

## **MIRS Capitol Capsule - December 16, 2009**

### **Weaver: Not A Candidate In '10, Yet**

Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth **WEAVER** said today she has not made a public announcement on whether she will run for re-election next year and, if she does, she's leaving her options open on whether she wants to appear as a nominee of the Michigan Republican Party (MRP).

The independent-minded Weaver has been a lightning rod for criticism by conservative Justice Robert **YOUNG** and former Gov. John **ENGLER** for not sticking with the other Republican-nominated judges in precedent-setting decisions that come before the court.

At the MRP leadership conference at Mackinac this fall, Engler talked about "finding some help" for Young on the Supreme Court (See "**Weaver Dissed At Mackinac**," 9/27/09). Weaver said she's undeterred.

"Nothing bothers me, particularly that kind of foolish," she said. "Look, I'm a judge. I'd be happy, assuming I decide to run, to have the nomination of every group that wants to nominate me because I feel I'm what we need in a judge. An independent."

"Even if the Democrats nominate you?" she was asked at the Lansing Country Club before she was to be recognized by Michigan's Children for "her decades of judicial work and leadership on behalf of children and families" at its 10th annual "Much Ado About Something Wonderful."

"They can all nominate me . . . I'm not in that mode right now. I'm not going to make any decisions for a long time."

By law, Weaver doesn't have to declare her re-election intentions until early July. As an incumbent, Weaver doesn't need to be nominated by a political party to appear on the ballot, meaning she could be an independent candidate if she chooses.

Weaver was elected to the Supreme Court in 1994 and re-elected in 2002. Previously, she had served on the Michigan Court of Appeals and the probate court.

But the northern Michigan justice said she's not concentrating on that decision right now. She's currently moving into a new Traverse City office building where the Department of Human Services (DHS) currently operates, a change that will save the state \$67,000 a year in rent payments, she said.

Also, Weaver said she is still pushing her judicial reform measures. She wants to see legislative term-limits extended and Supreme Court term-limits reduced. Also, Weaver wants to see Supreme Court justices elected by districts.

The Justice pointed out that she is the only member of the seven-member body that doesn't live in Metro Detroit or Lansing. Three justices live in the Grosse Pointes, which is over representation, Weaver said.

"Isn't it a little strange that Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan and there's nobody west of Lansing on the court?" Weaver said. "I understand that 40 percent of the population is in the greater Detroit area, but that doesn't mean four justices out of seven and I think it can be fixed."