

## BUDGET

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cated by the continued squeeze on revenues, which are already constrained by Proposal A, the real issue is one of timing. This reduction will come about half-way into the city's fiscal year, taking funds that have been anticipated for months.

"We have to find a way so that we can count on receiving that," Cantrell said. "It's impossible to manage a budget when we're subject to these kinds of cuts. I think the state legislature has to step up to the plate and keep the promise they made."

"If I sound a bit passionate about this," Cantrell added, "I am."

## IN THE HILLS

Farmington Hills City Councilman Barry Brickner voiced his displeasure that when the state needs money, it seems to have little issue taking it away from the cities.

Brickner said city manager Steve Brock had expected some cuts in revenue sharing so the recent action shouldn't drastically affect services. At first, Dana Whinnery, assistant city manager for Farmington Hills, thought the estimated 3.5-percent cut in state shared revenues would equate to around \$91,000 in the Hills' budget. He learned late Friday from the Michigan Municipal League the cuts would be made based on the total amount of state shared revenue, which boosted the figure to \$287,000.

He said the city is also concerned for the future and how many more potential cuts could be made over the next couple of years.

The city is working in the middle of its fiscal year budget and after the holidays will be begin putting together its 2003/2004 budget proposal for council approval over the summer, Whinnery said.

Administrators will meet soon to see where cuts can be made to absorb the deficit in state shared revenues. Whinnery said. Those same kinds of meetings will be taking place in council chambers all across the state, as well as in college board rooms as the cuts will also affect higher education.

## HISTORY REPEATS

Cantrell said historically, local government sources of revenue have been taken, and cities have been promised substitute revenue sources, which also end up on the chopping block. Farmington, too, is well prepared to weather the storm, she said.

"We're not going to feel the effects as much as other cities that are on the brink of deficit budgets. It's not an immediate crisis for us."

She said cities experience reductions in revenue due to economic downturns, but when the state legislature treats them like any other state department, cities get a double hit.

"I don't think state legislators really understand that," she said.

On Friday, State Rep. Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods), who will represent the Farmington area in the State Senate next session, said she voted against the budget cuts, but realized the package was going to pass. She said the bill was opposed by folks who had universities and community colleges in their communities; her opposition was based on large cuts in community health funding.

My feeling is you pay now or you pay later with this, and we're definitely going to pay later," she said.

Sounding weary after an exhausting House session that didn't adjourn until 1 a.m. Friday, Jacobs warns this round of cuts was largely based in one-time expenditures — like distributing MEAP scholarships in two years instead of one. And that isn't going to fix Michigan's money problems.

"The fact is we are in deep trouble, cuts had to be made, and everybody's bleeding," she said. "It will take a couple of years to solve this problem, and everybody understands that. It's going to take a long

time to dig out of this hole."

Lawmakers will have to use a bi-partisan shovel, Jacobs added, expressing her hope that politics between the Republican-dominated legislature and Democratic Governor-elect Jennifer Granholm don't slow up the process.

"This is a serious problem for Democrats and Republicans," she said. "This is clearly going to have to be a bi-partisan approach."

Staff writer Paul Pace contributed to this story.

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## OCC affected by state budget cuts

BY JONI HUBBARD  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland Community College's board of directors voted down a tuition increase several months ago, but may soon be reconsidering that decision.

A \$337 million budget cut package enacted by the state legislature early Friday morning includes about \$42 million in higher education funding. Officials at OCC know they'll have to dig deeper, but how far?

"We don't know what (the dollar amount) will be as yet," said David Adams, Executive Director of Marketing.

The college experienced state funding cuts several years ago, he added. Board members face the same dilemma as local government officials, in that cuts are coming about half-way through their budget year.

Our budget year begins July 1," Adams said, explaining that an estimate of state appropriations is included. "Now, we're have to find

money in our budget."

That could mean tuition increases, but not for the winter quarter, for which registration is already underway. And course planning is already underway for the spring semester as well.

Adams said the board has in the past increased tuition by the rate of inflation, so that students could qualify for a state tax break.

"The earliest (a hike) could take place would be spring or summer," he said, "if, in fact, they passed it."

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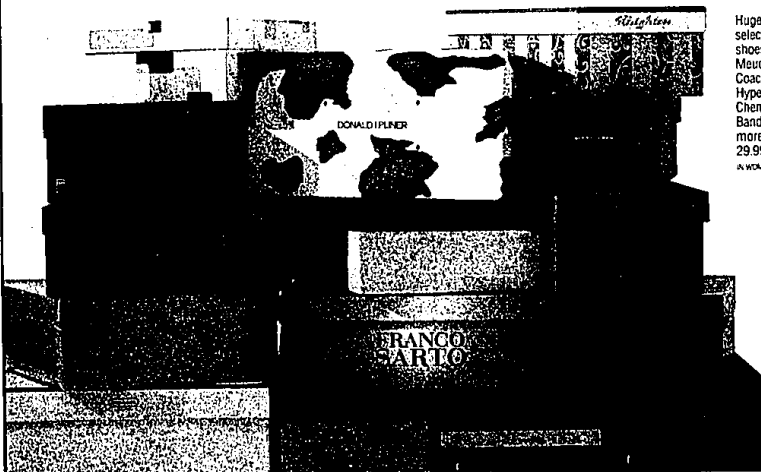
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