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House Chamber, Lansing, Thursday, January 29, 1998.

6:00 p.m.

The House was called to order by the Speaker.

The roll was called by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, who announced that a quorum was present.

Agee—present	Emerson—present	Kaza—present	Price—present
Alley—present	Fitzgerald—present	Kelly—present	Profit—present
Anthony—present	Frank—present	Kilpatrick—present	Prusi—present
Baade—excused	Freeman—excused	Kukuk—present	Quarles—present
Baird—present	Gagliardi—present	LaForge—present	Rackowski—present
Bankes—present	Galloway—present	Law—present	Rhead—present
Basham—present	Geiger—present	Leland—present	Richner—present
Birkholz—present	Gernaat—present	LeTarte—present	Rison—present
Bobier—present	Gilmer—present	Llewellyn—present	Rocca—present
Bodem—present	Gire—present	London—present	Schauer—present
Bogardus—present	Godchaux—present	Lowe—present	Schermesser—present
Brackenridge—present	Goschka—present	Mans—absent	Schroer—present
Brater—present	Green—present	Martinez—present	Scott—present
Brewer—present	Griffin—absent	Mathieu—present	Scranton—present
Brown—present	Gubow—present	McBryde—present	Sikkema—present
Byl—present	Gustafson—present	McManus—present	Stallworth—present
Callahan—present	Hale—present	McNutt—present	Tesanovich—present
Cassis—present	Hammerstrom—present	Middaugh—present	Thomas—present
Cherry—present	Hanley—present	Middleton—present	Varga—present
Ciaramitaro—present	Harder—present	Murphy—present	Vaughn—present
Crissman—present	Hertel—present	Nye—present	Voorhees—present
Cropsey—present	Hood—present	Olshove—present	Walberg—present
Curtis—present	Horton—present	Owen—present	Wallace—absent
Dalman—present	Jansen—present	Oxender—present	Wetters—present
DeHart—present	Jelinek—present	Palamara—present	Whyman—present
DeVuyst—present	Jellema—present	Parks—present	Willard—present
Dobb—present	Johnson—present	Perricone—present	Wojno—present
Dobronski—present			

e/d/s = entered during session

Rep. Eileen DeHart, from the 18th District, offered the following invocation:

“Lord as we gather tonight on this occasion when we will hear the news of the state of our state, we shall all remember those that are governing the most important people in the world, those whom we are governing. Their will and their needs far surpass ours. Let us not forget this as we continue with this year’s service and that we know that their needs come before our agendas. Amen.”

Rep. Dobronski moved that Reps. Baade and Freeman be excused from today’s session.
The motion prevailed.

Motions and Resolutions

Representative Gagliardi moved that a special committee of four members be appointed to notify the Senate that the House was ready to meet the Senate in Joint Convention.

The motion prevailed.

The Speaker appointed as such committee Reps. Schermesser, Gire, Bankes and London.

The special committee to notify the Senate that the House was ready to meet in Joint Convention returned to the House along with the members of the Senate.

The committee, through its Chairperson, reported that it had performed the duty assigned it. The report was accepted and the committee discharged.

The Sergeant at Arms announced the members of the Senate, who were admitted and conducted to seats.

Joint Convention

6:45 o’clock p.m.

The Joint convention was called to order by the President of the Joint Convention, Lieutenant Governor Binsfeld.

Bishop James Murray, from the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Michigan, offered the following invocation:

“I invite each of you to place yourself in the presence of God as we seek his blessing. Lord our God, We thank You for the Great Lake State in which we live, for its beautiful peninsulas and its diverse people. This evening we make our own the inspired words of the psalmist as we ask Your blessing upon the State of Michigan. May God always rule over it from sea to sea and from its rivers to the ends of the earth. May His name be blessed forever. As long as the sun, His name shall remain. In Him shall all the people be blessed. May the whole earth be filled with His glory. We pray especially this evening for the one hundred and forty-eight men and women of the Michigan Legislature. Guide them and help them in their deliberations. Among themselves they have many different points of view. They represent many different and legitimate interests. May they always resolve these differences with honesty and integrity, with justice tempered by compassion. Bless with Your spirit John Engler, our Governor, so that he will put forth wise proposals in accord with Your will, and for the common good of all who live in this state. Inspire everyone, Governor and governed, representatives and represented, senators and citizens, to work together to provide quality education, full employment, respect for human dignity as well as for all human life, a safe environment and secure families in which people can live and prosper in peace and harmony. Amen.”

The roll of the Senate was called by the Secretary, who announced that a quorum of the Senate was present.

The roll of the House was called by the Clerk, who announced that a quorum of the House was present.

The President of the Joint Convention announced that the two Houses had met in Joint Convention to receive the message of the Governor.

Representative Gagliardi moved that a special committee, consisting of two Representatives and two Senators, be appointed to invite and escort the State Officers to the Joint Convention.

The motion prevailed.

The President of the Joint Convention named as such committee Representatives Hanley and Brackenridge, and Senators Bullard and A. Smith.

The Sergeant at Arms announced the special committee appointed to invite the State Officers to be present at the Joint Convention.

The State Officers, escorted by the committee, were conducted to seats.

