



Indiana's mayoral gender gap

Kennedy, Hughes, Brown will try and break big city ceiling

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - As Melina Kennedy kicked off her Indianapolis mayoral campaign on Monday, her husband and young children were just off the stage to her right. At her left was a woman holding a placard reading, "Moms for Melina."

Canon IV CEO Jerry Jones - whose company provided the backdrop to this ambitious occasion - talked of the great men, from Lugar to Peterson, "who molded this city. These men made history. Now it is time for us to make history. Don't you think it's time to put a woman in the mayor's office?"

As the crowd erupted into cheers, Kennedy quickly responded, "It is time to make history."

If Kennedy can defeat Mayor Greg Ballard, she would enter the annals of Hoosier political history, which has been starkly short on female executive leadership.

Indianapolis never has had an elected female



Melina Kennedy hopes to make history as she challenges Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard. A female has yet to lead one of Indiana's biggest five cities. (OFA Photo)

mayor (there was a brief attempt to appoint one in the aftermath of the Ku Klux Klan fiasco in the mid-1920s). Neither have Fort Wayne, South Bend, Evansville, Lafayette, Gary, East Chicago, Kokomo, New Albany and Jeffersonville. Cosette Simon served 11 days as mayor of Fort Wayne

Continued on page 3

Holding & folding

By **RUSS STILWELL**

BOONVILLE - The opening session of the 2011 General Assembly should not have surprised anyone.



When the House Democrats pulled a never-used rule out of their political playbook that delayed opening day feel-good speeches, it was a classic case of the minority informing the majority (or in this case Pat Bauer sending not so subtle political smoke signals to Speaker Brian Bosma) that we matter, we count and be careful with your agenda or you



"I believe that for all our imperfections we are full of decency and goodness and that the forces that divide us are not as strong as those that unite us."

- President Obama



Howey Politics Indiana

is a non-partisan newsletter based in Indianapolis and published on the campus of Franklin College. It was founded in 1994 in Fort Wayne.

Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington
Jack E. Howey, editor
Beverly K. Phillips, associate editor

Subscriptions

\$350 annually HPI Weekly
\$550 annually HPI Weekly and HPI Daily Wire.

☎ Call 317.627.6746

Contact HPI

Howey Politics Indiana
6255 N. Evanston Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
www.howeypolitics.com

bhowey2@gmail.com

☎ Howey's cell: 317.506.0883

☎ Washington: 703.248.0909

☎ Business Office: 317.627.6746

© 2011, Howey Politics Indiana. All rights reserved. Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, whole or part, is a violation of federal law without permission from the publisher. ❖

just might not have one.

He could have just as well sung lyrics from the classic Kenny Rogers song, "The Gambler":

You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, Know when to walk away, and know when to run.

You never count your money when you're sittin' at the table. There will be time enough for countin' when the dealin's done.

A long time ago, a prominent state senator said about House Democrat Leader B. Patrick Bauer, "Never underestimate Pat Bauer politically or intellectually." Wise words from a wise former senator. No doubt that Gov. Daniels gets it. The bigger question is whether the House Republicans get it.

The governor has been on the receiving end of the good, the bad and the indifferent from the feisty partisan from South Bend throughout his tenure. That's one of the reasons the gov has repeatedly stated that now is not the time to for a contentious Right-to-Work battle. The state has other issues far more deserving debate. I hope that Speaker Bosma and his caucus understand as well.

Some of the most successful politicians in the Hoosier state are familiar with the crosshairs of political weapons – sometime aiming the sights and sometimes being the target. Bauer and Daniels are experts at this political sport. Both have a lot of practice with each other. But the shot initiated last week by Bauer was not directed at the governor; rather it was a shot over the bow to Bosma and the House Republicans. If they hope to move their weighty agenda, hopefully they took notice.

One only has to look at the past to predict the future. The year was 1995 and the Republicans had captured the Indiana House with fifty-six seats. They had run on an aggressive agenda of a Contract for Indiana. They were swept into office with a

national wave just short of a tsunami. Times were good. Sound familiar?

Fast forward to 2010. With a wealth of "capital" support from Daniels, House Republicans ran on a Daniel's agenda of reform. They were swept into office with a national wave of relentless tsunami proportion. Sixty house seats and nearly a score of fresh faces in the freshmen class.

In '95, they began the move to dismantle organized labor that created the most contentious and massive lobbying the Hoosier capitol had ever experienced! Twenty five thousand trade unionists converged on the state capital.

The only issue talked about or written about was the controversial labor issues. They had forgotten their agenda and the political reality that a near tsunami propelled them into office. And they lost their impressive majority the very next election.

2010? It was a very popular and motivated governor with the hurricane-force winds of a tsunami of the century that propelled the House Republicans to victory. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, the repudiation of Democrats in 2010 put the GOP in control of the most state legislative seats since 1928. Sounds to me like a national storm of epic proportion, not a recipe to take on all of organized labor in a mid-sized industrial state with a strong union presence.

The 2010 win in Indiana ended with a political tsunami with waves that pounded the shores in a relentless torrent. They just kept coming, beginning at the doors of then Speaker Pelosi and continuing the cascade through the state legislatures all the way to the courthouses. It was not a call to arms to dismantle labor and pick a fight that will overshadow what the election was really all about.

The House Democrats know when to pick a fight and when to take their medicine. They demonstrated this on opening day last week. Just



like Kenny Rogers, they know when to "hold 'em and when to fold 'em." After all, they are in the minority.

The House Republicans also know when to pick a fight and when to take their medicine. However, time will tell if they know when to "hold 'em and when to fold'em." I hope they learn lessons from years past. Maybe they should review this classic song's other lyrics as well.

Now Ev'ry gambler know the secret to survivin' Is knowin' what to throw away and what to keep

"Knowin' what to throw away and what to keep" just might make the 2011 session a whole lot more productive, albeit a whole lot less interesting. ❖

Stilwell is a former Democratic state representative.

Mayors, from page 1

after Mayor Win Moses resigned in a campaign finance scandal. Moses was then reelected by Democratic precinct officials to finish out the term he won in 1983.

Indiana never has had a female governor. The two women lieutenant governors - Democrat Kathy Davis and now Becky Skillman - took a pass on the next open gubernatorial nominations despite the state's long history of LGs positioned to make the next step up. Jill Long Thompson won the 2008 gubernatorial nomination, but lost to Gov. Mitch Daniels by 18 percent, failing to unite Hoosier Democrats even while Barack Obama carried the state in the presidential race.

Indiana has yet to elect a female U.S. Senator, and only Virginia Ellis Jenckes, Cecil Murray Harden, Katie Hall and Julia Carson have won congressional seats.

