Assault on smoking gains wide support

A new legislative assault on smoking in Michigan is being readled by a state Senate committee.

It is supported by a Southeast Michigan citizens anti-smoking group with a Farmington connec-tion.

tion.

The Senate Health Polley Committee opened hearings on a six-bill anti-smoking package April 12. Further testimony will be heard next week because of the many people who showed up to testify. State Sen. Jake Faxon, a Democrat whose district includes the Farmington and Southfield areas, said he expected the bills to be turned out of committee next week and taken before the full Senate with only minor modifications.

He is the chief sponsor of one of the bills, but supports them all. "I'm behind all the bills," Faxon said, "Every one is designed to ... advance our concerns on public health."

Faxon has long been a proponent of anti-smoking legislation.

THE PROPOSED bills would:

THE PROPOSED bills would:

• SB 837 — Probibit the free distribution of tobacco products in public places, such as people handing out samples of eigarettes.

• SB 698 — Create smoke-free schools and child-care centers by probibiting smoking, even by faculty and staff.

 SB 739 — Prohibit advertising and promotion of smokeless tobacco products — including chewing tobac-co or snuff — on billboards and other signs, except at stores where it is sold.

• SB 740 — Strengthen existing laws regulating the sale and furnish-

NAMED OF VIEW

ing of tobacco products to minors.

• SB 741 — Offer cleanup amendments to the Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act.

• SB 742 — To create smokefree health facilities, such as clinical laboratories and county medical care facilities.

facilities.

FARMINGTON HILLS resident Barbara Temporelli, her brother, Don Christy of Novi, and Temporell's children, Carolyn, II, and Chris, I3, all spoke before the standing Senate committee last week to declare their support of the six-bill package. They are members of People Against Tobaceo Smoke, a group in stremental in fighting for recent anti-smoking legislation. Chris, a student at Southfield Christian School and an asthmatic spoke specifically about smoking in schools by reading a poem to senaters. "Our principal feels it's (eignreites) a gateway drug," he explained, "If they stop it, there won't be problems with marijuana or crack (cocaine)."

His sister, Carolyn, a student at Maryline.

be problems with manipuana or crack (cocalne)."

His sister, Carolyn, a student at Longaere Elementary in Farmington, added, "I don't like to be around smoke at school," When there was smoking in her house, "I used to gu to my room and try and escape the smoke," she added.
"Tobacco is unique in that even when it is used as intended, it is inherently unsafe," said Pall Wiener, acting state public health director, during last week's hearings. She said Michigan sees more than 11,900 preventable deaths a year due to tobacco.

Barbara Temporelli addressed the general issue of smoking: "It's not the issue of taking rights away from anyone," she said. "It's returning the rights to us. What we have to do is limit the (smoking) area.

"People are speaking up - they do have an opinion."

CHRISTY, A pilot, compared death by smoking to the crash of Northwest Flight 255, in which 157 people were killed last August.

"I live with it every day," he said.
"But 1,000 people a day die from eigarettes in this country. That's equivalent to two jumbo jets colliding every day."

Yet, others spoke out against the six-bill package. One Michigan State Chamber of Commerce representative criticized all the bills as "seriously flawed."

Mona Young of the Michigan Edu-cation Association said her union was opposed to the bill affecting schools. She said the issue should be decided locally.

And David Remes of the Tobacco Institute objected to the bill banning free distribution of cigarettes, say-ing that's "an important form of pro-motion."

MARTIN REDISH of the University of Michigan Law School said such a prohibition would be unconstitutional because Congress has reserved the power to regulate eignette promotion. Faxon said Redish's constitutional concerns would be addressed in the bill before it is sent to the full Senate.

Michigan already has several laws restricting smoking, including a stat-ute that took effect more than a year

"Certainly you have more age that prohibits lighting up in all worthwhile and productive legislation to pursue," said Ritchard Studley, chamber vice president for government relations.

dictions and theaters, except warment relations.