Senator DeGrow moved that a special committee, consisting of two Representatives and two Senators, be appointed to invite and escort the Judges of the Court of Appeals to the Joint Convention.

The motion prevailed.

The President of the Joint Convention named as such committee Representatives Olshove and Galloway, and Senators Shugars and Hart.

The Sergeant at Arms announced the special committee appointed to invite the Judges of the Appeals Court to be present at the Joint Convention.

The Judges of the Appeals Court, escorted by the committee, were conducted to seats.

Representative Gagliardi moved that a special committee, consisting of two Representatives and two Senators, be appointed to invite and escort the Justices of the Supreme Court to the Joint Convention.

The motion prevailed.

The President of the Joint Convention named as such committee Representatives Brown and Hammerstrom, and Senators Bennett and Peters.

The Sergeant at Arms announced the special committee appointed to invite the Justices of the Supreme Court to be present at the Joint Convention.

The Justices of the Supreme Court, escorted by the committee, were conducted to seats.

Senator DeGrow moved that a special committee, consisting of three Representatives and three Senators, be appointed to invite and escort the Governor to the Joint Convention.

The motion prevailed.

The President of the Joint Convention named as such committee Representatives Quarles, Alley and Gilmer, and Senators Gougeon, North and Vaughn.

The Sergeant at Arms announced the special committee to wait on the Governor.

The Governor, escorted by the committee, was conducted to the rostrum.

The President of the Joint Convention then introduced Governor Engler who gave his message to the Joint Convention as follows:

“Thank you, Connie, what have you been doing with this audience? Thank you for your kind introduction; and thank you for all you do, Bishop Murray, for the uplifting and inspiring prayer.

Majority Leader Posthumus, Speaker Hertel, Chief Justice Mallett, colleagues in government, citizens of Michigan: I stand before you to report on the state of our state.

And I am proud to say:

The state of our state is outstanding!!!

We’re in better shape than at any time since Michigan was converting the Arsenal of Democracy into the Automobile Capital of the World.

What a year it has been since I last stood here and addressed you—so much good news.

Congratulations to the Maize and Blue!

Now the whole world knows, Michigan is number one!!!

Congratulations, also, to the Red Wings—and Speaker Hertel—for bringing the Stanley Cup back to Michigan and Detroit!!!

And of course, any talk of champions is incomplete without mentioning the incomparable Barry Sanders—football’s Most Valuable Player, and one of sports’ most valuable role models!!!

Speaking of who's most valuable, I'd like to single out my MVP—my “most valuable partner”—Michelle!

In fact, we ought to acknowledge and thank all the spouses of the men and women who serve in government.

It is their love and support that makes our work possible!

It is fitting that we applaud Michigan's great teams and athletes because they are the best in their class.

They climbed to the top because of the important qualities they possess—qualities like strength, commitment, leadership, teamwork.

These words also make me think of Michigan's climb to the top in the decade of the '90s.

Strength.

Strength captures Michigan's economy in the 1990s.

24 tax cuts mean a savings of more than \$11 billion for our citizens.

Month after month after month, we report record-low unemployment numbers.

Today, more high-paying jobs are being created than at any time in our history.

Because of our efforts over the past seven years, Michigan is a far better state in which to live, to work, and to raise a family!

Commitment.

Commitment describes what we have done for public education in the '90s.

Funding is at an all-time high—more than \$11.8 billion!

That's a 50 percent increase since my first state of the state address.

Our education reforms are paying off—test scores are going up.

U.S. Education Secretary Dick Riley called Michigan his “most improved player” in the nation.

Because of our efforts these past seven years, Michigan is becoming a smarter state.

Leadership.

Leadership expresses how our welfare reforms have strengthened families in the '90s.

Welfare rolls have fallen for 45 months in a row and are at their lowest level in a quarter century!

More than 135,000 families have moved off welfare rolls, onto payrolls.

Because of our efforts over the past seven years, Michigan families are becoming more self-reliant.

Teamwork.

Teamwork describes all we've done in the '90s to make citizens safer in their homes and communities.

You have passed and I have signed more than 300 crime-fighting measures.

Crime throughout Michigan is down—down for the fifth year in a row!

Because of our efforts these past seven years, Michigan is becoming a safer state!

Teamwork also describes our bipartisan approach to fixing Michigan roads.

This year, for the first time, transportation spending will top \$1 billion—and we are doubling dollars for road repair.

Every penny of the fuel tax increase is going to repair roads, and this, too, will make Michigan safer.

We're fixing the roads, and we're fixing them now!!!

Ladies and gentlemen, we have achieved so much in so many fields of endeavor that the stage is set now for Michigan to reach even higher.

Strength, commitment, leadership, teamwork—that's how we've turned this state around, and that's how we'll take on the future.

Tonight I propose the next steps—bold steps—to make Michigan first in the twenty-first century.

Let us begin by looking at the state of Michigan's economy—because it is in truly outstanding shape.

In 1997, Michigan achieved its lowest unemployment rate since 1969—4.1 percent!!!

Just as remarkable is the fact that our state unemployment rate has been below the nation's rate for four consecutive years!

The last governor who could cite even one year below the national average was George Romney, way back in 1966.

So long ago, that Attorney General Frank Kelley was campaigning for his third term!

