## We're efficient, not rich—Murphy

Oakland County - unlike the state and federal governments - remains fis-cally sound despite the recession, ac-cording to County Executive Daniel T.

cording to County Executive Daniel T. Murphy.

But he charged the state of Michigan is short-changing local governments by failing to turn over the constitutionally required 41.5 percent of its revenue to them. And he threatened court action to get the local site of pie.

Oakland's good financial condition is not a result of its "alleged richness," but because of its effective management practices, Murphy said.

The Republican executive delivered that message in his "State of the County" address last Thursday before the Board of Commissioners.

MURPHY WARNED that the county may be unable to sustain its record of success if the state continues to defer shared revenue payments.

Last year, Oakland County lost \$1.6 million of shared revenue and could lose another \$1.5 million this year. In addition, \$2.2 million in small-business exemption reimbursements have been deferred.

deferred.
"We are in danger of being deferred right down the drain," he said. "Our taxpayers sent that money to Lansing with the expectation it would eventually be returned for use here, where they live and work."

Murphy charged state officials with failure to comply with the 1978

'We must send the state a message — they will not unfairly and illegally take money away from good government and use it to prop up bad government."

-- County Executive Murphy

Headlee tax limitation amendment, which requires that at least 41.6 percent of state spending be for local governmental units.

"We must send the state a message that they will not bail out their athing ship with our buckets," Murphy said.

"They will not unfairly and illegally take money away from good government and use it to prop up bad government."

ment."

He vowed to "continue to demand our full legal share of tax dollars.

"We are prepared to make our demands in court," he said.

MURPHY DISAGREED with "politi-cal pundits" who blame government's



financial problems on the recession.

"Oakland County has suffered grievously during this recession, and for longer than most other counties in the nation.

"But unlike so many other governments, ours is not on anyone's disaster-list. Our government never succumbed to deficit spending.

"We never made the recession worse for clitzens by raising their taxes. In fact, our government has tried to ease the recessionary burdens of our clitzens in the best possible way — by lowering the county tax rate in three of the last four year.

IED DEBUNKED critics who say Cakland County can afford to run a

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good government because it's rich.

Those critics ignore the fact that the United States — "by all measurements a rich nation" — has a government which hasn't balanced its budget aince 1988 and han't been out of debt since 1885, Murphy said.

Oakland County is not as rich as many "would have you believe," Murphy said.

He said 69 of Michigan's 83 counties have higher tax rates than Oakland's. When Oakland's county executive form of government began in 1973, the county tax rate was \$5.01 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Today the rate is \$4.4 per \$1,000 — a 7-percent decline, Murphy said.

And Oakland's por capita state equalized valuation of property — "the truet measure of a county's wealth when considering the operations of county government" — is not the highest county of the property of the county is poorer than some other Michigan counties, it has managed its money well by holding the line on spending and ending every year with a surplus, Murphy, Said.

Michigan's first county executive attributed a major part of that success the fibuted as major part of that success the ributed a major part of that the ributed a major part of the ributed a major

said.

Michigan's first county executive at-tributed a major part of that success to high productivity and employee sacrif-

nign productivity and employee sacrif-ices.

Despite the fact that inflation in-creased by 127 percent from 1973 to 1982, employees' salaries increased by only 94 percent or 33 percentage points less than the cost of living, Murphy said,

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