

EPA chief denies political motive

Gorsuch embroiled in new fight

WASHINGTON — Already facing a contempt of Congress citation, the chief of the Environmental Protection Agency is locked in a new confrontation with Congress over attempts by a House subcommittee to interview more than 30 agency employees.

Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said he would ask the panel today to issue subpoenas to the EPA employees, charging Ann Gorsuch and her general counsel were impeding his subcommittee investigation.

At a news conference

Wednesday, Gorsuch said she was trying to protect the employees' rights in demanding last week a lawyer and a Republican staff member be present during interviews by subcommittee investigators. She also insisted transcripts of the interviews be made available.

Dingell said he "cannot and will not accept" those conditions which he felt would provide a "chilling" effect on the investigation by inhibiting witnesses.

He said the panel would gladly allow the employees to have their own lawyers present but objects to EPA having people in the room "to monitor the behavior of our witnesses."

Dingell's subcommittee is investigating allegations that election politics influenced the release of federal Superfund money to clean up toxic waste sites last fall and that Rita Lavelle, a top EPA official fired Monday, may have had a conflict of interest in her involvement in one case.

"It's pretty clear the administration is deliberately stonewalling this committee and other committees on this matter," Dingell said. "We've normally been able to get information without going through all of this tomfoolery."

Dingell said the interviews with employees were necessi-

tated by Gorsuch's refusal, on orders from President Reagan, to turn over EPA enforcement files on toxic waste cases to another subcommittee, for which she was voted in contempt of Congress and faces possible prosecution. Dingell's panel has sought similar files.

At a news conference Wednesday, Gorsuch rejected charges from anonymous agency sources that politics have influenced the release of Superfund money for toxic waste cleanups.

"Political considerations have never driven any decision under Superfund to my knowledge, nor will they in the future," she

said.

Dingell said his House subcommittee is investigating allegations that "political judgments were made" in connection with a waste site near Los Angeles, the Stringfellow Acid Pits.

"We have no evidence of a pattern," Dingell said.

The allegations of political manipulations in EPA's handling of the Stringfellow site stem from the delay of a \$6.1 million cleanup grant.

Other congressional sources said EPA employees have complained to the House committee that agency officials placed several dump sites on an "election track" last fall.

X-cars called back because of brakes

DETROIT — General Motors Corp. is recalling almost a fourth of its first generation of front-wheel drive X-cars because faulty rear-wheel brakes can lock and cause the cars to spin out of control.

GM said Wednesday that the recall of 240,000 Chevrolet Citation, Pontiac Phoenix, Buick Skylark and Oldsmobile Omega models was its response to an "initial determination" by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration that the cars had defective brakes.

The recall marks the 12th time the X-car models have been recalled by GM to fix a variety of problems. GM refused to comment on how much the latest recall will cost the company.

"We are taking this action to end uncertainty in the minds of our customers as opposed to a lengthy controversy on the subject," said GM spokesman Harold Jackson.

In mid-January, it was disclosed NHTSA was investigating reports the rear brakes on some of the front-wheel drive autos can lock, causing the vehicles to spin out of control.

The agency later said it had determined the cars were defective.

repairs of the faulty brakes. Last year, GM recalled thousands of the cars to fix a problem that could lead to fuel leakage.

The automaker also said some manual transmissions were faulty and leaking front-end seals could cause leakage of transmission fluid.

Two weeks ago, GM confirmed NHTSA had asked it ab-

out complaints that power steering on 1980 and 1981 versions of the cars does not work when the engine is cold or the car moving very slow.


Consumer safety advocates have recommended drivers carry sandbags or other heavy items in the cars' trunks to keep the back of the car stable until the brakes can be fixed.

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Friday, Feb. 11 at 8 p.m. —
Service led by Dr. Len Bierman; Oneg Shabbat following.

Saturday, Feb. 12
Services coordinated by Ben Pashoff — call Ben at 846-1075 for time.

Sunday, Feb. 13
Rabbi Cahana visits 11-1:30

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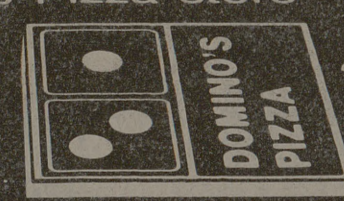



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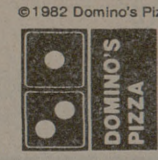
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TEXAS HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, TEXAS HEALTH CAREERS
TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION
TEXAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL THERAPY
THE STEHLIN FOUNDATION FOR CANCER RESEARCH
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