

Michigan ROUNDUP

May 14, 1992

Legislative Week in Review

■ Legislators and Governor John Engler reached a **budget compromise** this week on balancing current-year spending. Lawmakers approved an executive order and passed six bills that trim the FY 1992 deficit by \$785 million and also restore some program funding previously vetoed by the governor. Key components of the package include:

Executive Order 13, containing almost \$229 million in reductions, revenue lapses, and fund transfers. EO 13 captures \$111.3 million in reduced or eliminated revenue sharing payments to local units of government; the order does not include earlier controversial provisions mandating state employee furloughs or cuts to Detroit's Lafayette Clinic.

SB 213, the *supplemental spending* bill, cuts some program funding and boosts others for a net increase of \$141.9 million. The bulk of the increase goes to the Department of Social Services and includes funds for elderly and indigent medical care that had long been held hostage to the budget debate.

SB 1 increases *inheritance tax* exemptions, including for transfer of qualifying family-owned businesses and farms.

HB 5353 expands the state's *early retirement* provisions, eliminating the minimum age requirement of 50.

■ The Senate came up seven votes short in a **veto override** attempt this week on SB 691, the no-fault automobile insurance reform bill passed by lawmakers last month. Only two of the six Republican senators originally supporting the measure voted for the override, resulting in a 19-18 tally; 26 votes were needed.

■ The last two Senate-originated **FY 1993 budget bills** cleared the upper chamber this week. In approving amendments to the school aid budget (SB 226), the Republican-controlled Senate removed funding for several gubernatorial initiatives from the package—including transportation for schools of choice and pilot programs for an extended school year and charter schools. The bill now contains a general fund spending total of \$1,031.4 million. Also passed was the Department of Education budget (SB 750), with \$41.2 million in general fund support.

Political News

■ Elected office still has its supporters, notably the more than 450 **Michigan candidates** for Congress, the state House of Representatives, and various county offices who filed by Tuesday's deadline. With six of sixteen congressional seats and eighteen House seats without incumbents, this year's reapportioned races promise as much partisan turmoil and potential change as the state has seen in decades. As the filing deadline dust settled, the following facts emerged.

Reps. Stanley Stopczynski (D-Detroit), Donald Van Singel (R-Grant), and Wilfred Webb (R-Hazel Park) became the legislature's latest retirees. Stopczynski originally filed in Detroit's Fifth District, where he would have faced colleague Ted Wallace (D-Detroit) in a primary, but withdrew the next day.

Among former legislators seeking House comebacks are Democrats Juanita Watkins, who will challenge Rep. Burton Leland (D-Detroit); Edgar Geerlings, who is planning a primary run against Rep. Paul Baade (D-Muskegon); Jim Docherty, a perennial challenger to Republican incumbent Terry London in St. Clair County's swing district; and Jack Legel, who enters a primary contest with Rep. Michael Bennane (D-Detroit).

Barring further withdrawals, three districts will feature primary face-offs between incumbents: Democrats Hansen Clarke and Joe Young, Jr., are matched in the Fourth District; the Fifty-sixth District ballot will pit Jerry Bartnik (D-Temperance) against Lynn Owen (D-Maybe); and Holland Republicans Jessie Dalman and Alvin Hoekman are competing for the Ninetieth District seat.

Eight-term Rep. Sal Rocca (Sterling Heights) set the standard for flexibility by filing for reelection both as a Republican and as a Democrat in the Thirtieth District. Rocca must pick a party by Friday's withdrawal deadline or be disqualified from running at all.

In congressional races, State Sen. John Kelly (D-Detroit) will challenge 28-year Democratic incumbent John Conyers, Jr. Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Alice Gilbert resigned to run against Sen. David Honigman (R-West Bloomfield) for the seat vacated by William Broomfield. Former U.S. Rep. Philip Ruppe is among eight contenders for the First Congressional District seat vacated by Bob Davis. Others in the race include State Rep. Stephen Dresch (R-Hancock) and former Democratic Rep. Bart Stupak.