

New state budget improves services

By TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

John Engler's election year budget is a far cry from the conservative austerity of his first three years as governor, say suburban lawmakers on the powerful appropriations committees.

"It's people friendly," said Rep. Lyn Banks, R-Redford. "There are no cuts in human services — public health, mental health. He's doubling pre-school aid," said Banks, a member of the House Appropriations Committee that will handle budget bills.

"In a year before an election, he's put forth a Democratic budget," agreed Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southfield, another Appropriations member. "All of a sudden, he's restoring services. The CCC (conservation corps) is

back in. He has a public health initiative for 50-60 funding," she said, noting Engler's desire that state government pick up half the tab for community public health programs.

Budget director Patricia Woodworth on Tuesday unveiled Engler's \$7.5 billion general fund budget for fiscal 1995. It's 3 percent higher than the current budget and was delivered three months earlier than usual. It contains 3 percent more for higher education and 6 percent more for prisons.

"What surprised me," said Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, "is that he came back with the same proposal for K-12 education (\$9.6 billion) that we already have. He gave no consideration of what we'd done at all (raise public schools to \$10.2

billion in new tax bills passed last week).

Engler's budget puts the floor on school aid at \$4,500 per pupil. The House school aid bill, passed last week, put it at \$5,000.

"She (Woodworth) starts with a conservative estimate of revenue," said Rep. Richard Young, D-Deerborn Heights, a co-chair of the Appropriations Committee. "This year (fiscal 1994) we had a 5 percent increase. I commend her for using 4.2 percent. It's better to be overly conservative at the beginning of the year."

It's hard to argue with the departmental budgets. There are no more mental hospital closings. There are more state police — they're more important than prisons," said Young.

Several lawmakers praised

Engler's increases for higher education.

"Community colleges have not done well at all in recent years," said Young. "They've had to raise tuition."

Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville, praised the increases for both universities and community colleges. "It reflects the governor's concern for job growth," said Geake, vice chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Last year community colleges were held to a flat state aid figure.

Rep. Shirley Johnson, R-Royal Oak, called Engler "the Lee Iacocca of state government." As chairman of Chrysler in the late 1970s, Iacocca made huge cuts that hurt workers, management and stockholders but ultimately saved the company.

Bank collects toys

Michigan National Bank's 190 branches across the state will participate for the seventh consecutive year in the U.S. Marine Corps Annual Toys For Tots Drive by acting as collection points for donations.

Toys For Tots is the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve's annual Christmas campaign to collect and distribute toys to disadvantaged children all over the country. Toys For Tots was founded by the U.S. Marines in 1947.

The drive began on Friday, Nov. 26. Michigan National branches will collect toys through Friday, Dec. 17. Donors are asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy to any Michigan National Bank branch to assist in this charitable cause.

In addition, Michigan National has been designated as the Toys For Tots bank. Those wishing to make a cash contribution can do so at their local Michigan National

branch, where a special account has been opened. The cash contributions are used to purchase toys at wholesale prices. Toys are distributed to children of every religion, race and ethnic group by the U.S. Marine Reserve Corps in the communities where the toys are collected.

"There are many children this holiday season who will not know the security of a loving and stable home, the joys of family get-togethers and the many happy activities this season brings. These are the children we reach out to, through Toys For Tots," says Robert J. Mylod, chairman and CEO of Michigan National.

To locate the Michigan National Bank branch nearest you, phone 1-800-CALL-MNB.

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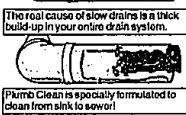
If you have even a moderate sized home you have roughly 100 feet of pipe filled with grease and soap scum. Most of this pipe is horizontal. Imagine again a bathtub that hasn't been cleaned for years. If you pour a drain opener into the tub (which is horizontal) it just runs along the bottom. The thick scum ring on the sides is left behind. The same thing happens in your pipes! In the past the only way to remove this gunk was to spend \$60-\$120 on a sewer cleaning.

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