

# AG

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Labor Council and later this month Freeman will address a meeting of the Oakland County Democratic county commissioners. When he is to accept the "Legislator of the Year" Award.

"Our candidate must be highly qualified to do the job," said Freeman, a graduate of Detroit Country Day High School, the University of Michigan and the University of Detroit Law School.

"But he or she must also bring strength to the ticket, be able to raise money (a minimum of \$1 million for the attorney general's race alone) and be a good campaigner."

Gubow Friday said he has filed nominating papers with the Secretary of State's office and is officially a candidate. "I'm in this race all the way," he said.

The next steps, he said, are to build broad-based support and to begin raising the \$1.5 million he believes it will take to run an effective state-wide race.

One of the state's most well known lawyers, who is also a Democrat, said he understands all the discussion about qualifications ... and considers much of it irrelevant.

"The next attorney general has to have one attribute," said Southfield attorney Geoffrey Fieger, who is also seeking the party's

nomination for governor.

"The next attorney has to be a kick-ass lawyer," said Fieger who has gained international notoriety representing assisted suicide advocate Jack Kevorkian.

"He or she will have to be a kick-ass lawyer because he or she will have to help my administration root out the political corruption of the last eight years," said Fieger, a West Bloomfield resident.

Is Fieger a possible candidate for attorney general?

"Not unless I can be governor and attorney general at the same time," he responded. "Other considerations — such as political moxie — won't matter."

Asked if he has anybody in mind, Fieger said he is not ready to make any endorsement. "But at least Carl Marlinga is a real lawyer. Scott Romney (the Birmingham attorney backed as the Republican candidate by Gov. Engler) isn't a real lawyer."

Would Fieger accept a draft if he happens not to win the Democratic governor's nomination and the party turns to him for help?

"No," Fieger said, "because it wouldn't matter."

"If I don't win the governor's nomination, Democrats are going to get drubbed like we did four years ago."

## Help pledged for of slaying victim's kids

Two children — left alone when their mother was stabbed to death in Southfield, and their father convicted in her murder — will always miss their parents, according to family members who witnessed the trial last week in Oakland Circuit Court.

But they will never be without love or support, insist the friends and relatives of Marcia D. Williams, who was slashed and stabbed to death by Kenneth L. Williams, whose attorney subsequently argued he was mentally unable to control his thoughts or actions.

"We're a loving family," said Edna Jones, an aunt of the slain woman. "And we're taking care of those two youngsters (a boy, 7, and a girl, 6)."

The youngsters will get some financial assistance from the coworkers of Marcia Williams who worked at the State Farm Claims office in Southfield, where a trust fund for them has been established. A spokesman for the insurance company didn't know any of the specifics about the trust fund, but he said it was initiated by her coworkers.

"All I know is that it will help with their education," said

Jones, one of more than a dozen friends and relatives of Marcia Williams in the courtroom Friday.

Jones and others were visibly relieved about 4 p.m. when the jury of seven men and five women — after deliberating for more than five hours — returned guilty verdicts against the man witnesses said stalked and then viciously murdering a woman described as a "loving mother and good friend."

Williams was found guilty of first degree murder — which carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole and second degree murder, or felony murder. Judge Barry L. Howard scheduled sentencing for 3 p.m. on June 24.

The victim's friends and relatives expressed no animosity toward Williams during the trial. "Nothing will bring my nice back," said Jones. "I want him (Kenneth Williams) to pay for his crime, but my thoughts are with the children."

The victim's brother, Bruce Ross, said the extended family had been forthright with the youngsters about their mother's death on Feb. 20, 1997. "They know she's never coming back,"

he said.

He said the family plans to eventually tell the youngsters other aspects of the case — including the role of their father — as they grow older.

Kenneth Williams was accused of following his former wife to a Southfield motel where she met a male companion. The couple had been married for about eight years, but their bitter divorce had ended a year earlier.

According to police and witnesses, Williams followed his ex-wife when she left the motel, calling the 911 emergency number as she drove. A tape recording of that phone call was played as evidence.

The tape had Marcia Williams, calmly at first, asking for help and describing how her former husband was driving erratically, apparently trying to force her off the road. Her words turned into screams as her assailant caught Williams in the 23100 block of Telegraph. She suffered 12 stab wounds and six slashes, according to the medical examiner's office.

The ferocity of the attack — along with a subsequent attempt at suicide — was cited by

defense attorney Mitchell Ribitwer as evidence that finding his former wife with another man caused Kenneth Williams lose control.

As further evidence of his client's distressed mental state, Ribitwer noted that when police confronted his client after stopping his fleeing car, Williams yelled "shoot me, kill me," while reaching inside his coat as if armed.

