

editorial opinion

Leaders should let regionalism take its place in metro growth

A father may dislike the idea, but he knows that one day his daughter will announce that she plans to enter wedlock, or some modified version thereof. The father knows he will have to accept it because his daughter is grown up.

State Rep. William Ryan has made such an announcement to the 4.5 million parents and non-parents of southeastern Michigan. Ryan (D-Detroit) has proposed a bill which would recognize that the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has grown up and is ready to take on adult (governmental) responsibilities.

Ryan, a former House speaker, is chairman of that body's urban affairs committee. Even if his bill is scary to some folks, Ryan has the courage — and the clout — to get public hearings on it this fall.

Ryan's idea is hardly original. It's based on proposals in the "Regionalist Papers," published by Metropolitan Fund, Inc., the line research and education foundation which begat SEMCOG. New Detroit, the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) and the Transportation and Land Use Study (TALUS).

OTHER STUDY GROUPS, task forces and just plain futurist citizens have come to similar conclusions. Those conclusions are complex and far-reaching, but here is a fair summary:

• SEMCOG's voluntary approach has attracted only about one-fourth of the eligible local governments in the seven-county region. The Metro Fund-Ryan approach would make membership automatic — just like Wayne and Oakland counties are part of the State of Michigan. No more hiding your head in the sand, like nonparticipating Macomb County does.

• No one has any real control over such truly regional governmental agencies as the Detroit Metropolitan Water Department and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan (parks) Authority. The Ryan bill would allow SEMCOG to write a charter, subject to state approval, that would make those agencies accountable to someone or something — probably to SEMCOG itself. The most probable tort would be that SEMCOG would appoint their board mem-

bers, review their budgets, perform their planning and coordinate their personnel policies. (No more arbitrary water price hikes.)

• SEMCOG itself doesn't answer to the citizenry. The Ryan bill would set up a 41-member governing body, much like SEMCOG's present executive committee, with 20 members elected by the voters — an eminently sensible idea. Twenty members would be elected from local governments, much the same way the current executive committee is picked. One member, the chairman, would be elected at large.

A SHAM ARGUMENT against the Metro Fund-Ryan approach is a vague, insecure notion that local home rule will somehow be eroded.

In fact, regional governmental agencies are already here and working. In fact, none of the 400-plus local governments in southeastern Michigan is running its own public transportation without regional government help. In fact, only Detroit and a handful of outlying governments have their own water and sewer systems. In fact, a regional agency is already coordinating hospital planning.

Some suburban politicians fear a restructured SEMCOG because direct election of SEMCOG's leadership would open up the "one man, one vote" can of worms. They say suburbs don't fear the present voluntary SEMCOG the way they would fear a more powerful agency.

The answers are plain. First, SEMCOG needs the assured kind of funding a mandatory agency would have (though Ryan's bill would give it no direct taxing authority). Second, the baby has grown up, and it's time she was treated like an adult.

Detroit Mayor Coleman Young is less than enthusiastic about a befeet up SEMCOG. Young's position is that he wants to deal with the governor and the federal administration directly, he alone wants to be Mr. Big in southeast Michigan.

The regional hedge-podge of governance in southeast Michigan has "muddled through," as the British would say, long enough. Ryan's bill, while it may not contain all the final answers, certainly poses the right questions. It deserves cool analysis, refined discussion — not the irrational fear of a daddy who won't let his little girl go out on her first date.

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Blake to face court hearing

Michael Blake of Farmington Hills is scheduled to face a Livonia District Court preliminary hearing at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 26, on a charge of breaking into a service station. Blake, 22, of 21222 Rembrandt, stood mute at his arraignment and was jailed after failing to post a \$5,000 bond.

Livonia officers James Eron and John Janderek reported that they arrested Blake while he was trying to steal tools and money from a Sunoco station, at 27417 Five Mile.

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CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS SUMMARY REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 11, 1975

A regular meeting of the City of Farmington Hills City Council was held on August 11, 1975. Present were Council Members: Deacon Dolan, Dudley, Lehtinen, McInnis, Oppenheimer and Trisman.

Motion unanimously approved in accordance with Charter requirements to approve the hiring of John Richard, James Richard, Ed Campbell Jr., Ron Cusack Jr., Tom Vaher, Harold Adrich and Steven Hume.

Confirmation of Roll Call Winderstream Farms Special Assessment.

Consideration of loaning necessary monies for the construction of D.P.W. Maintenance Building by the Farmington Hills Building Authority's unanimously approved Amending Ordinance No. 124-79 rezoning property at 2200 Middlesex Road from R-1 to P-1 unanimously approved.

Motion unanimously approved to conduct a Necessity Hearing for Road Improvements to New Market Road on August 25, 1975 at 8:00 P.M. at City Hall.

Unanimously approved consideration of Adopting Bonding Resolutions for SAs: (7) Grand River Homes Sewer, (8) Sunnyside, Colfax and Landis, (9) CW Ferndale, (10) CW Ferndale, (11) CW Ferndale, (12) CW Ferndale, (13) CW Ferndale, (14) CW Ferndale, (15) CW Ferndale, (16) CW Ferndale, (17) CW Ferndale, (18) CW Ferndale, (19) CW Ferndale, (20) CW Ferndale.

Motion unanimously approved to accept the low bid and award contract to Allstate Asphalt Paving in the amount of \$73,527 for asphalt resurfacing on Freedom and Folkson Roads.

Motion unanimously approved to accept the recommendations of the Director of Public Services for proposed resurfacing programs and to authorize advertisement for bids.

Council unanimously approved contract between City of Farmington Hills and City Manager George Majors for one year from July 1, 1975 to June 30, 1976.

Council voted unanimously to schedule a meeting with proponents and opponents of Permea Drain as proposed by Council of Homeowners Association.

Motion unanimously approved to accept bid and authorize execution of contract with L. M. Excavating Company in the amount of \$7,238 for the extension of the Herndonwood Water Main.

Meeting adjourned 10:04 P.M.

Prepared by FLOYD A. CAIRNS
City Clerk
Approved by Earl C. Oppenheimer
Mayor

Published August 23, 1975

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Red Cross honors youths

Youths serving the Red Cross will be honored at 11 a.m. Aug. 25 at the Northwest Regional Red Cross Blood Center, 15407 Middle Belt.

Those receiving recognition are: Maria Applebee, Maureen Flynn, Linda Stralkowski and Carol Suchenek, all of Redford; Eve Cusack, Jayne Golds, Robin Lovell, April Newman, Cindy Stowe, Cindy Troszak and Wanda Tyler, all of Livonia; Robin Crown, Valerie Main and Linda Ebel, all of Farmington; and Carolyn Galmes of Northville.

Twenty youth volunteers who have spent summer hours at the Farmington Convalescent Center, 3850 Fulson, Farmington, will be honored at 1:30 p.m. Aug. 25 at the convalescent center.

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