

'One-Man, One-Vote' Sought For Schoolcraft

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According to the community college act as amended. There is nothing in the act which makes it possible for us to change our legal constitution. We didn't initiate the act.

"We have operated with legal counsel. Until there is an attorney general's ruling (requested and due soon) to the contrary, we are legally organized. And even an attorney general's ruling can be challenged in court."

What, she was asked, would the Schoolcraft board do if the attorney general ruled that the board must be reappointed?

"We have alternatives. We could go to court, or we could ask the Legislature to rewrite our districting law. What we would actually do I can't say. We have made no plans beyond waiting for the attorney general's opinion. We had decided to wait and then proceed on the basis of that."

Mrs. Moelle, the Plymouth representative, noted one irony: The Plymouth School District has a potentially greater population than Livonia; thus, Plymouth could be the biggest beneficiary, in time, of a "one-man, one-vote" decision.

"You know," she added, "we've always tried to operate as an eight-man board—not as representatives of one school district or another."

STATE REP. Marvin Stempien (D-Livonia) has asked legislative staffers to draft a bill that would require community college trustees to be elected from single-member districts on equal population.

"It's patterned after the county reapportionment act I drew up in 1966," Stempien said. Under that act, county commissioners are elected from districts that sometimes follow, sometimes cross municipal lines.

College districts would be drawn up by the county apportionment commission, the same body which draws up county board districts. This apportionment group consists of five persons—the county clerk, treasurer and prosecutor and the chairmen of the two leading political parties.

One possible complication under Stempien's bill is that the Schoolcraft College district touches parts of three counties—Wayne, Oakland and Washtenaw. Stempien said the complication could be worked out, however, to avoid an excessively large group getting involved.

STEMPEN SAID it might take another 30 days for staff men to draft his bill because they must study how it might affect all 29 community college boards in Michigan.

Once drafted, he said, it would probably be referred to one of two committees—colleges and universities, or elections. Most likely it would be the former.

Because no appropriation is involved, he added, the bill could go directly from the initial committee to the floor of the House, without going through the appropriations committee.

THE LIVONIA lawmaker indicated his efforts toward reapportionment were unrelated to the NDC's. "I told members of the Schoolcraft board in the last campaign that unless someone could show me a reason why there shouldn't be reapportionment, I'm going to see that it's done. There's no good reason not to have it."

"Reapportionment will contribute to the long-run objective of representative, democratic government," Stempien said.

As for the NDC's court case: "Give 'em my love," cackled Stempien, who was one of a handful of Democratic candidates who failed to get an NDC endorsement in the 1970 campaign.

THE STATE Board of Education is being asked to take a stand in favor of reapportionment.

The Dept. of Education, which that board oversees, has prepared a working draft of a bill calling for the at-large election of community college trustees. That draft would be submitted to the state board for its endorsement.

Board member Annette Miller (D-Huntington Woods) said late last week that she would ask the state board today to take up the apportionment at its April 6-7 meetings.

One thing that has held up state board action is that an attorney general's opinion, requested by Rep. Stempien last fall, still has not been submitted.

Dr. Thomas McClung, an Education Dept. staff member, said that a draft of an opinion has been written by one of Atty. Gen. Frank J. Kelley's subordinates, but it has yet to be submitted for Kelley's approval. McClung expects the opinion "in the very near future"—perhaps in a few days.

ALTHOUGH there has been no indication of how Kelley will rule, the Education Dept. is prepared for a ruling that Schoolcraft's apportionment violates the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the one guaranteeing "equal protection of the laws."

It was under that amendment that courts have called for "one-man, one-vote" apportionment of state legislatures, county commissions, city council wards and (in the Missouri case) of community college districts.

But whereas Stempien's bill calls for single-member districts, the department's draft calls for at-large elections—a method used by Oakland Community College.

A departmental report, not yet approved by any official or agency, presents arguments both for and against reapportionment. The argument in favor is that it appears to be required under

the U.S. Supreme Court's Missouri decision. The only argument against is that reapportionment "may disrupt the governing structure of a community college currently in operation." Such "disruptions," however, have never bothered courts in the past.

Kelley's opinion, whatever it may be, will have the force of law until a court rules otherwise. It he rules that it's unnecessary, the NDC members' suit will quickly test him.

If he rules in favor of apportionment, it's an open question whether the Schoolcraft College board will go to court to preserve the status quo.

Senate Vote Upholds State's Coyote Bounty

LANSING The Michigan Senate refused to repeal the long-standing coyote bounty this week after the House had overwhelmingly voted for the repeal in late February.

After a second vote, the Senate could not muster up the 20 votes needed for the repeal. The first vote was 17 for and 15 against repeal. Senators held firm for the second vote of 17-14.

Backers of the bounty argued that the coyote population would get out of hand without the bounty and would lead to a decrease in the deer herd.

Legislators asking for the repeal said the state could not afford to continue paying the bounties which have amounted to \$4.4 million in the 35 years since it was instituted.

The House had voted for repeal by a 84-20 margin. Conservation officials pay hunters \$15 for each male coyote and \$20 for each female.

The coyotes is the only species in the state on which a bounty is still paid. Formerly bounties were paid on fox and hawks.

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