



## legislature

### gm ad campaign to fight measure could backfire

#### Bill designed to help car dealers is gaining fans

by tom roeder tom.roeder@gazette.com

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Calhan Republican Rep. Marsha Looper's car dealer bill at the General Assembly is gathering support, thanks to an effort by General Motors to kill the measure.

Looper penned HB1049 to help a Colorado Springs Chevrolet dealer who lost franchise rights during the General Motors bankruptcy last year.

The bill has turned into a statewide movement to battle Detroit, as backers from both parties decry moves by General Motors and Chrysler to shutter 39 dealers statewide.

The bill also has GM mounting a hasty campaign to kill Looper's bill.

"I think it is outstanding," Looper said of the growing support.

The bill, which cruised through the House on a 60-5 vote, would force car companies to give more compensation to dealers they close and give those dealers a right to reclaim their businesses if the carmaker decides to return to the market where it has downsized.

The measure is now being considered by the Senate and is on a fast track to a floor vote.

On Friday, Senate Democrats piled on as supporters, led by Colorado Springs Sen. John Morse. Morse, the chamber's majority leader, said they're motivated by a \$60,000 ad campaign from GM that takes aim at the bill.

"This was exactly the wrong thing to do, unless they wanted to make sure the bill passed," Morse said. "They have solidified the vote for this bill. I hope they do a better job of building cars than they do of politicking."

General Motors spokesman Greg Martin said Friday that Looper's bill endangers the carmaker's ability to make money.

"It's a downhill ski slope of bad business that will remove our ability to manage our retail network, to set up a profitable business model and to repay the taxpayers," Martin said, referring to billions of dollars in federal loans the firm has received.

Looper said she introduced the bill after family-owned Daniels Chevyland in Colorado Springs was

told its franchise was being pulled.

Elizabeth Daniels, general manager of the dealership, told a House committee last month that the company invested millions on a relocation to satisfy GM.

The dealer remains open and focused on diversifying its business.

Daniels has filed for arbitration with GM in a bid to retain its dealership.

Martin pledged that GM will keep fighting the bill.

“House Bill 1049 thumbs its nose to all of that precedent and essentially overturns a bankruptcy court and legislation at a federal level for a few under-performing GM dealers,” he said.

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