

Mental health

Honigman, Faxon vote to hinder closings

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Gov. John Engler will have a harder time shutting down mental health facilities under a budget bill amended by the state Senate.

"I can see a coalition of minority (Democrats) and those whose districts are threatened," protested Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville, who fought the amendment.

"It's not good policy... No institution will ever be phased out... It's another stumbling block to deinstitutionalization," said Geake, chair of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on mental health.

BUT THE BIPARTISAN coalition gave 27-9 approval to the amendment of Sen. Jim Berryman, D-Adrian. It requires the Department of Mental Health to make a plan before moving to close any institutions, giving communities time to prepare for the influx of former patients.

"It takes 18 months to plan one group home," Berryman said. "We

don't want the homeless mentally ill wandering the streets. This doesn't stop closings."

Geake replied. Supporting Berryman were area Republican David Honigman of West Bloomfield and Democrats Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills and George Z. Hart of Dearborn.

Siding with Geake was Republican Mat Dunaskis of Lake Orion. Absent was William Faust, D-Westland.

THE SENATE gave 33-3 approval to the final bill.

At \$13.3 billion, it's 0.4 percent higher than the current budget. Because the Senate version is \$30 million less than the House's, the bill will go to a conference committee.

"However, we are over budget," warned Geake, predicting the conference committee will have to make further cuts. The Senate bill is \$5.5 million higher than Engler's recommendation.

Engler's budget ruffled feathers statewide because of many closings he proposed.

HERE ARE the fates of some southeastern Michigan institutions: • Lafayette Clinic in Detroit — closure in August of 1992. A research and teaching institution, the Lafayette proposal is particularly controversial. With \$18 million, it serves about 100 patients.

• Reuther Psychiatric Hospital in Westland — phased closing by June 1992. "The Reuther Center has a boiler that needs to be replaced at a cost of \$1.5 million," said Sen. Joe Conroy, D-Flint. The center has been funded at \$21 million and served 275 geriatric and other special patients. It's housed in a former Wayne County Hospital on the Elsie site.

• Clinton Valley Center in Pontiac — nearly \$150,000 for new equipment.

Geake noted DMH's administrative expenses are cut 78 percent, and community residential services are raised 11 percent.

IN OTHER budget action Tuesday, the Senate rejected an attempt

to restore \$2.3 million for the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health program (MIOSHA), which Engler wanted to end.

"We can afford it," said Sen. George Z. Hart, D-Dearborn, who sponsored the failed amendment. "I'm not opposed to the idea," replied Sen. Vern Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, "but we simply do not have that money."

MIOSHA regulates state government workplaces which aren't covered by federal law. Engler calls it duplicative of federal efforts.

Among 17 supporting the Hart amendment was Democrat Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills.

Opposing MIOSHA were Republicans Mat Dunaskis of Lake Orion, Robert Geake of Northville, and David Honigman of West Bloomfield.

Lawyers verdict: Gage, Sosnick

For the second year in a row, a poll of attorneys conducted by "Michigan Lawyers Weekly" has ranked Oakland Circuit Judges Hil-da R. Gage and Edward Sosnick as two of this state's Most Respected Judges. Judges were nominated by subscribers and then voted on by secret ballot.

Gage, who took office Jan. 1, 1989, states the biggest problem facing the court today is the horrific workload. Dockets have swelled because more new cases are being filed and the Court of Appeals is remanding more cases for evidentiary hearings. Consequently, courts don't have sufficient time to give each individual case the attention it deserves.

Judge Gage is also concerned about the professionalism of the bar and advised new attorneys to be diligent, thorough and timely with their work.

Gage is very active in both national and state judicial associations. She is a past chairwoman of the National Conference of State Trial Judges and was elected to chair the Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission in January 1991.

Sosnick took office Jan. 1, 1988. He also worries that the huge caseload can cause judges to forget they are dealing with people and people's problems. In this regard, Judge Sosnick would advise all new lawyers that they are in a profession that is supposed to help people. Compassion and courtesy are a must.

Sosnick believes in doing as he says. He combined efforts with the Oakland County friend of the Court and private practitioners to develop the SMILE program to help reduce the trauma suffered by children whose parents are divorcing.

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Weight Loss Surprises Researchers

WASHINGTON—A nutrition organization was hopeful that a nutritionally complete "atch" food tablet would help ease world hunger problems, until a study revealed that one of the ingredients could cause significant weight loss. Researchers in Europe found that an ingredient in the aply tablet caused weight loss. One actually caused people to lose weight, even though specifically instructed not to alter normal eating patterns, according to one study published in the prestigious British Journal of Nutrition. Researchers in an earlier study had speculated that the weight loss was due to a decrease in intestinal absorption of calories.

While the development of Food Source One, a project of National Dietary Research, would not be used to successfully fulfill its original goal, the discovery has been a windfall for overweight

people. A Daytona Beach, Florida woman fighting a weight battle for 12 years used the product on the recommendation of her physician and lost 30 pounds. She stated, "Not only have I lost 30 pounds, but my cholesterol has dropped from 232 to 143. I have two closets full of clothes which have not fit me in two years that I can now wear." In a separate report, a telephone interview revealed that a Wilmington, North Carolina pharmacist lost 14 pounds in 15 days on the product and was never hungry.

Food Source One is available through physicians and pharmacists without a prescription because it is not a drug and contains only natural ingredients already known to be safe. Copies of the referenced study are available free from National Dietary Research, Suite 553, 1377 N. St., Washington, DC 20005. However, please include \$2 Postage & Handling for each request.

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