

Senate bill ends tax break on purchase of new cars

Used-car dealers went to the Michigan Legislature seeking the same tax break which new-car dealers had won. Instead, the Legislature is about to repeal the break entirely.

In a 25-10 vote, the state Senate last week passed Senate Bill 613 to repeal the "sales tax on the difference" law effective at the end of March.

The bill was sent to the House of Representatives. Gov. James J. Blanchard has promised to sign it.

"I WAS against it. We had passed that law as an incentive to people to buy new cars," said Sen. R. Robert Geake, R-Northville, the only area senator to oppose the bill.

"The whole thing was a mistake from the beginning," said Sen. Jack

Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, who supported the repeal bill. "We were pulling at straws when we passed it — anything to help car sales."

Supporting it were Republicans Geake, Richard Fessler of West Bloomfield and Rudy Nichols of Waterford, along with Democrats Faxon, William Faust of Westland, Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills and Patrick McCollough of Dearborn. Excused from the session was Doug Cruce, R-Troy.

BEFORE JAN. 1 and after March 31, Michigan's 4 percent sales tax is to be applied to the entire retail purchase price of a new car, trailer or boat. For example, on a car priced at \$10,000, buyer would pay \$400 sales tax.

In 1982 the Legislature passed a law applying the tax to the difference between the new-car price and the value of a trade-in. Thus, a buyer of a \$10,000 new car who traded in his old car for \$4,000 would pay a tax on \$6,000 — or only \$240.

Used-car dealers complained. A motorist couldn't sell his old car to them and buy a new car without suffering a \$150 tax penalty.

After failing in a court challenge, the used-car dealers went back to the Legislature. The original version of SB 613 provided that a used-car dealer could issue the motorist a voucher for his old car. The voucher would have allowed the motorist to be taxed on the

\$6,000 difference between the two prices.

BUT THE Senate majority argued that extending the tax break would cost the state \$85 million in revenue, harming local governments and school districts.

So instead of giving the tax break to both new and used car dealers, the Senate opted to take it away from both.

"The used-car dealers are satisfied they have removed an inequity that was putting them out of business," said Faxon.

But the effect will be to raise taxes. Said conservative Sen. Alan Cropsey, R-DeWitt: "I don't think we've learned a single thing in the last year of recalls."

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(O15A)

Women's jobs pay less on state level

According to a 1981 study commissioned in part by the Michigan Department of Labor, women state employees in predominantly female jobs earn \$375 per month less than male state employees in male-dominated jobs.

That finding and its impact on the collective bargaining outlook in state government was presented by a representative of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO.

It was presented at a hearing of the Comparable Worth Task Force of the Michigan Department of Civil Service in Detroit last week.

According to the Arthur Young, Inc. study, job-related segregation by gender does exist in state employment. Of the jobs surveyed, about 80 percent were found to be either male or female dominated.

"AFSCME is urging the State of Michigan to adopt a single job-evaluation system to determine the actual worth of jobs," said Kathy Collette, associate director of the union's women's activities department.

"WE ARE also urging the state to begin the process of correcting the inequities through reasonable collective-bargaining means," said Collette.

AFSCME advocates pay equity for women workers. Comparable worth has developed as a means accurately comparing the job skills the women and men exercise and in making pay adjustments as necessary. The union recently won a landmark sex-discrimination suit for female employees in the state of Washington that could eventually lead to a \$700 million collective pay gain for female employees.

"One reason that the settlement in Washington State was so high, was that the state failed to make the recommended pay changes for 10 years after it became an issue," said Collette.

"That's why we are recommending that the State of Michigan begin soon with a reasonable, phased-in process to correct the pay inequity."

Road board OKs tri-party projects

Eighteen townships and the Oakland County Road Commission have approved Tri-Party Program road projects for 1984.

The road commission has sent the list to the planning and building committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners for approval.

This is the fourth and final year of a program made possible by the county board committing the first \$3 million. The road commission matches the county board's contribution and townships also match the county board portion for projects in their communities.

"ONE OBJECTIVE is to reduce roadway hazards," said Richard V. Vogt, road commission chairman.

The program allocated \$750,000 for each of the four years to townships on a prorata basis of population, road mileage and road accident experience.

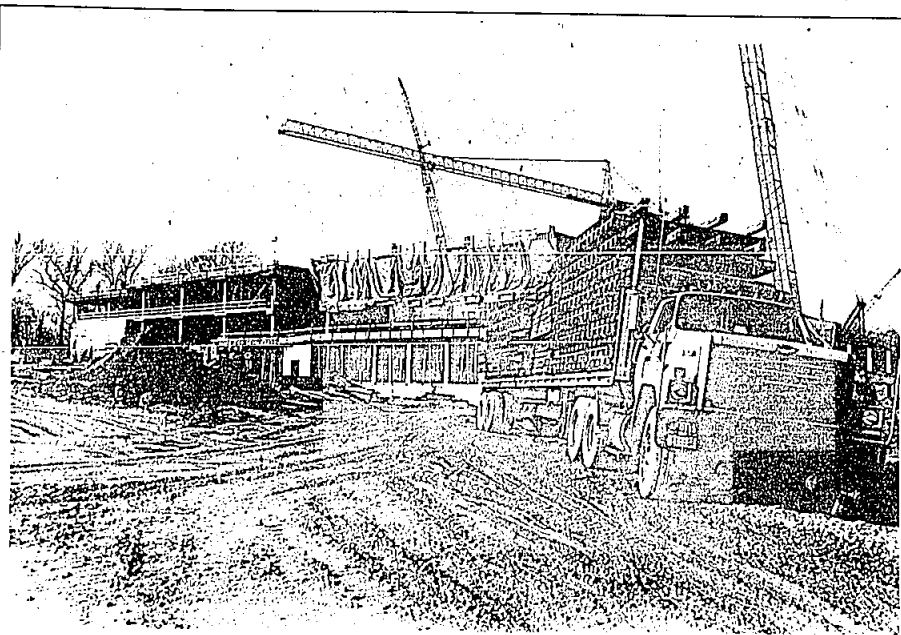
Townships could elect to use any portion of their four-year allotment in any

program year. When a township declined to use its full four-year allocation, the money was reallocated to others.

"The 1984 program is expected to cost \$801,000 of tri-party funds," said Vogt. The 1981 tri-party program cost \$605,000. The 1982 program cost \$665,000. The 1983 program cost \$931,000.

THE PROGRAM approved by townships and the road commission for 1984 has:

- Avon (\$35,000) adding a passing lane on Avon at Bollinger and paving approach.
- Bloomfield (\$150,000) paving Hickory Grove Road from Lahser Road west for one-quarter mile.
- Oakland (\$27,425) adding a passing lane on Rochester Road at Beach and graveling 1.75 miles.
- West Bloomfield (\$88,000) improving Drake at Maple.



DAVID FRANK/staff photographer

Building jobs

About 600 people will be employed at the Comerica computer center when it opens in the spring at Oakland Technology Park, a 1,800-acre site in Auburn Hills bounded by I-75 to the west, University Drive to the north, Oakland University to the east and M-59 to

the south. The park is designed to link high-tech businesses such as General Dynamics and GMP Robotics Corp. with Oakland Community College and Oakland University.

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