES, R-Livonia, voted against the measure, saying, "I son, wanted a "show of strength" that don't want to south pro-abortion, but it's too extreme. We've got to put something in it (Medicald funding). We're

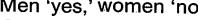
asid poils of his district — most of Troy and the greater Rochester area show a majority oppose Medicaid funding of abordions.

Last term, as a freshman, Sparks world against the bill because he was angry that its supporters refused to consider amendments to solten its economic impact. Now he sees that as "a dumb thing to do because I got stomped from both aides."

But Sparks insists the issue is "not a clear, simple, black-and-white issue. It's not just morality. It's morality and economics."

Men 'yes,' women 'no'

There were two parties in the state House of Representatives — men and women — on the vote to cut off Medicald funds for abortions.



abortloss.
Final vote was 77-32.
Men supported it 74-21.
Women opposed it 11-3.
In the Observer & Escentric area, males supported it 8-1; females opposed it 4-0.
Supporting it were: John Bennett, D-Redford, W.V. Brotherton, R-Farmington; Mat

Dunaskiss, R-Lake Orion (district includes Oakland Township); Gregory Gruse, R-Troy; William Kelth, D-Garden City; Gerald Law, R-Plymouth Township; Gerdon Sparks, R-Troy; and James Kosteva, D-Canton. Opposed were: Lyn Bankes, R-Livonia; Justine Barns, D-Westland; Maxine Ber-man, D-Southfield; David Honigman, R-West Bloomfield; and Judith Miller, R-Bir-mingham.

- Tim Richard



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