In most cities where the gender barrier has been broken, the results were hardly lasting. Mayor Judy Anderson lasted only one term in Terre Haute, as did Eleanor Kesim in Elkhart. Muncie Mayor Sharon McShurley and Portage Mayor Olga Velazquez are on thin ice politically in this year's elections.

That's not to say there haven't been success stories. Former state representative Nancy Michael in Greencastle (three terms), Jane Reiman in Carmel (two terms), Sally Hutton in Richmond (two terms), Sheila Brillson in Michigan City (two terms), and Tomilea Allison in Bloomington (two terms) won reelections. LaPorte's Kathleen Chrobak



Indiana's successful female mayors - Greencastle Mayor Nancy Michael (top), Bloomington Mayor Tomilea Allison, and West Lafayette Mayor Sonya Margerum led college towns.

won in 1999, did not seek a second term in 2003, then defeated Republican Mayor Leigh Morris in 2007 by a 2,499 to 1,750 margin. Huntingburg Mayor Connie Nass served two terms before making the rare jump to serve two terms as state auditor.

And then there are the grand dames of mayoral politics. Democrat Sonya Margerum served 24 years at the helm in West Lafayette while Republican Maggie Prickett did four terms in Mishawaka, winning her first term in 1963 and serving until Bob Kovach upset her in 1979. It's interesting that Margerum and Prickett served in smaller "twin" cities where males ran the predominantly larger cities next door.

Prickett, Allison, Margerum, Hutton and Michael also served or serve in the college towns of Purdue, Indiana, DePauw, Earlham and Notre Dame universities - places where a more enlightened electorate would be better disposed to look beyond gender.

"Maggie was a widow best known as the operator of a grocery store when she first ran and won, taking advantage of a split among Mishawaka Democrats," said longtime South Bend Tribune columnist Jack Colwell. "Quickly, she brushed away any of the concerns of that era that a woman wouldn't be able to handle the tough job of mayor amid tough economic times resulting from the demise of Studebaker automotive production. She was a tough administrator, and adding to her image were stories about how she often would be the winner in friendly poker games with 'some of the boys' who thought they could outbluff or outsmart her."

Prickett played to the parochial interests of those Mishawaka citizens who



wanted no part of joint efforts with neighboring South Bend and solidified her popularity by besting South Bend in economic development competition. But at age 71, she ran one time too many, losing to Democrat Kovach as she sought a fifth term in 1979. "Democrats finally were united for the first time in the mayoral contests in which she ran," Colwell recalled. "While Maggie still was personally popular, there was a growing feeling among Mishawaka voters that some of the key figures in her administration had been in power too long and needed to go."

For most females, just breaking through the glass ceiling can be daunting. But staying in office can be even more of a challenge.

In 2003, Indiana had 14 females in the two major parties who ran for mayor and 11 won in 119 cities, including Nancy Michael in Greencastle, Linda Buzinec in Hobart, Gail Kemp in Huntingburg, Suzanne Handshoe in Kendallville, Deborah Cantwell in Lawrence, Shannon Buskirk in Martinsville, Rosemary Knowles in Mount Vernon, Sally Hutton in Richmond, Gayle Strassell in Tell City, Judy Chastain in Salem, and Jan Mills in West Lafayette. Of those, Michael, Knowles and Mills defeated female opponents.

In 2007, four of those - Buzinec, Buskirk, Knowles, Chastain - lost primary battles to men. And another five - Mills, Kemp, Cantwell, and Strassell along with appointed Franklin Mayor Brenda Jones-Matthews - lost general reelections.

A big winner in 1999 - New Albany Republican Regina Overton - upset Mayor Doug England by 1,300 votes. In 2003, Democrat James Garner easily defeated Overton 5,971 to 3,893.

This year, along with Kennedy, two Fort Wayne Republicans - former Allen County Councilwoman Paula Hughes and Fort Wayne Councilwoman Liz Brown - are challenging incumbent men. If Hughes or Brown wins the GOP primary (Eric Doden is also running) the winner takes on first-term Democratic Mayor Tom Henry. Republican Linda Buskirk lost to Democrat Graham Richard in 2003 by a 27,251 to 19,701 margin.

The experience of then Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy in Indianapolis is instructive. She entered the 1999 mayor's race with the imprimatur of former mayors Dick Lugar, Bill Hudnut and Stephen Goldsmith, but lost to



Richmond Mayor Sally Hutton (top) and Fort Wayne Republican Paula Hughes will be running this year.

Bart Peterson by nearly 20,000 votes. That race became a referendum on Goldsmith's two controversial terms in office. But in losing to Peterson, Gilroy lost a significant slice of the Republican female vote. "It wasn't just GOP women," said J. Cameron Carter, who managed communications for the Gilroy campaign. "We were concerned with the female vote in the closing weeks."

And therein lies the danger to female mayoral candidates. Because the mayor deals with the grittier aspects of public policy - running police and fire departments, collecting the garbage, running the sewer system - the reality is that many voters see it as a "man's job."

Playing brute force politics

Successful female mayors - as Prickett did with her poker games - have to play brute force politics.

Chicago's Jane Byrne won a 1979 mayoral race when incumbent Mayor Michael Bilandic mishandled a blizzard that year. Byrne made a number of bold moves, such as temporarily moving into the crime-riddled Cabrini-Green housing project. But she made critical mistakes, such as endorsing Sen. Edward Kennedy in his race against President Jimmy Carter, then had a public showdown with her fire department, which had been ordered to knock off a climber on the John Hancock Center with a fire hose. Ultimately Byrne lost a 1983 reelection battle to African-American candidate Harold Washington after splitting the white vote

with Cook County State's Attorney Richard M. Daley, the son of the former mayor and now the current mayor.

The political danger for Kennedy could be elements she views as assets. Her two young children were conspicuous at Monday's campaign kickoff. But that can put the campaign into the gender gray zone. Fair or not, some voters will question why she isn't raising her young children as opposed to running American's 12th largest city.

Kennedy's portfolio as deputy mayor under Bart Peterson centered on economic development, playing an instrumental role in creating the BioCrossroads project. Her community activism is broad and includes programs like Dress for Success, Great Indy Neighborhood Initiative, Teach for America and the Domestic Violence Network.

The campaign website features the couple's "twin school-age children, Marcus and Sophia." In fact, the campaign is themed around them. "It is their future, and the opportunities Melina and Bob want for them, that drives



her commitment to public service and her vision of a new tomorrow for Indianapolis.”

Kennedy is undaunted by any gender gap. “My candidacy is based on my experience. I’m qualified to run the city,” she said on Wednesday. “I have the vision and passion and I happen to be a woman.”

