

March 18, 1975
Kalamazoo Gazette
By Unknown

Asylum Lake Park Use Bill To Be Introduced

A new bill which would lease the 260 - acre Asylum Lake property to Kalamazoo County was scheduled to be introduced into the Michigan House today.

Rep. Robert Welborn, R - Kalamazoo, said he was co - sponsoring the bill with Rep. Wayne Sackett, R - Portage, and Rep. Howard Wolpe, D - Kalamazoo.

Since the Michigan Department of Mental Health has declared the property surplus, Welborn said, "I see no reason it shouldn't be made available to the citizens of Kalamazoo."

The bill would provide that the property be used as a public park, that the county construct and maintain a fence where the property adjoins private property, and that the county pay the state \$1 a year rental.

A similar bill died in the State Senate after Walter McVicker, sites section chief for the Department of Management and Budget, testified that the land may be surplus to the Kalamazoo State Hospital, but "it is not surplus to the state."

McVicker said in November that the state was awaiting completion of a land inventory — expected to take about a year — before deciding what to do with the Asylum Lake property.

Welborn said today that if for some reason the new bill does not pass, "I plan to take steps to require the State of Michigan to fence in the property and police the area in an orderly fashion."

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