

Dolans say abortion rights shouldn't be political issue

Continued from Page 1

Proposal A asks whether the state should stop paying for them. A "yes" vote would halt such payment; a "no" vote would maintain the state's current program.

Proposal A is bound to overshadow any other ballot questions. The statewide referendum caps more than a decade of controversy over abortions for indigent women. Anti-abortion forces have tried to stop the state from paying for an annual 18,600 welfare-paid abortions, but gubernatorial vetoes from former

Republican Gov. William Milliken and current Democratic Gov. James Blanchard always stood in the way.

The proposal was put on the ballot this year after petition drives and court battles involving Michigan Right to Life and the People's Campaign for Choice — the two groups siding at opposite ends of the spectrum on the abortion issue.

During last summer's primary race, Democrat John Dolan said he was "philosophically and theologically against abortion." Republican Jan Dolan contended "freedom of

choice is a constitutional right."

The two Dolans, unrelated, will vie Nov. 8 to capture the seat of retiring state Rep. Wilbur "Sandy" Brotherton, R-Farmington, who will vacate his seat at the end of the year.

The 69th District covers the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, Southfield Township and the villages of Bingham Farms, Franklin and Beverly Hills.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.

Mayor asks planner to resign Hills post

Continued from Page 1

as a leave of absence from the planning commission and that we would accept his resignation and appoint a replacement," Mayor Jody Soronen said, referring to a letter she wrote to Welday. "I haven't heard from Paul."

Soronen will send another letter to Welday informing him of the public hearing and asking for a written resignation.

"We want to give him every opportunity to respond."

THE MAYOR said she queried other council members about Welday's attendance record and informed them he would be out of town for some six weeks.

"They all agreed with my assessment that we would request his resignation," Soronen said.

Welday was unsuccessful in the August primary for the Republican nomination for the 69th state House District.

THOUGH OFFICIALS say Welday's attendance was not what it should have been since his appointment in February 1987, the last few weeks, as well as his plans to be away through the November general election, are of great concern.

"This wouldn't be an issue if he wasn't going to be out of town for

another six meetings," Soronen said. "It hasn't been a problem yet. But we don't want tie votes," planning commission chairman John Trafelet said.

A COUPLE of days before he left, Welday informed Trafelet he would be out of town working on a political campaign.

"We never really resolved it. He told me he was leaving. He said, 'I'll call the mayor tomorrow' — and he never did," Trafelet said.

Concern over Welday's absences stems from the possibility of the votes on the planning commission, which considers site plans for development and zoning issues.

According to city records, of 58 meetings since his first as a commissioner in February 1987 through July 1988, Welday was absent 11 times. Since the first meeting in

August, Welday has been absent four times, including a joint study session with the city council Oct. 3.

Welday also has been tardy for meetings or has left early before all business is concluded, according to city records.

THE PLANNING commission does not have an attendance policy. Generally, the planning commission policies its own members by requesting excused absences.

"To the best of my knowledge, there is no policy regarding attendance. But if you look at other members' attendance, it's pretty near perfect. We never had reason to make a policy," Soronen said.

The 15-year-old city charter does not mention attendance but does give the mayor the authority to remove an appointed official from office.

Dems urge proposal A 'no' vote

The Farmington Democratic Club appears on a list of statewide groups that forms the People's Coalition for Choice, which represents the pro-choice side of the abortion issue.

One of the few local groups in the 48-group coalition, the Democratic Club urges a "no" vote on Proposal A Nov. 8.

The proposal asks voters if they would "restrict use of tax funds for abortions for persons receiving public assistance." A yes vote would ban

Medicaid-funded abortions; a no vote would maintain current payments.

The group took a position after club member Marian McCracken, Michigan president of the National Organization for Women, raised the issue at a meeting, according to Democratic Club activist Aldo Vagnotti of Farmington Hills.

"She brought it up and we endorsed it," he said.

Some members of the Democratic Club have also crossed the lines dur-

ing this election year, supporting Republican Jan Dolan in her bid for the 69th state House district seat. Jan Dolan has taken a stand as a pro-choice candidate.

The Farmington Democratic Club, several metro Detroit groups, and statewide organizations make up members of the People's Coalition for Choice, in an effort to defeat the November ballot issue. Michigan Right to Life members have called for an end to state-funded abortions for poor women.

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