# Assisted suicide in state has 'life' until April

Assisted suicide won't be banned in Michigan. There's only a moratorium of 18-21 months, says a Senste proponent of the

ban.
"It's much better than not hav-ing anything at all," said Sen. Fred Dillingham, R-Fowlerville. "I expect to see action (in 1993) to

Fred Dillingham, R-Fowlerville.

"I expect to see action (in 1939) to remove the sunset (expiration date on the ban).

"I would prefer not to have the sunset in there. But we have to work with what we have."

In a rebute to House Judiciary leaders Perry Bullard, D.Ann Arber, and Lyn Jondahl, the Michigan House of Representatives last week passed a bill to:

Make assisted suicide a felony punishable by four years in prison and a \$2,000 fine from about April 1 (effective date of the law) until the end of 1994. With Dillingham working behind the scenea, this amendment was added on the House floor by Reps. Ken Silkenan, R-Grandville, and Joseph Palamara, D-Wyandotte.

Set up a study commission for 15 months to study such complex questions as the difference be-

## Holiday survival for singles

"Singles Surviving The Holidays" is set for 7-10 p.m. Tucaday, Dec. 8, at the Birmingham Unitarian Church. The program is recommended for enyone who is single, regardless of age.

"Options and innovative ways to approach the season will be anterpreach the season will be anterpreach techniques for meeting new people and examine the benefits of taking risks to create the best celebrations.

Fee is 252; MasterCord/VISA accepted. Registrations will be taken through Thursday, Dec. 4; call 370-3033.

## How to think creatively

The Oakland University Continuum Center offers a one-day workshop that teaches new approaches to problem solving through creative thinking. Creative Problem Solving will be held from 9 am. to 4 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, at the Signature Inn. Participants, led by presented Jackie McCarroll, will learn a step-by-step approach to attacking problems through a creative thinking process. Fee is \$79 and includes materials; MasterCard/VISA accepted. Registrations will be taken through Wednesday, Dec. 2; call 379-3933.





agement of suicide and active par-ticipation, as well as suicide

ticipation, as well as suicide pacts.

The ponalities sought by Dilingham, Sikkema and Palamara would expire three months after the commission reports but no later than Jan. 1, 1995.

The Senate is scheduled to vote on it Thursday, Dillingham said it would be taken straight to the floor without going through a committee. The Senate passed Dillingham's bill to criminalize assisted suicide months ego.

#### House chiefs lose

Bullard, as chair of the House Judiciary Committee, set on iden-tical bills by Dillinghuan and Rep. Nick Claramitaro, D-Roseville, to criminalize assisted suicide. Instead his panel reported out House Bill 5601, the study com-mission bill of Rep. Tom Power,

R-Traverse City. That bill had been recommended by a special subcommittee headed by Jonathan. "We spent the last two weeks putting it (the amendment) together," said Dillingham, who bill the committee of the shifty to "We spent the last two weeks putting it (the amondment) to-gether," said Dillingham, who prides himself on his ability to work with House members and Democrate. "Yesterday I spent all day making sure we had 72

House passage came on a vote of 72 to 23 with nine absent.

Area members voting yes were:
Republicans Barbara Dobb of:
Union Lake, Jan Dolan of Farmington Hills, John Jamian of Bloomfield Township, and Gordon Sparks of Troy.

don Sparks of Troy.
Voting no were Democrata
Maxine Berman of Southfield and
Republican Shirley Johnson of
Royal Oak.
The vote came one day after
"Dr. Death"—retired pathologist
Jack Kevorkian of Royal Oak

assisted a sixth woman to comme suicide in Michigan.

Dillingham said that was a co-incidence because the votes were in place to pass the bill well in advance. "The birthday cake and

advance. "The birthday cake and candles were in place. All he (Kevorkian) did was light the candles."

Essentially, the House took the text of Dillingham's bill, added the sunset and tacked it onto Power's bill.

"Some of you accuse Dr. Kevorkian of playing God," asid Berman of Southfield. "Attempting to ban assisted suicide is playing God, too."

God, too."

Power voted against the bill he sponsored and asked that his name be removed from it. A conservative Republican, Power splits with most of his party on abortion and assisted suicide questions. He is leaving the Legislature to become a circuit judge.

The House debated the bill

more than four hours. It added an amendment from Jamian of Bloomfield Township to place a coroner on the study panel.

"Yes — reluctantly"
The bill was short of the twothirds needed to give it immediate
effect. Instead it will become law
90 days after the Legislature adjourns, or about the first of April
1993. Gov. John Engler said he

nichard Thompson, who has lost attempts to prosecute Kevorklan because Michigan has no law banning assisted suicide, called the bill'an important victory for life and the vulnerable."

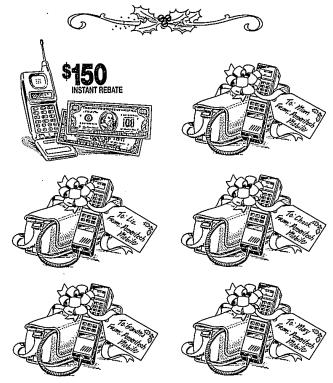
Kevorkian's attorney, Michael Schwartz, said he may challenge the act's constitutionality.

## Panel to examine issue

The House bill on assisted suicide sets up a Michigan Commission on Death and Dying.
All major interest groups will be allowed to appoint one member. The groups include:
American Associated of Retired Persons, Citizens for Better Care, Hemlock of Michigan, Michigan Association of Suicidology, state Health Department, Michigan

Hospice Organization, State Psychological Association, State Medical Society, National Association of Social Workers, Right to Life of Michigan and the State Bar. Six Iegislators will serve, too, from the House committees on Judiciary, Public Health and Mental Health and the Sengtes committees on Family Law, Health Policy and Mental Health.

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