Her candidacy comes on the heels of two other historic political events in the state when Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first women to win the Indiana presidential primary and then the man she defeated then, Barack Obama, became the first African-American president and the first Democrat to carry Indiana since 1964.

“Our president broke some barriers,” Kennedy said, adding that in recent judicial elections, “the top vote getters have been women. I think the people will be look at me as a candidate who can be effective. I don’t think it will be a key issue.”

She plans to hold Ballard accountable on several fronts. Kennedy said he reneged on a promise to rescind the county option income tax hike. And he’s lost 35,000 jobs, Kennedy says. There have been an array of tax and fee increases and there have been problems with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department which has been at the center of the Officer David Brisard vehicular homicide case and the alleged beating of a teenager.

Ballard will defend his record, saying in his December campaign kickoff, “Just last month, Newsweek listed Indianapolis as one of the top 10 cities in America best poised for economic recovery. CNBC named Indianapolis as one of the 10 best cities to relocate to. In fact, we have commitments for more than 8,500 new jobs and nearly 900 million dollars in capital investment to the city this year alone. To put that in perspective, in this difficult economy, Indianapolis attracted 3,000 more jobs than any other year in the last 10 years! That is leadership at work.”

Ballard added, “As cities across the country face staggering budget deficits, and have increased taxes and dramatically cut services, Indianapolis stands in proud con-



Melina Kennedy announcing her candidacy on Monday with husband Bob and her two young children to her right. She had a good week, reporting \$1 million while Jose Evans dropped out of the race, leaving only Rob Gibson facing her in the Democratic primary (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

trast. We are doing more with less. We’ve improved city services and in 2009, we offered relief to taxpayers by reducing income taxes by nearly \$7 million. We continue to consolidate township fire departments to provide more efficient and cost-effective services. For mayors, I led the charge for property tax caps, and now the average homeowner is paying one-third less in property taxes than they did in 2007! That is leadership at work, and we absolutely cannot go back.”

Instructive history

History can be instructive in Indianapolis politics. Police controversies can exact a po-

litical price, as Goldsmith found out in 1996 when a police riot ruined his gubernatorial bid. When Mayor Lugar ran for the U.S. Senate in 1974, there was another police controversy that didn’t help in his loss to Sen. Birch Bayh.

Ballard acknowledged that in his campaign kickoff, saying, “We are putting more police officers and detectives into the hot spots, using real time data to be proactive in our crime prevention – and the numbers show it is working. Now we’ve had our share of challenges in recent months, but let me be clear – the vast majority of the brave men and women who put on that uniform everyday are dedicated to making our city safer and serving the public honorably.”

Kennedy notes that the homicide rate is up despite falling in other big cities across the nation while property crimes are up. “Why are we not following national trends?” she asked. “That will be an issue.”

Another critical aspect is knowing when to go negative. Gilroy was forced to run negative ads in 1999 when polls showed Peterson leading and they backfired. The same happened to Peterson eight years later with Ballard winning by 5,000 votes despite a 10-to-1 money disadvantage and only a couple of weeks of positive TV.

The two decade-long population shift is a big advantage for Kennedy, as Democratic candidates swept all Marion County offices on Nov. 2 despite the Republican tsunami nationally.

If Kennedy can take advantage of those trends this November, then the real challenge may just be beginning. And that’s winning reelection. ❖



Violence *The not-so-distant American cousin*

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Hoosier U.S. Reps. Shepard Crumpacker and E. Ross Adair were seated on the House floor on March 1, 1954 in the midst of an immigration debate when they were startled by a commotion in the gallery.

"I didn't realize they were shooting guns," Crumpacker recalled in a 1986 interview. "I thought it was firecrackers. So we just sat there and then we realized that anybody who had gotten up and ran had either been shot or shot at. People who moved attracted their attention."

Five congressmen were shot by Puerto Rican extremists - some in the back - and none were killed.

The story is a reminder that violence has always been a not-so-distant cousin to American politics. Four of our presidents have been assassinated and several others - including Theodore Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan - were injured in attempts in some 20 attacks. All of our modern presidents since Richard Nixon have been targeted, with the exception of President Obama.

That U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, federal Judge John M. Roll and 9-year-old Christina Green - among others - couldn't escape the gunshots of Jared Loughner with the stillness that Crumpacker and Adair summoned in their crosshair moment is tragic.

In the confusing aftermath some of my media colleagues and many citizens became engrossed in speculation of a political motive. Statistically, an estimated 40,000

Americans are so mentally ill that they are capable of violent outbursts, according to research by Dr. E. Fuller Torrey, a research psychiatrist and author of "The Insanity Defense." It is out of this mostly apolitical group that half of the American murder rampages similar to what we saw last Saturday are perpetrated.

Many cite the shrill political rhetoric these days as a potentially volatile element. But in reality, violence has been a constant companion in the American experience, whether it was the gun duels of Aaron Burr, Alexander Hamilton or Andrew Jackson, the street brawls of Tammany and Chicago politics, or canings on the House floor in the prelude to the Civil War.

Violence flared last Saturday and it inevitably will again some day.



U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly during an August 2009 town hall that was moved outside to a Kokomo street due to the size of the crowd. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

In the quarter century that I've covered Indiana politics, the notion of violence is a constant, if latent, companion. For me it became more conspicuous in August 2009 as the health reform debate rolled into the town hall season. We watched national media coverage of people showing up at rallies carrying AK-47s and with Jeffersonian placards, quoting "The tree of liberty is watered by the blood of patriots and tyrants."

I traveled to Kokomo to watch U.S. Rep. Joe Don-



nelly host a town hall and close to 500 people showed up, prompting the congressman to move it outside to the street. Having grown up in nearby Peru, I know Kokomo well and its politics can be dynamic. During the energy shocks three decades ago, I remembered UAW members lining U.S. 31, verbally targeting those who drove foreign-made autos. Beyond this passion, there was little reason to expect political violence.

As Donnelly spoke, there were several plain clothes cops in the audience. Under the intense heat and sunlight (Donnelly borrowed my Ray-Bans for the first 15 minutes of the discussion), folks asked questions and demanded explanations. Donnelly was earnest, respectful and was interested in facts and opinions. That is what he received from these assembled patriots.

"This is our chance to hear what others have to say," Donnelly told the crowd which appeared to be an even mix of Obama supporters and skeptics whose concerns ranged from budget deficits to "death panels" and abortion, and even constitutional concerns. Nearly half the license plates in the nearby parking lot were from outside Howard County.

