

Milliken signs 5 Proposal A bills

Gov. William G. Milliken Wednesday signed five of the bills needed to implement Proposal A if it is approved by Michigan voters May 19.

The bills, all with immediate effect, "are essential not only to the implementation, but also to the passage of Proposal A," Milliken said.

"In short, the Legislature has demonstrated its good faith and its commitment to the middle-class property tax payers of Michigan — perhaps the most heavily burdened group of taxpayers in the state — by passing this legislation well in advance of the May 19 election," Milliken added.

"THE SIGNING of these bills should end, once and for all, the insinuations of those who say the voters have no guarantee that the Legislature will give them what they ask once the election is over."

HB 4173 creates the Local Tax Relief Fund, by means of which the proceeds of the extra 1.5 cents in sales and use tax is dedicated to and channeled to local units of government as reimbursement for property and income tax reductions.

HB 4171 and HB 4172 increase the sales and use taxes from their present 4 cents to 5.5 cents.

HB 4169 and HB 4170 define and regulate state payments to local units of

government and provide for changes in the state revenue and spending limit that will have to be made if the voters approve the proposal.

Most of the provisions take effect next July 4, but only if Proposal A is approved at the polls May 19.

These bills — combined with one that already has been signed and several others that still need legislative approval — make it clear to the people of

Michigan that their leaders in Lansing meant what they said when they approved a tax relief program that would:

- "Reduce operating property taxes for homesteads by 50 percent."
- "Reduce local income taxes by 50 percent."
- "Place a lid on inflation by permitting property tax revenues to grow

by no more than 6 percent per year per class.

- "Make up the lost revenue to local units of government through an increase in the sales tax from 4 cents to 5.5 cents."
- "Improve the present circuit breaker property tax rebate plan for lower income families."
- "Allow assessment of farm property by its use value."

Realtors lash out at A: not enough relief

The board of directors of the Western Wayne Oakland County Board of Realtors (WWOCBR) has declared itself in opposition to Proposal A on the May 19 ballot.

"On the surface, the proposal promises a great deal," said Robert D. Shimmin, WWOCBR president. "But under careful analysis, it fails to deliver and will shortchange the expectations of those who believe a Yes vote will bring substantial tax relief."

"At best, Proposal A would cut state revenues by only \$250 million, and this is for the short term. With a state budget in the neighborhood of \$10 billion, this 2.5 percent barely scratches the surface."

"WITH THE present economy, Shimmin said homeowners are

many voters may feel that even a small measure of tax relief now is better than none at all. We believe, however, that passage of this measure would effectively eliminate any future hope for major tax reform in Michigan which continues to be a serious need."

"It was thought that the 46 percent of voters who favored the tax-cutting provisions of Proposal D, the so-called Tisch amendment, in the last election had sent a clear-cut message to Lansing. Not only do they seek relief from the growing burden of property taxes, but are demanding substantial cuts in state spending. Proposal A is not responsive to this need."

being misled into believing that Proposal A will limit property tax revenues to 6 percent annually in all communities without local voter approval of a higher rate.

This would not be true in all cases, he asserted. Under the complicated procedures proposed, some individual taxpayers could still experience increases far in excess of 6 percent depending on increases and decreases in assessed valuation within each taxing jurisdiction, he said.

Voters should be warned, he added, that, even with the 6 percent cap, property taxes will double within 12 years, and any relief gained now will be wiped out in much less time.

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