

Senate picks away at Proposal A promises

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Gov. John Engler's promise that local school districts wouldn't lose money if Proposal A passes June 2 may have a \$10 million leak.

"I take this money off, and you whistle away at things people think are in Proposal A," warned Sen. Michael Bouchard, R-Birmingham, as the Senate stripped out money for several area school districts.

"This makes it more difficult to pass Proposal A," agreed Sen. Jim Berryman, D-Adrian. "Our credibility is at stake."

Proposal A is the elaborate constitutional amendment that

would give a cut in school operating taxes, take 2 cents more in sales taxes and guarantee every district \$4,800 per pupil. Says Engler's campaign literature: "Every school district will receive a 3-percent increase."

"No they're not," said Berryman.

"If we keep rapping people on the knuckles, I'm going to pull off (supporting Proposal A)," said Bouchard.

What they lose

The Senate rejected a Bouchard amendment to the school aid bill

that would implement Proposal A. The action will cost Farmington and Walked Lake school districts \$1 million each next year alone and more in later years.

Other losers: Avondale, \$289,000; Birmingham, \$733,000; South Lyon, \$441,000; Novi, \$411,000; and Bloomfield Hills, \$289,000.

"I wouldn't lose a whole lot of sleep over these districts," said Sen. Dan DeGrow, R-Port Huron, an advocate of taking money from the taxpayers in what he considers wealthy districts.

Here's how they'll lose it: Bouchard Wednesday won passage of his amendment to the \$1.1

billion school aid bill that would base 1994 state aid on current year spending.

The Senate Thursday recalled the bill, removed Bouchard's amendment on a 30-7 vote and based state aid on current tax revenue. The difference: The affected districts had declined to levy all their authorized property tax millage to balance their budgets. Instead, they dipped into their bank accounts to meet expenses. Thus, their taxes were lower than their spending.

"We're penalized for being fiscally conservative," said Bouchard.

"You're punishing those people

for not levying the full amount. They're not all rich school districts," agreed Berryman.

"It's \$10 million we don't have," said DeGrow.

How they voted

Area senators voting yes: Bouchard, Mat Dunaskiss, R-Lake Orion, Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills and David Houlgman, R-West Bloomfield.

Eight Republicans and six Democrats supported the Bouchard amendment while 16 Republicans and six Democrats opposed it. Among the opponents was Democratic gubernatorial hopeful Debbie Stabenow, D-Lansing.

House agrees

The battle was briefer in the House, where the Bouchard amendment was offered by Rep. Willis Bullard, R-Milford. The roll call was counted. Speaker pro tem Frank Fitzgerald, R-Grand Ledge, saw a blizzard of red (no) lights on the tally board and de-

clared it defeated.

The House passed the bill 98-0 and sent it to the Olds Tower across the street for Engler's signature.

Freshman Rep. Deborah Whyman, R-Canton, had a thumbprint on the new bill. Her amendment to cut teacher retraining money from \$2 million to \$1 million was rejected by the House but added in the Senate and retained in the final bill.

"There used to be five subjects for teacher retraining. They got \$3.8 million," said Whyman. "But four of those subjects were moved to another area of the budget. There was only one remaining."

"The funds were cut to \$2 million, but the program should have been funded at \$800,000. I thought I was being generous in offering \$1 million."

Whyman also won an amendment to a library bill limiting voter-approved taxes to 10 years. "Conceivably it could have been forever," she said.

Local forum focuses on AIDS impact

Cranbrook Kingwood Middle School teacher Shelley Gerson, who contracted HIV through a blood transfusion, will be keynote speaker at a community forum on AIDS May 24 at The Community House.

AIDS: The Topic of the '90s"

will be a three-hour forum beginning at 4 p.m. to discuss the impact of the deadly disease on society.

Gerson, 25, her father and brother all contracted AIDS through blood transfusions, and she will relate how that has af-

fected their lives.

Randall Poppe, chief of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Intervention Section of the Department of Public Health will begin the forum with a discussion on how AIDS had affected thousands of Michigan residents.

The workshops will be held from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. followed by Gerson speaking at 6 p.m.

Registration is \$5. For more information, contact The Community House at 644-5832. The Community House is at 380 S. Bates.

Mother/daughter relationship probed

Every woman has been profoundly influenced by the mother of her past, and the Oakland University Continuum Center is offering an evening workshop that explores this unique relationship. "Daughters: Every Woman is One: Many Women Have One" will be held from 7-9:30 p.m. on

Wednesday at the Bloomfield Township Library.

Each woman will reach to the roots of the mother/daughter relationship by examining the effects of "mothering" received; exploring ways in which they were loved or

not loved well; and looking at their own mother as a woman, aside from the role of parent.

Fee for the evening is \$39; MasterCard/VISA accepted. Registrations will be taken through today. Call 370-3033.

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