Our goal for 1998: Unemployment below the national average for five years in a row!!!

That was unthinkable back in the '80s.

Know what else was unthinkable back in the '80s?

Cutting taxes.

And here I want to congratulate this Legislature.

Your commitment to get government off the backs of our families and out of the pockets of our workers has allowed me to sign tax cuts totaling more than \$11 billion.

That's \$11 billion!

Some of our tax cuts will make for a pleasant surprise at filing time for years to come.

I applaud this Legislature for joining me in raising the personal exemption.

This year a Michigan family of four, with two pre-schoolers, will be able to exempt \$12,400 of income—more than ever before.

If you are Representative Mark Jansen and his wife LeAnne, with their four kids, will be able to exempt \$18,600! Ted Stopczynski would like that provision.

Besides higher personal exemptions, additional tax cuts are phasing in.

\$237 million in new tax cuts are taking effect this year, and \$280 million more next year.

My friends, since tax cuts have helped so many families and brought us so far, let's take a giant step.

Tonight, I propose we cut Michigan's income tax—and cut it again, and again, and again, and again—five cuts over five years. And again until the tax rate goes all the way down to 3.9 percent!!!

The cuts begin in the year 2000, and when fully phased in, Michigan's income tax will be the lowest in a generation.

What do these tax cuts mean for Michigan taxpayers?

Treasurer Doug Roberts has run the numbers using the higher exemptions and the lower rates, and the savings are huge—\$3 billion more.

I repeat: \$3 billion over the next five years—not for government, but for families.

What do these cuts mean for you and your family?

Let's say you're a Michigan family with an income of \$40,000.

In the first five years, your family will save almost \$850.

Or say you are a public school teacher, and you make \$49,000 a year.

Your family will save more than \$1,000.

Or say you're a Big Three autoworker, making \$55,000 a year.

Your family will save more than \$1,100.

These tax cuts are not targeted at special interests.

These tax cuts are across-the-board.

These tax cuts ease the “middle-class squeeze” for everyone, enabling families to buy a house, pay off bills, pay for day care, plan for college, or save for retirement.

Now, to those who claim government needs that money, I remind you: Think back to 1991.

Who—in the face of a \$2 billion deficit—would have expected us to cut taxes once, much less 24 times?

And to those who argue wrongly that our tax cuts put education funding at risk, I remind you again: We've cut taxes 24 times, and we have not cut public education.

Our firewall protecting education stands firm!!!

So let's take the next bold step—cut the income tax!!

Remember the higher taxes and failed policies of the '80s?

I do all too well—and we're not going back!

Look at our coat of arms before you.

You see the Latin word “Tuebor”—“I will defend.”

To defend our families and workers, I propose a common-sense solution.

I propose a constitutional amendment that would require a three-fifths vote of both the House and the Senate to raise taxes!!!

Currently 50 percent plus one raises taxes.

I believe we should make it a little bit harder.

Legislators in both chambers—including Senator Bouchard and many of his colleagues—have been working on this.

I support the language of Joint Resolution K, sponsored by Representatives Oxender, Perricone, Hammerstrom, and Jelinek.

That resolution reads: “No bill to increase a tax base or a tax rate of an income tax, sales tax, use tax, or the single business tax . . . shall become law without the concurrence of three-fifths of the members. . . .”

For the sake of the people in Michigan, now and in future generations, let's take this bold step!!!

Now let us look at the state of Michigan's environment and natural resources.

As chief steward of the Great Lakes, Michigan can be rightfully proud of her many accomplishments.

The water we drink is excellent.

We have made, and continue to make, tremendous progress.

The most recent EPA data show that our state is number one in the nation in meeting federal drinking water standards.

The quality of the air we breathe is also excellent.

We have made, and continue to make, tremendous progress.

And since we passed environmental reforms in 1995, the number of toxic sites we've cleaned up each year has quadrupled!

Many of those cleanups have been in our cities.

Reusing old industrial sites not only allows us to reinvigorate inner cities and downtowns; it enables us to slow down the paving of green fields and thus conserve Michigan's beautiful countryside.

To date, our cleanups have seen nearly \$300 million invested in our cities and nearly 3,500 jobs created.

While our record of achievement is impressive, the time is right to take the next step.

Tonight I propose we invest \$500 million more to make Michigan even cleaner!!!

These new “Clean Michigan” bonds will benefit both our peninsulas in three critically important ways—\$400 million for restoring polluted and abandoned sites; \$50 million for protecting drinking water; and \$50 million for upgrading facilities at our 96 state parks.

From Lake Superior to Lake St. Clair, our "Clean Michigan" initiative will improve our quality of life.

It will accelerate the cleanup of sites like a PCB-saturated landfill in Bay City, sludge pits in Van Buren County, a rusting tank yard in Eaton County.

It will protect our lakes, rivers, and streams—protect them from runoff and pollutants.

It will make our outstanding state parks even more enjoyable for tourists and campers.

The bottom line: This initiative means cleaning up our water, fixing up our cities, and sprucing up our parks!!!

My friends, our most precious resource is our children.

As moms and dads, we do all we can to help our children succeed.

As leaders and legislators, we must do all we can to help everybody's children succeed.

