

Federal cuts to hit state schools, health

By Warren M. Hoyt
Special writer

EDUCATION and health care would be big losers in the \$309 million which state and local government would lose under President Reagan's proposed 1987-88 federal budget.

That's what state budget director Robert Nafaily reported recently. Nafaily sent an 84-page analysis of the impact of the budget on the state to 43 members of Michigan's congressional delegation.

"We support congressional efforts to strike a reasonable balance between funding key programs and restraining federal deficits," Nafaily said.

He said both the federal budget deficit and the national trade deficit must be reduced to continue economic progress in Michigan.

AMONG THE proposed budget cuts that would be felt most in Michigan, Nafaily said, are:

- \$79.1 million in reduced financial assistance for college students, as the number receiving help would be cut by 24,000.

- \$34 million in vocational education as federal support would be phased out.

- \$7.3 million from support for handicapped education.

- \$60 million by terminating Urban Development Action Grants and cutting Community Development Block Grants.

- \$9.8 million by terminating energy conservation "drastically impairing the state's ability to weatherize the homes of needy persons."

- \$18.9 million in reduced services for wastewater treatment construction.

- \$7.4 million by eliminating the Work Incentive Program for AFDC applicants and recipients.

- \$21.6 million from child nutrition.

- \$198 million for senior citizens' health care under Medicare.

- \$19.5 million by policy changes

under Medicaid.

Among the increases would be \$51.9 million under the Job Training Partnership Act to help dislocated workers and young people find jobs and \$12.1 million for increased compensatory education.

BUSINESS COULD opt out of the workers' compensation system with an alternative benefit program for injured workers. And a 1985 Supreme Court ruling which legislative leaders said misinterpreted legislative intent would be partially reversed under a proposal announced by Senate Majority Leader John Engler, R-Mt. Pleasant.

He said broadening legislation (SB 67), which reflected business propo-

sals to revise the disability definition and make other changes, to include his proposals, would result in "an irresistible package."

The Senate Human Resources and Senior Citizens Committee immediately adopted the changes with little discussion, but delayed final action on the bill.

Engler said it is important, however, for the Senate to act on the bill before it breaks for Easter in mid-April.

The action came as the Legislature and the Blanchard Administration works toward a May 15 deadline when the current definition of disability in the current law expires, as well as perhaps other significant sections of the act.

The House is deferring delibera-

tions temporarily while a business/labor group headed by the Departments of Commerce and Labor tries to develop a consensus proposal.

ENGLE said his proposal to let businesses opt out of the worker's compensation system was developed by the Blanchard administration when it tried to recruit GM's Saturn project. It would break new ground and permit a new era of labor/management cooperation.

"We have to challenge old assumptions on how we treat injured workers and bring them back into the workforce," Engler said.

The current system was set up in 1914, while the state needs to look at better ways to complete in the 1980s, he said. While the optional system would have to contain the elements of the current worker's compensation system, it could contain different eligibility requirements and benefit levels.

Science Olympiad Saturday

More than 1,000 high school juniors and seniors will head to Oakland Community College Saturday for the Science Olympiad, an academic interscholastic competition.

It will run from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturday on the Highland Lakes Campus, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake. Events will be held in Levinson Hall, High Oaks Hall and the Student Center.

At a 4 p.m. awards ceremony, Olympic-style medals will be awarded in each of 24 events, and overall champions will be awarded plaques. The top four teams will represent Oakland County in state competition.

Open to the public, the Science Olympiad features a "Science Bowl," a computer programming competition, and model bridge building event testing student knowledge of biology, earth science, chemistry, physics, computers and technology. Many are in TV show and board game formats.

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