

# Baker's Vote Helps Transit Package



"The Oakland County Road Commission would receive an additional \$4.4 million annually... Cities and villages would also receive over \$1 million in additional funds."

--Rep. Ray Baker

By KATHY MORAN  
State Rep. Raymond Baker's vote for the transportation package bill last week was one of nine votes that resulted in passage on the second try.  
Baker (R-Farmington) was absent for the first vote on Feb. 12 when the package went down 50 to 54. Last week's vote was 59 to 43 (56 votes are needed for passage).  
The bill was sent to the Senate. Also voting for the bill were Reps. Marvin Stempion (D-Livonia), Joseph Forbes (D-Oak Park) and James Delebaugh (R-Birmingham). Rep. Richard Young (D-

Dearborn Heights) voted against the bill.  
Not voting were Reps. John Bennett (D-Redford Township), James Tierney (D-Garden City) and Thomas Brown (D-Westland). All had voted against it the first time.  
THE TRANSPORTATION package includes bills to raise the gas tax by two cents per gallon to increase highway funding for local governmental units, primarily those in urban areas. A portion of the tax will be used to develop urban and public mass transit systems.  
Baker's affirmative vote was based largely on the in-

crease in funding for Oakland County roads, he said. He did not mention rapid transit.  
The Oakland County Road Commission will realize a 44 per cent increase in funding under current proposals. The increase is the largest for any county in Michigan.  
"If the governor's proposals are enacted into law, Oakland County would receive over \$5.4 million in additional funds each year, beginning during fiscal year 1972-73. This money would be used for much needed and long overdue construction of county township, city and village roads," Baker said.

"Of this total, the Oakland County Road Commission would receive an additional \$4.4 million annually for use on county and township roads. Cities and villages in Oakland County would also receive over \$1 million in additional funds next year."  
BASED ON conversations with officials of the Oakland County Road Commission, Baker said that more than \$700,000 of the additional money would be made available each year for 27 construction and reconstruction projects in Farmington and West Bloomfield

townships and in the Lathrup Village and Southfield areas, all in Baker's district.  
"This additional revenue will greatly accelerate road programs in our part of the country," Baker added. "For example, this new money would allow us to immediately begin the widening to five lanes of Orchard Lake Rd. from Grand River to Pontiac Trail."  
"According to our road commission, this desperately needed project will have to be put off for another 10 to 15 years unless this additional money is made available."

Without the additional funds provided in the package, the road improvements in Oakland County will proceed at just one-third the rate provided for in the bill, he said.  
"Because of inequities in the distribution of state gas tax revenue, Oakland County has accumulated an overwhelming backlog of road needs over the past 10 years," Baker said.  
CITIES AND villages in Oakland would receive more than a 13 per cent increase in funding also, he said.

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