



## Hoekstra visits businesses on bike tour



*Contributed/Frank Wilson*

Beachway worker Hyacinth Sinclair, a Jamaican national, shows U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Holland, how to tuck in the end of a pillowcase Monday morning. Hoekstra is working at area businesses during his 2008 bike tour of his district.

**By STEPHEN KLOOSTERMAN**

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Saugatuck, MI — U.S. Rep. Pete Hoekstra learned how to fold bathroom towels the fancy way Monday morning at The Beachway Resort in Saugatuck.

“If Pete worked here for about a month, maybe he can gain a little speed,” said Beachway owner Kathy Wilson. “I suppose we’d have to pay him.”

Hoekstra, R-Holland, is working at area businesses during his 2008 bike tour of his district. The experiences allow him to listen to the views of those who work about issues they face.

Seasonal workers at Beachway, 106 Perryman St., most of them from Jamaica, put Hoekstra to work for about an hour, directing him to fold towels, make a bed, do laundry and clean a bathroom.

“He’s sweating,” laughed worker Hyacinth Sinclair as Hoekstra finished scrubbing a bathroom floor. According to a live update posted to the Web, Hoekstra ended up ruining the shirt he was wearing after he splashed it with bleach.

Hoekstra quizzed workers about their living conditions and work skills, and spoke to the owners Kathy and Frank Wilson about their need to bring in foreign workers on temporary work visas.

Hoekstra said that in previous tours, he’s found that farmers also need to hire foreign help.

“They can’t find workers to do these jobs, even in a state like Michigan,” he said.

Kathy Wilson told Hoekstra she was surprised by how well business has been so far this summer despite the poor economy.

“It just shows tourism is one of the pillars that keeps Michigan going,” Hoekstra said. “There’s a lot of jobs that are just created by small- to medium-sized businesses.”

The bike trip to Saugatuck was cut short Monday afternoon by thunderstorms.

“It got a little cold and a little rainy,” said state Rep. Bill Huizenga, R-Zeeland, who accompanied Hoekstra for the first part of the trip.

Hoekstra appeared later in the day at a golf benefit for the Zeeland-based ministry Winning at Home. He is scheduled to work a variety of jobs this week in Holland, Manistee, Cadillac, Grand Haven, Muskegon and Ludington.