Tucker, Pernick win County Democrats opt for experience

Preparing for the first and possi-bly most important challenges of 1991, Oakland Democrats have turned to two of their most experi-enced leaders.

turned to two of their most experienced leaders. In separate caucuses last week, Cakland Democrats elected Birmingham attorney Donald F. Tucker and Southfield businessman Lawrence R. Pernick to positions of leadership. Tucker, 44, who lives in Birmingham and practices law from his office in Southfield, was elected chalrman of the Democratic Party of Oakland County.

of Oakland County.

HE WAS ELECTED Dec. 4 by the party's executive committee.

Pernick, a county commissioner from Southfield, was re-elected chairman of the Democratic caucus of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners at the party caucus Dec. 5.

Tucker and Pernick have been politically active for many years.

Both acknowledge that reapportionment will likely be the first and-most important challenges facing the Democrats next year.

Reapportionment, of course, is mandatated every decade after certification of the census. Throughout the country, boundaries for federal, state and local elections will be redrawn, with an accompanying

redrawn, with an accompanying shake-up of the political structure.

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20 members in the U.S. House of Representatives. There is much speculation about which two representatives will be reapportioned out of office, including the possibility of parts of the 6th and 18th districts being combined.

Both districts include portions of Oakland County and If combined could see incument Democrat Bob County and If combined the publican William Fromulties. As county chairman, Tucker will be the only Democrat on the five-member Reapportuoment Commission that will redraw boundaries for the Board of Commission-ters races in 1992.

Other commission members are the county chairman af the Republicans and clerk. All are Republicans and clerk hallows. The chairman of the 18th Congressional district for 10 years, His successor in the 18th District has not been elected. Vice chairwoman is Sandy Teague of Lake Orion.

OTHER PARTY officers elected

OTHER PARTY officers elected by county Democrats include Wil-liam G. Wolfram of Franklin as

liam G. Wolfram of Frankiin as treasurer. Pernick has been a county com-histoner since 1969 and has been Democratic caucus chairman on several different occasions. Pernick said reapportionment will be an important Issue and sug-gests that gerrymandering by Re-

publicans is one reason Democrats are outnumbered on the county board 19 to 8.

"We (Democrats) got more than 43 percent of the vote cast for county commissioners last month," hald. "Yet we occupy less than one-third of the seats on the county board."

county commissioners last month, to said. "Yet we occupy less than one-third of the seats on the county board."

Other officers elected by the Democratele caucus of the county board are: commissioner James Ferreras, Pontiac, vice chalrman, commissioner Hubert Price Jr., minority vice chalrman of the finance commissioner Hubert Price Jr., minority vice chalrman of the general government committee, commissioner runder of the price price

dog when commissioners vote on the appointment this month.

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Cost-cutting adoption bills wait 'til next year

Three bills to cut the cost of adopting children died without de-bate in a state Senate committee re-

adopting children died without debate in a state Senate committee recently.

"I haven't talked to anyone about them," said Sen Dick Posthumus, Ruwell, chairman of the commerce committee, which handles health insurance legislation.

Supporters criticized his lack of action on the bills, which were sent to his panel in April.

An adopted child isn't covered under the family's health insurance until one year after placement in the home, when the adoption is finalized. Illuse Bills 54435 would have required insurers to treat adopted child cen like newborns.

It is should be one of the major initial the said of the said post the said Postburnus. "For these of us who are pro-life, it, would make adoption a more viable alternative. Generally, the concept is OK."

BUT POSTIMBUS is taking heat because the bills languished in his committee for eight months after winning House approval March 28. "He's responsible for what happens in his committee. I'm very disappointed." said the sponsor, Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southfield. "We'll bring them back next year."

In Howell, Heather Divina said he was "terribly disappointed at the system. I wrote to him and got a form letter of reply."

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Divian and her husband Jeffrey, a vice president Capricorn Capital in Farmington Hills, have adopted a 4-year-old Korean-born boy. They are awaiting a second placement. "We we been following the bills," said Divian, who has Joined a door bothers in a support group in Brighton. She fired off an angry letter brothemus after learning the Senate would bold more committee to the beautiful to do, the beautiful to the b

color or religion. This is just dis-color or religion. This is just dis-reliminatin against children who are adopted.

"We plan on coming back at 'em again,' said Marengere, a lloom-field Township resident.

In the control of the control of the con-makes it harder to adopt. It's another roadblock to adoption."

Marengere said he received a let-ter from Posthumus' office express-ing concern at "potential abuses of insurance. "What abuses? It's not an abuse to adopt,' he said in reply. POSTHUMUS and his panel have handled the highly controversial auto insurance and accident benefit biths in the last two years.

He also led the Republican Senate campaign effort. A confidant of Gov-elect John Engler, Posthumus will succeed him as Senate majority

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leader in 1991.
Doug Cruce, R-Troy, will chair the Commerce Committee next year.
Some 5,300 families adopted children in 1988, according to Berman's

dren in 1988, accorrains to berman-staff.
Children who previously were wards of the probate court were eli-gible for coverage under Medicaid, the health care program for low-in-come people. But in some areas of the state, Medicaid-participating health-care providers are hard to find.

THREE BILLS are required to make the legal changes — one for health maintenance organizations (HMOs), a second for the Blues and a third for commercial health insur-

third for commercial health insurers.

"Blue Cross was not opposed. HMOs were of opposed. It was the private insurers," said Berman.

Private insurers said the proposal wouldn't have permitted them to charge higher rates for adopted children with pre-existing health conditions. But the law requires them to cover newborns with the same conditions.

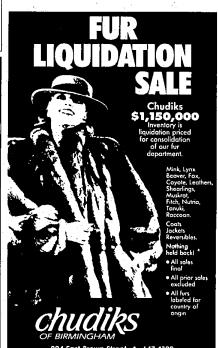
Berman scoffed at the objection.

A child is a child," she said. "Their compromise would have cut out a tremendous percentage of hard-to-place children."



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