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was further linked to 14 new proposals still to be introduced.

Furthermore, local officials heard the bill was on a "fast track" to passage — a charge Raczkowski vehemently denied.

Other assurances of the bill's pending demise came from state Sen. Thaddeus McCotter and state Rep. Laura Toy, both Livonia Republicans.

"Put away your pitchforks and torches. From my perspective, I think you're right," McCotter told officials at the spirited anti-4777 rally Wednesday at the state capitol building.

And Livonia Councilman John Pastor, one of more than two dozen metro Detroit officials on hand, said Toy told him the bill "as is" won't pass.

But, despite McCotter and Toy, the verbal "pitchforks and torches" remained out.

"The audacity of this bill is overwhelming," said big Jim Barker, the bear-sized mayor of Garden City, to cheers.

"I'd like to tell these legislators to keep their grubby hands out of Garden City," he boomed.

His city, like many others, passed a resolution opposing HB 4777.

'Under attack'

Councilwoman Vicki Barnett of Farmington Hills, the city that led Wednesday's rally, said HB 4777 had put both home rule and free speech "under attack."

"We now have the right to complain" and get changes made if a local government "does something people don't like," she said.

But HB 4777 would curtail those rights and also those of elected officials and administra-



Against: Farmington Hills resident Marsha Silver shows her opposition to the bill.



The case: Farmington Hills Mayor Pro-Tem Nancy Bates led the rally before the state Legislature Wednesday when elected officials marched on Lansing in opposition to House Bill 4777.

tors to assure "quality of life" for residents and businesses in housing, zoning ordinances, noise and traffic control and pollution.

She said the right of a community to zone church locations, for example, would be removed in HB 4777 "with no concern" for traffic problems.

The bill, however, claims freedom of religion is being infringed.

Barnett suggested House members follow "the government version of the Golden Rule: Let the state do unto the locals as they would like the feds to do unto them."

Bates called HB 4777 "a gross abuse of power." She said the

expanded bill was "like taking an elephant gun to kill a gnat."

Bates said, "We should have a place at the table when these bills are being drafted. We should be consulted on bills that impact on local government."

Regarding Raczkowski's co-sponsorship of the bill, Bates said he "really didn't completely understand the bill" at first and probably was honored to be

invited as a co-sponsor by "people he has respect for."

But, she said, "Rocky did not come through city government" on his way to the state House and "so is not sensitized" to what local officials deal with.

Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi, defending Detroit's living wage provision by noting that 80 percent of its citizens voted for it, said it "lifts people

up to the poverty level and requires some kind of health insurance" for them.

"We'll pay" "If they don't have health insurance, the rest of us will be paying for it," he warned.

The Hills mayor also had one of the better quips about HB 4777.

"I read the bill in Italian," he said. "Spoken in Italian, it

sounds even worse: It would prevent the pope from standing on his balcony."

Pastor of Livonia agreed the bill would "limit our ability to create our own quality of life."

The city's right to pass signage ordinances, building codes and have site plan approval, for example, "should remain," he said.

But he agreed with other provisions in HB 4777 that would prohibit municipalities from legislating on banking and occupational health and safety matters.

Troy, where HB 4777's other main co-sponsor, Republican State Rep. Bob Gosselin, was once a city councilman, sent a busload of delegates to the rally.

"We loved him on the city council," Mayor Jeanne Stine deadpanned.

"If memory serves, he got term limits passed in our city government, so you know how much we love him."

Plymouth Township trustee Chuck Curmi also attended the rally.

Detroit and Downriver communities and the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments were represented, as were Lansing and metropolitan Grand Rapids.

■ It (HB 4777) would prevent the pope from standing on his balcony.

Aldo Vagnozzi
Farmington Hills mayor

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lence following a reported altercation with his wife, 28, of three years. He reportedly became angry while confronting her about an affair he thought she was having with another man, threatened to pour coffee on her and throw a hair gel bottle at her. He told police he had been arrested four years ago for domestic violence against his former wife, who did not want to prosecute.

MAIL TAMPERING

Farmington Hills:

A resident living in the 30000 block of Kingsway reported Thursday that someone sent a letter with razor blades taped inside, possibly causing injury if the letter were opened with a finger. The resident told police the only suspect was a woman to whom she had recently sold something. The customer was reportedly unhappy not to get her money back when she returned it.

LARCENY

Farmington Hills:

Someone reportedly forced open the front door of a home in the 35000 block of Springhill sometime before Thursday and took several items. Taken were a \$300 jewelry cabinet, three jackets worth \$1,500, \$600 in cash and a \$600 camcorder.

DRUG ARREST

Farmington Hills:

A 28-year-old Southfield woman was arrested Thursday

at Farmington and Kirby for possessing marijuana and prescription drugs following a traffic stop. She also was ticketed for having open intoxicants and for driving with a suspended license.

DISTURBANCE

Farmington

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church Msgr. Walter Hurley

reported suspicious behavior occurring about 6:30 p.m. last Sunday.

According to a memo from Hurley to Farmington Public Safety Director Gary Goss, a man, accompanied by his brother and sister, came up to the front of the sanctuary at the end of Mass. Then, he turned up his tape recorder and began "talking

out loud."

Hurley reportedly told Goss that the man, in his 30s and from Southfield, was just released from a hospital and that he had apparently "attacked" the Rev. Lawrence Zurek at St. Michael Catholic Church, breaking his nose

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