

Phone survey: A's equitable, or power grab

An informal telephone survey was conducted by the Farmington Observer over the past week on Proposal A and school tax reform. Following is a sampling of the results:

"I voted no on Proposal A due to all the advertising I saw on TV. I argue that Proposal A is a bad idea."

"I favor Proposal A because it saves me the most money right now. The only time you can really benefit from the government is when you get the things they give you right now. Why count on money in the future, which may or may not show up when you can have cash in your pocket this year?"

"I disagree with the proposal. The state government has promised money for the lottery will go for schools, but only a small percentage does. Why should we believe them about this?"

"I am against Proposal A because it is unfair to the school system."

"I am against Proposal A and the backup plan as well. I feel that they are a distinct power grab by the state, which wants to control our schools. I feel it's creeping socialism. They're stealing from the taxpayers and giving to the have-nots. I can probably think of a bunch of other reasons, but that'll just get me more angry."

"I'm voting no on Proposal A because a sales tax has to be voted in by the voters, but an increase in the income tax does not have to be. I feel that once the sales tax is voted in, they'll

continue to increase the income tax. Either way we're going to be loaded with a bunch of taxes."

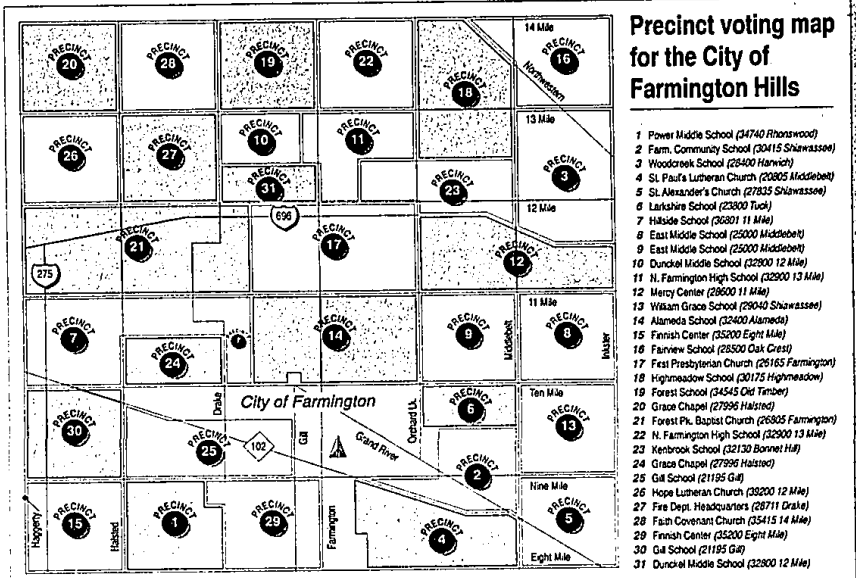
"I am against A. If you vote for A, they can always turn around and give you the alternative plan right on top of it. Seems like they want to have fair school funding. Well, fair means getting what you pay for and paying for what you get, not robbing from the rich and giving to the poor."

"I voted with an absentee ballot against Proposal A for two basic reasons: I will lose my state income tax deduction. I will lose my property tax deduction to the federal government. It grinds my soul to send any extra money to Washington."

"I favor Proposal A because it is more equitable. I don't know if everybody knows, but teachers and city employees and state employees... they don't pay any taxes on their pensions. That's why they pushing to have the proposal rejected."

"Hi. I'm calling to say that I support Proposal A and I plan to vote on March 15. My reasons are really pretty basic. I think a sales tax is a lot easier to manage for most people and something that you can decide on one way or another. So I'm for Proposal A. Thank you."

"Hi. I think it's really a ne-brainer of an issue. The MEA has never had the best interests of the taxpayers in mind. So when the MEA came out against Proposal A and worked so vehemently against it, I knew I should support it."



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the turnout could be higher than the 43 percent who voted in last June's state election, in which a sales tax increase was given a thumbs down.

In Farmington, 772 absentee ballots have been returned. Farmington Clerk/Treasurer Patsy Cantrell refused a prognostication, however.

"I'd really hesitate to guess because that's what it would be - a guess," she said.

Confusion over the ballot proposal has led many to the clerk's office seeking answers. Literature from the Farmington Public Schools, state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, and interest groups has been available in Farmington Hills.

"We haven't really tried to (answer specific questions)," Dornan said. "We've passed out literature. I'm sort of confused about the

proposals myself. I'm not an expert on either of the proposals."

Added Cantrell: "There's been a lot of questions related to specific situations that we weren't always able to answer. We took notes and referred them to their state representative or someone else who could help them."

