

Rent rebate bill passes Senate

The Michigan State Senate last week passed legislation to insure that senior citizens won't be forced to pay more than 40 percent of their incomes for rent.

The measure is sponsored by Sen. Doug Ross, an Oak Park Democrat whose district includes Southfield, Lathrup Village, Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The legislation passed 25-8 in the senate, which gave the proposal bi-partisan support, Ross said. He hopes for prompt action on the bill by the State House of Representatives.

"Rents are rapidly escalating," Ross said. "This is due in large part to increased costs, particularly utilities, and a severe shortage of rental housing. Combined with the general ravages of inflation, rental costs are becoming a severe burden for many, especially senior citizens."

All too many people are faced with either moving into substantial housing or cutting back on expenditures for other necessities. For at least 20,000 senior citizen households in Michigan, rents are taking an excessive portion of income."

Senate Bill 487 proposes that the state rebate, through a tax credit, 100 percent of rents in excess of 40 percent of household income for senior citizens, Ross said.

"BECAUSE THE elderly have significant barriers to further mobility, a 100 percent return is proposed for them," Ross said. "To the best of our knowledge, seniors are looking for the resources to remain in their present housing rather than move."

"Besides providing immediate relief, the proposal will also benefit many senior citizens who are worried about what the future holds. By placing an absolute ceiling on the rent a senior must bear, the proposal significantly reduced the anxiety of many seniors who are afraid they may have to leave their homes if rents continue to rise."

The program would assist nearly one-third of the state's senior citizens and would bring the total of \$8.5 million, according to Ross. The legislation also provides a tax rebate for non-seniors who pay more than 50 percent of their income in rent, Ross said.

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Driver killed in mishap

A 27-year-old Southfield woman was killed Tuesday morning when her car struck a utility pole on the northeast corner of Grand River and Riverview Ct.

Nancy Ferguson, of 27223 Adelin, was pronounced dead at Botsford Hospital.

Farmington police said the vehicle was travelling eastbound on Grand River when it crossed the center line and struck a utility pole on the other side of the street.

No other vehicles were involved in the accident, which occurred at 1:20 a.m.

A Farmington Hills firefighting crew worked to remove the victim from the car. Paramedics from the Farmington City Ambulance Co. also worked at the scene.

Police said there were no witnesses. The accident is still under investigation. It was the second traffic fatality recorded in Farmington this year.

Pedestrian's condition critical after accident

A 68-year-old Farmington man remained in critical condition yesterday at Botsford Hospital after he was struck by a car while crossing Grand River east of Grove Friday afternoon.

Claude Robinson was struck by a car as he stood in the center turn lane of Grand River.

The driver of the car was exiting the Good Year Tire Store eastbound onto

Grand River at 1:25 p.m. when the accident occurred.

Farmington police said the accident is still under investigation. No charges have been brought against the driver.

Farmington police said the intersection has not been a problem in the past. However, one source said that a crosswalk across Grand River will be revamped when the city's senior citizen housing development is built.

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