

# Corbin's plans: revitalize state, promote self

By Steve Barnaby  
staff writer

Agriculture, education and tourism are key industries in state Sen. Gary Corbin's plan to revitalize Michigan's economy.

The 39-year-old Democrat is traveling throughout the state outlining his agenda for executive leadership should he win the uphill battle for the governor's chair.

But with the gubernatorial primaries more than a year away, the Clio resi-

dent unabashedly admits promoting name recognition — his — is the most immediate task.

By hitting the campaign trail early, the second term state legislator hopes to be ahead of the Democratic primary pack with a strong grass roots organization.

Coming from a traditionally Republican area, Corbin appreciates the value of grass roots organization and one-on-one campaigning.

"People don't want to be taken for granted. They don't want to be ig-

nored," he says, shifting his athletic-looking body uneasily in his too-small chair.

Several times in the decade since entering public life, Corbin has had to fight the political odds against stiff Republican opposition. Each time he has waged a door-to-door campaign to victory.

In 1972 he won re-election as a county commissioner in a GOP district where Richard Nixon won overwhelmingly. In 1974 he beat an incumbent Re-

publican for the state senate seat he now holds. In 1978 he did it again.

A SLAYER OF Republican dragons is his message. But, he admits, the effectiveness of that message depends on a well-planned media campaign.

"For any Democrat to be successful, he must be a good media candidate. Not in itself does it mean success. But it's very important," he says.

"Equally important is a candidate of substance."

But for now the image is the thing.

Corbin sports a neatly tailored dark suit — not too flashy. His hair is cut fashionably.

He talks about family. "I've talked about running for governor with my family. They are willing to be part of the campaign," he says about his wife and two daughters.

"With that decision made, the physical decisions aren't so difficult. You can stand up under the pressure of a campaign. There are a lot who talk about running for governor who haven't made that kind of family decision."

An ordained minister, Corbin mentions it but seems uncomfortable pursuing the subject. He came to Michigan from Indiana in 1967 to serve as a minister in the small city just north of Flint.

Since becoming a full-time politician, he has risen in the Democratic ranks as a liberal legislator. Although the majority of his reputation has been built on such liberal legislation, he plays it down in these days of conservative predominance.



Gary Corbin

AMONG BILLS he has sponsored are the lobbyist reform act, the sunset proposal now under consideration in the house, of representatives, and the full employment act of 1978.

He is chairman of the Senate finance committee, where he ran into trouble recently in attempts to garner enough committee support to bring the Milliken tax proposal to the floor.

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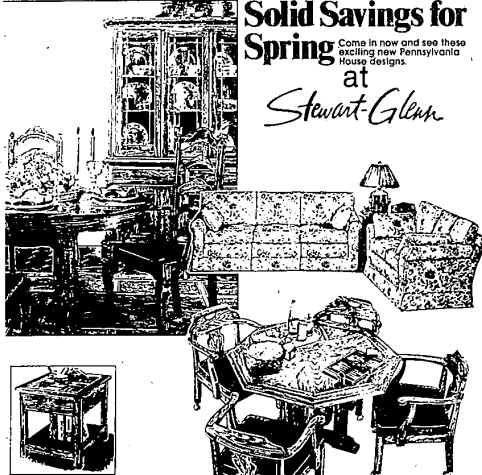
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