Like his close friend Gabrielle Giffords - with whom Donnelly had entered Congress in 2007 - the Democrat had hosted "Congress

on the Corner" events, including one at a Martin's Supermarket in Mishawaka a few days before. Normally 15 or 20 people might show up, but on that day more than 200 turned out. The atmosphere that Donnelly experienced in Kokomo and Mishawaka demanded a strict stewardship. "What I won't have is people screaming and shouting at each other," he said. "At that point, we have a safety risk."

Afterwards, a sweating Donnelly who talked for nearly 90 minutes, beamed at how the event that was originally supposed to take place in a 100-person auditorium ultimately turned out. "What you saw here was a real Hoosier crowd. They wanted to hear what I had to say and I wanted to hear what they had to say. I'm glad it went that way. I expected it to go that way."

I remember leaving Kokomo that day with a good feeling. The public square had been the scene of a vigorous, respectful debate.

While Donnelly and U.S. Rep. Mike Pence keep a brisk pace of town halls, other members of the Indiana delegation avoided them. Then congressman Baron Hill, who struggled to control a town hall that same month at Bloomington North HS, spoke of "political terrorists" to the Washington Post. "That's a strong word to use, but if you're there to blow up a meeting, that's terrorism," Hill told HPI. Hill acknowledged he used "pretty strong language" but described people disrupting town hall meetings around the U.S. as those "who have no intention in engaging in debate."

Republican Tea Party activist and U.S. Senate candidate Richard Behney talked of cleaning his guns if change didn't come to Washington. Many activists realized the danger of such rhetoric, as was the case in Corydon last fall when, during a speech by Treasurer Richard Moudock, a sign was placed near the stage repudiating violence.

It is a sad thing when public servants become afraid of the people.

It's a two-way street. Political candidates and activists who place gun cross-

hairs on the maps of political opponents - as was the case with Reps. Giffords, Hill and Donnelly so targeted - stand to reap a bitter harvest. Politicians who target minorities and they are killed or injured by extremists risk the broad bush.

The public square needs to survive and sometimes it may be up to average citizens to keep a watchful eye over our public servants, even if we disagree with their politics. Good employers protect their employees.

As for the Jared Loughners who invariably walk among us, Hoosier singer John Mellencamp observed in his song "Rural Route" - "Give us the mercy for the drug-addicted and the mentally ill" ❖





Daniels speech through the presidential prism

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - When sizing up Gov. Mitch Daniels' seventh State of the State address in the prism of a potential presidential bid, the 30 minute annual exercise was chalked full of fodder.

The first quarter of the speech was heavy on Indiana contrast with the rest of the Great Recession beleaguered states. First, there was anticipation.

"Hoosiers are wating tonight for a national economic recovery," Daniels said. "The best efforts of our state, or any one state, to break free of recession's suffocating clutch, are never adequate and we can't wait for better times."

Then contrast.

Sizing up the nation, "Indiana is now the leader in business climate, fiscal integrity, transportation, property taxes and so many other respects." You could feel The Wall Street Journal, the Concord Coalition and Grover Norquist leaping to their feet.

"Breaking the all-time record for new job commitments isn't enough," Daniels explained. "Adding new jobs at twice the national average isn't enough. We did all of those things in 2010, but it couldn't offset the terrible drag of a national economic ebb tide that continues to leave too many boats stuck in the muck."

He talked of the 2008 property tax cuts and the constitutional caps.

"Tonight, because of our action, Indiana's property taxes are the lowest anywhere in America. And thanks to a ringing 72 percent verdict by our fellow citizens, who voted in referendum to protect those cuts in our constitution, they're going to stay that way. During this terrible recession, at least 35 states raised taxes, but Indiana cut them. Since '04, the other 49 states added to their debt, by 40 percent. We paid ours down by 40 percent."

So in the Tea Party era, the combination of tax cuts and constitutionality is a potentially powerful political potion.

Fiscal credibility? As Illinois, California, New York and Texas face structural deficits measured in the tens of billions of dollars, "Our credit is AAA," Daniels said. "Here in Indiana, we live within our means."

Expanding government keeping pace with the ever

expanding universe? Not in Mitch Daniels' Indiana. "Across the country, state spending, despite the recession, is still up sharply the last six years. But here it is virtually flat, one-third the rate of inflation. Elsewhere, state government payrolls have grown, but here, we have the nation's fewest state employees per capita, fewer than we did in 1978."

Echoes of George H.W. Bush in 1988 saying "read my lips?" In Mitch Daniels' Indiana, "I just mentioned no tax increases. Can I get an amen to that?" he asked.

The conservative wing of the Indiana Senate - Sens. Mike Delph, Jim Banks and Dennis Kruse - were standing and saying "Amen."

Homespun cornbelt wisdom? "Remember what the Hoosier philosopher said: 'It's tainted money. 'Taint yours, 'taint mine'" (actually it was Mark Twain) as the governor made a case for tax refunds when reserves exceed 10 percent of annual needs. Grins creased the faces of all good Republicans and even some Democrats.

There were teachable civics moments and instances of humility. Bragging about the epic gains last Nov. 2?

"It changed a few things," Daniels said. "like the seating arrangement in this chamber." But ... "that election, like all elections, was not a victory for one side. It was an instruction to all of us. It was not an endorsement of a political party, it was an assignment to everyone present."

There was an Obamaesque call for unity. "By itself, it accomplished nothing, but it threw open the door to great accomplishment," Daniels said. "Starting tonight, we must step through that door together."

Daniels talked about reforming criminal sentencing laws in a nation where 14 states have either legalized or decriminalized some drug laws.

He talked of government reform in an area the Tea Party avoids, describing townships awash in millions of dollars of reserves while neighboring governmental units are broke. He called for "major changes" in education "rooted most deeply in a love" for school, teacher, student and parent.

He talked of foreign societies - even Slovenia - passing our schools by.

On the Daniels time line, Indiana is on the 18th hole, in the NFL red zone with Peyton Manning, racing with Bulldog Gordon Hayward past Duke defenders and the 10 second line.

By the time Gov. Daniels should be giving his eighth and final State of the State, the compelling datelines may well be Des Moines and Dixville Notch. ❖





Shepard finds ‘amazing range of challenges’

By **SAMM QUINN**

INDIANAPOLIS—Indiana Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard said in his State of the Judiciary Address Wednesday that challenges such as the foreclosure crisis have created the same challenges for the state’s courts that they have for other branches of government.

“The challenges of the moment cover an amazing range,” Shepard said. “The men and the women of the Indiana courts tackle all these issues and more, both through long-range strategic planning and through immediate action.”

Shepard said that the mortgage foreclosure crisis is an area that all three branches of Indiana government have worked.

