



Michigan ROUNDUP

Legislative Week in Review

- The clock is running out on the legislature's lame-duck session. The Senate's target **adjournment date** is December 6—two days prior to the wedding date of the majority leader, Governor-elect John Engler. The House is also likely to adjourn on the sixth, and both chambers are struggling to build consensus for the few bills that will be passed and for ways to reduce the projected budget deficit.
- The State Officers Compensation Commission (SOCC) got advice on **legislative pay raises** this week from House and Senate leadership. The SOCC recommendations—which are subject to legislative veto—are expected next month for executive, legislative, and judicial branch posts. Sen. John Engler has proposed pay freezes in all these jobs in light of the state's fiscal troubles.
- In a barrage of amendments, a four-bill **gun control** package passed the House 73-7. As amended, the bills wipe out more than 50 local gun ordinances but add new restrictions to the statewide code. Neither side in the controversy is happy with the result, which faces an uncertain fate in the Senate.
- The Senate's 29-2 approval of "right-to-die" legislation may mean enactment of the **patient's rights** measure after 15 years of legislative debate. Easy passage is anticipated in the House, where Rep. David Hollister (D-Lansing) has spearheaded the issue since its inception; Governor Blanchard has indicated he will sign the measure.
- Upon their return to Lansing, lawmakers may be greeted with a **property tax cut initiative petition**. The Board of State Canvassers agreed this week to provide an additional 60 days for a citizen group to prove that it has collected sufficient valid signatures to mandate legislative consideration of its 20 percent property tax reduction plan.
- With the dome swaddled in a protective wrap that will allow **capitol restoration** to continue through the winter, the state landmark's executive-legislative committee got its first new member this week: Sen. John Schwarz (R-Battle Creek) replaced retiring Sen. William Sederburg (R-East Lansing) on the bipartisan panel overseeing renovation. Sederburg recently announced his appointment as vice-president for public policy at Public Sector Consultants.

Political News

- With the naming of the state's next **treasurer and budget director**, Governor-elect Engler continues the brisk administrative staffing pace set in the three weeks since his election. Treasurer-designate Doug Roberts, current director of the Senate Fiscal Agency, holds a doctorate in economics from Michigan State University and is hailed by outgoing state Treasurer Bob Bowman as "first rate in every way." Patricia Woodworth was Florida's budget director before returning to Michigan to serve on Engler's transition team. Now Woodworth—who once held Roberts's job in the Michigan Senate—will stay on as head of the Department of Management and Budget.
- **Other Engler staff appointments** announced since last week include Colleen Pero in the newly created position of director of state affairs, responsible for scheduling, appointments, and community affairs. State Republican Party spokesman Rusty Hills will be communications director, and Engler campaign spokesman John Truscott has been appointed press secretary.
- On the other side of the transition, Blanchard administration **Department of Commerce** director Larry Meyer has announced plans to return to the Michigan Retailer's Association in January. Meantime, the Associated Press reports Governor Blanchard's estimate that it may take 5,000 moving boxes to transfer the two-term governor's files from his office and residence.
- After a Lansing swearing-in ceremony, a week of tightly scheduled **inaugural celebrations** will take John Engler and his bride across the state in a sweep deliberately reminiscent of his successful campaign. Following inauguration day receptions at the governor's residence and the Lansing Center, receptions are planned in Marquette (January 2), Traverse City, and Mt. Pleasant (January 3). Inaugural balls will be held in Detroit (January 4) and Grand Rapids (January 5).
- U.S. Rep. Carl Pursell this week announced his bid for a **congressional leadership** position. The seven-term Ann Arbor Republican will challenge California Rep. Jerry Lewis for control of the 167-member House Republican Conference. In another House Republican leadership battle, U.S. Rep. Guy Vander Jagt of Luther faces opposition for the chairmanship of the fund-raising National Republican Congressional Committee, a post he has held for the past 14 years.