



Michigan ROUNDUP

November 19, 1992

Legislative and Political News

- Seven-term Detroit legislator Curtis Hertel won the House Democrats' **top leadership post** in a secret ballot, caucus vote Wednesday. A member of a politically prominent Michigan family, Hertel beat eleven-term Okemos resident H. Lynn Jondahl for the position—the title of which is not yet clear. Both parties have made their choices for Speaker-elect, but until control of the lower chamber is settled, the question of who is Speaker and who is minority leader remains open. Pat Gagliardi (Drummond Island) and Raymond Murphy (Detroit) were reinstated in their positions as floor leader and speaker pro tempore, respectively, while Sharon Gire (Clinton Township) was elected by the caucus to the associate speaker post formerly held by Hertel.
- House Democrats delayed voting on a **controversial rules change** seeking to ensure Democratic control of the chamber that is currently evenly split, 55–55. The House will meet next Tuesday to consider HR 1136, reported out of the House Oversight Committee over the objections of Republicans. The resolution provides that in cases of tied partisan membership, control of the chamber remains with the party previously in power unless the opposing party can muster at least 56 votes.
- Aligning his partisan affiliation with his voting record, Sen. Gilbert DiNello (Mt. Clemens) **switched parties** this week to register as a Republican. The only Democrat in the Republican-controlled upper chamber to chair a committee, DiNello's district became more Republican after reapportionment, with his constituents supporting President Bush in the recent election.
- Meeting this week in Wisconsin, Republican governors floated a list of **1996 presidential candidates** including Michigan's John Engler. Engler was mentioned along with the governors of California, Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Wisconsin, most of whom share with Engler the need to be reelected in 1994 to be viable national contenders.
- Former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Dennis Archer, who ran Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's first reelection campaign, announced on Thursday his own **mayoral candidacy** for the state's largest city. The midday announcement followed nearly two years of pre-campaign choreography involving public appearances, white papers, and advisory groups. Young, who has not yet decided whether to seek a sixth term, is considered a formidable opponent; despite speculation about his health, he controls a robust \$5 million campaign war chest. For his part, Archer has retained the coaching of consultant David Axelrod, described by the *Detroit News* as advisor to President-elect Bill Clinton and Senator-elect Carol Mosley Braun and a force behind the election of Democratic mayors in Chicago, Cleveland, and Houston.
- Michigan's state capitol became a **national historic landmark** Thursday as part of rededication ceremonies for the painstakingly restored Victorian structure. Ceremonies proceeded on schedule despite a bomb threat that caused the building to be sealed off for several hours Wednesday.
- Outgoing Rep. Perry Bullard (D-Ann Arbor) introduced a bill Wednesday to outlaw discrimination based on **sexual orientation**. HB 6222, certain to die in the lame-duck session, amends the state's civil rights statutes that already prohibit discrimination based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, and family or marital status.
- A coalition of two dozen state environmental groups has blasted the state administration for failing to meet new federal **clean air requirements**. According to the Michigan Environmental Council (MEC), an umbrella organization for the groups, Michigan lags behind other states in implementing new requirements. An MEC report faults the state Department of Natural Resources for missing an implementation plan deadline in six different areas, ranging from fees and permits to enforcement.
- Privacy rights of candidates in **presidential searches** at the state's colleges and universities are generating news in both the legislative and judicial branches these days. Two Senate bills to amend the state's open meetings act by exempting presidential search committees are not likely to be considered before January. If passed, over the current objections of Attorney General Frank Kelley, the measures could come too late to help Michigan State University, some of whose leaders have requested the exception to allow the board of trustees to meet privately with candidates for its existing presidential vacancy. Meanwhile, the Michigan Supreme Court has agreed to review a lower court ruling that University of Michigan regents broke the law by splitting into groups of less than a quorum—thereby avoiding open meetings—to quiz candidates in their last presidential search.
- *Roundup* will not be published on the Thanksgiving holiday. The next issue is scheduled for December 3.