

Voters should decide abortion funds—Geake

By M.B. Dillon
and Tim Richard
staff writers

State Sen. R. Robert Geake, R-Northville, says his critics are right in contending that his plan to end Medicaid-funded abortions carries a hefty price tag.

"That doesn't make it morally right to abort babies," said Geake, whose district includes the cities of Plymouth and Livonia and the townships of Canton, Redford and Plymouth.

The Senate last week passed a Geake-sponsored resolution proposing a constitutional amendment

barring state-funded abortions. If the House agrees, the measure will go on the ballot April 6, when many cities hold elections.

The Senate adopted Geake's resolution 27-6, one vote more than the necessary two-thirds.

THE HOUSE, however, postponed action until Dec. 2.

Rep. Lynn Bankes, R-Livonia, said 48 of the 53 Republicans are ready to put it on the ballot. But House Speaker Gary Owen, D-Ypsilanti, "couldn't control his Democratic caucus," she added.

Owen and Gov. James J. Blanchard oppose a ballot proposition. The \$5 million cost of holding the election possibly could be distributed among Michigan cities where local elections already are scheduled for that day, Geake said.

State Sen. Joe Conroy, D-Flint, has said Geake's proposal fails to address the financial burden the state and poor families would face as the birth rate climbed, according to reports.

GEAKE DOESN'T agree.

"We're reviewing the figures now. There certainly will be some cost involved but only to the extent that poor families continue to have babies," Geake said.

"Hopefully poor people would have the same attitude as the rest of the population — that they should practice contraception rather than continue to have more and more pregnancies."

About 18,000 abortions are performed at a cost of \$6 million annually in Michigan. Both "pre-life" and "pro-choice" factions believe that even with a Medicaid abortion ban, 75 to 80 percent of abortions would continue because other funding sources would be found.

The ban on Medicaid abortions, as passed by the Legislature, would affect only operating procedures, not abortion aftercare.

GEAKE'S PLAN goes beyond Medicaid abortions. It would ban all publicly funded abortions except in cases where the mother's life is en-

dangered — applying to health insurance benefits for state, college, school district and local governmental employees as well as to welfare recipients.

His proposal says that "no public funds of this state shall be appropriated or used directly or indirectly to pay for all or part of the expenses of

performing or inducing an abortion, unless the abortion is for the purpose of saving the life of the mother."

Geake said his proposal is aimed at breaking the impasse between the last two governors, who vetoed Medicaid abortion bans, and the Legislature, which has voted for them at least 13 times.

Federal-Mogul buys Signal-Stat

Thomas F. Russell, chairman and chief executive of Federal-Mogul Corp., said the Southfield-based firm has completed its acquisition of a unit of IC Industries for an undisclosed amount.

Signal-Stat, with headquarters and two plants in New Jersey, is a unit of IC's Pneumo Abex subsidiary. Signal-Stat is a manufacturer, marketer and distributor for lighting and safety components, and tire accessory components primarily for the

heavy-duty truck replacement parts industry.

Sales for the division totaled \$36 million in 1985 and employment is about 500.

Federal-Mogul operates 40 plants, more than 50 distribution centers and four major research facilities throughout the world. Its products range from a variety of precision parts for the transportation, farm equipment, construction and manufacturing industries to aerospace components.



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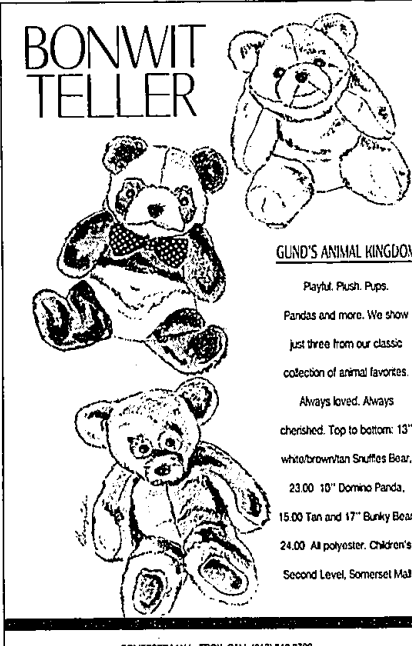


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