

# Parties split over latest school tax plan

**By Tim Richard**  
staff writer

Both parties in the Michigan Legislature are deeply split over the Harden committee's plan to raise the state sales tax a half-cent and earmark the new revenue for schools.

Outstate Republicans and Gov. James J. Blanchard say the \$400 million plan has merit, and they want to add a second ballot proposal to give school property tax relief.

"Dead on the table," replied Senate minority leader Art Miller, D-Warren, and several suburban senators of both parties. They were joined Thursday by Senate Majority Leader John Engler, R-Mount Pleasant, who favors earmarking bigger slices of future general fund pies for education.

The parties will caucus this week to decide their positions. But it's ap-

parent the split is along metro-outstate lines more than along party lines.

"I HAVE a problem with it," said Sen. Richard Fessler, R-Commerce, who favors capping rising property assessments and earmarking more of the state budget for schools.

"Past plans have had a Robin Hood approach. Instead of tearing down those districts at the top, we should bring those at the bottom up," Fessler, whose district includes Bloomfield Township, Bloomfield Hills and West Bloomfield Township, said state fees are low — particularly drivers licenses, builders licenses, real estate licenses and state park entry fees. Raising them would ease the pressure on other parts of the state budget, he said, and allow more to be allocated for schools.

SEN. JACK FAXON, R-Farmington

Hills, said a flat "no" because "there's no relief from the exorbitant property tax increases. The education establishment is very mistaken in reading the minds of the public," said Faxon, whose district includes Novi and Southfield.

Sen. Rudy Nichols, R-Waterford, said, "My reading of the electorate is that they'll turn down a shift."

Nichols, whose district includes Rochester, said the Harden plan covers only "half the problem" — raising funds for poorer school districts.

THE HARDEN committee was chaired by Edgar Harden, former president of Northern Michigan University and once acting president of Michigan State University.

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— State Sen. Jack Faxon

Property tax cut is involved. The \$400 million in new revenue would be earmarked for schools. The school aid fund and a new student improvement fund would get \$315 million. The remaining \$85 million would go into such programs as preschool, classroom technology, achievement incentives, professional development, math-science and the like.

REPRESENTED ON the panel were two teachers unions, the Michigan Education Association and Michigan Federation of Teachers, the State Board of Education and superintendent of public instruction; association of school superintendents and association of school boards; the Michigan Manufacturers Association and the state AFL-CIO.

"They agreed on how to spend

\$400 million," said Engler, the Republican Senate chief, "but they're not sure where'll they'll get it. I'm very disappointed. This group labored mightily and brought forth zero property tax relief."

"I'm extremely disappointed," added Miller, the Democratic Senate leader. "The earmarking proposal (Engler's) is looking better every day."

BIPARTISAN SUPPORT is growing for tax proposals — one small sales tax increase for more school funds, another for property tax relief.

Gov. Blanchard later issued a statement endorsing the Harden proposal, adding he favors "an additional proposal to provide permanent relief from rapidly rising property taxes."

He urged the Legislature to place twin proposals on the ballot this summer.

## around Oakland

### Tax revolt meetings set

The Oakland County Taxpayers' Association will host a series of organizational meetings to encourage participation in the tax-cut effort, with the next one at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 27, in Roosevelt Elementary School in Keego Harbor as hosted by Tom Madden, Keego Harbor spokesman.

The organization is part of the drive by L. Brooks Patterson and others to get a tax-cutting or tax-limiting proposal onto the statewide ballot next year.

### County sets nutrition class

The Oakland County Health Division, in conjunction with Birmingham Community Education, is offering a nutrition course, "Better Eating for Better Health."

The class will be held at Midvale Elementary School in Birmingham on Thursday evenings from 7-9 p.m. beginning Thursday, April 27.

The class will be taught by a registered dietitian and will run for six weeks. The cost is \$15.00.

To register, call Sheila Brice at 645-2839. Class size is limited.

### Secretaries' luncheon set

Former Detroit Tiger Bill Freehan will be the guest speaker at the 11th Annual Secretaries' Luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 26, at the Pontiac Silverdome's Main

### Event restaurant.

The event is sponsored by the Oakland County Chamber of Commerce and Manpower Temporary Services of Bloomfield Hills. All Oakland

### County businesses are invited to attend.

Tickets are \$13.50, which includes a gift for each secretary. For reservations call 683-4746 or 644-1229.

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**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
P.O. Box 30023  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

TAKE NOTICE, That the Michigan Department of Natural Resources proposes to hold a formal public hearing at the Bloomfield Township Hall, 4399 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, at 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, the 2nd day of May 1989.

The purpose of this hearing is to secure the views of interested persons concerning the following application for permit:

Application for Permit 85-14-101-W under the Governor-Anderson Wetland Protection Act, Act 203, Public Act of 1979, by Jack LeViner, 8199 Wislana Drive, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013, to seek authorization to dredge a pond 80 feet by 180 feet by removing approximately 2,000 cubic yards of material in low area contiguous to Gilbert Lake, T3N, R10E, Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan.

The application may be reviewed in the Pontiac District Office, Land and Water Management Division, 2455 North Williams Lake Road, Pontiac, Michigan, during normal office hours.

The hearing will be held pursuant to Section 8(1) of the cited statute. The hearing will not be a court-type proceeding, witnesses will not be sworn, and there will be no cross-examination. Public Hearings are primarily informational and are held to encourage the expression of views and presentation of facts. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will, upon written request, provide a copy of the Department's decision on this application.

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
Daniel H. Morgan  
Lakes and Streams Protection Unit  
Land and Water Management Division

Date: March 29, 1989  
Public: April 11, 1989