I've often said our strategy for success comes down to one thing: The state with the best schools wins.

No question about it: Michigan must have the best schools—the best in the world.

And the good news: We are making dramatic progress toward reaching that goal.

Remember all the problems we heard about in years past? . . . all the barriers to having good schools?

Working together, we have achieved unprecedented reforms to tear down barriers and open up opportunities.

Remember when millage elections were failing and property taxes were skyrocketing?

We fixed that problem with Proposal A, which slashed property taxes and constitutionally guaranteed funding for every student.

Remember the old funding system: The rich got further ahead, the poor fell further behind, and the kids got trapped in the middle?

Again, we fixed that problem with Proposal A.

Remember the pain when the last two governors signed executive orders that cut education by \$400 million?

On our watch: No executive order cuts!

In fact, since 1990, education spending is up 50 percent, and now tops \$11.8 billion.

And I am very proud to say that Michigan is the only state in America to balance its budget six years in a row, cut taxes 24 times, and increase education spending every single year!!!

Remember guns and knives in school?

We fixed that problem: Bring a gun and you're done.

Remember when you had to change houses to change schools?

We fixed that problem—with choice, charter schools, and competition.

Remember the complaints about teacher tenure?

We fixed that problem: Tenure reform means bad teachers are moving out, and good teachers are moving up!

Remember the 17-year-old court fight over special education funding?

We fixed that problem: Our \$1 billion Durant settlement treats all schools fairly and helps every child.

Remember concerns over technology and the lack of computers in classrooms?

We're been fixing that problem.

I envision that \$1 billion settlement being used to infuse more classrooms with state-of-the-art technology and increasing the number of trained teachers in those classrooms.

Imagine our children communicating across space and time in ways previous generations could only dream of.

Remember concerns over class size?

We're fixing that problem.

In the '90s, our \$4 billion increase in school funding has improved the ratio of teachers to students.

In fact, since I took office, Michigan public schools have hired an additional 6,700 teachers.

And this year we are launching a \$20 million initiative for even smaller classes.

Thank you, Senator Conroy and Senator DeGrow!

Remember when school boards spent all their time talking about those problems I just discussed?

Since we've fixed those problems, school boards are now free to focus on their real mission—delivering a quality education to every child!!!

The bottom line: Our reforms, combined with dedicated teachers and concerned parents, are getting results.

Rising test scores are the proof.

No matter what test you look at—ACT, SAT, MEAP, the High School Proficiency Test—our students are doing better.

Let's congratulate the kids who take the test, their teachers who prepare them, and their parents who support them.

With all we've done, what steps remain to make Michigan schools first in the twenty-first century?

My friends, nothing is more basic than the ability to read.

Reading changes lives.

The inability to read also changes lives.

It means falling behind your classmates . . . dropping out of school . . . spending your life in unfulfilling jobs or, worse, in prison.

If our children aren't reading, Michigan will never be first in the twenty-first century.

Let me tell you something that saddens me.

The most recent MEAP test indicates that 51 percent of fourth-graders cannot perform at grade level.

That means not even half our fourth-graders are good readers.

It doesn't have to be so.

The best research shows that it is realistic to teach almost 100 percent of our kids to read at grade level if—if—they are screened early for learning difficulties and are taught using effective methods.

In my visits to schools, I've seen the difference careful screening and good teaching can make.

It's unacceptable that any child grows up in Michigan unable to read. Unacceptable!

Tonight I set before you this challenge: Children who start kindergarten this fall must be able to read by the time they reach the fourth grade.

Let that be our goal—write it down: Reading by the fourth grade. Best in the nation. No exceptions. No excuses!!!

And while we're at it: No more social promotions!!!

Recent reform proposals in Detroit and here in Lansing seek to stop that practice.

I applaud them—and every school should stop it!

Now, making every child a reader will take commitment—the commitment of parents, teachers, school boards, and all of us here tonight.

I am proposing an ambitious "Reading Plan for Michigan."

This "RPM" strategy helps children even before they enter school.

Our Early Childhood Office in the Department of Education will develop "reading readiness kits" and get them into parents' hands.

Let's help moms and dads be good first teachers!

Because each child is unique, and because each child can succeed, I am directing the Department of Education:

- to assure that every child is assessed from the first day of school with the best diagnostic tools to determine reading readiness;

- to see that every child is monitored on an ongoing basis to insure reading progress;

- and finally, to design a model summer reading program to reinforce reading year around.

Michigan has many wonderful and dedicated teachers.

Dedicated as they are, they cannot do the job alone.

Fortunately, they are not alone.

Many individuals and organizations already volunteer.

From literacy councils across this state to local libraries, from ACE to STAR and many in between, Michigan is blessed with a wealth of reading organizations, and they are to be commended for all their good work!!!

Tonight, I am calling on all these groups, as well as Michigan's business community, to redouble their efforts so all children can read.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, I believe that a child who cannot read has no passport to the twenty-first century.

Reading is our most important prevention program.

It's about preventing ignorance and poverty.

All children can read—and in Michigan they will!!!

Something else is essential to learning: safe schools.

Too many teachers have become casualties in their own classrooms.

Last year, I called on the men and women in this chamber to pass our teacher protection legislation.

