



## Hard work, collaboration, & message

*(Continued from page 1)*

And the legislature backed away from big-time income tax cuts.

Call this a victory. But is it a harbinger of good things to come, or an aberration, a momentary departure from the dismal tax and spend, sometimes anti-government, anti-public school wars of past legislatures?

Consider this:

When the 2001 legislature convenes in January, at least one half of the House of Representatives will have never sat there before! What that half thinks and does about our issues will mean everything. Right now, we know virtually nothing about that half. Come November, we must choose wisely.

In part, the special session backed away from income tax cuts because no one knows for sure if our revenue growth will adequately replace the revenue local governments and school districts lost due to huge reductions in business equipment property taxes the '97 and '99 legislatures ordered.

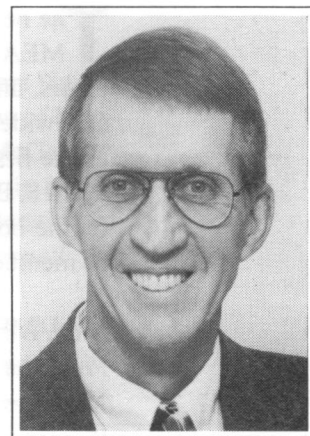
The university system, elementary and secondary schools, and the state pay plan remain seriously underfunded. Throughout the special session we promised we would be back for more in 2001.

The K-12 school funding system under which we labor is broken beyond repair. No one can explain how this system works. No one can justify its built-in, enrollment-driven brutalities. The system is a disgrace to simplicity and fair play. It hurts our children. It must go.

### A personal comment

A personal comment, my last as MEA president: Thank you for the years you gave me to serve MEA. I am grateful to you for your commitment to the merger of MEA and MFT. I know our new union will defend and enhance quality public education and good government throughout our great state better than either MEA or MFT separately ever could. And thank you for your support and confidence in my leadership.

I will give MEA-MFT my undivided attention. But, in the last analysis, it will be you, Vice-President Jim McGarvey, Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Ryan, Executive Director David Smith, and all our members, leaders, and excellent staff who will make our new union great. ■



**BY ERIC FEAVER**  
**MEA-MFT PRESIDENT**