

# House lets auto brokers stay in business

Auto brokers will still be in business next year in Michigan.

An amended bill to ban the practice of auto brokering passed the Senate, 23-13, but the House rejected the amendment, which then died.

"I think it's really absurd to have us legislate people out of business," Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, in voting against the measure.

But Sen. R. Robert Geake, R-Northville, called auto brokering "a form of unfair competition. Brokers don't have to maintain the same financial bases — outlays for a dealership and service facilities. The can have nothing but a desk and a telephone."

BROKERING is the work of 140 small firms which handle 2,000 to 3,000 of the 700,000 cars sold in Michigan in a year. Acting on behalf of a group such as a credit union, the broker negotiates with an auto dealer

for a lower price than members of the group could get individually.

The dealer picks up sales volume but sees his profit margin reduced.

An amendment to ban brokering was inserted in House Bill 4930, a bill to outlaw tampering with odometers that bill passed the House 94-0 in mid-1987.

The Senate version with that amendment was supported by Republicans Geake, Doug Cruce of Troy, and Richard Fessler, R-Commerce; and Democrats William Faust of Westland and George Hart of Dearborn.

Faxon was the only area senator opposed.

The bill split the Senate in odd ways. Senate Democratic leader Art Miller of Warren voted yes. But GOP leader John Engler of Mount Pleasant, Commerce Committee chairman Dick Posthumus, R-Lowell, and

Jack Welborn, R-Kalamazoo, voted no.

SAID POSTHUMUS, who has strong business connections: "We all know that the auto dealers have been political supporters and substantive supporters of ours. However, I think on this issue they were wrong."

Faxon, in a formal protest, accused auto dealers of "greed" (five times), "arcey" and "avaricious ugliness." Sen. Lana Pollack, D-Ann Arbor, concurred in his "greed" remarks.

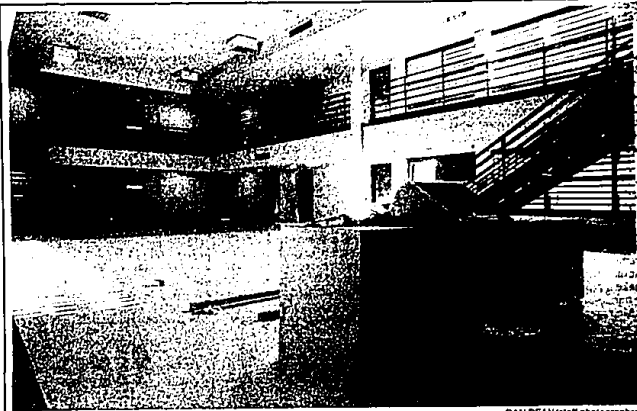
One of the Senate's most conservative voices, Jack Welborn, R-Kalamazoo, said the anti-broker amendment violated the Michigan Constitution because it wasn't germane to the odometer bill.

Welborn added that auto dealers could be deemed to be in unfair competition themselves. "Auto dealers are also in the area of financing which is in direct competition with credit unions and banks. And, again, they do not necessarily have to meet the regulations of the banks and credit unions," Welborn said.

GEAKE SAID he would send a formal letter of reply to constituents who had written to them about his vote.

"What happened," Geake said, "is that when the brokers lost in the Senate, they went to The Detroit News, which wrote an editorial favorable to the brokers' point of view. The News ran our names (the 23 who voted for the anti-broking amendment).

"Their (brokers) real purpose was to intimidate the House members. "It probably worked."



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

## The jail's 'day room'

The desk is the control station for a typical "pod" in the Oakland County Jail addition, now under construction in Pontiac. When it's opened about Feb. 1, this day room will be full of tables and chairs where prisoners

can dine, play games and watch television. From the control station, a sheriff's officer can control exit doors and doors to prisoners' cells (in background). The \$10 million facility will hold 488 prisoners.

# Police ticket quotas face ban

A bill to prohibit police department ticket quotas is on its way to Gov. James Blanchard's desk after overwhelming House of Representatives acceptance.

"It was a compromise," said the sponsor, Rep. Perry Bullard, D-Ann Arbor. "But it maintains the principle that ticket quotas are barriers to the evaluation of a police officer's performance."