I support it, the MFT supports it, the MEA supports it, and the Senate passed it.

Make Michigan schools safer.

Protect our teachers and staff.

Let's get it done. NOW!

We all agree that a good education is the cornerstone of a good life.

But the foundation of a good life is a good family.

This evening, I am happy to report that the state of Michigan's families is much better today than it was when this decade began.

Infant mortality has declined for seven straight years, and is now the lowest ever in Michigan history.

We can celebrate six consecutive years of declining teen pregnancies—now we have the lowest teen pregnancy rate in a generation.

The improvement in our immunization rate is the most dramatic in the nation.

We also are helping more working parents with child-care needs than ever before.

Next year we will spend \$278 million—a 400 percent increase over the last six years.

And we will help more than 55,000 families with child care—a four-fold increase since 1992.

And thanks to our Healthy Kids initiative, 80,000 children who were without health insurance are now covered!

Our nationally acclaimed welfare reforms have also been strengthening Michigan families.

For 45 consecutive months, the number of families needing welfare has declined, and now welfare rolls are at their lowest level in 27 years!

All our remarkable progress gives Michigan another distinction we can be very, very proud of:

The United States Census Bureau reported last year that we were the only state in America where the number of people covered by health insurance went up, while the number of people living in poverty went down!!!

We've also made dramatic gains in fighting child abuse and neglect.

For children at risk, we are moving faster to make sure they don't miss their chance at childhood.

Our strategy is one of prevention, and we back it up in our budget.

Since the passage of our adoption reforms, the number of children adopted into permanent, loving homes has doubled.

And we can be proud of last year's far-reaching reforms that mean better-trained, child-protection workers; more rigorous family assessments; and speedier decisions to protect vulnerable children.

All of these actions are in the best interest of Michigan's children.

Tonight I'd like to pay special tribute to a great champion of children, Our Lieutenant Governor Connie Binsfeld.

What are the next steps to make Michigan families stronger and more self-reliant?

First, a new initiative called MICHild will ease the worries of parents of more than 150,000 uninsured children.

When fully implemented this year, virtually 100 percent of all Michigan children will have access to health insurance.

MICHild, I think it's safe to say, will save lives.

A second way to strengthen families is to crack down on deadbeat parents who don't—or won't—pay child support.

It is sad but true that too many single moms are driven into poverty because the father isn't doing his duty.

Recently Chief Justice Mallett announced that the Judicial and Executive branches are taking unprecedented steps to join forces and help these single parents and their children. Thank you Chief Justice and all members of the judiciary.

Tonight I propose the "Parental Responsibility Initiative" on behalf of every Michigan child—starting when the baby is born.

For fathers who aren't accepting financial responsibility for their children, our Parental Responsibility Initiative aims to identify them, locate them, put them to work, and make them pay.

A third way to strengthen families is to end drug abuse.

Drug abuse is self abuse because it undermines the ability to work and be self-reliant.

When you are a parent, drug abuse is also child abuse.

And that is intolerable.

This evening I propose "Operation Zero Tolerance" to end drug abuse among welfare recipients.

Let there be no ambiguity here.

Zero tolerance means just that—zero tolerance.

Beginning with a pilot program, welfare applicants will be tested before receiving benefits.

If they test positive, they will be referred to treatment.

No treatment. No benefits.

Tonight I ask you to help our children—by helping their parents break the habit!!!

A fourth way to strengthen Michigan families is to expand our successful Project Zero.

The goal of Project Zero continues to be what it has been from the beginning—to reduce the number of welfare families without jobs to zero.

Ambitious?

You bet it is.

But Ottawa County showed us the way.

Our goal is nothing less than to achieve 100 percent employment in every county for every parent on welfare.

Thus far tonight, I've proposed a series of bold, new steps to help Michigan families.

Government's number one duty is to protect families and their property against predatory criminals.

I am happy to report that, for five years in a row, the number of serious crimes in our state has dropped and is now also at a 27-year low!!!

This encouraging trend didn't just happen by accident.

It happened because of our resolve to reverse the failed policies of the past, which pampered prisoners and coddled criminals.

I commend the bold strides this Legislature has taken to put us on the right track.

More than 300 anti-crime laws have given police, prosecutors, and judges the weapons they need to fight crime more effectively—especially juvenile crime.

We're doing more to protect women and children from domestic abuse and sexual predators.

And we're keeping violent criminals behind bars for longer periods of time.

The verdict is in: By being tough on lawbreakers, we are making Michigan safer.

But—the cost of safety is vigilance.

So tonight we start with some unfinished business.

Last year I stood at this podium and told you about the tragic death of Judy Rosin.

Unfortunately, there are more tragic deaths to report.

Last October 12th, in Grand Rapids, a Camaro driven by a drunk driver crossed a median and careened into a minivan, killing a total of five people, three of them in the same family.

The only survivor: a two-year-old girl named Molly.

She lost all her family.

Dead because of a drunk driver.

A repeat offender.

Then, exactly four weeks ago tonight—on January 1st—three lifelong friends after watching the Rose Bowl victory were killed driving home to Brighton.

Dead because of a drunk driver.

A repeat offender.

It is urgent that you act.

Last June, Secretary of State Candice Miller and Representative Frank Fitzgerald joined me in unveiling legislation to get repeat offenders off the road.

