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Opinion > Letters

Letters

[Print Page](#)

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The system has failed to protect the little guy

Editor,

It appears to me that the economic turn down cannot be stopped no matter what is done by the federal government. I do recall that there was a bill that was approved late this year for the housing sector, for those lending companies that had hit hard times, but little was done with the \$700 billion that the taxpayers had to fork over.

I was in contact with Fred Upton, one of the congressmen who helped push this bill through the House and Senate. He told me that this bill was set up to help those people like me with programs to help save my house.

To tell you the truth I did try to get into some of these so-called programs, with no avail. The worst perpetrator is the Michigan.gov Web site. It has hyperlink called "Save the Dream." It should be called "Trash the Dream." This Web site does not work. In fact, most of the institutions do not, and will not work with some one in the same boat as me. I even called the lieutenant governor on this Web site.

What I do know for a fact is that this money is not going for what it was intended, sort of like the Social Security, which is used for everything but what is designed for. This is no surprise. So the American public is stuck with the bill, holding the bag while the fat cats from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac still give their top people money that they do not deserve, and the rest of us wind up losing our houses.

I think that we should hold not just the companies accountable for what they have done, but also those congressmen and women accountable for helping make the system worst. This includes Mr. Upton.

Steven McEnaney

Decatur

Emergency crews were prompt and professional

Editor,

On Dec.21, extreme weather conditions, including icy roads, blowing snow and poor visibility contributed to a massive traffic crash. In all, as many as 100 vehicles were involved, either damaged or having slid off into the snow-covered median and shoulder. I was assigned the crash investigation and coordination of emergency services.

As a veteran Michigan State trooper I have investigated many traffic crashes involving multiple

vehicles, but never anything to this extent.

Officer Schadler, of the Lincoln Township Police Department, was first on scene. Officer Knapp of the St. Joseph Township Police Department, and I responded to assist. Immediately, we were overwhelmed as one vehicle after another, including jack-knifed semi tractor-trailers, crashed into each other before I-94 was shut down entirely. Lt. Lang (St. Joseph Township) Trooper Cook, (state police, Bridgman) and other officers arrived. The first priority was searching through the wreckage to locate and remove the injured. Unfortunately, among them there was one fatality.

First Lt. Willie Mays, (state police, Bridgman) was notified and coordinated support from fellow Bridgman Post personnel (many came from home), and more troopers came from the Niles, Paw Paw and South Haven posts.

Berrien County Sheriff Paul Bailey arrived at the scene and offered assistance. Lt. Goulooze, accident investigator, was contacted and requested to handle the fatal traffic crash.

The St. Joseph Township Fire Department and Medic 1 ambulance crews removed and treated the injured. They also transported motorists involved to the nearby Lake Breeze Hotel.

Jeff's Towing, Hasse's Towing and other wrecker services were very professional. In only a few hours, the damaged passenger vehicles, semi tractor-trailers and debris were cleared and I-94 was reopened.

Although closed for business, the Lake Breeze Hotel was accommodating. Red Cross volunteers established a base of operations there and helped those displaced, including families with small children. I was especially thankful for the hot coffee! Dep. Moore (Berrien County Sheriff's Department) and Officer Neal (Benton Township) assisted by transporting local families home or to a nearby relative.

Berrien County dispatch and the state police regional dispatch efficiently coordinated all of these services.

The motorists involved were extremely patient and repeatedly expressed their gratitude for all our efforts.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved. I am proud to have been part of this cooperative and coordinated effort, which is exactly what the public expects from emergency services.

Matt Churchill

Trooper

Michigan State Police

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