

Faxon only area senator voting no

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Mike Bouchard sat at his desk in the Michigan Senate with his index finger over the green light, middle finger over the red light — one for yes, the other for no.

"I could have gone either way," said Sen. Bouchard, R-Birmingham, who finally voted yes on the massive state school tax shift plan that voters will find on the June 2 ballot.

The Senate voted 31-4, five more than the necessary two-thirds, only hours after the House gave it 74-22 approval. The plan would raise the state sales tax by 50 percent, use the money to cut property taxes, and cap assessments.

Many outstate lawmakers were enthusiastic. "Because we've been levying such high millages, we get bigger than average (property tax) rollbacks," said Rep. Susan Munsell, R-Howell.

Bouchard, however, was typical of suburban lawmakers with school districts that are out of formula (getting no state aid because of high assessments). That belt of districts runs from northern Macomb County, across Rochester and central Oakland County to western Wayne County and out to Ann Arbor.

Their cuts would range from zero to 7 or 8 mills. Many residents will pay more in higher sales taxes and loss of income tax deductions than they'll get in property tax cuts.

Killed or bruised?

So why did Bouchard, a first term senator, vote yes? Two reasons.

■ "The Robin Hood damage would have been greater than the loss of revenue," he referred to pending bills that could take away even more categorical aid — such as transportation and special ed — than the measure that passed. "They were going to come after all of the retirement and FICA (Social Security) that the state has paid. That was painfully clear. It was also painfully clear they had the votes."

■ Assessments would be capped at 5 percent or the rate of consumer price inflation. Suburbs west and north of Detroit have been among the hardest hit areas of the state by real estate inflation.

Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, put it even more succinctly: "It was the difference between getting killed and being badly bruised." Opting for the tad bruise, Dolan had voted yes.

How they voted

Area senators voting yes were Republicans Bouchard, Mat Dunaskas of Lake Orion, David Honigman of West Bloomfield and Robert Geake of Northville.

Voting no — vociferously and at length — was Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills.

"You're not giving people equal property tax relief. In fact, you're asking people to approve an increase on their (sales) taxes for an unequal exchange on their property tax," said Faxon.

"If people live in southeast Michigan," he said, the bill's guarantee of "\$4,800 per child is \$200 less than the average per pupil expenditure today — less! A home in Oakland County of 1,200 square feet can cost 10 times more than in Ontonagon County. You take a look at the uneven cost on housing, and then you say, 'Well, we're going to give everybody the same per pupil expenditure.'"

The Senate tabled another part of the complex plan — a bill that would roll back this year's property tax assessment increases. Senate leaders said there was no rush to take that up, since it won't go into effect unless voters approve raising the sales tax from 4 percent to 6 percent.

"Some senators predicted the proposal would fail at the polls."

"Frankly, I think it will go down. I think we're wasting time and wasting money," said Sen. Jack Welborn, R-Kalamazoo, referring to the \$5.2 million cost of the special election.

"It will go down to defeat," said Faxon.

Much support

But there are several factors in this proposal's favor:

■ It will be alone on the ballot.

\$1 MILLION TO SPEND

U.S. PROOF SETS • MINT SETS
GOVT BOX "C.C. \$1"

U.S. Gold Coins
"Sell Where the Dealers Sell"

BARNETT RARITIES
CORPORATION
10000 E. 10th Ave. Suite 100
Denver, CO 80231
Phone: (303) 755-1234

TAX SHIFT

Almost all the other dozen or so proposals in the last 20 years shared ballot space with other plans.

■ Gov. John Engler already has launched his campaign to win voter approval. Engler at first wanted only a tax cut.

■ "People have really been stung by the huge assessment increases. They realize there's a need to cut property taxes and also to reform the school finance system and this plan does both," said Engler spokesman John Truscott.

■ The Michigan Education Association, the teachers union, won't openly fight this way it fought Engler's 1992 Cut & Cap proposal.

■ Conservative forces such as the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and tax fighter Richard Headlee of Farmington Hills are expected to back it.

How it works

Boosting the sales tax to 6 percent would bring in \$1.7 billion. It would allow school operating property taxes to be rolled back to



In majority: Sen. Mike Bouchard and most area lawmakers voted for the plan.

18 mills from the current statewide average of 34.6 mills. Local taxpayers could vote up to 9 additional mills. Most suburban districts would be able to levy 24 to 27 mills.

The proposal would guarantee \$4,800 per pupil for each kindergarten-through-12th grade public

school district. That's an attempt to close the wide gap in spending between rich and poor districts.

School districts now spending less than \$4,800 per pupil would be limited to a 10 percent increase each year until they reach that level. Districts spending more wouldn't see the state aid in 1994, but they could see smaller state checks after that.

Property tax savings are estimated at \$280 million in 1994, the first full year of the sales tax, then \$430 million in 1995 and \$617 million in 1996, according to legislative analysts.

Those figures include the higher federal taxes that taxpayers would pay because sales tax, unlike property tax, isn't deductible on federal forms.

Patrick Anderson, director of Taxpayers United for the Michigan Constitution, said the plan had the backing of the tax watchdog group.

Anderson, an economist with Alexander Hamilton Insurance Co., said with Michigan's exemption for grocery purchases, the sales tax "is the fairest tax out there." He gave the plan a 50-50 chance of winning voter approval.

