



Michigan ROUNDUP

Legislative Week in Review

....Governor Blanchard's **state of the state message** emphasized new education and training programs to create a work force capable of meeting increasing demands for technical skills and literacy in the job market. He proposed

- establishing a \$276 million **education excellence fund**--\$250 million of which would result from eliminating some personal and business tax exemptions--to offer K-12 districts incentives to establish preschool programs for four-year-olds, reduce dropout rates, improve test scores, establish a new "core curriculum" for all grade levels, achieve minimum education standards, reduce K-3 class sizes, allow parents and students to choose schools within districts, toughen teacher competency standards, and develop school improvement plans;
- **redistributing state aid** to equalize per-pupil funding among districts;
- **delaying property tax reduction** until the above are adopted, preferably by June;
- asking single, 18- to 20-year-old general assistance applicants to accept employment in a **neighborhood youth corps** to help them develop job skills and to refurbish decaying neighborhoods; and
- establishing a **human investment fund** to coordinate job training programs and "stress results by paying providers for performance." Participants in job programs would receive "Michigan opportunity cards" to gain easy access to any of fifty current retraining programs.

The governor also announced proposals to improve environment, natural resources, and recreation programs; law enforcement; and state fiscal management.

Political News

....**Senate Majority Leader John Engler** (R-Mt. Pleasant) says that during the 1988 session the Senate will emphasize

- crime prevention legislation, including stiffer sentences and increased search powers,
- property tax reform and increased spending on schools,
- implementing an AIDS education program,
- product liability legislation to reduce business costs, and
- political campaign reform and regulation of officeholder expense funds.

....**Patricia M. Woodworth**, director of the Senate Fiscal Agency since September 1985 and former assistant to the director of the federal Office of Management and Budget, announced Tuesday that she will quit her post effective February 19. Woodworth, 33, will become Florida budget director on March 29. No successor has been named.

....**Rep. Wilbur "Sandy" Brotherton** (R-Farmington) has announced that he will not seek reelection after 14 years in the Michigan House of Representatives. Brotherton, who will be 66 on July 6, is a former Chrysler Corporation executive and is known for his expertise on economic development and taxation issues.

....A study financed by Common Cause that uses 1986 election data reveals that, for the first time, the majority of **campaign contributions to state legislators** are coming from political action committees instead of individuals. PACs contributed 53 percent of all money spent on 1986 campaigns, according to the director of the study John Klemanski, an assistant professor of political science at Oakland University. He told Michigan Information and Research Service that 57 percent of Democratic funds and 49 percent of Republican campaign money came from PACs. A first-term senator, Dr. John Schwarz (R-Battle Creek) received the most PAC money: \$347,093. House Speaker Gary Owen (D-Ypsilanti Township) led House members with \$113,249.

PSR Public Sector Consultants, Inc.

Knapp's Centre • 300 S. Washington Square
Suite 401 • Lansing, MI 48933 • (517) 484-4954