

RUMBLINGS

Drivers win in spat over bridge study

The winner of last week's squabble over the \$3.4 billion Michigan Department of Transportation budget for 2009 may have been, of all people, drivers.

Depending on whom you ask, the skirmish was either a GOP-led fight, bankrolled by Ambassador Bridge owner **Manuel Morou** to



Morou

kill a proposed new bridge between Detroit and Windsor, or it was a Democratic effort to

force a needless new crossing on taxpayers.

Unless the budget was approved, with or without language about the ongoing Detroit River International Crossing study, MDOT was threatening to halt work on road projects all over the state. Both parties reached a compromise and rushed to issue breathless press releases praising themselves as saviors of the taxpayers and accusing the other side of not playing nice.

The Republicans, led by DeWitt's **Alan Cropsey**, got additional language in the budget bill that puts more oversight on MDOT during the study process, especially for land purchases related to a potential new bridge.

The Democrats, led by Detroit's **Steve Tobocman**, whose 12th District would be home to a new bridge,

FACTS ABOUT FAMILY BUSINESSES

About 100 people gathered at the Motor City Casino Thursday night for Crain's Family-Owned Business Forum.

Keynote speaker Paul Bernhard, director of the business transition planning group at Plante & Moran P.L.L.C., opened with a quiz designed to gauge respondents' knowledge of family businesses. One telling tidbit: Did you know that 64 percent of our nation's gross domestic profit is generated by family-owned businesses? To read more about the event, visit www.crainsdetroit.com.

claimed victory because the bridge study survived, period. Estimates have ranged from \$1 billion to more than \$3 billion for a new Detroit-Windsor link, which would take several years to build.

And in the meantime, MDOT's orange barrels and concrete barriers will continue to infest Michigan's highways in the forlorn hope of a smooth drive.

Lawyers to 'voice' parodies

Instead of lawyers singing the praises of their clients or cases, several local barristers are comedically crooning about a docket of issues — including Detroit's favorite textual ex-mayor.

The Detroit-based musi-

cal-parody troupe A (Habeas) Chorus Line has a new show, "LOL," that lampoons everything from Kwame Kilpatrick's predicament to the recent banking bailout and Sarah Palin.

"It has been a target-rich environment," said Justin



Klimko

Klimko, the group's lyricist and a corporate transaction attorney with Detroit law firm

Butzel Long.

A sample of Klimko's lyrics spoofing Hizzoner, sung to the tune of "I Can't Get Next To You":

*I can bulldoze run-down slums
I can give employment to all my high school chums
Oh, I can hire an army just to be my bodyguards
I pay my expenses with city credit cards
But my life is incomplete and I'm so blue
'Cause I can't get text to you*

The group is set to perform at 7 p.m. Oct. 4 at Berkley High School.

Tickets are \$15 and available at the door or in advance by calling (313) 436-2425 or e-mailing info@habeaschorus.com. Shows are about 85 minutes long and include about 25 songs.

The group first began performing in 1992 for the Detroit chapter of the Federal Bar Association, and makes itself available for events such as fundraisers and parties.

Information about the troupe, and songs from its CDs, is available at habeaschorus.com.

64%

Of what is generated by family-owned businesses?

See boxed item for answer.