



Public Sector Reports

Michigan ROUNDUP

Legislative Week in Review

■ Governor James Blanchard released his FY 1990-91 Executive Budget on Thursday. It provides for a 3.8 percent increase in GF/GP spending, to \$7.6 billion, and a 3 percent increase in total spending, to \$17.9 billion. The largest budget increases (GF/GP) are: school aid, \$87.5 million, or 14.3 percent; higher education, \$70.3 million, or 5 percent; corrections, \$56.4 million, or 7.9 percent; and mental health, \$42.3 million, or 4.8 percent. The recommended increase for social services is \$16.8 million, or .7 percent.

The total school aid budget (including restricted revenue) is recommended to increase \$145.2 million, or 4.9 percent; included is \$40 million for the governor's property tax relief program.

The budget earmarks nearly one-third of available resources for education. About 37 percent is allocated to social services and health.

Significant recommendations are made in the corrections area. The governor announced that prison capacity will not be expanded beyond 31,000 beds, which will be reached at the end of FY 1990-91 (a total of 3,500 beds will be added in FY 1989-90 and FY 1990-91). The Senate Fiscal Agency estimates that by January 1993 the prison system will be 19,610 prisoners over capacity. To prevent this the budget recommends substantial increases in spending on alternatives to incarceration. Among these programs are: \$10.3 million to assist in local jail construction, \$25.8 million (\$10 million increase) for the community corrections program, and a \$6 million increase for boot camps. Increased funding also is provided for halfway houses, reduced sentences, and a tether program.

■ A House-passed bill requiring a woman under age 18 to obtain a parent's or a judge's consent prior to having an abortion was amended and approved by a Senate committee. The full Senate is expected to approve the bill next week.

■ Eleven gubernatorial debates would be required under legislation passed by the Senate. Passage by the House is uncertain.

Political News

■ Senate Majority Leader John Engler (R-Mt. Pleasant) is scheduled to announce his candidacy for governor Monday at five news conferences throughout the state.

■ Lansing Police Capt. Jerry Mills announced his candidacy for the 58th District House seat being vacated by Democrat Debbie Stabenow in order to run for the state Senate. Mills, a Republican, narrowly lost the county sheriff's race in 1988, although he carried Stabenow's district by about 700 votes. So far, Mills is the only announced Republican contender for the seat. Democratic Ingham County Commissioner Dorothy Frederickson already has declared her candidacy in the race; fellow Democrat and Commissioner Dianne Byrum is expected to follow suit next week.

■ Michigan State University President John A. DiBiaggio told the *Detroit Free Press* that his position at the school is "difficult now, almost untenable." MSU's chief executive is expected to address issues of academic and administrative leadership in his State of the University address on February 19. Meanwhile, MSU professor Zolton Ferency has advocated primary elections for university trustee races in the wake of the recent disagreements between MSU's board and president.

■ Detroit Mayor Coleman Young made a rare personal lobbying visit to Lansing on Thursday, hoping to reinstate the 5 percent Detroit utility tax, ruled invalid earlier this week by Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Marvin Stempien. The decision could cost the city—already \$81 million in the red—about \$100 million in refunds on utility taxes collected since 1988. Young will seek legislative resolution of the problem from House and Senate leaders. Republican leaders indicated they would add the issue of state property tax rates to any discussions about reinstating the utility tax.

■ In the wake of last November's resounding defeat of ballot proposals increasing state funding for public schools, three Detroit-area communities—Romeo, Hamtramck, and St. Clair Shores Lakeview district—voted this week to approve local school finance proposals.