

# Minimum wage hike bill criticized Guns from page A9

**BY TIM RICHARD  
STAFF WRITER**

The state House of Representatives has passed and sent to the Senate a minimum wage hike bill that a critic said should be called the "Youth Unemployment Act."

The vote was an overwhelming 94-12. But the Sept. 16 vote belied the flurry of amendments aimed either giving it more teeth or filing them down.

"This bill takes care of hourly workers who do not fall under the federal minimum wage laws," said Republican Sandra Hill of Montrose. "It is the only fair thing to do, and it needed to be done quickly."

"This amendment, like the one before it, should be titled the Youth Unemployment Act," Rep. Greg Kazn, R-Rochester Hills, said at one point in the debate.

"Young people, predominantly teenagers working part-time, will have a harder time finding a job if these amendments are enacted into law in Lansing. Numerous economic studies have shown that jobs have been eliminated when amendments such as these have been enacted in the past. These amendments are job killers."

Kazn voted no on final passage as did 11 other Republicans, including Penny Crissman of Rochester, Gerald Law of Plymouth and Dan Gustafson of Williamston.

Opposing the bill was the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB). Lobbyist Charles Owens said its members tend to be family-owned businesses.

Gov. John Engler indicated he would sign this version if it reaches his desk.

"Most businesses in the state already pay above the minimum wage in order to attract and retain quality workers," Owens said. "NFIB and its more than 23,000 Michigan members believe the marketplace, not the government, should determine the wage and prices of business and commerce."

House Bill 6180:

- Increases the state minimum wage from \$3.35 per hour to \$4.75 beginning Oct. 1. It's the first state increase since 1981, said sponsor Bob Emerson, D-Flint, who chided Republicans for waiting 20 months to act on his bill.

## Roads from page A6

Road interests call the 6-cent diesel discount is a "loophole" that should be repealed. It's a tax break for truckers to keep them from filling up in Indiana before entering Michigan.

- Which taxes should be cut?

Clearly the sales tax on fuel will be a target, but school interests will resist giving it up. Road interests argue, however, that all road-oriented taxes should be dedicated to transportation.

And if the fuel tax is raised, business groups argue other taxes should be cut — preferably the single business tax.

- Who should get the bulk of the new money?

Currently, the Michigan Department of Transportation by law gets 39.1 percent, the counties 39.1 percent, and cities and villages 21.8 percent.

Engler wants any new tax revenue to go entirely to the state road system — those with an I (for interstate), U.S. and M-numbers. As former MDOT director Pat Nowak said, "Which would does the doctor treat — a severed artery or a scratched finger?"

County road associations say local roads need a piece of the pie, too, pointing to other states where the transportation department takes a smaller share than MDOT. Their favorite argument: The state has only 8 percent of the total road system — 9,700 of the 118,000 miles.

The counties also argue that MDOT soaks up 75 percent of all federal aid coming into Michigan, too.

Engler precipitated a political crisis late in 1995 when he unilaterally decreed that MDOT should take three years' worth of federal aid from counties and cities. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments engineered a compromise under which MDOT took a lion's share for one year but reverted to the old formula in the second and third years.

- Increases the wage to \$6.15 an hour on Sept. 1, 1997.
- Sets the "tip-credit" wage at 75 percent of the minimum wage. Thus, the service-industry wage for employees who get tips rises to \$3.66 an hour Oct. 1 and \$3.86 an hour on Sept. 1, 1997.
- Applies to an estimated 130,000 workers.
- Boosts the "training wage" for workers under age 20 from \$3.35 to \$4.25 for the first 90 days of employment.
- Allows employees who work

overtime to choose between a pay rate of 1.5 times the wage or to take off compensatory time of 1.5 hours for each hour of overtime.

- Applies to businesses not covered by the federal overtime act — those with gross receipts of less than \$500,000 a year that aren't engaged in interstate commerce.

The new bill brings Michigan's wage law in line with a recently passed federal law. The federal

rate, however, was increased to \$4.25 in 1991.

The House softened the bill for businesses that employ seasonal summer help.

The new rates become effective at the end of the summer and at the training wage period 90 days, the length of this summer season.

Refer to House Bill 4180 when writing to your state senator, State Capitol, Lansing 48909.

undergo weapons training, Hogan said, with emphasis on knowing when the weapon can legally be drawn, displayed or discharged.

"Applicants have a constitutional right to carry a weapon," he said. "But I would reserve the right to interview them first."

Quisenberry said the sheriff has generally voted for granting CCW permits to qualified applicants.

But Nichols favors restricted permits — rather than unre-

stricted permits — for those who can not demonstrate a danger to his or her life or property.

Restricted permits enable a person to carry a concealed weapon to a target range or for business reasons.

"I'm not sure the members present liked what I had to say about Sheriff Nichols' philosophy," said Quisenberry. "But that's his position."

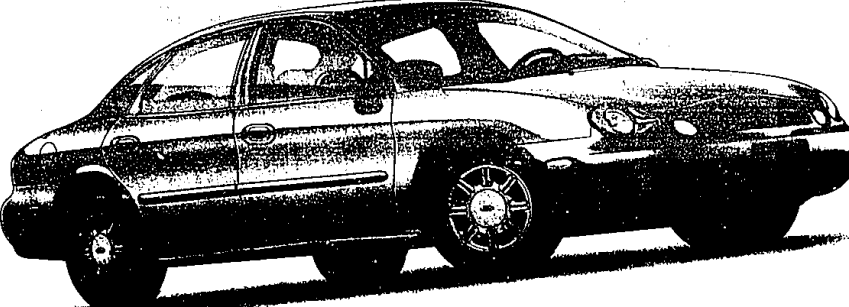
Nichols, 77, is a resident of Novi who is seeking his fourth consecutive four-year term.

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