Nowak won't rule out future political bid

BY. TIM RICHARD STATY WRITER

For the first time in 20 years, Pat Nowak has a job in the pri-vate sector and is moving to Rochester Hills.

vate sector and is moving to Rochester Hills. "I'm vice president for corpo-rate davelopment of Spalding DeDecker Engineering. It's an old firm; been around since 1950," Nowak said this week. "I'm assisting in recongineering total quality and securing new business." Nowak left as Gov. John Department of Transportation in Delge's director of the Michigan Department of Transportation in Lansing last March to challenge incumbent Democratic Congress-man Dale Kidee, of Flint, in the 9th District.

In the early 1970s, Nowak was in the insurance business in Farmington Hills and a part-time Oakland County commis-sioner. I didn't run for re-elec-tion as county commissioner in 1976. My initial plan was to leave the state. But (County Executive Dan) Murphy asked me to be his deputy.

So Nowak was No. 2 man in county government in charge of long-range planning until Mur-phy retired in 1990 and Engler was elected governor the same van Vear. Last year he was unable to sell his house in Lansing and rented a house in Clarkston while mak-ing his congressional bid. "I've

that the current Michigan law provides. "Small business owners believe the marketplace, not the government, should determine the wages and prices of business and commerce." Federal law doesn't apply to firms with less than \$500,000 in gross receipts that aren't in interstate commerce.

Worker's comp

sold my home in Lamsing and am moving to Rochester Hills next yong back and forth," ho said. "I don't have any politican plans. But I won't rule anything out," Nowak said, adding he did n't plan to attend the Jan. 31 (OP state convention in Dutroit. Nowak, 68, didn't take the con-it almost defices analysis. The Democrats idi much bettr than to be and done in any and all board," he said. To wind na good candidate-to Bill Ballenger's Inside Michi-panes. It was all across the board, "a said. Not only did Republicans fail to win any of their three target-ed congressional seats (against

Nowak said he went into the congressional campaign believ-ing that Kildee, a former teacher at University of Detroit Jesuit high, was "a decent guy" who would campaign on issues.

"In the last three weeks he came out with vicious list" Nowak drives a Jap car, "Novak proposed an incinerator for Rochester Hills, and 'Nowak oppused student loans." I wolld have expected it from (other Democrats). But Kildee, whe passes himself off as a near priest — it sent me for a loop," Nowak said, "though I dan't ence."

Legislature reconsiders minimum wage

BY TIM RICHARD STAFF WRITER

State Capitol capsules: Two major lnbor issues are back before the Michigan Legis-lature, despite the time lawmak-ers spent debating them in 1995-

ers spent debating them in 1995-G. First, minimum wage. The House passed an election season hike in the minimum wage, but it died in the Sonate Labor Com-mittee, chaired by Mike Rogers, Reson: House Bill 4180 hiked the restaurant server's minimum wage, which is pegged at 75 per-cent of the base minimum, or \$2.52. Business argued that servers, with tips, were making far more than the minimum, and that no hike for servers was nec-

cssary. This year, Sen. Loren Bennett, R-Canton, introduced Senate Bill R-Canton, introduced Senate Bill 'to raise the minimum wage from \$3.35 to \$5.15 an hour. It would mirror the federal mini-mum wage change enacted by Congress last year. His bill reportedly didn't touch the serv-or \$2.82 minimum. SB 1 was denounced immedi-ately by the National Federation of Independent Business when it

Worker's comp Second issue is worker's com-pensation reform. Last May Rogers got his SB 895, aimed at cutting fraud in worker's compensation, through the Senate on a 21.16 party-line vote, but it died in the House Labor Committee. Rogers said his bill would halt

went to its first hearing before the Senate Labor Committee last

the Senate Labor Committee last week. "Most businesses in the state already pay above the minimum wage in order to attract and charles Owens, NFIB state director. "However, small busi-nesses currently exempted under federal law should have the flexi-bility to determine wage lavels that the current Michigan law provides. This Weekend...

fraud and "wouldn't cost injured workers a penny." "If that's all it did," replied Democrat Ken DeBeausaert of Macomb County, we could come to an agreement." DeBeausaert by the GOP majority without said Rogers' 895 tried to over-turn two court decisions. It

only for the first time in Michigan,

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