Foreclosure filings were even higher last year than in 2009.

“While Indiana may no longer be near the top of the national list, that’s little comfort to the 43,000 new families facing loss of their homes,” Shepard said.

He said that the General Assembly recently passed legislation giving every homeowner the right to a settlement conference and the chance to negotiate for a modified loan.

“The judges working on this have discovered that when the court itself sends a separate settlement notice, more than 40 percent of the homeowners respond,” he said.

To make sure that these conferences are productive, the judiciary has assigned settlement facilitators to “bring the right people to the right table.”

Techniques now are used in counties that have 60 percent of the foreclosures and the rest of the state will be covered by the end of the year. It is done without any claim to the state’s general fund because a user’s fee has been authorized on foreclosure cases filed by lenders.

“There is a need for further legislation, and we’ve outlined our own ideas to possible sponsors,” Shepard said.

Shepard also addressed the issue of criminal justice sentencing reform.

“The package of sentencing reforms before you is based on reliable evidence. I think it’s good for Indiana and I join Gov. Daniels in endorsing it,” Shepard said.

Daniels had also called for criminal sentencing reform during his State of the State address Tuesday night.

Such changes would “see that law breakers are incarcerated in a smarter way, one that matches their place of punishment to their true danger to society,” Daniels said.

“We can be tougher on the worst offenders, and protect Hoosiers more securely, while saving a billion dollars the next few years,” Daniels said the night before.

Sen. Greg Taylor, D-Indianapolis, said that the General Assembly should be careful in regard to sentencing reform and provide incentives for those attempting to

re-enter society from prison.

“What can we present to those people? We need to provide them with opportunity,” Taylor said.

“If not, there’s a risk of them going back to jail.”

Shepard also said the state’s courts need to take better advantage of technological advances.

“If there’s a field where Indiana’s courts have proven themselves capable of identifying an opportunity or a problem, devising a plan to address it and executing on the plan, it is technology,” Shepard said.

Recently the Judicial Technology and Automation Committee built a system to notify law

enforcement immediately when a court enters a protective order on behalf of victims of domestic violence.

“Victims will soon be able to receive immediate notice by text or e-mail,” Shepard said.

The chief justice’s last major point dealt with simplifying the way courts communicate with non-lawyers involved in judicial proceedings.

Shepard said that the new “Plain English Jury Instructions” make the legal system easier for citizens. The drafting committee spent three years revising the traditional instructions. ❖

Adam Powell contributed to this story.



Indiana Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard during this State of the Judiciary Address on Wednesday. (HPI/Franklin Photo by Tim Grimes)



Daniels takes aim at township government

By **SUZANNAH COUCH**

INDIANAPOLIS - Township government could be abolished if Gov. Mitch Daniels and the Republican majority of the General Assembly pass their proposed local government reform legislation.



The leader of the Indiana Township Association signaled that township government won't go away without a fight. "We feel strongly we still need to have that local checks and balances with locally elected folks, at a very low cost to the taxpayer," said Debbie Driskell, the association's executive director.

Driskell said it costs taxpayers 7 to 27 cents per board member per household to have a township advisory board. She said many township board members make less than \$500 dollars per year, and most make less than \$1,000 a year.

In his State of the State, Daniels said that he supports the recommendation of the Kernan-Shepard Commission, which states that township government should be eliminated and that the duties of the boards be assigned to city and county officials. "If their duties are transferred to the county council, you lose that local representation in every township," Driskell countered.

Mark Lawrance from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce said the Legislature should eliminate township government where it is no longer needed. Lawrance said voters should have the option to vote to have a township government, especially in rural counties.

"Some don't want to do anything. Others want to wipe out townships altogether. My bill eliminates townships in large counties," Rep. Phil Hinkle, R-Indianapolis, said about counties with first- and second-class cities.

Under state law, Indianapolis is the only city given first-class status. Second-class cities must have populations between 35,000 and 600,000. Fort Wayne, Bloomington and Evansville, among others, are second-class cities.

Every city with a population of less than 35,000 is third-class. "In rural areas, there would be county-wide referendums. Hopefully, that kind of approach will find some common ground," Hinkle said.

Lawrance and Daniels both argued that the role of the township has changed from the 1800s when the system first was established.

"Many township lines were laid out to accommodate the round-trip distance a horse could travel in a day.

We've come a little ways since then," Daniels said.

Daniels said in his address that townships are not only outdated, but they have an abundance of money. He said that the townships have hundreds of millions of dollars in reserves.

After the State of the State, Driskell said that her organization has conducted surveys and they found townships that have large sums in reserve sometimes are saving for a capital project, such as a community center.

"Townships, as part of their history, have shown themselves to be units of government that pay cash for their purchases," Driskell said. "Many townships are saving for those ... purposes." ❖

Linking drugs to jobs

By **MEGAN BANTA**

INDIANAPOLIS --- A proposal that could require jobless Hoosiers seeking unemployment benefits to say, under penalty of perjury, that they haven't used and will not use drugs moved to the Senate floor Wednesday.

Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, said that Senate Bill 86, which she authored, would protect employers.

"As our unemployment population stays high and we have more and more frustrated people that we represent, more frustrated employers worrying about how they're going to pay increased unemployment premium tax, I think we've got to figure out who's receiving [welfare benefits] and if they're eligible," Leising said.

Sen. Jim Arnold, D-LaPorte, said he thought that Leising had a valid point.

"You've probably undertaken a problem that we're all concerned with and I think we all need to really evaluate that [and] look at it," Arnold said.

While Arnold said that he is supportive to Leising's stance, he thinks that the bill has a long way to go before it can be passed as law.

Ed Roberts, vice president of human resources and labor for the Indiana Manufacturers Association, also gave testimony in favor of the bill.

He argued that in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits you must be available and actively seeking work, and that drug users are not available for work.

Roberts suggested that the committee "link drug use by whatever evidence that knowledge may be acquired to availability for work."

Sen. Karen Tallian, D-Portage, agreed that there is a problem with the current system, but she does not agree with Roberts' suggestion and did not think that the bill will address the problem.

Tallian said the bill could put up "another barrier to



receiving unemployment benefits for people who are otherwise entitled to them."

Sen. Jim Buck, R-Kokomo, disagreed. He sees the bill in a positive light. "I think this is a bill that's trying to bring one thing that seems to be lacking in society anymore, and that's accountability," Buck said.

George Raymond, vice president of human resources and labor relations for the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, also gave testimony in favor of the bill. Raymond said that there is a paradox when it comes to drug testing: an employee caught using drugs and fired for that same reason can be denied unemployment benefits, but an employee terminated for any other reason is free to use drugs while receiving unemployment benefits.

