

SEARCH  
DETNEWS.COM

GO

Sunday, July 29, 2001



Return to Editorials

The Detroit News

E-mail this story

Comment on this story

Previous story Next story

detnews.com

## SITE INDEX

[Homepage](#)  
[Search](#)  
[CyberSurveys](#)  
[News Talk](#)  
[Sports Talk](#)  
[Lions Talk](#)  
[Tiger Talk](#)  
[Wings Talk](#)  
[Car Talk](#)  
[Tech Talk](#)  
[Horoscope](#)  
[Hot Sites](#)  
[Lottery](#)  
[Weather](#)  
[Staff](#)

## NEWS

[Autos](#)  
[Joyrides](#)  
[Business](#)  
[Careers](#)  
[Census](#)  
[Columnists](#)  
[Commuting](#)  
[Detroit History](#)  
[Editorials](#)  
[Health](#)  
[Metro / State](#)  
[Livingston](#)  
[Macomb](#)  
[Oakland](#)  
[Wayne](#)  
[On Detroit](#)  
[Nation / World](#)  
[Obituaries](#)  
[Death Notices](#)  
[Politics / Govt.](#)  
[Real Estate](#)  
[Religion](#)  
[Schools](#)  
[Special Reports](#)  
[Technology](#)

## SPORTS

[Sports Home](#)  
[Lions/NFL](#)  
[Pistons/NBA](#)  
[Red Wings/NHL](#)  
[Shock/WNBA](#)  
[Tigers/Baseball](#)  
[MSU](#)  
[U-M](#)  
[More Colleges](#)  
[Golf Guide](#)  
[High Schools](#)  
[Motor Sports](#)  
[Outdoors](#)  
[More Sports](#)  
[Scoreboards](#)

## Rep. Barcia feels pain of Republican redistricting plan despite moderate positions

By George Weeks / The Detroit News



U.S. Rep. Jim Barcia of Bay City, Michigan's most moderate Democrat on Capitol Hill, wins by big margins and delivers big for the state by working effectively with Republicans.

He won the praise of Gov. John Engler for teaming with Rep. Vern Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, a fellow member of the House Transportation Committee, to change the federal funding formula to boost Michigan's road money by about \$300 million a year. On Friday, Barcia co-authored an amendment that would mean more funding to cope with Great Lakes sewer overflow problems.

Michigan's newest House member, Republican Mike Rogers of Brighton, calls Barcia "a quality guy doing a darn good job."

But Barcia is a Democrat.

The GOP-ruled Legislature adopted a congressional redistricting plan that throws Barcia in a district with 13-term Rep. Dale Kildee, D-Flint. It takes away from Barcia the heavily agricultural counties in the Thumb that he has ably served since 1993.

Nothing personal. Because of population shifts, Michigan is losing one of its 16 congressional seats. Republicans did what Democrats would have done had they controlled the pen.

They made sure the lost seat cost the other party. Barcia himself notes "If the shoe were on the other foot, we would be doing the same thing."

Republicans also met their two priorities. One was to draw a more favorable district for Rogers, who won by a mere 111 votes in a recount, in an open seat that had been held by now-U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Lansing.

The other priority was to draw a seat highly favorable to Secretary of State Candice Miller. Republicans did that by carving the 10th District, now held by Rep. David Bonior, D-Mt. Clemens, to include the northern two-thirds of Macomb County, St. Clair County, and three counties now represented all or in part by Barcia: Lapeer, Sanilac and Huron.

There has been speculation that if Barcia decides to back away from a 5th District match-up with Kildee, he might run again for the state Senate, where he served 10 years.

There also has been speculation, fanned by those close to him, that Barcia might run in the new 10th district that was drawn for Miller. But he categorically ruled that out Friday, vowing "I will not move out of Bay

## ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment  
▶ Casino Guide  
▶ Movie Finder  
▶ TV Listings  
Crossword

## HOMESTYLE

Homestyle home  
▶ Decorating  
▶ Food  
▶ Gardening  
▶ Home  
Improvement  
▶ Home Life  
▶ Home Tech  
▶ Wine Report

## PHOTOS

Sports  
Red Wings  
Autos  
Joyrides  
News  
History

Copyright 2001  
The Detroit News.

Use of this site  
signifies your  
agreement to the  
[Terms of Service](#)  
(updated April 17,  
2000).

County. It is my political anchor."

As a statewide candidate, Miller has run well in the Thumb. But there is some discomfort in the agricultural community there about losing Barcia as an advocate.

In a column headlined "Who wants a rep named Candy?," Publisher Emeritus Brett McLaughlin of the Tuscola County Advertiser wrote of an earlier GOP redistricting proposal: "not only would we lose a representative who knows agricultural issues, but we would be bunkered up with metropolitan Detroit."

He called Miller "a pretty good secretary of state, but you gotta wonder what she knows about protecting the county's sugar industry or fashioning a farm bill."

On the other hand, a rep named Candy seems appropriate for the sugar industry.

What finally passed did not put Tuscola County in the 10th with the other Thumb counties. The final districting awaits the outcome of a Democratic federal court challenge of the Legislature's plan.

However this is resolved, it would be a shame if Michigan lost "a quality guy doing a darned good job" in Washington.

### Promise Kept

One of Gov. Engler's top transportation priorities has been a new Sault St. Marie lock to accommodate the growing number of larger ships passing between Lakes Huron and Superior. Congress has authorized it, but eight Great Lakes states have to contribute toward its cost.

Engler vowed Michigan would meet its \$14.1 million share. Last week, he signed legislation for the initial \$4.7 million deposit that, with interest, will cover Michigan's annual costs.

*George Weeks is The News' political columnist. His Sunday column appears in the Outlook section; his Tuesday and Thursday columns appear on the Commentary page. Reach him at (517) 371-3660 or [gweeks07@aol.com](mailto:gweeks07@aol.com).*

▶ [Comment on this story](#)

▶ [Previous story](#) ▶ [Back to index](#) ▶ [Next story](#)