

# GOP reps hail Engler candidacy as 'exciting'

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

No one's endorsing her, but Republican state representatives from suburbia all say it's "exciting" that Colleen Engler is running for governor.

"She's everyone's second choice," said Rep. Mat Dunaskiss of Lake Orion, a Dan Murphy supporter.

The 33-year-old, fourth-term state representative from Mount Pleasant surprised party leaders when she announced she would be the fifth candidate — the only woman and the only legislator — to seek the GOP nod Aug. 5 for a chance to take on Gov. James J. Blanchard.

The wife of Senate Majority Leader John Engler, Rep. Engler rarely speaks on the floor or in committees, according to those who know her. But when she does, it's articulate and authoritative, they agree.

A MORE cynical view in the Capitol press corps is that Engler faces a tough challenge for her college-town House seat and is using the gubernatorial race for media attention.

"We're really excited," said first-term Rep. Lyn Bankes of Livonia. She learned of Engler's decision at a monthly meeting of women legislators.

"She will surface issues that are being buried. She asked us to identify bills that we cared about. Child care is my bag," said Bankes, a Bill Lucas supporter.

Pointing to President Reagan's emphasis on the family as the focal point of govern-



State Rep. Colleen Engler wants top state job

menter Lucas, Murphy, Richard Chrysler nor John Laue has ever served in Michigan's Legislature.

"She's been on statewide campaigns. She has a network. She's one of the best-versed candidates in the state," Dunaskiss said.

Engler's own announcement stressed her experience in the Legislature and her outside origins. She said Blanchard, a former congressman, is "uncomfortable working with Lansing legislators and has chosen to be a ceremonial governor." She made no mention of being a woman or trading on the women's vote.

YET ENGLER has never been known as a legislative leader in Lansing.

"I think she feels that people will look at her and say, 'Is that she or John

mental programs, Bankes said it's the kind of issue a Republican like Engler can run on while other candidates hash over traditional issues.

"EXCITING," SAID Sen. Doug Cruce, R-Troy, who even sent out a press release on the topic. He called her "qualified for the job" but issued no endorsement.

"I'm very enthusiastic," said Rep. Judith Kilmer of Birmingham. "It will be an interesting campaign. I'm not endorsing anyone."

"I'm excited," said Rep. Shirley Johnson of Royal Oak, adding that "I never endorse in primaries."

"We're the Rainbow Coalition," chuckled Rep. David Honigman of West Bloomfield, pointing to the Engler and Lucas candidacies. "All they (Democrats) have is WASPs." Honigman is a Murphy supporter.

"It's a new twist, a good idea," said Rep. Gordon Sparks of Troy. "I'm not committed."

"SHE'S GETTING in late," said Rep. Gerald Law of Plymouth Township. "Most people are committed to other candidates," said Law, a Lucas supporter. "But she's very bright and articulate. It's good to see a woman running for higher office."

Dunaskiss, a three-term lawmaker and former Oakland County commissioner, touched on another reason why legislators are excited about Engler.

"She's one of ours," said Dunaskiss, an apparent reference to the fact that neither incumbent Democrat Blanchard nor chal-

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"She's everyone's second choice."

—Rep. Mat Dunaskiss  
R-Lake Orion,  
speaking about  
Colleen Engler

## Highway gas price lowest since '79

State self-serve gasoline costs fell between 5.1 and 5.5 cents — the largest single-week drop since AAA Michigan began keeping records in September 1973.

The average cost of self-serve regular along major state highways is below \$1 per gallon for the first time since September 1979.

Statewide full-serve costs declined to the lowest average since January 1980 and metropolitan Detroit costs are at March 1983 levels.

AAA Michigan's "fuel gauge" survey of

300 stations along major state highways shows self-serve, no-lead and regular prices dropped 5.4 cents in one week.

No-lead averages \$1.021 per gallon, 22.6 cents below the full-serve cost. Self-serve regular averages \$0.958 per gallon, 22.3 cents below full-serve, ranging from \$0.799 to \$1.179.

Full-serve, no-lead along state trunklines dipped 4.5 cents to average \$1.247 per gallon, costing from \$0.899 to \$1.699. Full-serve regular fell 4.3 cents to average \$1.181 per gallon. It ranges from \$0.879 to \$1.659.

A check of 100 metropolitan Detroit sta-

tions shows self-serve, no-lead dropped 5.5 cents to average \$1 per gallon, 38.2 cents below the full-serve price. Prices range from \$0.899 to \$1.219.

Self-serve regular, which last week fell below \$1, tumbled another 5.1 cents to average \$0.916 per gallon, 30.5 cents below full-serve. It costs from \$0.839 to \$1.039.

Detroit area full-serve, no-lead dipped 3.4 cents to average \$1.382 per gallon. Prices run from \$0.929 to \$1.849. Full-serve regular dropped 3.3 cents to average \$1.311 per gallon, varying from \$0.849 to \$1.799.

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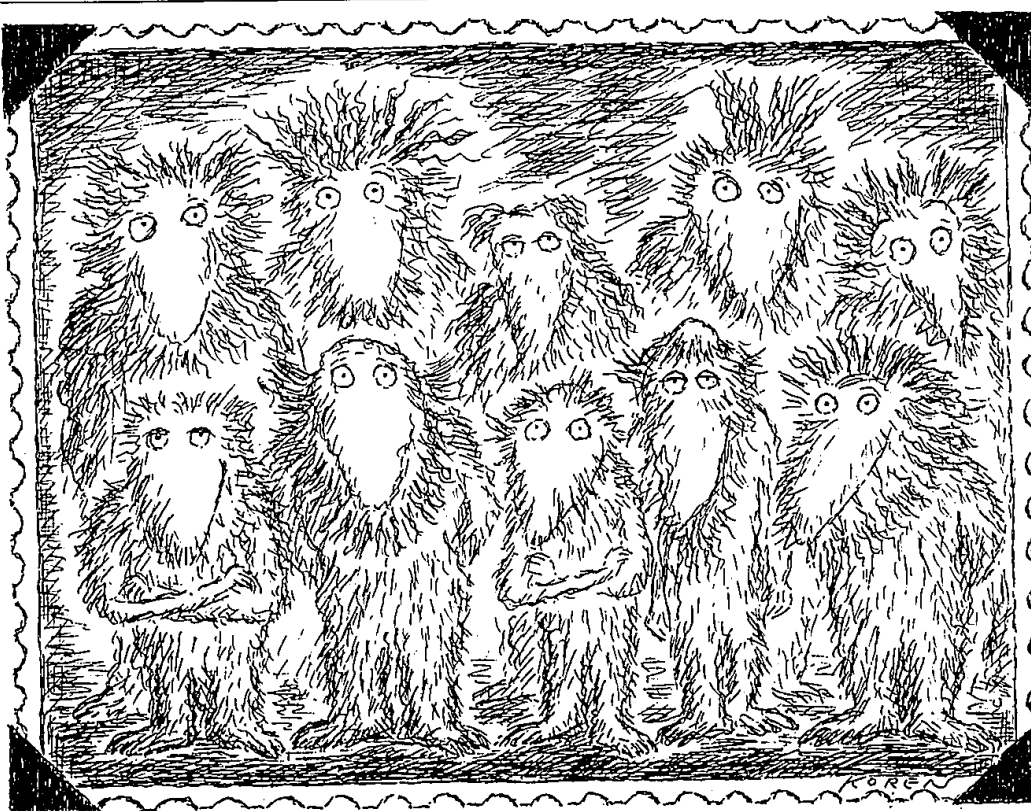
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