

GOP threatens petition drive to cut taxes

By Helen Niemiec
staff writer

If Democrats don't agree to Gov. John Engler's proposal to cut school tax bills by 33 percent over the next three years, Republicans will begin a statewide petition drive, according to state Sen. Dave Honigman, R-West Bloomfield.

Engler's proposal would reduce the homeowner's share of school taxes paid, increase the Homestead Property Tax Credit and take nothing away from individual school districts, Honigman said.

Sen. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, said the plan is long overdue because it makes legislators rethink the state's goals and priorities.

"Overall it is a very good proposal for improving the state's business climate," Cruce said. "This reprioritizes state spending and we've been in need of that for 17 or 18 years now."

THE PROPOSAL now goes to the House of Representatives, which must adopt the plan before it can become law.

"It will come to a head soon. Either the House Democrats will agree to cut taxes, or we'll go directly to the people and circumvent the Legislature," Honigman said.

The initiative process, Honigman acknowledged, is a big job. "The requirements are too stringent," he said. The "Legislature is covetous" of its areas of control, hence the strict requirements.

Cruce hasn't been a part of the discussions on the initiative but said he thinks that will be the next course of action if the House doesn't adopt the plan.

Cruce, whose district includes Birmingham, expects a fight in the House.

"There will be a fight whenever there are new priorities. The special interests are hurt by reprioritization. The House caters to special interests and they want to protect their turf," Cruce said.

PART OF THE reprioritization is putting education at the top of the list, Cruce said.

"Schools will get back 100 percent of the money that is cut by the plan."

'Schools will get back 100 percent of the money that is cut by the plan. Actually, school budgets will be up 4.5 percent overall. That's the net effect of the plan.'

— Sen. Doug Cruce
R—Troy

Actually, school budgets will be up 4.5 percent overall. That's the net effect of the plan."

Honigman agreed that education must be a top priority and schools should not suffer in any budget cut.

"No district will lose money," Honigman said. "The Democrats are making noises about reducing aid to the schools. But we're not."

Under the Republican plan, the state would have to reduce its spending by 4 percent to send money back to the schools.

The Engler plan presented Thursday, of which Honigman is a co-sponsor, calls for:

- Reducing school property taxes by 18 percent this year, 25 percent in

1992; and 33 percent in 1993.

- The state will reimburse school districts for the money they lose through lower school tax rates.

- Increase the Homestead Property Tax Credit maximum by \$200 per year until 2002. Currently the maximum is \$1,200. That would rise to \$3,600 by 2002.

AN EARLIER proposal to exempt senior citizens from paying property taxes was abandoned, Honigman said, to provide "greater across-the-board reductions."

School property taxes are a big part of the tax cut plan, Honigman said, because 60-70 percent of prop-

erty tax bills go to local school districts.

The first-term senator said he long has felt that property taxes are the wrong method for financing schools.

"The state should be funding schools more," Honigman said.

While more dollars will come from Lansing under the plan, Honigman said that adjustment is not a

method for the state to gain greater control over education.

"I don't want to give the state more control. There are no strings attached to the money. We won't say that they have to read Chaucer rather than T.S. Eliot. We're not going to get involved in curriculum," Honigman said.

How to help blended families

Counselors who work with students or clients from meshed families may be interested in a workshop to be offered by the Continuum Center of Oakland University.

"Blending Families: Accepting Challenges and Delight" will be offered 9 a.m. to noon Thursday,

March 14 at the Auburn Hills Signature Inn.

The workshop focuses on the blending of families with the problems and benefits encountered by step-parents and step-children.

The fee for the workshop is \$49. To register by Tuesday, March 12, call 370-3033.

Free program targets stress

The Meadow Brook Health Enhancement Institute at Oakland University will offer free stress evaluation and management programs to help people deal with tension and stress.

The programs will be 6:30-8:30 p.m., Tuesday and Wednesday, March 12 and 13 at the Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion on the Rochester campus.

Additional information is available at 370-3198.

EXTRA CAR IN DRIVEWAY
CAR GETTING ON NERVES? TAXES TOO HIGH?
Help us help those in need
By donating your used car, boat, real estate...and receive fair market value as a tax deduction when you donate.
CALL 373-9000
VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA

BRIDAL FASHION SHOW
featuring
"Country Elegance"
Thurs., March 14th 7-8pm
Limited Seating
Please call for reservations
Elizabeth's Bridal Manor
"#1 in Customer Satisfaction"
402 S. Main • Northville • 348-2783

The sale worth waiting for... is here at last!
Our annual BUILDER SHOW SALE is now in progress, and we've really drained our prices.
Now you can save on the spas featured on the PBS "HOMETIME" Show, Hot Spring Spas, with our lowest prices of the year. See our booth at the show or visit one of our showrooms.
You won't want to wait any longer!

HotSpring
ANN ARBOR: 3965 Versality Dr.
ROCHESTER: 3310 S. Rochester Rd.

CALL: 1-800-878-SPAS

3 DAY SALE

nutri/system

1/2 OFF

OUR BASIC PROGRAM

THERE'S A RIGHT WAY TO LOSE WEIGHT.
nutri/system
1-800-321-THIN

*Program sold only by the Nutri/System computer for your weight loss goal. Special offer does not include the cost of Nutri/System foods and cannot be combined with other offers. Valid only with the purchase of a new program at a participating center. One discount per person. Expires 3/31/91.

SPRING 1991...

alive with
COLOR,
TEXTURE, and
FORM!

Jacobson's