Bullard said serious crime — not traffic tickets — should top the agendas of police agencies.

The House voted 93-0 to concur in Senate amendments Thursday.

The bill initially had been opposed by suburban police agencies, particularly Livonia and Bloomfield Township, and the 17-community Conference of Western Wayne County. Police unions backed it. Bullard said their differences had been resolved.

All area representatives supported House Bill 4538 except Democrats William Keith of Garden City and James Kosteva of Canton. Both were absent for the roll call.

# One day-care zone bill was defeated

A bill to prevent cities and villages from keeping day-care homes out of residential zones actually was defeated in the Michigan Legislature.

A report in Monday's editions incorrectly said it passed. Senate Bill 687, one of three sponsored by Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, was passed 17-23 in the state House of Representatives, but the House tacked on amendments that made it different from the Senate version.

When the bill went back for Senate concurrence, senators voted 19-16 to concur — one vote short of the needed 20.

Area senators voting yes besides Faxon were Sens. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, and Richard Fessler, R-Commerce.

Voting no were Sens. William Faust, D-Westland, George Hart, D-Dearborn, and Rudy Nichols, R-

Waterford. Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville, had an excused absence.

Faxon said the bills would help many home-care providers out of a "double bind" because cities considered day care a business use. "A woman who has been baby-sitting in her home for years may register with the state and then discover that she is breaking the zoning law in her own city. This is a situation that needs to be remedied," he said.

Three bills were needed — one each to amend state laws governing cities and villages, townships and counties. The bills governing townships and counties were passed, as reported, and are on their way to Gov. Blanchard for signature.

There is a possibility of another vote on SB 687 when the Senate meets at Dec. 29 to adjourn for the year.

# No bus changes yet — SEMTA

Bus riders in the Oakland and Wayne suburbs will see no schedule changes, even though the Michigan Legislature has passed a bill drastically reorganizing the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority.

SEMTA general manager Albert A. Martin called it "a positive step" when the Legislature last week approved a bill to reorganize public transportation in the region.

"On behalf of the SEMTA board and SEMTA staff," Martin said the bill is "a positive step that bodes well for the future."

The establishment of a Regional Transit Coordinating Council with the chief elected officials of the region as sitting members will bring cohesiveness to public transportation. It will also allow the expression of a more unified front in dealings with federal and state governments.

"WE DO NOT anticipate major changes of any kind in SEMTA's present operating schedule. Nor will the new legislation hinder SEMTA's ongoing effort to improve and ex-

pand service to our riders."

The RTCC bill replaces the 15-member SEMTA board with the so-called Big Four: the mayor of Detroit, the Oakland and Wayne county executives, and the Macomb County board chairman.

Detroit will continue to operate its Department of Transportation. Suburban buses will be under a suburban operating board.

Martin added, "I am also pleased at the general tone of the public transit strategy for southeast Michigan released in report form in mid-November. The Metropolitan Transit Development Committee, in recommending a 1 percent increase in the state sales tax for transportation use in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties, has isolated the one critical element necessary for improving public transit services — a local source of operating money dedicated for public transportation."

The action was taken in House Bill 5571, which passed the Senate in the Legislature's closing days.

# Dangerous dog bill OK'd

The state Legislature passed one bill to provide criminal penalties for owners of dangerous dogs.

The House of Representatives voted 94-0 Thursday to concur in Senate amendments to House Bill 4897, sponsored by Rep. Willis Bullard, R-Millford. It amends the dangerous animal law to provide criminal penalties to owners of animals judged to be dangerous.

But the House rejected Senate Bill 269, to require state registration of

pit bulls, a fighting breed. That measure, sponsored by Sen. Joe Mack-Dironwood, was ridiculed by Rep. Michael Nye, R-Litchfield, who said, "How many people will sign up a dangerous dog? And if you do, the Agriculture Department can use that information to prosecute you."

The bill went down, 13 in favor and 78 against. Among local lawmakers, only Rep. Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, supported it.



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 Right: Fashion Avenue cotton/mack-turtleneck sweater with button front. This longer length is available in black, red, jade, purple, navy, pink and white. Sizes S-M-L. Reg. \$28, sale \$21.00007  
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