I ask you: Had there been action in this Legislature, how many lives would have been saved?

Pass this legislation.

Second, it is imperative that you take action on sentencing guidelines to insure even longer prison stays for violent criminals.

I applaud the Senate for having the wisdom to pass unanimously the recommendations of the bipartisan Sentencing Guidelines Commission, which spent two-and-a-half years preparing the proposal that the Senate passed and is before the House.

Now all eyes are on the House.

Speaker Hertel and Members: I urge you to act promptly.

For the sake of our law-abiding citizens, keep the crooks off our streets and out of our neighborhoods by passing the guidelines out of your House!

Third, it is imperative that Michigan build more prisons.

Because we have been so successful at putting more criminals behind bars and making them serve longer sentences, we face a problem.

We simply don't have enough prison beds.

Certainly yes, prisons have a cost, but they serve a very useful purpose: They keep our streets safe by keeping crooks behind bars.

The only thing more costly than a lawbreaker doing time . . . is a lawbreaker who is out doing crime!

Fourth, it is imperative that these prisoners also work—it will be imperative to society.

My goal is to get more prisoners working.

For example, our Department of Corrections will be assisting Habitat for Humanity.

The prison in Freeland will pilot construction of prefabricated housing for transport to local Habitat sites.

That's just one more way we accomplish our goal—putting more prisoners to work.

Fifth, it is imperative that we get rid of a law that gives prisoners the right to challenge denial of parole.

When the parole board says "no," it should mean "no."

Just last year, more than 1,000 court appeals were filed, yet none was successful—not one prisoner was ordered paroled.

This wastes taxpayers' money, takes up our Attorney General's time, and clogs our courts.

Tonight I urge the Legislature to scrap this law.

Sixth and finally, it is imperative that we step up the war against gangs.

Senator Posthumus, for your leadership on the Youth Gang Violence Task Force, and Representative Varga, for your work in the House, I applaud both of you.

Tonight, to build on your good work and to combat gangs, I propose "Operation Night Hawk."

Teams of police officers and specially-trained probation and parole agents will be deployed on nights and weekends, when gangs are most active.

Any wrong move—drug use, curfew violation, associating with a known criminal—and violators will be arrested on the spot.

Just as we have made it a crime to recruit drug sellers, I propose we make it a crime for gang members to recruit or attempt to recruit teenagers into gangs that engage in criminal activity.

We've got to help crime fighters in the war against juvenile crime.

I greatly admire the men and women who put their lives on the line to fight crime, and we're duty bound to help them in any way we can.

Our get-tough approach is protecting families.

Consider Benton Harbor.

A year ago, eleven murders in ten days made it clear that decisive action was needed.

Benton Harbor officials asked for our help, and I am proud that our State Police met the challenge.

My friends, the Michigan State Police brought law and order back to Benton Harbor.

As a young mother told the *Detroit News*, and I quote, "I don't hear gunshots every night. I can sit on my porch again without being afraid for my life."

State Police Trooper of the Year Mo Burton, born in Benton Harbor, was part of the team that went to his home town and restored law and order.

Tonight Mo Burton and his wife are here. Would you please stand up.

Let's thank Trooper Burton and his wife, Jolita. We applaud you.

And while we're at it let's thank all the crime fighters who help make our homes and neighborhoods safer.

My friends, at the dawn of the twentieth century, Theodore Roosevelt said:

"We must dare to be great. We are face to face with our destiny, and we must meet it with high and resolute courage."

Tonight, we stand face to face with the twenty-first century—and our destiny.

To meet that destiny, I have charted a course that will benefit the people of Michigan for years to come.

Let us take bold strides to:

- help all children read,
- cover more children with health insurance,
- cut the income tax for our families and workers,
- amend the Constitution to protect taxpayers,
- pass our "Clean Michigan" initiative,
- expand our nationally acclaimed welfare reforms, and
- get tougher on deadbeat dads and drunk drivers.

As I talk to citizens from all walks of life, I am excited by what I hear.

Indeed, it is the people who give me the true pulse of the state of our state.

Their words and deeds tell me that our families are better off, our economy stronger, our students smarter, our environment cleaner, and our streets safer than they were when this decade began.

My report this evening reflects much good news.

It is cause for celebration, and it augurs well for the twenty-first century.

But we must not lull ourselves into thinking that we've arrived.

We are closer to the beginning, than to the end, of our journey.

We must continue to be courageous.

So tonight, I ask you—all of you, Democrats and Republicans—to continue with me on this journey.

Let us take the next bold steps together to make Michigan first in the twenty-first century.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the great state of Michigan."

The business of the Joint Convention having been completed, the Governor, the Justices of the Supreme Court, the Judges of the Appeals Court, and the State Officers withdrew.

Rep. Gagliardi moved that the Joint Convention adjourn.

The motion prevailed, the time being 8:00 p.m.

The Lt. Governor and members of the Senate retired.

The Speaker announced that the House of Representatives and Senate had met in Joint Convention and had listened to the message of the Governor.

Rep. Gagliardi moved that when the House adjourns today it stand adjourned until Tuesday, February 3, at 2:00 p.m. The motion prevailed.

