

Polls fail to convince Senate on death penalty

By Tim Richard
staff writer

It's back to the petition drive for L. Brooks Patterson and proponents of the death penalty in Michigan.

The state Senate, bucking the opinion polls, voted 21-13 Tuesday against placing before voters a state constitutional amendment that would permit the death penalty. The vote was 12 short of the two-thirds majority needed to place it on the ballot.

"He's had some of the most horrible mail he's seen since he's been in the Legislature," said an aide to Sen. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, the lone suburban Republican to vote against the measure.

CRUCE WROTE, then withdrew, an amendment to require electric chair executions to be performed by persons drawn at random from a list of licensed drivers over age 18.

"The intent was to make people think about the responsibility they were taking in advocating the death penalty,"

said the Cruce staff member. "It's easy to vote for the death penalty, and it has its appeal. But at some point, some human being would be responsible for taking the life of another human being."

Many letter writers volunteered to pull the lever that would execute condemned prisoners. Another called Cruce "wimpy." Many were unsigned and from outside Cruce's southeastern Oakland County district, which includes Birmingham and the Royal Oak area.

Cruce withdrew that amendment, the aide said, when it became clear it had no chance of passage. He also withdrew a second amendment that would have made a death penalty law permissible rather than mandatory.

THE VOTE split party ranks in the northwestern suburbs. Favoring Senate Joint Resolution H were Republicans Richard Fessler of West Bloomfield, R. Robert Geake of

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— aide to Sen. Doug Cruce (R-Troy)

Northville and Rudy Nichols of Waterford plus Democrat Patrick McCollough of Dearborn.

Opposed were Republican Cruce and Democrats William Faust of Westland and Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills.

Supporters included 11 Republicans and two Democrats. Opponents included eight Republicans and 13 Democrats. Among opponents were Majority Leader John Engler, R-Mount Pleasant, and Minority Leader Arthur Miller Jr., D-Warren. Three senators were absent.

If passed by voters, the proposal would have removed an 11-word section that has been in three Michigan

Constitutions: "No law shall be enacted providing for the penalty of death."

Such a proposal can be placed on the

ballot either by 1) a two-thirds majority of both houses of the Legislature or 2) by petition drive. The fifth such petition drive, headed by Patterson, has been under way for more than a year.

CHIEF PROPOSER Kirby Holmes, R-Utica, urged senators to place it on the ballot because polls showed 74 to 89 percent of voters favored the death penalty for first-degree murder.

"Even though you might be personal-

ly opposed, put this on the ballot and let your constituents decide," said Holmes, a first-term senator elected during the 1983 income tax backlash.

"Only 12 to 15 percent of homicides are first-degree murder. We're not talking about barroom brawls or crimes of passion."

Sen. Nick Smith, R-Hillsdale County, offered an amendment requiring the death penalty for murderers of police officers and firefighters. It was shouted down in a non-roll call vote.

Health care pros learn more at OU

Health care professionals will participate in the 1985 Symposium on Primary and Secondary Prevention of Coronary Heart Disease Wednesday, June 19, at Meadow Brook Hall at Oakland University, Rochester.

Nationally recognized medical authorities will discuss the most recent developments in the prevention and treatment of heart disease in a professional program from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The day's agenda includes activities on the theme of the symposium: physical activity (tennis, golf, jogging), low-fat meals and relaxation at a Meadow Brook Music Festival performance.

The symposium will bring to the attention of the medical community the benefits of the university's cardiac program, according to Fred W. Stransky, program director.

Speakers will be from Harvard Medical School, Pennsylvania State College of Medicine's Hershey Medical Center, Massachusetts General Hospital, the University of Texas, the University of Michigan Hospital, Crittenton Hospital.

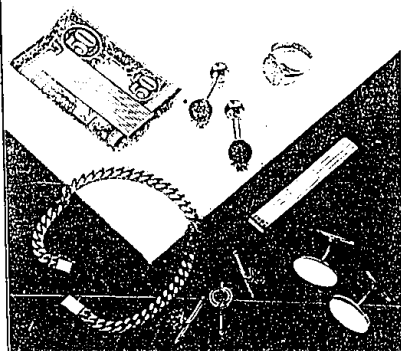
Health care professionals and knowledgeable lay persons may obtain information about the symposium by calling the Exercise Science and Cardiac Rehabilitation office, 370-3198.

The professional part of the symposium is certified for 5.5 CME credit hours toward Michigan licensure and meets criteria of the physician recognition award of the American Medical Association. Credit has been requested from the American Osteopathic Association.

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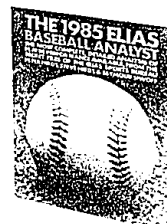
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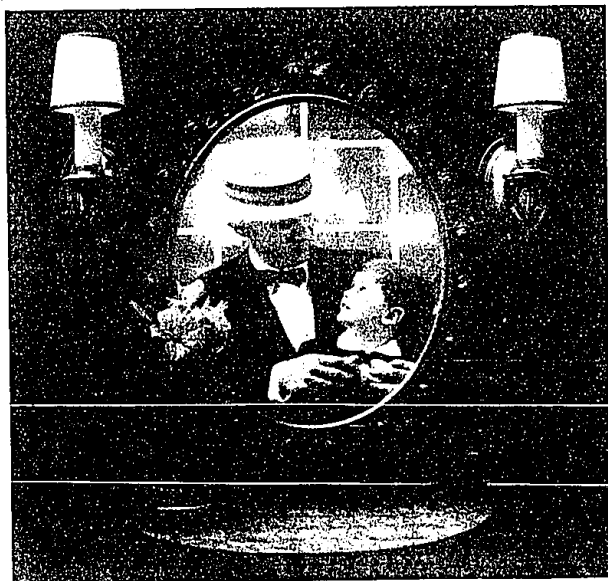
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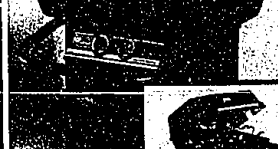
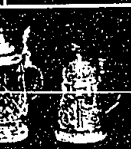
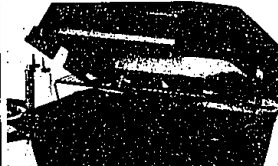
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