SUPER SHOE SAVINGS!

THE SPORTS AUTHORITY

Join Us In Our Celebration Of Life!
Easter Sunday
April 11, 1993
9:00 & 11:00 a.m. Services
Children's Church 9:00 a.m.
Child Care available at 11:00 a.m.
An outstanding musical program will precede V. Michael Murphy's powerful and inspirational message, "A Rising Up."

Church Of Today
11200 East Eleven Mile Rd.
Warren, MI 48089
(313) 758-3050

22⁹⁶
CONVERSE
IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS.
CONVERSE ALL STARS OX MEN'S BASKETBALL SHOES
100% canvas upper, natural gum rubber outsole.
ALL STARS HIGH MEN'S SHOES \$24.95

29⁹⁶
HEAD
ELITE CLASSIC MEN'S TENNIS SHOES
Leather upper, EVA midsole, herringbone tread pattern for traction.

49⁹⁶
HI TEC SIERRA LITE
MEN'S OR LADIES HIKING SHOES
Leather nylon and suede upper, carbon rubber outsole, removable EVA insole, Eco-tread outsole.

63⁹⁶
ASICS
GEL 121
MEN'S OR LADIES RUNNING SHOES
Internal molded thermal plastic rubber heel counter. Gel cushioning system in rearfoot of midsole for shock absorption.

99⁹⁶
CONVERSE
ACROBAT MID MEN'S BASKETBALL SHOES
REACT™ custom cushioning system, EVA midsole, abrasion resistant sole rubber outsole.

37⁹⁶
REEBOK CLUB II JR.
TENNIS SHOES
Garment leather upper, EVA midsole, non-marking outsole.

27⁹⁶
HI TEC TOPAZ JUNIOR
CHILDREN'S HIKING BOOTS
Nylon/suede upper, extended toe bumper, EVA midsole and rugged outsole.

79⁹⁶
ASICS
GEL LYTE MEN'S OR LADIES RUNNING SHOES
Dual density EVA footbed. Gel cushioning system with P-Gel wedge. Removable EVA sockliner.

79⁹⁶
CONVERSE
ACCELERATOR™ III MEN'S BASKETBALL SHOES
REACT™ heel piece for custom cushioning, EVA midsole, perforated tongue for breathability.

39⁹⁶
NEW BALANCE
CT320 MEN'S TENNIS SHOES
Canvas upper, Rollerblade outsole. Synthetic heel counter for stability. Assorted widths.

64⁹⁶
HI TEC GT RUGGED
MEN'S HIKING BOOTS
General terrain boot, rubber/nylon upper, EVA midsole, wrap around carbon rubber outsole. 19.5 oz.

61⁹⁶
SAUCONY
JAZZ 4000 MEN'S OR LADIES RUNNING SHOES
Breathable mesh upper with synthetic suede trim. EVA footbed for cushioning and heel stability.

42⁹⁶
CONVERSE
CONS 5000 MID MEN'S BASKETBALL SHOES
Durable leather upper, rubber outsole for support and traction.

64⁹⁶
NEW BALANCE
CT615W MEN'S TENNIS SHOES
Leather upper, rollerblade for support, ProLonge midsole and Truonion® midsole. Assorted widths.

69⁹⁶
HI-TEC
ROGUE MEN'S HIKING SHOES
Waterproof leather upper and stitching. EVA midsole, high traction outsole doesn't damage trail.

64⁹⁶
NEW BALANCE
MS30 MEN'S RUNNING SHOES
Reinforced EVA midsole, C-CAP midsole for energy return, carbon rubber outsole.

ROLLERBLADE
MONDRIAN IN-LINE SKATES
Molded polyurethane boot. 70mm semi-precision bearings. Bright yellow with white line. Limited sizes. Compare at \$99.99.
SPECIAL PURCHASE 59⁹⁸

ROLLERBLADE
MACRO ES M IN-LINE SKATES
Molded PU boot, adjustable cuff height, 70mm T5A durometer wheels, ABEC 1 track A bearings, 21.5" x 30.5 mm mono point sizing.
229⁹⁶

VARIFLEX
AIR MAX 3000 YOUTH IN-LINE SKATES
Unisex, fully vented boot, adjustable replaceable one buckle system. CSA urethane wheels, dual brake system.
39⁹⁶

ROLLER DERBY
ECLIPSE IN-LINE SKATES
High performance molded tongue, deluxe padded heel, map wheels, precision bearings. Buckle.
79⁹⁶

LOWEST GUARANTEED PRICES
Limited quantities on all special purchase and clearance items. Management reserves the right to limit quantities.

DRUGS DON'T WORK

WATERFORD
277 Summit Dr. (in Summit Crossing)
734-5620

MADISON HEIGHTS
John R Rd. (south of 14th Rd.)
569-0133

LIVONIA
Plymouth Road (west of Middlebelt)
522-2750

CLINTON TOWNSHIP
Gratiot Avenue and Quin (14 1/2 Mile Road)
731-8400

UTICA
M-59 (Hill Road) and M-53
(313) 254-8560

THE SPORTS AUTHORITY

STORE HOURS MON-FRI 10AM-8PM SAT 9AM-6PM SUN 10AM-6PM