

## Governor's staff now looking over amendment

By SUSAN L. SILK  
OAKLAND — Senate Bill 1173 — the legislative amendment to the legal "nightmare" of Public Act 139 (which allows unified county government under a full-time appointed or elected executive) is presently under longer than expected review by the Governor's staff prior to his signature.

And one county official is keeping his fingers crossed.

(Third in a series)  
Milliken signed Act 139 into law in November. The act places the question of unified government, and under which form of executive, before the voters at the next primary election in August.

Scrutiny of the signed act, however, brought up a number of legal questions. Could both management options be placed on the ballot? After the commissioners make their option choice known, can that be bumped by a citizen petition drive?

AS A RESULT, Senate Bill 1173 was introduced — to clear up the questions that Act 139 has brought up. Approximately a week ago the bill, through both houses

of the legislature, was headed for the Governor's signature. Lanning sources, including State Rep. Philip O. Mastin, Jr., (D-69), reportedly assured county officials that the bill would allow for both options to appear on the ballot. The other questions were expected to be cleared up.

So sure were county commissioners of the bill becoming law that a resolution "morally binding" the board to place both options on the ballot following the passage of 1173 was approved.

Earlier the Republican-controlled board had voted to place the appointed manager option on the August primary. That move forced the elected executive forces to begin a 15,000 signature petition drive to bump the commissioners' choice and place their own before the voters.

While the county commissioners awaited the Governor's move, the petitions were also held up as perhaps becoming unnecessary.

THE GOVERNOR'S staff has been studying 1173 for almost a week. The governor has until May

14 to sign, a Milliken aide said. "Some attorneys here (in Milliken's office) feel that there are some technical problems" but that these "could be worked out," the aide said.

Late last week, however, there was no indication of a veto, the Milliken spokesman said.

Failure by the governor to sign the bill would mean that the legislation would not become law until the adjournment of this session of the legislature — too late for the coming primary and general elections, according to Howard Altman, county elections director.

ALTMAN SAID he had been given all kinds of assurances that the bill would be signed but acknowledged that language cleanup was a holdup.

Milliken is reportedly seeking assurances of his own — from the House leaders — that his signature would be followed by the language clarifications he wants, Altman said.

The possibility that Milliken may veto the bill, to please Wayne County forces opposing the unifi-

cation move, was raised late last week by Oakland County Democratic Party leader Bernard Wingard.

And what if Milliken doesn't sign, or vetoes? Costly special elections could follow.

IF THE PRO-ELECTED executive forces have to begin collect-

ing their signatures now, statutory time provisions would allow their campaign to continue beyond the filing date for the August primary, throwing the issue onto a special election ballot, Altman said.

Then should voters select the elected executive option, a second special election to choose that person would also be required, according to the elections official.

Printing the ballots and mailing the county's 540 precincts for the two elections could cost the county \$150,000, Altman estimates.

"We've got to cross our fingers and pray that they (Milliken and the House) do the right thing," Altman said.

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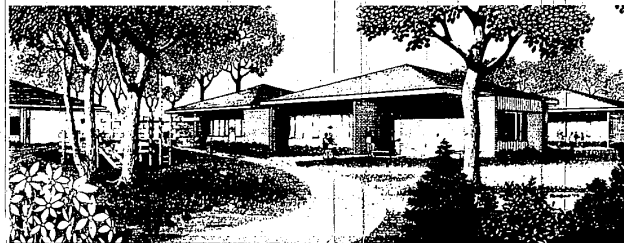
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Center will feature home-like atmosphere for retarded

### For handicapped

## Center groundbreaking set

Construction of the state-sponsored Macomb-Oakland Regional Center (MORC), a live-in facility for the severely multiple handicapped, will begin with a groundbreaking ceremony Monday.

In the first phase of construction, the developmental homes complex — 12 homes on 41 acres in Clinton Township — will be created to serve 36 persons from Macomb and Oakland counties.

An administration complex is also scheduled for a site at 36355 Garfield Road, Fraser, according to MORC director, David Rosen.

GUEST SPEAKERS at the 1:45 p.m. ceremony will include Dr. E. Gordon Yudashkin, director of the Michigan Department of

Mental Health, and N. Lorraine Beebe, chairperson of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

"The developmental homes complex with its home-like environment is the most unique concept for care and treatment of severe and profound retarded persons in Michigan," said Rosen.

Phase I of the administration and developmental homes complex is being constructed at a total cost of \$10 million. Plans for construction of the second phase are incomplete, according to Rosen.

Each of the four or five bedroom homes will have a living room, a dining room, two bathrooms and an activity room for eight residents.

"THE DEVELOPMENTAL homes complex reflects the dramatic change in our concept for the care of the mentally retarded in Michigan — a drastic turning away from historically institutionalizing of patients far from their home communities in large schools for the mentally retarded," said Rosen.

Parking accommodations for the groundbreaking are at the Garfield Road entrance of the Macomb County Community College's Center campus; 16500 Hall Road, Mount Clemens. Buses will be available to drive guests to the groundbreaking site.

The public may attend.

## Funds to go for rewards

Donations totaling \$1,800 have fattened the reward fund of the North Oakland County Chamber of Commerce Silent Observer program recently.

Tipsters, by informing their local police agencies, can anonymously report information pertaining to a crime they have witnessed and, after conviction and sentencing of the suspect, may be paid rewards ranging from \$50 to \$1,000.

Checks in the amount of \$300 from

the North Oakland County Law Enforcement Association, \$1,000 from the Police Officers Association of Michigan and \$500 from the Greater Pontiac Area Association of Independent Insurance Agents were presented to Silent Observer chairman, Thomas Plunkett, on March 28.

The program, since its inception, has paid out more than \$11,000 to tipsters, according to a Chamber of Commerce spokesman.



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