"We need to look at eligibility and we need to look at benefit levels to try to bring a balanced approach to our fund system," Raymond said.

Leising agreed with Raymond. "I think we've really got to address the misuse of the system," Leising said. "I'm just trying to get people to be honest that they are truly eligible for unemployment."

The Senate Pensions and Labor Committee approved the bill on a 9-1 vote. Tallian voted against it.

"This is not what we need to do," Tallian said. "What we need to do are things that really work. I just think that this sort of empty pledge (by applicants) does nothing, and that was why I objected to it." ❖

Heated smoke ban debate

By MONICA HARVEY

INDIANAPOLIS - A bill that would ban smoking in public place and work sites produced heated debate before a committee of the Indiana House of Representatives on Wednesday.

House Bill 1018 generated two hours of argument. The only interruption was a fire alarm in the middle of the House Public Health Committee meeting.

Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, said his measure isn't hard to understand. It will ban smoking in public places, in places of employment and within 12 feet of public places or enclosed areas. "The bill is straight forward," said Brown.

Still, it generated controversy.

Brown dismissed the notion of smokers' rights.

"It should be noted that there is no constitutional right to smoke," said Brown.

Greenfield resident Karena Walter, 38, said she quit her job at the Hollywood Casino in Lawrenceburg in March because of the secondhand smoke.

"I just want be cared for as a person—as an employee," said Walter.

Mike Smith of the Casino Association of Indiana

said a public smoking ban would hurt casinos' business.

The state's Legislative Services Agency estimates that it could cost Indiana between \$95 million and \$188 million in gambling tax revenue in fiscal year 2012.

There are three amendments to the bill that will be discussed and voted on next Wednesday. ❖

School's out for summer?

By ZACH OSOWSKI

INDIANAPOLIS - Just like last year, three Indiana state senators want to change the start date for Indiana schools

"It [Senate Bill 171] will mandate that schools start their school year after Labor Day and end no later than June 10," said Sen. Mike Delph, R-Indianapolis, one of the bill's three sponsors. Sen. Dennis Kruze, R-Auburn, and Sen. Scott Schneider, R-Indianapolis, are the other two sponsors. Delph told the Senate Education Committee Wednesday that his push for the changed school start date began when Delph had a discussion with some of his constituents who were upset about how early school was starting in August. He said they were frustrated by their lack of ability to talk to their school administrators about getting it moved back.

Sen. Earline Rogers, D-Gary, repeatedly asked why Delph thought the state government should be responsible to mandate when schools start. She said local government should make decisions regarding local schools.

Many witnesses, including Becky Beckdell, a volunteer spokesperson for Save Indiana Summers, who carried a bright T-shirt touting her cause, said this is something that most superintendents want. "No superintendent wants to be the first to step down even though they all want to," Beckdell said.

The main opposition to the bill came from teachers and principals. Nancy Papas, representing the Indiana State Teachers Association, said having a schedule like the one Delph proposes would leave schools with fewer breaks over the course of the year. "Students and staff alike do burn out if they go for a long time with no break," Papas said.

The hotel and tourism industry are among those in favor of pushing the school start date back to September so more people might travel to in Indiana during the month of August.

Proponents pointed to Michigan as an example of a state that has a late school start and brings in many tourists as well. ❖



GOP health repeal could work (or backfire)

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - The new Republican-controlled House now cannot kill the health care reform law, but it can endanger the plan's health and perhaps leave it terminally ill.

Congressman Fred Upton, the Michigan Republican from St. Joseph, pledged last week on "Fox News Sunday" to use his new committee chairmanship "to go after this bill piece by piece . . . to see if we can't have the thing crumble."



When Fox host Chris Wallace said repeal "is not going to happen," with Democrats still controlling the Senate and President Obama with veto power, Upton responded: "Just wait." Spoken like the avowed Chicago Cubs fan that he is.

Waiting for repeal this year will be as fruitful as waiting for the Cubs this season to win the World Series. The numbers don't add up - for repeal or the Cubs. But both causes could see prospects improve for the future, 2013 for repeal.

Upton is the new chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, with jurisdiction over aspects of the health care reform legislation passed last year. While Upton had been known for sharing pizza at lunches with GOP centralists, he couldn't have won the chairmanship without now drinking the tea of the party advocates of instant death of the health care reform plan.

Although the president hails the plan as a monumental reform, long overdue, to improve the nation's health, hold down health costs and trim the federal deficit, Republican critics of what they call "Obamacare" claim it won't accomplish any of that and actually would hurt the health care system.

Members of the House Republican majority, many of whom credit their vociferous opposition to the health care reform as instrumental in their election victories and take-over of the House, are anxious to continue with the same strategy. Many promised to vote for repeal. And they will. Repeal will pass quickly in the House.

Upton contended that "a significant number of Democrats" will join in the repeal, with the House at least close to the two-thirds vote needed to override a veto and with "enormous pressure on the Senate to do perhaps the same thing."

One problem with this House scenario is that a

vast majority of the Democrats who were re-elected were strong advocates of the reform, running in districts where it is more popular. It was the Democratic "Blue Dogs" who opposed or strongly criticized the health care reform who suffered substantial losses.

And in the Senate, there is no chance of getting the votes for repeal, not alone for a veto override.

So, Upton cannot be in the role of Dr. Kevoorkian, killing the health care reform outright. But he and other Republican chairmen in the House can make it very sick, perhaps terminally ill, with its demise coming if there is a Republican president taking office in 2013.

Republican chairmen can hold hearings on every aspect of the plan, tying up Obama administration officials responsible for implementing it with demands for tons of information and reports and day after day of testimony.

A more telling blow could come through "starving" the plan by House refusal to fund implementation of significant pieces, part of the Upton strategy of looking at the plan piece by piece "to see if we can't have the thing crumble."

The strategy could work.

Or backfire.

Republicans favoring this approach believe there is still strong public disapproval of the plan and that they can continue to make political gains by attacking it and promising to make it all go away.

Democrats, who know they lost the public debate over the bill by the way deliberations dragged on and content was poorly explained, cite polls showing growing popularity for parts of the plan, such as prohibiting insurance denial for pre-existing conditions, allowing children to stay on parents' insurance until age 26 and closing the doughnut hole for senior citizens for Medicare drug costs.

"Make my day," say the Democrats who welcome Republicans continuing to fight to repeal all of the health care law.

"You already made our day," say the Republicans who welcomed the Democratic passage of the law as a political gift in 2010. They see it as a gift that keeps on giving. ❖

Colwell has covered politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.



