



## Michigan ROUNDUP

### Legislative Week in Review

- **Mandatory no-fault auto insurance** premiums would be rolled back 25 percent under legislation introduced by Sen. Dick Posthumus (R-Alto) and Rep. Paul Wartner (R-Portage). Other major provisions define who is eligible to go to trial in a lawsuit, mandate a fee schedule for health benefits, require insurers to offer a range of benefit levels for personal injury protection coverage, and permit insurers to make wage loss coverage optional.
- The *Lansing State Journal* reports that Rep. James Kosteva (D-Canton), chair of the House Subcommittee on Rail Safety, will introduce a bill in February to stiffen regulations for transporting **hazardous materials**. Businesses would be required to inform communities about the type of material being shipped, and funds would be earmarked for emergency planning programs. Sen. Richard Fessler (R-West Bloomfield) will sponsor legislation restricting trains carrying hazardous waste to 25 mph.
- Rep. David Gubow (D-Huntington Woods) met recently with General Motors and the Detroit Chamber of Commerce to discuss his legislation to amend the **Handicapper Civil Rights Act**. The changes would require employers to accommodate a handicapped person's needs regardless of whether the handicap affects the employee's ability to do the job. Gubow, whose bill has encountered opposition from the business community, indicates that modifications to address some business concerns may be made to improve the chances of passage.
- A House-Senate conference committee agreed Wednesday on legislation to restrict the use of **all-terrain vehicles (ATVs)**. The bill's sponsor, Sen. John Schwarz (R-Battle Creek), reported that the compromise prohibits the use of three-wheel ATVs by anyone under the age of 16; those aged 12-16 would be permitted to operate four-wheel ATVs under adult supervision on public land, and those aged 10-16 could operate them under adult supervision on land owned by their parent or guardian.
- The legislature plans to recess December 13 and to reconvene December 28.

### Political News

- The Governor's Health Care Cost Containment Management Team will release a report today outlining several strategies to control the **increasing costs of health care**. The task force, created by Governor Blanchard in 1988, recommends raising taxes on alcohol and tobacco and using the revenue for health education programs, considering a ban on alcohol and tobacco advertising, enhancing existing family planning services, and requiring shoulder-belt use in back seats of cars equipped with them.
- The Detroit school board voted 7-3 Tuesday to offer interim superintendent **John Porter** a contract extension. Porter, whose one-year contract expires in June, has not formally agreed to the lengthened term.
- The Michigan Low-Level Radioactive Waste Authority, headed by Commissioner James Cleary, welcomed the news of a report to Congress by the Office of Technology Assessment, which concluded that the 12 to 15 low-level **nuclear waste facilities** planned throughout the nation are more than adequate to satisfy current demand. Cleary has the responsibility of developing a seven-state waste facility, which he and Michigan lawmakers have argued is unnecessary.
- The Air Force has decided to locate rail-based **MX nuclear missiles** at five bases throughout the country, including Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda. Two missiles each on 25 trains would travel over commercial track, and the Air Force reports that from four to six trains would be assigned to each of the five bases. Governor Blanchard's press secretary said: "With all the changes taking place in Eastern Europe, [the governor] believes it's highly questionable that the system will ever be built, let alone located in Michigan. It would have to be shown to be absolutely safe, and the burden of proof is on the Pentagon."
- On Monday the Detroit Elected Officials Compensation Commission approved **pay raises** for Mayor Coleman Young, the city clerk, and nine city council members. The increase will bring Young's annual wage to \$130,000, which matches the salary of the nation's highest paid mayor, New York's David Dinkins. The Detroit City Council will become the third highest paid in the country, following Washington and Los Angeles.

