## Tax plan irks managers

## By Marie Chestney staff writer

Suburban hotel and motel managers who unanimously call "unfair" and "un-reasonable" legislation to raise taxes on rooms in the tricounty area hope to win an "equilable compromise" in the state Senate.

win an "equitable compremise" in the state Senate. Opponents of a bill to belp finance a 720a-million expansion of Cobo Hall in downlown. Detroit by increasing the room tax in Wayne, Oakland and Ma-emb counties expected the bill would pass the House easily this week, as it did Tuesday. The vole was 59-44, with Rep. Sandy Broinerton, R-Parmington, voling against it. "There are more reasonable people in the Senate", said J. Denais Burns, a Lansing lobbyist representing the Michigan Lodging Association. There is room for more compromise, and more of a willingness in the Senate to listen."

listen." To bring the room tax "closer to re-ality." Burns predicted the Senate would further chip away at the pro-posed tax increase, taking it from its present high of 5 percent to something "more equitable."

more equitable." The bill which passed the House Tuesday adds a room tax of up to 5 percent onto the current 5 percent lax on all rooms in the three counties. A hotel's or motel's tax would be based on the number of rooms.

CARTON CIGARETTES POP Roume of Michael States and State

Hotels and motels in the tri-county area with fewer than 36 rooms would not be taxed under the bill. Those with 36 to 36 rooms would be charged 1 per-cent per room, per night 81- to 160-room hotels would be charged 3 per-cent, and batels with more than 160 rooms, 5 percent.

SUBUREAN botel and motel mana-gers surveyed, however, opposed any room tax whatsoever to finance the ex-pansion of Cobo Hall. That's the same stand taken by the lodging association, periodic and purports but not for primotional purports but not for We don't support this but wo have to compromise," he added.

"We don't support this but we have so compromise, 'be added. John Kuhn, general manager of the Plymouth Hilton, wanted to know, "Why tax customers who will never see the inside of Cobo Hall? It's unfair." Victor Martin, general manager of the Sterling Inn In Sterling Heights, is the name most often mentioned by managers when asked who is leading the Hight against the legislation. Under the House built, Martins 122-anil inne would see a 3-percent tax increase per From.

Wold see a spectrum tax increase per room. "We're not opposing the amount, but the principle of the thing," Martin said. "Hotel taxes shouldn't have to pay for brick and mortar." Up till Tuesday, the room tax had

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been the most controversial of two tax-increase bills being pushed by Detroit officials to help pay for a 550,000 square-foot expansion to Cobo Hall. All along, the second bill, which would increase the tax on liquor to 15.5 percent, had been less of a problem to lawmakers. Not so on Tucsday, when the state House, however, Wednes-day approved the increase, 57-48. Bankers voted against the hike both times.

Currently, the tax is 8 percent on liquor by the glass and 9.85 percent on liquor by the bottle.

MARTIN said it was unreasonable for hotels and motels in Oakland and Macrom counties to pay the room tax because most of heir customers didn't attend Cobo Hall functions. Kuhn said the same thing of customers who stayed at the Plymouth Hilton, in west-ern Wayne County. And James Geddes III said the same of customers who stay at four suburban Hilton Hotels, in-cluding the Northfield, Troy and South-field Hilton and the Michigan Inn in Southfield.

Southfield. Southfield. Southfield. Hymouth's Mayflower fiotel, said De-troit officials had the 'right idea' to ex-pand Cobe Hall, but these who attend conventions there don't make the 30-minute drive into the suburbs to stay at a hotel. John Ahut, president of the Farm-ington Hills Bolsford Inn, said some of his customers did attend functions at Cobe. However, Anhut said he still op-posed the room tax.

Cobo. However, Anhut said he still op-posed the room tax. "Wore not the same as the Pontchar-train or the Westin — we're not in the shadow of Cobo Hall," Anhut said. "If the (Cobo Hall) addition is so gract, it should be abite to pay for itself." Burns said a compromise offered by the lodging association to base the tax on a hotel's nearness to Cobo Hall rather than on the number of rooms it has "went nowhere."

THE MANAGERS surveyed said it

was unfair to make hotels and motels pay a tax on the extra business Cobo Hall's expansion would create when many other businesses will benefit also. They gave as examples parking lots, restaurants, clothing stored, even concession stands and soft drink com-panies. panies.

why penalize the hotels?" asked Kuhn of the Plymouth Hilton. Ann Yoakam, manager of Livonia's Holiday Inn on Plymouth Road, agreed, aying that "it wan't right two busi-nesses (hotel/molel and liquor) get

stuck paying it. "Most of my customers call on the auto companies, not Cobo Hall," Yoak-

because no hotel tax has to be paid there. The other is future convention sites in the Southeastern Michigan area. "What if duter citics decide to hult a convention center?" he asked. "Will they want some of this money, too? What looks good. "Will they and the some of the might net looks good." Will Le unonimous in their opposi-tion to the room tax, and generally sure Detroit Mayor Coleman Young was on the right track in expanding Cobe Hall, the managers surveyed were less sure of how the expansion should be fi-nanced.

of how the expansion should be in-nanced. Dotsford's Anhut suggested putting a head tax on those who register at the convention hall. The second state of the second states that here as for everyone' in the De-troit area. Martin, as well as others, suggested raising the hotel/motel businesses' present voluntry 1 percent assess-ment to 2 percent. The revenues from that assessment go to the Metropolitan Detroit Convention and Visitors Bureau to pay for about 75 percent of the bu-reav's \$2.5 million annual budget.

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Orchard Lake

Williams had mentioned in late 1984 that he was considering not seeking re-election, site said. "It was his health. I was disappoint-id (with his decision), but it was not totally unexpected. I sincerely hope he is able to give it another try in a few years. I would hope he'd give it a try again." years. I would hope he'd give it a try again." Williams' announcement should kin-dle the interest of some in filling the vacancy, the mayor said. "When an incumbent steps down, they know that somebody is going on the council, a different person."

Continued from Page 1

Continued from Page 1

GORDON LEWIS, former library director, resigned his position on May 15, tollowing his suspension without pay on May 2. "The library has always been well-supported in this community, and I don't see any of that eroding." Vagnozzi said.

Charles Williama

## Trustee named

"And then ask for their input, to see which services they want to continue and to improve."

"I guess everybody wants to get the best person possible for the joh." Get-ting that person will require a search that is broad in secope, he said. "I would not limit it to just national, would not everlook talent that may be there in our own area or in the surrounding areas." The new director will need top-notch administrative sabilites, Vagnozi said, and should also be "someone who has already established a reputation in the field." Vagnozi said he has not decided

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U of M Тс and comparises in constraint, reas-am said. Mayflower's Lorenz said promoters of the room tax bill were overlooking two factors. He predicted Windsor would start building holds "like erary" because no hotel tax has to be paid

Continued from Page 3 with the other board members," Vag-nozzi said Tucsday. "The fact I have been active in the community at the lo-cal government level, hopefully that background will serve the board. "I've always spoken out at council meetings on the library, and that isn't going to change." The two tasks the board faces are choosing a new director and winning "back anything we may have lost in the recent unfortunate circumstances," he said.

and. The new library trustee would like to involve larger numbers of people in the library's activities.

Vagnozzi has some general thoughts n the search for a new director of the

on the search for a new director of the library. "I really don't know enough about it to comment. My understanding is there already is a committee.

fletd." Vagnozzi said he has not decided whether he will seek reappointment when his term expires.

Williams nixes re-election bid