



# William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate

*Dave Dempsey*

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"Bill Milliken has always been a thoroughgoing pluralist. He cherishes diversity and differences of opinion and he shuns extremism. . . . My hope is that history will show he was closer to the mark than the Republican Party of today."

---Congressman Sandy Levin

"This is an outstanding and long-overdue biography of a man who set the standard for how a political figure should behave in a civilized society. Anyone who wants to understand modern Michigan history-or who wants to know how our politics and government could be better today-ought to read this book."

---Jack Lessenberry

William Milliken, Michigan's longest-serving governor, stands as an icon of decency even among the state's most cynical political observers. Often seen by the public as a man above politics, Milliken was in truth an astute deal maker who governed by crafting coalitions with politicians that spanned the gamut from Detroit's hard-left Coleman Young to the rural conservatives of his own Republican Party.

Born in Traverse City, Michigan, Milliken fought in World War II and returned home to run the family business, served as lieutenant governor from 1965 to 1969, and was then elected to four-year terms in 1970, 1974, and 1978. Milliken stepped down after fourteen years and a record of education reform, environmental protection, urban policy, and civil rights-and a series of bruising tax fights.

Twenty years after leaving office Milliken's legacy of civility and willingness to work with political opponents stands tall. But his outspoken defense of traditional Republican values has cast him into a political no-man's land that makes this story as intensely emotional as it is relevant to today's no-holds barred politics.

Dave Dempsey presents a fully developed picture of Milliken that reveals both his strengths and weaknesses while also providing the political and historical context of Milliken's time in office-and the lessons of his life and career for current and future politicians and the public.

Dave Dempsey serves as Communications Director for Conservation Minnesota and consults for other environmental and conservation organizations across Minnesota and Michigan. He is author of *William G. Milliken: Michigan's Passionate Moderate* and *Ruin and Recovery: Michigan's Rise as a Conservation Leader*.

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