Some Canadians have been calling Farmington Hills to say "Eh?" to "A," Dornan said. Calls have even come from across the border wanting to know if they can vote.

She speculates the Canadians may be concerned about higher cigarette taxes if Proposal A passes.

Stateside, Proposal A has been a hot topic of debate. If passed, the sales tax would be increased 2 cents on the dollar and the school tax rate on homestead property would

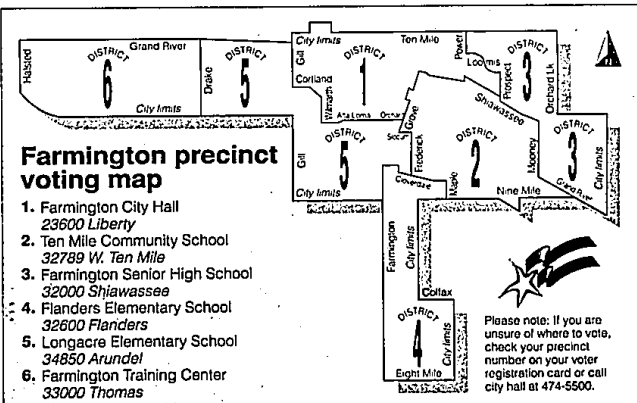
be lowered from 32.8 mills to 22.94 mills. If the sales tax fails, the backup plan would raise the income tax from 4.4 to 6 percent.

The school millage rate would be lowered to 20.42 mills on homestead property. Nonhomestead property would be taxed at 32.42 mills compared to 24 mills under the sales tax plan.

In little over a year, there have been elections for a school millage renewal, sales tax proposition, school board, library and city council. Some wonder if the democratic process is wearing people out.

"We've been bombarded by elections the last two years," Dornan said. "They're special elections out."

"As a clerk, you encourage voter participation... When people are asked to vote so often, they get tired of the process."



Democrats from page 1A

He added that the backup would increase income tax for Detroiters to 9 percent, which would hurt that city's efforts to recover.

Vagnozzi said Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, who came out in support of "A" last week, did so in part because tax increment financing districts and downtown development districts would be eliminated under the backup plan. Vagnozzi said that although he does not believe tax abatements and TIFs work, Detroit is using those tools in its redevelopment.

Lichtman said that high-spending school districts, such as Farmington, would not benefit from either plan, which has caused a lot of frustrations.

On that point, everyone seems to agree. Barnett, who had spearheaded a petition drive to reinstate the current tax plan if the legislature had not come up with an alternative after eliminating property tax for schools, said the governor is not having anything to do with the statutory plan. But he and the legislature came up with it and Engler signed on, she said.

Going, going . . . gone!

A going-out-of-business sale is in progress at Ray Interiors, a furniture store and long-time fixture in downtown Farmington. After 30 years in the same location on Stocum Street, owner William Ray is retiring and closing the business. That decision pleases his wife, Robin.

"I'm getting my husband back," said Robin Ray. "He just decided it was time to retire."

Asked about his retirement plans, William Ray said, "Oh, I'm going to play a little bridge; I'm going to take a few photographs and build a darkroom so I can develop and print them; I'm going to play some tennis and maybe coach some tennis. I'm going to do a lot of things."

The Rays said they hope for a successful going-out-of-business sale. "We've contacted 8,000 of our former customers," said Robin Ray. "That's going to be our retirement."

The business has 15 employees, including Cheryl Sauer, a Wixom resident who's worked there 20 years. "It was a total shock," she said of the closing. "Things will be different for me now."

Seven Ray Interiors employees were in the

FARMINGTON FOCUS


news last July when they were the big winners in the Farmington Founders Festival raffle that offers a new Corvette or \$30,000 as first prize. They purchased the winning ticket - No. 833 - from Robin Ray.

Team Farmington benefit

The second annual Team Farmington Bowl - Then to benefit the local Special Olympics squad will be held at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at Drake's Lanes, 35000 Grand River, Farmington.

Teams will be made up of five bowlers each and will represent businesses, organizations and individuals in the community. Funds raised will aid Team Farmington Special Olympics programs.

Anyone interested in sponsoring at team may call Todd Lipa at 855-0632. Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21898 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.



SELBY SHOES SPRING 1994

COLLECTION SHOW

Meet representative Chuck Tibbits and view the entire collection of Selby Shoes for spring '94. Choose the styles to suit your spring wardrobe and step into spring with the style of Selby. Mr. Tibbits will be available to assist with sizing and special-order needs.

Thursday, March 17
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Wednesday, March 23
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10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Shoe Salon

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