Saving revenue sharing will be 'an uphill battle'

Michigan government leaders, claiming they're "hard-pressed to pro-vide essential and basic services," are making strong pitches for continuing federal aid to help pay for those ser-vices.

vices.
State, county, city and township offi-cials urged members of a U.S. House of Representatives' government opera-tions subcommittee Monday to rela-state the federal revenue sharing pro-gram. Some \$172 million will be dis-tributed this filsal year to local gov-ernments in Michigan.

eroments in Michigan.

Congress must act to renew federal
revenue shaming funds, which are derived from personal income tax, before
the program expires Sept. 30.

"At a time when local units of goveroment are hard-pressed to provide
essential and basic services, Congress
should act to reauthorize this important program which for over 10 years

SEVERAL LOCAL officials made similar pleas before Reps. John Conyers, D-betroit, Sander M. Levio, D-Southfield, and Ted Weiss, D-New York, at a bearing in Ferndale.

The congressmen have used the "grass-roots approach" in three other states — California, Alabama and Penasylvania — in an attempt to strengthen their case for continuing the moorram.

strenguen uses the program.

All three support a bill which would extend the program for live years and restore the states' share of the funds. Their bill would increase the appropriation to local units from \$4.6 billion to

20.3 GUIDON.
But Conyers cautioned that the bill may receive little support in Congress.
"We have an uphili battle in persuading our colleagues about the wisdom of this legislation," he said.

"We're asking for almost chicken feed to support state, county and municipal governments, but funding like drunken saliors when it comes to military spending."

BOTH BLANCHARD and state Rep. Joe Forbes, Dolak Park, echoed the need for restoring the state's share, which was eliminated three years ago. Michigan ranks among the top live states sending taxes to Washington, but is the last state to get assistance back, Forbes said. In 1980, Michigan sent \$23.7 billion in tax revenues to Washington. The state received \$15.4 billion in 1980. The \$7 billion loss is larger than the state's general fund budget. "Since that time (1980, state governments have been authorized to receive shared-revenue funding, but have received no appropriations," Forbes said. "This has resulted in a loss of approximately \$95-\$100 million per year for the state government, an economic shock causing administrative tremors throughout the system."

BLANCHARD URGED Congress to oppose President Ronald Reagan's proposal to merge the federal revenue sharing program with the federal community block great program.

posal to morge the federal revenue sharing program with the federal community block grant program.

"Merging the two programs runs the risk of causing contusion at the local level and, in fact, reducing unfairly the same state of the same state o

CLAIMING THE elimination of federal revenue sharing would cause further hardship to financially strapped Wayne County, County Executive William Lucas said: "We need this to get on an even footing, Without it, we don't have a fighting chance."

Wayne County, which faces a \$350-million deficit, needs the \$11.3 million allocation it received this year from the federal government to help pay for public safety and health care services, Lucas suggested Congress consider a proposal to tie the revenue sharing program to the national unemployment rate.

"We would suggest that you consider

rate.
"We would suggest that you consider
authorizing a standby counter-cyclical,
anti-recession assistance program to
provide hard-pressed local governments with a reasonable level of funding to help them cope with the recession.

ion.
"Such a provision would start as the eccessionary cycle begins and stop as

BE A MODEL!

Wayne County's executive also urged that "general revenue sharing alloca-tions to local governments be increased to reflect increases in program costs due to inflation."

While the funding level has remained the same — \$4.6 billion — since 1976, the buying power of revenue sharing dollars has been "croded by inflation," Lucas said. Thus, he said, local governments receive 40 percent less federal government aid than they did in 1976.

MAYOR COLEMAN Young of De-troit told the congressional committee his city is in "deep isscal trouble." ? "But we're not alone," he said. "You're aware of cuts across the board which have put poor people on the rack

which have put poor people on the rack.
"I'm not here on a begging expedi-tion," Young said. "I'm here demand-ing some degree of equity for all cities, particularly Detroit."

Storm spotters class Monday

A class designed to teach partici-pants how to spot severe storms will be conducted from 10-11:30 am. and 1:30-3 p.m. Monday at the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Auditorium, 1200 North Telegraph, Pontiac. "Skywarn spotters" assist the Na-tional Weather Service in Identifying

and reporting severe storms and deter-mining the type, location and direction of movement of tornadoes and thunder-

storms.

There is no charge. Groups interested in attending may contact the Oakland County EMS/Disaster Control Office at 858-5300.

Town meeting calls on deaf

The Michigan Department of Labor's Division of Deaf and Deafened plans a town meeting 7-9:30 p.m. Monday in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center, 28000 Evergreen.

There will be a demonstration by a "hearing ear dog," trained to alert deaf persons when door belts and phones

ring.

The meeting is one of eight being conducted throughout the state to discern the problems and aspirations of deaf and hearing-impaired persons in Michigan.

According to Chris Hunter, director of the division, there are nearly 85,000 deaf persons and 500,000 persons with bearing impairments in the state.

The division last year was instrumental in securing passage of a new law that guarantees interpreters for judicial and administrative hearings.

For more information, contact the Michigan Department of Labor, Division of Deaf and Deafened, 309 N. Washington, Lansing 48909 or call (517) 373-0379.

Dog classes start in HP

Dog obedience and conformation handling classes are being sponsored by the Hazel Park Recreation Department and Bartop Dog Training Club beginning this week.

Beginning this week.

Beginning obedience classes are at 1 and 7 p.m. Friday, April 8, at a fee of \$425. Don't bring your dog the first night but do bring health certificates for DHL, parvo, rables and a fecal exam.

Classes are held in the Hazel Park

Recreation Center, 620 W. Woodward Heights (91/2 Mile), a block west of I-75.

Conformation handling classes begin at 8:45 p.m. next Wednesday, April 13. Bring dogs and health certificates the first night. Fee is \$20 for 10 weeks or \$4 per night for walk-ins.

Questions may be called to the recreation center at 547-5535 or Karen Paraday at 398-4135.

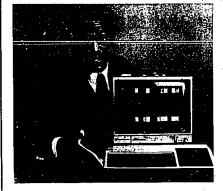


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