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# Suburban leaders counter 3-county auto tax hike.

Oakland and Macomb county leaders are working on their own version of a tax plan to raise money for not only a regional rapid transit system but for local roads as well.

Fred Houghten (R-Rochester), chairman of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, and County Execu-

tive Daniel Murphy revealed the bid outline of their alternative to Gov. William Milliken's plan in testimony Monday before the Senate Taxation Committee.

They were among 16 persons who testified in a public hearing, with sentiments running about 3-1 against major portions of the Milliken program.

MILLIKEN'S PLAN, supported by Detroit Mayor Coleman Young and the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMATA), calls for an average tax increase of \$10 per vehicle in the metropolitan area of Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. It would raise an estimated \$27 million a year as a local 10 per cent share to construct a rapid transit system.

Houghten said suburban officials will propose a statewide tax that would average \$7.50 a vehicle with half going to the 83 county road commissions and half to SEMATA construction.

Murphy estimated revenue at nearly \$48 million. Thus, the alternate plan would yield SEMTA nearly \$24 million compared to \$27 million under Milliken's plan.

Murphy backed the general idea of rapid transit because "we've got one of the worst mass transit systems in the nation."

Houghten quoted a Citizens Research Council study early this year which declared 80 per cent of Oakland County roads inadequate, making roads the top priority in Houghten's view.

JOSEPH BIANCO, SEMTA vice chairman and an investment banker from Bloomfield Hills, was one of only three persons to give outright support to the \$10, tri-county vehicle tax and the proposed reorganization of SEMTA's board.

Bianco said the federal Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA) had recognized three transit agencies in southeast Michigan—the City of De-

troit, SEMTA and the state—and "doesn't want to see multiple jurisdictions grabbing for federal funds."

The "tripartite" agreement between Milliken, Young and SEMTA came about, Bianco said, because UMTA told us there would be no federal funds without an agreement.

A second supporter was Tom Turner, also a SEMTA board member and president of the metropolitan AFL-CIO. Speaking for organized labor, Turner called the vehicle tax plan "the least painful alternative."

FRED HARRIS, Farmington Hills attorney and chairman of the Oakland County Road Commission, vehemently attacked the "cabal" of Milliken, Young and SEMTA, adding that a rail rapid transit system would yield a low benefit compared to the cost and that a bus system would be better in a low-density area like Detroit.

Birmingham City Commissioner Dorothy Conrad said that while city officials support SEMTA, SEMTA and the 1990 transit plan, they opposed the structural change in the SEMTA board. Birmingham also opposes taxing three counties for a transit package that will serve a seven-county region, she added.

Homer Case, Bloomfield Township supervisor, presented a resolution from SEMCOG asking for a continued role in appointing SEMTA board members.

Case then added that if SB 831 and the so-called "Ryan bill" strengthening SEMCOG were passed, "it would be a major step forward for another layer of government in southeast Michigan."

Oakland County Commissioner Larry Pernick (D-Southfield) said in written comments that appointments to the SEMTA board, other than the governor's, should be made only by SEMCOG. "I believe SEMCOG will provide the best forum for guaranteeing that the SEMTA board members will represent the total regional transportation interests."

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By LEM MESEK

Duck hunting is fair to good in southeastern Michigan as gloaming weather moves in and keeps ducks low.

Squirrel hunters in western Oakland County are having good shooting, but western Wayne County gunners report it's fair at best.

Pull-take pheasant hunting pressure is moderate and success is fair.

HUNTER SAFETY clinics are plentiful these days, and there's no excuse for a youngster's not getting the proper training and certification if he or she is so inclined.

Here is the latest list of courses and places from the Friendly State Department of Natural Resources (DNR):

- Oct. 27 at 7 a.m.—at 27 S. Broad way, Lake Orion, William Adams, instructor.
- Nov. 1 at 11 a.m.—at 18102 Inkster, Romulus, Sherman Lambly, instructor.
- Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.—at 27 S. Broad way, Lake Orion, William Adams, instructor.
- Nov. 5 at 7 p.m.—Parks and Recreation Department, 10 Mile at Orchard Lake Woods, Farmington Hills, Allen Schreier, instructor.

# Outdoors

Nov. 7 at 7 p.m.—at Western Wayne County Conservation Association, Napier north of North Territorial, Plymouth, Jack Backfelt, instructor.

SNOWMOBILE season isn't far off, and the DNR provides this list of safety classes:

- Oct. 29 at 4 p.m.—Room 93 of Bentley High School, Five Mile at Hubbard, Livonia, Gerald Boyne, instructor.

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