Reports of Standing Committees

The Committee on Conservation, Environment and Recreation, by Rep. Alley, Chair, reported

House Bill No. 5343, entitled

A bill to amend 1994 PA 451, entitled "Natural resources and environmental protection act," by amending section 43510 (MCL 324.43510), as added by 1995 PA 57.

With the recommendation that the substitute (H-3) be adopted and that the bill then pass.

The bill and substitute were referred to the order of Second Reading of Bills.

Favorable Roll Call

HB 5343 To Report Out:

Yeas: Reps. Alley, Callahan, Anthony, Brater, Brown, Kilpatrick, LaForge, Mans, Basham, Middaugh, Birkholz, Bodem, Byl, DeVuyst, McManus, McNutt, Walberg,
Nays: None.

The Committee on Conservation, Environment and Recreation, by Rep. Alley, Chair, reported

House Bill No. 5473, entitled

A bill to amend 1994 PA 451, entitled "Natural resources and environmental protection act," by amending section 82126 (MCL 324.82126), as amended by 1996 PA 500.

With the recommendation that the following amendments be adopted and that the bill then pass.

1. Amend page 3, line 14, after "On" by striking out "AN OPERATING OR NONABANDONED" and inserting "a".
2. Amend page 4, line 7, after "CROSSING" by striking out "OF" and inserting "OR ALONG".

The bill and amendments were referred to the order of Second Reading of Bills.

Favorable Roll Call

HB 5473 To Report Out:

Yeas: Reps. Alley, Callahan, Anthony, Brater, Brown, Kilpatrick, LaForge, Mans, Basham, Middaugh, Birkholz, Bodem, Byl, DeVuyst, McManus, McNutt, Walberg,
Nays: None.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE REPORT

The following report, submitted by Rep. Alley, Chair of the Committee on Conservation, Environment and Recreation, was received and read:

Meeting held on: Wednesday, January 28, 1998, at 10:30 a.m.,

Present: Reps. Alley, Callahan, Anthony, Brater, Brown, Kilpatrick, LaForge, Mans, Wetters, Basham, Middaugh, Birkholz, Bodem, Byl, DeVuyst, McManus, McNutt, Walberg,

Absent: Rep. Schermesser,

Excused: Rep. Schermesser.

The Committee on Insurance, by Rep. Gubow, Chair, reported

House Bill No. 4784, entitled

A bill to amend 1956 PA 218, entitled "The insurance code of 1956," (MCL 500.100 to 500.8302) by adding section 2211.

With the recommendation that the bill pass.

The bill was referred to the order of Second Reading of Bills.

Favorable Roll Call

HB 4784 To Report Out:

Yeas: Reps. Gubow, Scott, Thomas, Varga, Vaughn, Basham, Llewellyn, Green, Jelinek, Law, London, Middaugh, Voorhees,

Nays: None.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE REPORT

The following report, submitted by Rep. Gubow, Chair of the Committee on Insurance, was received and read:

Meeting held on: Wednesday, January 28, 1998, at 4:00 p.m.,

Present: Reps. Gubow, Scott, Bogardus, Thomas, Varga, Vaughn, Basham, Llewellyn, Green, Jelinek, Law, London, Middaugh, Voorhees,

Absent: Reps. Dobronski, Palamara, Profit,

Excused: Reps. Dobronski, Palamara, Profit.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE REPORT

The following report, submitted by Rep. Gagliardi, Chair of the Committee on House Oversight and Ethics, was received and read:

Meeting held on: Monday, January 26, 1998, at 2:00 p.m.,

Present: Reps. Gagliardi, Cherry, Brewer, DeHart, Kilpatrick, Varga, Gustafson, DeVuyst, Fitzgerald, Goschka, Richner, Voorhees,

Absent: Reps. Agee, Hanley, Wallace, Wojno, Perricone,

Excused: Reps. Agee, Hanley, Wallace, Wojno, Perricone.

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE REPORT

The following report, submitted by Rep. Wetters, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture, was received and read:

Meeting held on: Thursday, January 29, 1998, at 8:30 a.m.,

Present: Reps. Wetters, Vaughn, Baade, Bogardus, LaForge, Willard, Horton, Jelinek,

Absent: Reps. Brewer, Green, DeVuyst, Gernaat, Nye,

Excused: Reps. Brewer, Green, DeVuyst, Gernaat, Nye.

Messages from the Senate**House Bill No. 4454, entitled**

A bill to create a commission for the control of the alcoholic beverage traffic within this state, and to prescribe its powers, duties, and limitations; to provide for powers and duties for certain state departments and agencies; to impose certain taxes for certain purposes; to provide for the control of the alcoholic liquor traffic within this state and to provide for the power to establish state liquor stores; to provide for the care and treatment of alcoholics; to provide for the incorporation of farmer cooperative wineries and the granting of certain rights and privileges to those cooperatives; to provide for the licensing and taxation of activities regulated under this act and the disposition of the money received under this act; to prescribe liability for retail licensees under certain circumstances and to require security for that liability; to provide procedures, defenses, and remedies regarding violations of this act; to provide for the enforcement and to prescribe penalties for violations of this act; to provide for allocation of certain funds for certain purposes; to provide for the confiscation and disposition of property seized under this act; to provide referenda under certain circumstances; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.

