

One tax proposal on ballot, others pending

By Tim Richard
staff writer

One property tax proposal already is on the 1992 Michigan ballot. Three groups are organizing petition drives to put property tax questions on the ballot.

A third tax cut proposal is in court.

Another group is seeking a state constitutional amendment to limit terms of federal and state lawmakers.

Here is the status of each and contact places if you want to join.

ASSESSMENT CAP

Sponsor: Placed on the 1992 ballot with bipartisan support by both chambers of the Legislature.

Proposal: Homestead property assessments increases would be capped at the consumer price index or 5 percent, whichever is less.

Assessments would be equalized by two classes of property: (1) homes and farms, (2) everything else. Homeowners would have a greater chance of seeing millage reductions because stable business assessments wouldn't neutralize the impact of rising home assessments.

Impact: Schools would be reimbursed but not cities, villages, townships, counties, community colleges and special districts.

Contact: No committee formed yet.

"CUT AND CAP"

Sponsor: Gov. John Engler and state Senate Republicans.

Proposal: Amend state constitution to:

- Cut school operating property taxes for everyone by 30 percent over five years.
- Cap assessment growth at 3 percent.
- Reimburse schools for lost taxes by dedicating half of growth in state revenues (historically 4.5 to 5 percent annually).

Impact: \$1.3 billion in property tax cuts, less growth in state general fund budget.

How to join: Petition forms available from Oakland County Republican headquarters, (313) 681-1890, or "Cut and Cap" headquarters in Lansing at 517-487-2090.

DEMOCRATIC PLAN

Sponsor: House Democrats, Speaker Law Dodak, Taxation Chair Lynn Joudahl.

Proposal: Amend state law to:

- Exempt the first \$15,000 of a home's state equalized valuation (\$30,000 of market value) from school operating property taxes. In average district levying 34 mills, tax break would be \$510 per home.
- Reimburse lost school revenues by ending business property tax abatements and raising the single business tax by eliminating deduction for capital investment.

Impact: \$1.1 billion in homeowner tax cuts, estimated \$750 million in business tax increases.

How to join: Petition forms available from Macomb County Democratic headquarters, (313) 463-6525.

SALES TAX SHIFT

Sponsor: Fair Share School F.

nancing Committee, 304 S. State, Ann Arbor 48104.

Principals: George W. Sallade, Democrat of Ann Arbor, former state representative; Roy Smith, Republican of Ypsilanti, former representative, now Washtenaw County commissioner; Fred Veigel, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. IBEW paid for the petition.

Proposal: Amend state constitution to:

- Increase sales tax rate by 2.5 percent (to 6.5 percent).
- Require state to refund 85 percent of property taxes on homesteads and resident farms (up to \$10,000 per home, \$12,000 per resident farm).
- Give a 100 percent refund of school operating taxes for people 65 or older.
- Provide proportional refunds for renters.

Unaffected: Circuit breaker rebates of 100 percent for people over 65 would continue; no break for commercial, industrial, personal and mining property.

How to join: Call George Sallade (pronounced Sal-a-day) at (313) 682-1218 or Roy Smith at (313) 434-9347.

"LIMIT POLITICIANS' TERMS"

Sponsor: Campaign to Limit Politicians Terms, a coalition of groups headquartered at 3309 Rochester Road, Royal Oak 48073. Chair is Michael "Ross" Pomroy of Royal Oak.

Proposal: Amend state constitution to place these limits on elected officials:

- U.S. senator — two terms in a 24-year period.
- U.S. representative — three terms in a 12-year period.
- State executives (governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general) — two terms.
- State senator — two terms.
- State representative — three terms.

Goal: More citizen involvement and fewer lengthy careers in government. Incumbent congressmen are sure to oppose this on the ground Mi-

chiganians could never accumulate enough seniority to gain powerful committee chairs.

How to join: Call headquarters toll free 1-800-272-1011 or (313) 583-6776.

"HEADLEE II"

Sponsor: Taxpayers United, chaired by Richard H. Headlee, Farmington Hills insurance executive.

Status: Petitions filed but not approved for ballot. Supporters are seeking a Court of Appeals order to

place on 1992 ballot.

Proposal: Amend state law to:

- Cut all property assessments 20 percent over two years.
- Require Legislature to use general fund to reimburse local units for lost revenue.
- Allow any taxpayer to sue in circuit court to enforce.

Impact: \$1.5 billion in property tax reductions, curtailed state general fund budget.

Contact: Call Bill McMaster, McMaster Communications, (313) 647-0370.

Strike averted, OU 'normal'

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Classes at Oakland University are in full swing today, with no indication that a labor impasse over the weekend threatened to disrupt the opening of the fall semester.

Bargainers for OU and its chapter of the American Association of University Professors averted a strike by reaching a tentative agreement about 5 a.m. Tuesday, hours before classes were scheduled to begin.

"There might have been a class or two that didn't meet at 8 a.m.," said OU spokesman James D. Llewellyn. "But for the most part, classes began as scheduled. . . and things are certainly back to normal today."

Even before the tentative contract

was announced, OU promised to open classes as scheduled, despite threats from the AAUP — which represents about 95 percent of the faculty — that its members would withhold services without a contract.

The point became academic when the tentative contract was reached after 16 hours of what was described as "hard bargaining."

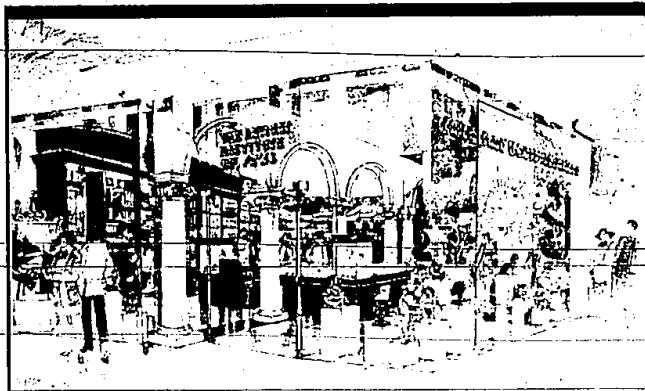
A message on the AAUP hotline notified callers that the tentative contract had been reached, and urged faculty members to report for classes as scheduled.

The proposed agreement is "less than perfect," according to Edward J. Heubel, AAUP spokesman, but probably the best the faculty could get in light of the uncertain economic times.

Members of the AAUP held an informational meeting Tuesday evening at which terms of the new three-year pact were outlined and subsequently made public. Its bargaining committee is recommending approval and it will schedule a ratification meeting within the next month.

The proposed agreement calls for faculty wage hikes amounting to more than 16 percent over the life of the contract, 5.4 percent immediately, 5.5 percent in 1992-93 and 5.6 percent in the third year.

But the proposed contract also eliminates an early retirement option and, in the third year, requires faculty members to pay more of their health insurance.



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