Daniels ignores the deficit of neglect

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - When Mitch Daniels speaks his mind, he usually thinks through his positions carefully. It was no surprise, therefore, that he thanked Illinois for considering higher taxes to combat its financial difficulties.



Morton Marcus
Column

Higher taxes in our neighboring state, the governor contends in an interview with the Northwest Indiana Times, will drive residents and businesses to Indiana.

Daniels believes, if I may speak for him, government needs to moderate its programs in times of economic distress. He proudly holds the line on taxes and cuts spending in order to sustain Indiana's good fiscal

condition.

He recognizes our fiscal condition has problems. Unfunded pensions remain a liability for state and local governments. We are in debt to the federal government because of an underfunded unemployment compensation fund. Our local infrastructure reveals serious neglect.

To balance the Hoosier budget, we (yes, you and I are as culpable as the governor and the legislature) have cut services to those who are in serious need and often have no voice to object. One example will do: the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services (BDDS) has cut funding for people who require 24/7 supervision and assistance. Often their emergency needs can not be met adequately. It may be good fiscal management, but it is heartless, dangerous neglect.

Nonetheless, this is the Indiana to which we hope to attract Illinois residents and businesses. Our workers struggle to receive justified compensation for injuries on the job. Our unemployed must make do with less generous payments than similar people in other states. Our schools are inadequate by most measures. Our local streets and roads are in poor-to-dismal repair. Our highway program is more than a generation behind. Ancient sewerage systems all over the state are in need of modernization. Public transit is on life support where it still exists.

All these deficits, but we have a balanced budget!

Do Hoosiers have such low opinions of themselves that they truly condone such neglect? Is private household consumption for Valentine's Day

and Halloween so important that we care unable to raise annual taxes by the amount we spend on those blatantly silly events?

To attract more businesses to Indiana we could accelerate depreciation on capital investments. That is, if a firm makes an investment in Indiana, the company could recoup that expenditure faster than allowed on the federal return. This would make Indiana a more attractive place for business location and create new, better jobs for our citizens.

In the long run, a place (city or state) will attract households and businesses through the services it offers, not the taxes it does not collect. Our political leadership knows this, but ignores it. Most public officials focus on election rather than service.

When pandering to the worst aspects of public opinion, elected officials say things like, "My job is to protect the interests of the taxpayer."

This is sad. The statement presumes citizens think of themselves only in terms of taxes paid and not services enjoyed. Yet, that is how citizens think because public officials constantly address us as taxpayers and not as consumers of government services - clients of government agencies.

Language shapes thought. It is time to recognize that we are much more than just taxpayers. Perhaps that is happening in Illinois. ❖

Marcus is an independent economist, speaker, and writer formerly with IU's Kelley School of Business.





Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star: Gov. Mitch Daniels promised there would be no surprises in his State of the State address Tuesday evening. His 2011 legislative agenda, after all, had been exhaustively laid out in recent weeks. So I tuned in instead to look for clues about the presidential questions surrounding Indiana's governor. Would there be signs of a budding White House bid in his 30-minute speech? Would he look for ways to impress national political pundits or Republican insiders who have begun to pay more and more attention to him? Would he offer something intended to endear himself to social conservatives and others who dominate the GOP primaries? The answer to all of the above questions was no. Daniels stuck to the same themes he has talked about for seven years now and avoided any gratuitous shout-outs to the D.C. crowd. His target audience appeared to be the Hoosier lawmakers and voters who were watching. The funny thing is, though, anyone looking to see what kind of presidential candidate Daniels would be, or what kind of message he would bring to the campaign trail, found plenty of answers Tuesday. He talked in depth about government efficiency and spending restraint, issues that have long filled his speeches. With lawmakers preparing to begin a debate over the next two-year budget, Daniels insisted: "We will stay in the black, whatever it takes." Daniels has pushed that message from the day he took office in 2005. The good news for him is that the message has taken center stage for the GOP base of late. All that talk from Republican voters about the federal deficit and increased government spending? That plays into Daniels' strengths. ❖

Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana: Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels has been coy about his presidential prospects. When I asked him about it sometime back, he said he might run if he were drafted, opening the door a crack to the possibility. That crack is widening. Max Eden, a senior at Yale University, is building a Students for Daniels organization in hopes of persuading the governor to run for president in 2012. A flashy website has been built, and a network of organizations at colleges across the United States is being formed this month. Eden told me Thursday the list is up to about 40 college campuses, and he is hoping for more than 100. Then, in February, the "Draft Daniels" petition will be ready for the students to sign. Eden wants to present thousands of signatures to Daniels to convince him to run for president. "He says that he will decide at the end of April," Eden said, so time is of the essence. Daniels has said he wants to get through this legislative session before making up his mind -- or perhaps changing his wife's mind -- about running for president. That makes

sense. With the Indiana House and Senate now both in GOP control, he would gain some substantial victories he could tout on the campaign trail. Already, Daniels has achieved national acclaim for guiding a state that has maintained a balanced budget, even as other states have run up deficits. His national profile was elevated as well by a new Zogby International poll that showed 5 percent of Republican voters said they would vote for Daniels for president in 2012 if he were on the ballot. That's progress. Not near New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, at 27 percent, but still No. 5 on the list. ❖

Eric Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press: If he is interested in running for governor in 2012, Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel's plan to consider his options and wait a few months before making an announcement will give him time to see how other potential candidates maneuver. U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, the likely Republican candidate if he wants to run for the governor's mansion rather than the White House, likely will have announced his decision by then. And U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, who is said to prefer to remain in Congress but might not stand much of a chance at doing so after the redistricting process is complete, will have the information he needs to make his decision about whether another term in the House is possible, or whether he'll need to seek another office. Weinzapfel is one of at least three potential candidates from Southern Indiana. Others are former U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth and former Indiana House Speaker John Gregg of Sandborn. "To say that there are multiple people that are looking at it — and I would assume that includes the mayor from Evansville — is accurate," said Dan Parker, the Indiana Democratic Party chairman. "I think we have a solid crop of candidates that are looking at it." Democrats split almost evenly between Jill Long Thompson and another contender, Jim Schellinger, in the 2008 primary. Long Thompson won the party's nomination, but was already hobbled on her way to being handily defeated by incumbent Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels. Parker said he'd prefer to avoid a similar scenario in 2012. "I lived through a primary in '08 and I don't want to have to do that again," he said. Anthony Long, the Democratic Party's 8th Congressional District chairman, said he is encouraging Weinzapfel, Ellsworth and Gregg to consider running for governor. "I think the candidate for governor next year will come from Southern Indiana, and most likely from what's now the 8th District," he said. He said Weinzapfel has done the most to lay the groundwork for a gubernatorial campaign, traveling the state and attending Democratic functions often in recent years. Ellsworth, meanwhile, could benefit from the name recognition he gained during his failed U.S. Senate campaign. ❖





