

Activist: 'Hurtful things' trigger Engler recall

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Efforts to oust Michigan's governor will succeed — where others have failed — because the actions of John M. Engler have hurt more people, according to organizers of the recall initiated this week in Oakland and other Michigan counties.

"He (Engler) has done hurtful things," said Regina McNulty of Oak Park, referring to budget cuts enacted by the governor — or attributed to him by Democrats.

McNulty, 67, a retired court clerk, said she is not personally affected by the cuts because she is not receiving welfare or other state benefits.

But she is angry at Engler and supports the recall — to the point of serving as the south Oakland County coordinator — because she knows how people will be hurt by those cuts.

"People will go hungry," she said. "People will be homeless. People will get less health care. How does that help the state?"

MAGGIE TYSON, a Bloomfield Township resident who is a volunteer in the Welfare Rights Organization, said she is active in the recall effort because cuts in welfare mainly affect children.

"When you talk about welfare, you talk about children," she said. "Two-

thirds of welfare recipients are youngsters."

"It seems like Engler just sits in the capitol thinking of ways to hurt people," she said. "Michigan's welfare benefits were inadequate to begin with — to cut them further is unconscionable."

McNulty, Tyson and other Oakland County residents were at the Michigan Employment Security office in Pontiac Monday, along with Jackie Shrader the rural housewife who kicked off the recall effort.

Shrader and recall advocates had similar rallies at MESC offices in Livonia, Detroit and five other cities across the state. One recall proponent said people in those offices, presumably the unemployed, "streamed out to sign the petitions."

NO RECALL effort against a Michigan governor — including the 1983 campaign against Democrat James Blanchard — has ever been successful.

Part of the reason is the seemingly impossible number of signatures needed to put a recall on the ballot. State law requires a number equal to 25 percent of the votes cast for governor in the last election.

For Shrader's group, that means garnering 641,141 signatures within 90 days.

Backers of the Headlee Tax Cut Petition — named after Farmington

Hills businessman William Headlee — were unable to gather the 191,000 valid signatures needed to put that proposal on the ballot.

Getting enough signatures to recall Engler is an uphill task, acknowledged McNulty. But not impossible.

"We need about 7,500 signatures a day," she said. "But we have an ally Engler himself. He's united us."

McNulty said within 24 hours of

the recall's kickoff she received a request for copies of the petition from a senior citizen complex in Hazel Park. She didn't want to identify the complex, she said, because its residents might suffer reprisals.

"But this (the recall) is just beginning," she said.

While she claims the recall is non-partisan, McNulty said her political leanings are activist and liberal.

In 1974 she was a candidate for

lieutenant governor on the Human Rights ticket. Her running mate was Zolton Ferency.

Carolyn Peyser, a nurse from Birmingham, also believes the recall effort will be successful.

"I'm aware of what those budget cuts can do," said Peyser, who works at the Oakland County Medical Care Facility, a county-operated facility with about 175 patients, many of whom need specialized care.

ABOUT 80 percent of those patients of those patients are on Medicaid, Peyser. "The cuts (which face legal challenges) could mean that many of them will have to leave after 10 or 15 years."

Peyser was an unsuccessful candidate for Oakland County Commissioner last fall. She ran as a Democrat against incumbent Republican Donald W. Jensen, also of Birmingham.

Dems, GOP disagree over recall

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Organizers of the recall to oust Gov. John Engler insist their efforts are nonpartisan ... a nonpolitical groundswell.

Republicans, however, challenge that claim and offer a newspaper article as proof.

The recall effort against Republican Engler is not a nonpartisan, grass-roots movement, the press sec-

retary of the state GOP said in a statement issued Tuesday.

... but rather a partisan maneuver engineered by Democrats and professional social service bureaucrats," Bryan Flood said in a statement sent to numerous newspapers and broadcasting stations.

Flood also faxed copies of a story that appeared in The (Lansing) State Journal. Among other things, that story reports the toll-free number recall proponents are urging follow-

ers to use rings into the East Lansing home of Bob Alexander, first vice chairman of the Ingham County Democratic Party.

The article said Alexander acknowledged installing the toll-free line, but denied being "an insider" in Democratic circles. He put the Engler recall phone in his home because "no one else was insane enough."

HE REPORTEDLY received

"hundreds of calls," the story reports.

A representative of Ingham County Democrats is also quoted in the story, insisting that Alexander is acting on his own and not as a representative of the party.

Donald Tucker, chairman of the Oakland County Democratic Party, insists that claims of Democratic involvement in the Engler recall are "poppycock and foldarol."

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