

Young Republicans warm to 'Citizens tax limitation'

By Tim Richard
staff writer

The state Legislature would have to give a bigger piece of the budget pie to public schools, and property owners would get a hefty tax cut if voters approve the Patterson-Anderson "Citizens Tax Limitation" amendment.

"The combination — high taxes and poor public education — has frustrated our citizens," economist Patrick Anderson, one of the amendment's authors, told Oakland County Young Republicans Monday.

Anderson, an assistant vice president of Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. of Farmington Hills, is a close associate of Richard Headlee, who led the 1978 tax limitation amendment drive.

Brooks Patterson is former Oakland County prosecutor and "deserves the credit for bringing people together," Anderson said. Petition forms are available from: Patterson-Anderson Proposal Committee, P.O. Box 4721, Troy 48069-9992.

the rate of consumer price inflation — about 5 percent a year.

TO ANDERSON, it would be easy for the Legislature to place 10 percent more of the \$7 billion state budget into schools.

"The state has cut its contribution to local schools from 45 to 32 percent of their budgets since 1978," he said, echoing the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce's plea for "new priorities, not new taxes."

Some \$75 million of the money would come from property tax rebates that would no longer have to be sent out with income tax refunds, he said.

A major share could come from the so-called "supplemental" budget of \$500 million, which Gov. James Blanchard customarily introduces in mid-year.

In an interview, Anderson conceded the Legislature may opt to end the entire \$600 million program of property tax rebates, and it might not be a bad idea.

"The circuit breaker has functioned as an incentive to raise property taxes," he said.

Many YR members promised to circulate petitions to get 300,000 signatures to put the proposed constitutional amendment on the 1990 state ballot.

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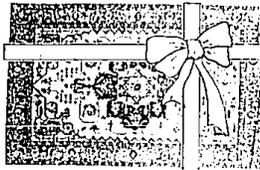
"When's the last time you heard a legislator say 'we need a tax increase for welfare?'" Anderson said.

"MICHIGAN HAS the fourth highest state-local tax burden in the country. You hear (from Blanchard) that we have to 'be competitive' with Korea, Taiwan and Japan. We've gotta be competitive with Tennessee, too. The way to do that is cut taxes," Anderson said.

Detroit and Pontiac, in particular, would benefit from tax cuts because of their high per-family tax burdens.

"Detroit has a huge number of empty lots and empty houses that people don't pay taxes on," he said.

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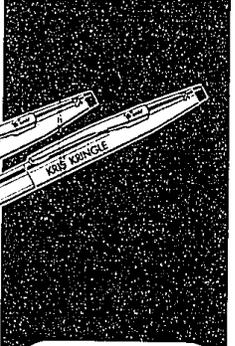
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