The Senate has substituted (S-2) the bill.

The Senate has passed the bill as substituted (S-2) and ordered that it be given immediate effect.

The Speaker announced that pursuant to Rule 45, the bill was laid over one day.

House Bill No. 5120, entitled

A bill to amend 1962 PA 192, entitled "Professional service corporation act," by amending section 4 (MCL 450.224), as amended by 1990 PA 166.

The Senate has substituted (S-1) the bill.

The Senate has passed the bill as substituted (S-1), ordered that it be given immediate effect and amended the title to read as follows:

A bill to amend 1962 PA 192, entitled "An act authorizing the creation of professional service corporations; providing definitions; providing exceptions; providing the manner and method of creating such corporations; providing for individual liability of officers, employees and agents of such corporations in certain instances; authorizing certain investments of corporate funds; regulating the issuance and transfer of capital stock; providing forfeiture of corporate franchise in certain instances; and requiring identification as a corporation," by amending section 4 (MCL 450.224), as amended by 1997 PA 139.

The Speaker announced that pursuant to Rule 45, the bill was laid over one day.

Senate Bill No. 757, entitled

A bill to prohibit a state employer from expending money received from the state to provide certain benefits to persons not employed by that state employer.

The Senate has passed the bill.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Senate Bill No. 816, entitled

A bill to amend 1949 PA 300, entitled "Michigan vehicle code," by amending section 722 (MCL 257.722), as amended by 1993 PA 22.

The Senate has passed the bill.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Transportation.

Senate Bill No. 846, entitled

A bill to amend 1996 PA 522, entitled "The Michigan biologic products institute transfer act," by amending the title and section 3 (MCL 333.26333) and by adding sections 3a, 3b, 6a, 6b, and 6c; and to repeal acts and parts of acts.

The Senate has passed the bill.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

Notices**Public Hearing**

Subcommittee on Violence in the Schools

Date: Monday, February 9, 1998

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Place: Whitmore Lake High School Cafeteria, 8845 Main Street, Whitmore Lake, Michigan

Rep. Schauer

Chair

Agenda: Violence in the schools
and any/or all business properly before the subcommittee

Announcement by the Clerk of Printing and Enrollment

The Clerk announced the enrollment printing and presentation to the Governor on Thursday, January 29, for his approval of the following bills:

Enrolled House Bill No. 4146 at 11:55 a.m.

Enrolled House Bill No. 5084 at 11:57 a.m.

Introduction of Bills

Reps. Bodem, Alley, McBryde, Dobb, Fitzgerald, Baade, Schauer, Crissman, Birkholz, London, Jansen, Gernaat, Dalman, Kukuk, Richner, Voorhees and Scranton introduced

House Bill No. 5518, entitled

A bill to amend 1988 PA 389, entitled "Roller skating safety act of 1988," by amending sections 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 (MCL 445.1722, 445.1723, 445.1724, 445.1725, and 445.1726).

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

Reps. McManus, Birkholz, Horton, Hammerstrom, Dalman, Mans, Goschka, Law, McBryde, Jansen, Jelinek, Perricone and Voorhees introduced

House Bill No. 5519, entitled

A bill to amend 1975 PA 238, entitled "Child protection law," by amending section 3 (MCL 722.623), as amended by 1994 PA 177.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Human Services and Children.

Reps. Hale, Wallace, Wojno, Parks, Varga, Schermesser, Rison, Scott, Baird, Vaughn, Willard, Murphy, Bogardus, Brater and Stallworth introduced

House Bill No. 5520, entitled

A bill to regulate the activities of travel promoters; and to provide certain rights and remedies to certain persons.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Consumer Protection.

Reps. Hale, Wallace, Wojno, Parks, Varga, Schermesser, Rison, Scott, Baird, Vaughn, Willard, Murphy, Bogardus and Brater introduced

House Bill No. 5521, entitled

A bill to amend 1976 PA 331, entitled "Michigan consumer protection act," by amending section 3 (MCL 445.903), as amended by 1996 PA 226.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Consumer Protection.

Rep. McNutt introduced

House Bill No. 5522, entitled

A bill to require disclosures of criminal convictions and certain conduct by certain persons; to require criminal history checks of certain persons; to require disclosure of child abuse or child neglect records of certain persons; to regulate the employment of certain persons; to prescribe the powers and duties and limit the liability of certain state and local departments and agencies; and to prescribe penalties.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Human Services and Children.

Rep. McNutt introduced

House Bill No. 5523, entitled

A bill to amend 1975 PA 238, entitled "Child protection law," by amending section 7 (MCL 722.627), as amended by 1997 PA 168.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on Human Services and Children.

Rep. Kelly introduced

House Bill No. 5524, entitled

A bill to amend 1984 PA 431, entitled "The management and budget act," (MCL 18.1101 to 18.1594) by adding section 255.

The bill was read a first time by its title and referred to the Committee on House Oversight and Ethics.

Rep. McBryde moved that the House adjourn.
The motion prevailed, the time being 8:45 p.m.

The Speaker declared the House adjourned until Tuesday, February 3, at 2:00 p.m.

MARY KAY SCULLION
Clerk of the House of Representatives.