



Endorse: Wayne Beerbower of the Farmington Hills Police Department says the local union endorses state Rep. Andrew Raczkowski, who announced his candidacy for re-election Monday night.

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4777, which city officials said cut deeply into local control.

"We talk and joke about politicians these days, but these last two years have been historic," he told a crowd of about 150 well-wishers. "The votes I've cast have gotten me into hot water. What it's come down to, folks — it's cities versus citizens."

Cities fought a residency bill that struck down local laws requiring public employees to live within a certain distance of the communities they serve. Raczkowski said it came down to a "fierce fight" over whether employees could live where they wanted to live.

"If I was in a car accident, I'm not going to ask that firefighter whether he lives in Farmington or Farmington Hills," he stressed. "I'm going to ask him to do the best job he can."

Raczkowski also touted the state's "rescue" of the Detroit school system, taking control of the district away from the school board, as an example of appropriate state intervention.

"When local control is out of control, it is our job to step in,"

he said. "We stepped in and saved the day ... Now we're starting to see some strong advancement."

Though it's likely to be a strong focus in the campaign, Raczkowski also plans to touch on a number of issues from education and crime to infrastructure and health care. Among the legislative initiatives of which he is most proud are a MEAP scholarship program and enhanced criminal penalties for drunken driving.

"I have a multitude of issues," he said. "These are all issues I've been championing in Lansing, and I plan to continue."

Lawmakers have begun a project to clean out some of the state's most antiquated laws. Raczkowski drew a laugh with the announcement that one state law makes it illegal to fall asleep in someone else's outhouse.

He likened the state's progressive attitude with his own, announcing a new campaign Web site: www.citizensfirst2000.com. The site includes biographical information, position statements on major issues,

copies of press releases and speeches, as well as links to other sites, like "Rocky's Book Club," which features a selected book and links to Amazon.com.

Raczkowski also points proudly to his status at the state House, having been elected majority leader for the Republican Party. He is not only the youngest party leader in the country, but his leadership office is the youngest in the state, he said.

Though no official announcement has been made, local political rumblings peg Raczkowski as a candidate for Speaker of the House. However, his first task at hand will be getting through the party nomination process and then the run-off in November.

With positive response from his initial door-knocking experience and the cheers at Monday night's event, Raczkowski feels he's off to a good start at spreading his message of "putting citizens ahead of government."

"That really is the theme," he said. "Keeping government out of your pocketbook and out of your private lives." Lead story here

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failed to persuade officials at the local American Legion Walker-Grove post to celebrate Vietnam vets, at least a little, by allowing a wreath to be placed during the Memorial Day ceremonies in Memorial Park, which follow the annual parade down Grand River.

The argument given by Wally Christensen of the Walker-Grove

post was that the priority for this year was to properly mark the 50th anniversary of the start of the Korean War. He did say the 2001 parade and ceremonies would focus on Vietnam.

Still, representatives from the Oakland County Chapter of Vietnam Veterans and American Legion decided that even a one-year wait would be too long for

Robertson, and for Kenny's dad, Roy Kenneth Williams Sr. It was determined that Vietnam veteran Frank Church would escort Robertson to Memorial Park and help her lay a wreath in honor of all Farmington-area Vietnam veterans who died for their country.

"I feel much better," said Robertson last week about the

pleasant turn of events. "I feel great. ... I'm so glad that Vietnam vets are alive somewhere, and active for Memorial Day."

It was Dale Palmer, president of the Oakland County Chapter of Vietnam Veterans, who intervened on Robertson's behalf. He telephoned Carmie Jackson, a district commander at the American Legion, who in turn contact-

ed someone (not Christensen) at the Walker-Grove post.

There was no resistance to doing something for this year's ceremony. "We basically think it was a big misunderstanding," Palmer said, adding that he assured Robertson the Vietnam vets would have a presence at Farmington's 2001 Memorial Day parade.

■ **'We basically think it was a big misunderstanding.'**

Dale Palmer
—County Vietnam Veterans president

"Next year we'll commit ourselves to Farmington," he said.

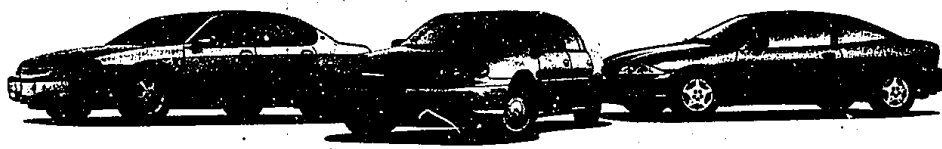
Meanwhile, Palmer emphasized that whatever is done this year won't detract from the commemoration of the Korean War.

"This is the 50th anniversary of Korea and I don't want to take anything away from them, either," Palmer said. "They went through an awful lot when they came back, too. But I personally feel Memorial Day is to honor all veterans. But I understand that the 50th anniversary of the Korean War should be up front." Story here



Honored: Helen Robertson and Roy Williams Sr. look at memorabilia about their son Kenny, who was killed in Vietnam.

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