Obama tells nation 'We can be better'

TUCSON - Summoning the soul of a nation, President Barack Obama on Wednesday implored Americans to honor those slain and injured in the Arizona shootings by becoming better people, telling a polarized citizenry that it is time to talk with each other "in a way



that heals, not in a way that wounds." Following a hospital bedside visit with Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, the target of the assassination, he said "She knows we're here, and she knows we love her." In an electrifying moment, the president revealed that Giffords, who on Saturday was shot point-blank in the head, had opened her eyes for the first time shortly after his hospital visit (Associated Press). First lady Michelle Obama held hands with Giffords' husband, Mark Kelly, as the news brought soaring cheers from thousands gathered for a memorial service. Obama bluntly conceded that there is no way to know what triggered the shooting rampage that left six people dead, 13 others wounded and the nation shaken. He tried instead to leave indelible memories of the people who were gunned down, and to rally the country to use the moment as a reflection on the nation's behavior and compassion. "I believe we can be better," Obama said to a capacity crowd in the university's basketball arena and to countless others watching around the country. "Those who died here, those who saved lives here — they help me believe," the president said. "We may not be able to stop all evil in the world, but I know that how we treat one another is entirely up to us." He spoke of decency and goodness, declaring: "The forces that divide us are not as strong as those that unite us."



Obama's appeal for civility played out against a deepening political debate. Earlier in the day, Republican Sarah Palin, criticized by some for marking Giffords' district with the crosshairs of a gun sight during last fall's campaign, had taken to Facebook to accuse pundits and journalists of using the attack to incite hatred and violence.

of Representatives. We're praying for her recovery, the recovery of all those injured and the comfort of the families of the fallen." Pence added, "Today the American people speak with one voice. We will condemn these unspeakable and evil acts. We will remember the injured and the lost. And we will gently reaffirm our ideals."

Pence pays tribute to shooting victims

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Mike Pence spoke of the shooting in Tucson on Saturday on the House floor Wednesday. "Like every American I'll never forget where I was last Saturday," Pence said. "My wife and I were shocked and saddened when we learned of the attack on our colleague Gabby Giffords, her staff and her constituents. Gabby is a hard worker, a talented legislator and has been said poignantly on this floor so much better than I will ever be able to today, she's a dear person. And a unique individual who is universally liked in the House

Palin cites 'blood libel'

WASILLA - Sarah Palin posted a nearly eight-minute video on her Facebook page early Wednesday, accusing journalists and pundits of inciting hatred and violence in the wake of a deadly Arizona shooting that gravely wounded U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (Associated Press). Last spring, Palin targeted Giffords' district as one of 20 that should be taken back. Palin has been criticized for marking each district with the cross hairs of a gun sight. In the video, the 2008 GOP vice presidential candidate said vigorous



debates are a cherished tradition. But she said after the election, both sides find common ground, even though they disagree. "But, especially within hours of a tragedy unfolding, journalists and pundits should not manufacture a blood libel that serves only to incite the very hatred and violence they purport to condemn. That is reprehensible," she said.

Obama, Daniels at Gridiron Club

WASHINGTON - Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels will speak to the Gridiron Club in March, addressing the society of Beltway reporters, columnists and bureau chiefs at their annual dinner (Politico). After declining invitations in 2009 and 2010 to speak at the exclusive dinner, President Barack Obama has accepted an invitation and will also for the first time since taking office. Obama last spoke at the dinner in 2006, when he was considering his own national campaign. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius is also scheduled to speak.

Kenley bill targets development

INDIANAPOLIS - The new Center for the Performing Arts wouldn't be opening if Mayor Jim Brainard and his redevelopment commission hadn't taken their city \$95 million deeper into debt (Indianapolis Star). And if a powerful state lawmaker has his way, neither the Carmel redevelopment commission nor any other in the state will be allowed to take on such debt again for big-ticket projects unless it has the approval of its elected city council. Luke Kenley, a Noblesville Republican who is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he will introduce his proposal today in the Senate, and he

thinks it has enough support to pass in both the Senate and the Indiana House. Similar legislation did pass overwhelmingly in 2008. Kenley said his proposal would amend that law to clarify provisions that Brainard used to justify incurring debt without seeking approval from the Carmel City Council.

AFL-CIO to seek 'bill of rights'

INDIANAPOLIS - Members of the Indiana State AFL-CIO and other labor organizations have scheduled a news conference for 1:30 p.m. the Indiana Statehouse where they will unveil their first-ever "Workers' Bill of Rights."

Bosma hopeful on township reform

INDIANAPOLIS - Sen. Dennis Kruse, a Republican from Auburn and former township trustee in DeKalb County, said he disagreed with the governor's contention that township government was inefficient and disputed the notion that the state would be better off without the some 4,000 elected township officials (Louisville Courier-Journal). "We should want as many people as we can get involved in the process," Kruse said. "I think the more the better." Republican House Speaker Brian Bosma said he didn't believe the lukewarm response to the governor's remarks indicated his proposals would fall flat. Bosma said House Republicans, who regained a majority in November's election, had endorsed a bill that passed the Senate last year to eliminate township boards and that the proposals would receive a full hearing in the House this session. "I think you will see action on many of these initiatives both by the House and the Senate," he said. House

Minority Leader Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend, said he believed that was the appropriate action and called Daniels' proposals a distraction from more important budget and economic issues. "I think there probably is a need for some merging," Bauer said. "I think there is compromise there, but I think at the same time that's not going to save this budget crisis. That doesn't help the state cut half a billion to a billion dollars."

Gora unhappy with performance goals

INDIANAPOLIS - Ball State University President Jo Ann Gora spoke out against the state's performance-based funding formula, which has led to funding recommendation that would be the largest drop of any institution in the state (Muncie Star Press). Appearing before the Indiana House Ways and Means Committee in Indianapolis, Gora criticized the Indiana Commission for Higher Education's formula, which includes graduation rates. The commission compared the four-year graduation rates of students who entered BSU in the fall of 2003 to those who entered in the fall of 2005. "It's almost as if you were at a baseball game and they decided the winner based not on what happened over the full nine innings but took a look at what happened between the sixth and seventh innings and said the winner is determined by the team that got more runs in the seventh inning than they got in the sixth inning," Gora said.

Nappanee mayor to seek 5th term

NAPPANEE - Mayor Larry Thompson announced earlier this week that he would seek election for his fifth term in office (Elkhart Truth).