

Judge rules state term limits are constitutional

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Voters can look forward to a packed August primary ballot after U.S. District Judge Patrick Duggan upheld the validity of Michigan's state term limits.

His ruling means 65 of the 110 state representatives elected in 1992 have served the three terms allowed under a constitutional amendment passed that year. It added sec. 54 to the legislative article.

Term limits won't affect state

senators, the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state and attorney general until 2002.

"In sum, the court concludes that sec. 54 imposes an insubstantial, content-neutral and non-discriminatory burden on the voting rights of plaintiffs," Duggan wrote.

He disagreed with every contention of the challenging plaintiffs — Citizens for Legislative Choice, Michigan Handicapped Voters' Rights Association, and individual constituents of two Detroit Demo-

cratic representatives. They contended the Michigan Constitution violated their rights under the U.S. Constitution.

Duggan wrote he "does not agree that sec. 54 imposes a severe restriction on plaintiffs' voting rights. While sec. 54 narrows the field of candidates for whom plaintiffs may vote, it does so only slightly. Plaintiffs remain free to vote for any candidate who has not served three terms in the state House since Jan. 1, 1993."

"Plaintiffs are not 'guaranteed

the right to vote for a specific candidate," he said, citing a 1989 federal decision upholding Ohio's right to prohibit judges from being elected after age 70.

The complaint said sec. 54 doesn't "favor a so-called 'novice' viewpoint of representative democracy over an 'experience' viewpoint," Duggan noted. But he ruled that Michigan's term limits section "does not distinguish between candidates on their political beliefs or point of view and does not violate plain-

tiffs' voting rights."

He relied on a U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision in San Francisco decided Dec. 19 that California's even tougher term limits don't violate the U.S. Constitution. That circuit rejected 9-2 the claim of Assemblyman Tom Bates that term limits violated his constitutional rights and were unfair to voters who wanted to choose their own leaders.

Duggan disagreed that the burden of term limits falls on racial minorities. "This is scant evidence from which to conclude that minority and inner-city voters are unfairly disadvantaged by sec. 54. White and suburban voters would lose the ability to gain political power through seniority to the same extent as would minority and inner city voters..."

OAKLAND JOURNAL

Oakland Journal is a roundup of Oakland County news and notes collected from government, school, civic, community and neighborhood sources. Please write: *Oakland Journal*, c/o Oakland County editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Our fax number is (248) 644-1314.

HEART TO HEART

The Oakland County Animal Care Center will be celebrating Valentine's Day this year by attempting to find loving homes for loving pets. An open house will be held at the center, 1700 Brown Road in Auburn Hills, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 14. More than 100 homeless dogs and cats will be available for adoption. Theme for the day is: "Two hearts are better than one." For further information, call (248) 391-4100.

KEEPER OF THE DREAM

Oakland University's Keeper of the Dream Banquet, culminating OU's observance of African-American Celebration Month, is set for 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, in the Shotwell-Gustafson Pavilion. Robert J. Easton, chairman of Chrysler Corporation, will deliver the keynote address. Tickets are \$75 per person, of which \$35 is tax deductible. For ticket information, call Lauren Herrington at (248) 370-4666 or Betty Green at (248) 370-4404.

COMPANIONSHIP VOLUNTEERS

The Alzheimer's Association is seeking volunteers to provide companionship to persons experiencing memory loss. Those who volunteer receive an excellent orientation that provides them with the information and skills to brighten the life of someone with Alzheimer's. The next orientation is from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 21. To learn more about volunteering, please call Jeri Williams at (248) 657-8277.

MASTER COMPOSTER CLASS

Southeastern Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority is offering a master composter class, beginning from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25, at the Royal Oak Senior Center. Topics covered

OU winter enrollment up

Oakland University marks its highest winter enrollment total ever, in a fifth consecutive year of increases: 13,285 students are enrolled this term.

The headcount is up almost two percent compared to last winter's enrollment of 13,076. Graduate enrollment is up by three percent, undergraduate headcount is up 1.3 percent.

OU President Gary D. Russi attributes the climb to the university's landmark year of 1997. During that year, Oakland celebrated its 40th anniversary; added several new academic degree and certificate programs; began new areas in medical, computer and engineering research; proceeded with several major new building projects; joined Division I athletic competition; and announced Creating the Future, a new initiative in which community and business leaders unite to build on OU's unique strengths and find opportunities for advancing educational excellence.

"As Oakland University stands on the threshold of the 21st century, we are well prepared to become the model university of the future; OU fosters personal development and honing of workplace skills for an increasingly complex and technical world," Russi said.

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NURSES BOUGHT

The Oakland University School of Nursing in Rochester has launched its annual search for outstanding Michigan registered nurses to receive its 1998 Nightingale awards — a commemorative Nightingale bronze statuette and \$1,000. Nomination forms may be obtained by calling the School of Nursing at (248) 370-4501. Forms must be returned by Feb. 20. Nominations are sought in the following categories: nursing administration, nursing research, nursing education, nursing practice, long term care practice and home care. Winner, runners-up and nominees will be honored at the 10th annual Nightingale recognition dinner, May 7 at the Troy Marriott Hotel.

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Bloomfield Hills Woodward Ave. (north of Square Lake Rd.) 02/11 at 2:30 PM 02/18 at 2:30 PM 02/25 at 2:30 PM 03/04 at 2:30 PM	Madison Heights 14 Mile Rd. (across from Oakland Mall) 02/10 at 2:30 PM 02/17 at 2:30 PM 02/24 at 2:30 PM 03/03 at 2:30 PM
Dearborn Michigan Ave. (east of Outer Drive) 02/10 at 2:30 PM 02/17 at 2:30 PM 02/24 at 2:30 PM 03/03 at 2:30 PM	Royal Oak Woodward (north of 11 Mile Rd.) 02/05 at 2:30 PM 02/12 at 2:30 PM 02/19 at 2:30 PM 02/26 at 2:30 PM 03/05 at 2:30 PM

Med Max locations:

Farmington Hills 02/02 at 1:00 PM 02/09 at 1:00 PM 02/14 at 11:00 AM 02/16 at 1:00 PM 02/23 at 1:00 PM	Orchard Lake 02/02 at 1:00 PM 02/09 at 1:00 PM 02/14 at 11:00 AM 02/16 at 1:00 PM 02/23 at 1:00 PM	Taylor 02/04 at 1:00 PM 02/11 at 1:00 PM 02/14 at 11:00 AM 02/18 at 1:00 PM 02/25 at 1:00 PM
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Other locations:

Farmington Hills Kerby's on Haggerty/8 Mile Rd. 02/05 at 10:00 AM 02/10 at 10:00 AM 02/12 at 10:00 AM	Southfield Big Boy Restaurant Grodan/Telegraph 02/11 at 3:00 PM 02/18 at 3:00 PM 02/25 at 3:00 PM
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Macomb Hospital Center 12000 E. 12 Mile Rd., Warren Executive Office Bldg. Auditoriums A and B (12 Mile Entrance) 02/10 at 10:00 AM Auditorium A 02/17 at 10:00 AM Auditorium A	Wayne and Cowan Rd. 02/05 at 2:30 PM 02/12 at 2:30 PM 02/19 at 2:30 PM 02/26 at 2:30 PM 03/05 at 2:30 PM
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