



Michigan ROUNDUP

Legislative Week in Review

- Legislators reconvened in Lansing Tuesday for what likely will be an intense three-week session before engaging in the final heat of their reelection campaigns. Adjournment is expected on September 27, with a postelection return scheduled for November 8.
- A controversial and veto-proof law requiring parental consent for teenage abortions was enacted Wednesday by margins of 29-8 in the Senate and 60-41 in the House. It requires unmarried pregnant women aged 17 and younger to obtain either a parent's or a judge's permission before receiving an abortion. The statute, similar to a measure approved earlier in the session by the legislature but vetoed by the governor, results from a drive by Right to Life of Michigan, which collected more than 300,000 signatures on its legislative initiative petition. The governor is not permitted to veto laws resulting from initiative petitions. According to press reports, the ACLU is considering a court challenge to the new law.
- Lawmakers returned from the summer recess to estimates of significant deficits in budgets approved earlier for the next fiscal year. The Senate Fiscal Agency projects a shortfall of \$454 million, while the House Fiscal Agency pegs the estimated deficit at more than \$700 million. In assessing these projections, legislators also have to consider revisions in budgets for the eight state departments which had appropriations partially vetoed by the governor.
- The House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Department of Social Services budget rejected the governor's proposal to cut \$115 million from the department's general fund monies. Blanchard had proposed \$56.4 million GF/GP in Medicaid cost containment as well as elimination of some emergency needs programs. House and Senate budget staff will begin work on a DSS continuation budget that will maintain FY 1989-90 appropriation levels. The legislature will consider this continuation budget next week.
- After summer-long negotiations, hotly disputed legislation that would make polluters pay environmental clean-up costs passed the House on Thursday. The 16-0 endorsement from the Conservation, Recreation, and Environment Committee of HB 5878 saw it safely through passage in the House. The Senate, however, may not take up its consideration of the measure until after the November 6 elections.

Political News

- Dan and Marilyn Quayle stumped for Republican candidates in Michigan on Wednesday. Predicting close gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races in the state, the vice president played in a Dearborn golf fund-raiser and made unscheduled stops at an Allen Park delicatessen and a Southgate bowling alley. Marilyn Quayle addressed the State Bar of Michigan's annual meeting in Battle Creek and spoke at two Kalamazoo fund-raisers. The couple ended their whistle-stop with a \$1,000 per couple reception in Grosse Isle.
- The chain reaction of legislative vacancies that began with the selection of Sen. Connie Binsfeld (Maple City) as Republican candidate for lieutenant governor ended this week. Republicans in the 106th House District have tapped Beverly Bodem, longtime aide to Rep. John Pridnia (R-Harrisville), to replace Pridnia on the ballot. She is unopposed. Pridnia, four-term House veteran and vice-chairman of that chamber's Public Health Committee, is considered the odds-on favorite to win Binsfeld's heavily Republican 36th Senate District seat.
- A national report released this week ranks Michigan's mental health care quality 26th in the nation, placing the state in a five-way tie with Arkansas, Georgia, North Dakota, and South Carolina. The rating, issued by the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill and Public Citizen, is a significant boost from two years ago, when the group ranked Michigan 43rd.
- The eighth annual Michigan education poll shows nearly 90 percent of those surveyed support sex education teaching in the schools. The random telephone survey of 650 state residents also indicates that 51 percent give Michigan schools a grade of A or B. The *Lansing State Journal* points out that is 10 percent higher than the similar grades given schools nationwide in the latest Gallup Poll.
- State Democrats and Republicans held their party conventions last weekend in Flint and Detroit, respectively, and confirmed the following slots on the ticket: Secretary of State, (D) Richard Austin of Detroit and (R) State Rep. Judith Miller of Birmingham; Attorney General, (D) Frank Kelley of Okemos and (R) Clifford Taylor of East Lansing; Supreme Court, (D) Patricia Boyle of Detroit and Michael Cavanaugh of East Lansing, and (R) Clark Durant of Grosse Pointe and Judy Hughes of Hastings.