Dr. Gerald A. Shiener, a psychiatric consultant from West Bloomfield, testified Williams was suffering from mental disorders and severe depression related to the divorce.

In his closing arguments Ribitwer told jurors his client did not have the mental presence of mind required by law to warrant conviction of premeditated murder.

Prosecutor David G. Gorceyn, who personally argued the case, countered with evidence from the Forensic Psychiatry where psychologists said Kenneth Williams suffered from depression, but showed no signs of mental illness.

"Depression is no excuse for killing somebody," Gorceyn said.

## STATE CAPITOL CAPSULES

### Cloning bills through

Sen. Loren Bennett, R-Canton, said four bills banning human cloning are through both chambers and on the way to the governor's desk for signing.

The bills would allow permanent lifting of the medical licenses of 37 guilty doctors, provide for 10-year prison sentences, and ban the use of state money for human cloning research.

Rep. Kirk Profit, D-Ypsilanti, also is sponsor of part of the package.

The Senate is due this week to take up Bennett's bill to ban tobacco advertising on roadside billboards. If Senate Bill 341, reported out of the Transportation Committee, becomes law, Michigan would be the second state to pass a tobacco ad ban.

### No to 'Hash Bash'

Ann Arbor may continue to

host its annual "Hash Bash" on the University of Michigan campus, but it will cost the city 10 percent of its state aid under a bill approved May 27 by the Senate.

Sen. Mike Rogers, R-Brighton, won an amendment to the general government budget cutting 10 percent of the shared revenue of any local unit that penalizes illegal drugs less than the state Public Health Code. It's aimed at Ann Arbor, whose pot fine is \$25.

"I spoke to a group of high school students whose attitude was, 'Obviously it can't be bad for you. Ann Arbor does it every year. They don't know the danger of THC,'" said Rogers, a former FBI agent.

"By their (Ann Arbor) doing this, it has an effect on our tax dollars. The University of Michigan spent \$20,000 on this in 1997 for one day. The city says, why punish us? They encourage people to 'vend.' It (the Hash

Bash) is not there because of the U-M; it's there because of the Ann Arbor ordinance."

Ann Arbor's ordinance was "grandfathered" in place when a state law was adopted, Rogers said, so the state's best hope of correction is to withhold shared revenue.

Rogers amendment passed 33-4.

Sen. Gary Peters, D-Bloomfield Township, lost an amendment to boost community policing aid by \$10 million to \$34.7 million. It lost 16-20, on almost a party-line vote.

On final passage, the Senate approved the general government budget bill 36-1. It goes back to the House, which probably won't concur in amendments. That will force the bill into a conference committee, which is likely to remove many amendments.

### Second try works

On his second try, Sen. David Jaye, R-Macomb, won approval of his amendment to the welfare budget prohibiting benefits for the purchase, installation, repair or maintenance of air conditioners.

He lost May 26 when the Family Independence Agency bill was on second reading and the roll call wasn't recorded. But on third reading, the roll call was a matter of permanent record, and Jaye won 20-17.

Exceptions would be allowed for welfare clients 65 or older and those with a physician's certificate saying AC is medically required.

"It's too comfortable for people to be on welfare when they can stay in their taxpayer-paid air-conditioned homes instead of going out looking for a job," said Jaye, who is famed for offering many similar amendments that are less successful.

Democratic leader John Cherry of Clio denounced the Jaye amendment as "so restrictive it borders, if not achieves, the ridiculous."

Voting yes were 16 Republicans, including Mike Bouchard of Birmingham, Bill Bullard of Milford and Matt Duneskins of Lake Orion, as well as four Democrats.

Voting no were 11 Democrats, including Gary Peters of Bloomfield Township and six Republicans.

### House bills

Rep. Bob Brown, D-Deerborn Heights, won House passage overwhelmingly of two pet bills.

■ Restrictions on "cold call ads" — that is, mailed ads where an unsuspecting consumer is offered a "great deal" with incomplete information about the item's cost. The consumer is supposed to call for more information.

and is given a high-pressure sales pitch.

Brown's bill, which has passed the Senate and is on its way to the governor's desk, would give the buyer three days to back out of the deal. "Cold call ads prey on vulnerable citizens by making promises that can't possibly be delivered," the sponsor said.

■ A requirement that mortgage lenders notify home purchasers when they may cancel their private mortgage insurance (PMI) — usually when the buyer has reached 20 percent equity.

Mortgage insurance benefits the lender. "It protects the lender from defaults and helps lenders make loans to more families," Brown said, but its annual cost averages \$1,200. He said his bill, now on its way to the Senate, answers three questions for home buyers: "Why is PMI necessary? For how long? And how is it canceled?"



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