

Honigman only county legislator against use of force in classrooms

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Teachers will have limited authority to use force to maintain classroom order under a bill on its way to Gov. John Engler.

A gallery packed with members of the Michigan Education Association applauded as the House of Representatives Thursday gave H-15 approval to Senate Bill 338.

"That's what the people want. The very first goal is a disciplined environment for learning — 86 percent said that," said House Education Committee chair William Keith, D-Garden City, citing a state Department of Education survey.

The bill, which generated more and more opposition as it wound through legislative corridors, allows teachers, other school personnel and contractors to use necessary force to maintain order in classrooms, buses

and school functions.

THE STICKING point for many was a section tolling adjudicating authorities — such as the school board and court — to give deference to a teacher's word when it conflicts with a student's.

"That bothers me," said Rep. Lyn Jondahl, D-Oakman. "Not even in law enforcement do we do that. We don't give deference in child abuse cases. We don't give deference in spouse abuse cases."

Not so, replied Keith, citing a 1984 law tolling state courts to defer to federal rulings in anti-trust cases.

The original 1988 no-spunk law, which forbade any use of force at all, came under heavy attack.

"This bill was asked for by teachers' organizations because they feared they were losing control," said Rep. Robert DeMars, D-Lincoln Park. "Students would say 'you can't

touch me, and if you do my parents will sue you."

"This bill is a step in the right direction," said DeMars. It would allow a teacher to put a hand on the shoulder of an unruly student to make him sit, remove him to the office, break up fights, take away a weapon and protect property.

KEITH SAID, "Our professional staffs need this clarification to maintain order and control in the classroom." He said the bill clearly prohibits use of force as a method of punishment.

Keith said the bill asks the state Department of Education to draw up a "model list of alternatives" to the use of force.

Rep. William Bryant, R-Grosse Pointe, attacked the bill as "schizophrenic." First it rules out force for "discipline," then allows force "as long as it's reasonable and necessary

to maintain order and control. How is anyone supposed to know until after a host of lawsuits?"

Bryant said the bill falls short because it offers no protection to a student who helps a teacher maintain order.

The session had to be gavelled to order several times as members buzzed over their first glimpses of reapportionment maps.

HERE IS HOW area representatives voted: YES — Democrats Justine Barnas of Westland, Maxine Berman of Southfield, Keith, James Kosteva of Canton, Wilfred Webb of Hazel Park; and Republicans Lynn Baikes of Livonia, Barbara Dobb of West Bloomfield, Georgia Goss of Northville, John Jamian of Bloomfield Township, Thomas Middleton of Orionville and Gordon Sparks of Troy.

NO — John Beaudet, D-Bloomfield.

NOT VOTING — Jau Dolan, R-Farmington Hills.

Here is how area senators voted a day earlier when the Senate adopted it 24-4.

YES — Republicans Michael Houchard of Birmingham, Mat Dubaskis of Lake Orion, Robert Geake of Northville, and Democrats William Faust of Westland, Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills and George Hart of Dearborn.

NO — David Honigman, R-West Bloomfield.

OU continues to pile up grants

Oakland University received nearly \$6.5 million from federal, state and local agencies and foundations for 1991, 2 percent off the record high set a year earlier, according to reports from the Office of Research and Academic Development.

External funding for research continues as the leading source of funding with about 61 percent of \$3.9 of the total. The period covers July 1, 1990 through June 30, 1991.

Donald A. McGrimmon, director of the office, provided the report along with comments on the increased competition marking the national science funding environment. He noted that while budgets had increased for governmental agencies,

so had competition for dollars from other institutions.

OU submitted a total of 187 proposals for external funding during the past year covering research, education, program development, and student services, a decrease of six percent over the previous fiscal year. Of the 187 OU submissions, 95 were funded.

FEDERAL AGENCIES provided 50.3 percent of OU's total external funding for the past year, state and local agencies and foundations 22

percent and support from hospitals, universities, and business and industry sponsors made up 17.7 percent of the total.

The Eyr Research Institute topped all units in terms of external research support with nearly \$1,499,775 with the College of Arts and Sciences sec-

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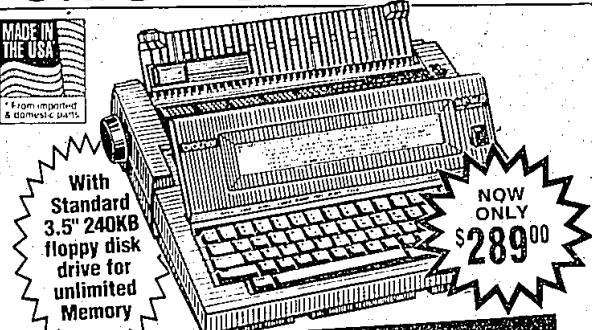
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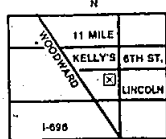
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