

# Nixon on the Line Today In Michigan

Saginaw, Mich.

Both candidates in Michigan's eighth district campaigned furiously yesterday in the closing hours of a special congressional election that Democrats and Republicans alike called a referendum on President Nixon.

Mr. Nixon's stake in the outcome of the election increased sharply last week when he barnstormed through part of the area, his first campaign foray since Watergate.

County clerks in the seven counties of the district said it appeared that 90,000 of 213,600 registered voters will turn out today to choose between state representative J. Bob Traxler, the Democrat, and his Republican opponent, James M. Sparling Jr.

Only once this century, in 1932, has a Democrat won in the eighth district. But public opinion polls published last week gave Traxler a slight edge.

Traxler and some political experts attributed his lead to unemployment, inflation, the energy crisis, Watergate and apathy among traditional GOP voters.

Mr. Nixon's visit was designed to ignite interest among the party faithful, GOP leaders said.

Republicans said Mr. Nixon is hopeful of a victory for Sparling, a 45-year-old former newsman making his first political race, because it could ease pressure for impeachment from some GOP representatives.

Democrats said a victory for Traxler, 42, a member of the Michigan Legislature since 1962, could intensify that pressure.

Two members of the Saginaw County Republican Executive Committee, Nancy Shaffer and Bo Weineke, resigned yesterday and endorsed Traxler.

Saginaw is the largest of the seven counties in the eighth district, which is north of Detroit on Lake Huron.

The seat became vacant this year when Representative James Harvey, who served for 13 years, resigned to accept appointment as a federal judge.