

# Freeway cop dispute boils

Suburban state legislators feel the Michigan State Police will put jurisdiction over the freeways in metropolitan Detroit.

State police now patrol the 62 miles of freeways, and have since 1976. But Wayne County Sheriff William Lucas and the deputies he employs would like to wrest that job away.

The deputies are being aided by the AFL-CIO, of which their union is a member.

In the fray, too, is Gov. William Milliken, who threatens to veto any transfer of the highway beat to the Wayne County sheriff.

**THE SHERIFF** and the unionized deputies won several early battles in persuading the state house of representatives to give them jurisdiction. But in the senate appropriations committee, the state police won the nod.

Things in Lansing are gearing up for a full senate vote and then joint house-senate action.

Rep. Ruth McNamee (R-Birmingham), whose 63rd House District includes Rochester and part of Troy, said, "The presence of the state patrol has been a good, positive step."

She echoed the sentiments of other legislators who felt having the state police on freeways in Detroit was a psychological pfe.

Rep. James Defebaugh (R-Birmingham) of the 66th district recalled a "time when you took your life into your own hands" on the city expressways.

He said he "concurred wholeheartedly" with the senate appropriations committee's decision to return the state police to Detroit. He termed the house's voting record on the subject "miserable."

Defebaugh said the house had voted twice to restore the freeways to the state police, but intensive pressure by the Wayne County sheriffs and the AFL-CIO changed 17 votes. He said the house "caved in" to the pressure.

He said the house vote was not an

"overwhelming mandate." "Anytime you've got 51 per cent voting one way you've got 49 percent voting the other. That's no mandate."

Rep. John Bennett (D-Redford) of the 36th district, predicted, "We're going to return the state police. Since they've been here, they've done an outstanding job. The people feel safe. That's what's important."

He criticized both sides for turning the issue into a "political football," however.

**THE DECISION** involves more than who should patrol highways. The AFL-CIO is trying to save the jobs of 280 Wayne County deputies who face layoff after the Westland jail is closed down, said Rep. Robert Law (R-Livonia).

Some legislators are concerned over the state's assuming more and more responsibility in local police matters.

Rep. Wilbur Brotherton (R-Farmington) representing the 64th district, said a compromise eventually phasing

out the state police would be the outcome of a senate-house conference committee. "The state will eventually wind up paying the cost of law enforcement. That bothers me," he said.

"We've already involved in so many things with our budget going through the roof. There are many other things we could be doing with the money we would be spending on highway patrols in our cities."

He added, however, "I'll have to admit it was money well spent. . . But all of sudden we were expanding the state highway patrol." He said that before Gov. Milliken sent the police to Detroit the state legislature was slashing the state police's education programs because they did not have enough money to fund them.

The governor's plan to add 81 state patrol officers to take command of 153 miles of freeway in suburban Detroit, Saginaw, Flint, Lansing and Grand Rapids would cost approximately \$31 million.

## Port authority bill readied for debate

A bill allowing cities and counties to establish port authorities and issue revenue bonds will go to a public hearing next week in Lansing.

State Rep. Robert C. Law (R-Livonia) offered the bill as a contrast to one by Rep. Dennis Hertel (D-Detroit), which doesn't provide for such a method of raising capital.

Law's bill is also designed to keep one city from dominating a city-county port authority.

**THE HEARING** is scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 28, before the house towns and counties committee in the State Capitol. Rep. Tom Brown (D-Westland) is chairman.

Law said the crucial part of his bill is that revenue bonds would allow a

port authority to develop and operate port facilities on its own initiative.

If such an authority were developed here, Detroit would put up 25 per cent of the operating budget, Wayne County 25 per cent and the state 50 per cent.

The bill provides for possible creation of special assessment districts for properties especially benefited from the port authority.

"A PORT authority would stimulate business activity for the entire state of Michigan," said Law. He cited a study by Dr. Asil Gesen for the state commerce department showing a tremendous potential for an increase in jobs and improvement of the overall economic climate.

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