



Michigan ROUNDUP

....The Senate Appropriations Committee reported out HB 4537, the higher education appropriations bill. Under the bill, MSU, U of M, Wayne State, and Michigan Tech would receive a 6.69 percent increase over last year. The eleven other public colleges and universities would be subject to the "Student Equity Plan," which bases appropriations on student headcounts and the number of full-year equated students.

....A report of the House Republican Task Force on Crime emphasizes prevention and intervention through the identification of young potential offenders and follow-up counseling. The report recommends that the Department of Social Services fund the program; Representative David Hollister suggested that revenues from the federal tax windfall be used.

....A bill (HB 4460) providing for medical testing of up to 160,000 Vietnam veterans who may be suffering the effects of Agent Orange is on its way to the governor along with another bill establishing an Agent Orange commission and an information center. If signed, the new laws would end years of legislative deadlocks over Agent Orange relief for veterans.

....The cost of credit life insurance in Michigan will be cut by 20 percent over the next two years under a compromise approved by the Joint Administrative Rules Committee. In 1985, the Insurance Bureau charged that credit life insurance rates should be reduced because of "unreasonable" profits; insurers quickly filed a lawsuit that blocked the rate reduction. The agreement reached between the Insurance Bureau and credit insurance companies ends the litigation.

....Despite a federal judge's ruling that the State is in contempt of court for failing to reduce prison overcrowding, the governor said he would not release inmates before their sentences are completed. U.S. District Court Judge Richard Enslin ordered state officials to eliminate overcrowding at Jackson, Marquette, and Ionia prisons by November 1 or face daily \$10,000 fines. The governor believes that the fines can be avoided with the opening of three new prison facilities this summer.

...Kevin Seitz, head of the Michigan Medicaid program, said that a woman on Medicaid is nearly twice as likely as other women to have a baby die in its first year. In testimony before the House Public Health Subcommittee on Infant Morality and Prenatal Health, Seitz explained that physician's rising malpractice insurance costs and Medicaid's low reimbursements to physicians have discouraged obstetricians and gynecologists from taking on Medicaid patients. Studies of Medicaid show that infants of women who receive obstetrical care from a physician are much less likely to die.

....According to an NEA report released Wednesday, Michigan's public schools spend an average of \$3,954 a year on each student, slightly below the national average of \$3,970. Michigan ranks fourth among the states in average salary (\$31,500) for public school teachers with 15 years of experience and a master's degree.

....Among the Michigan members of the U.S. House of Representatives making their mandatory annual financial disclosures, Representative Fred Upton (R-St. Joseph) has the highest assets and Representative Paul Henry (R-Grand Rapids) has the lowest. Upton listed assets of more than \$1 million, including over \$250,000 in Whirlpool Corporation stock. Henry reported only a \$5,000 checking account. All representatives' assets exclude salaries and personal residences.