



Indiana's need for a health strategy

State's worsening health metrics, Obamacare uncertainty create need for a comprehensive approach

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – When it comes to the relative health and well-being of the 6.5 million Hoosiers – collectively rated as the 41st most healthy population in the U.S. and down from 37th a few years before – there is a surplus of empathy.

Gov. Mike Pence explained to Howey Politics Indiana earlier this month, "The issue of infant mortality, the issue of childhood poverty in Indiana, are two that weigh heavy on my heart. We're going to continue to assemble the information and identify solutions."

There is the policy debris field we know as the Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare, that has muddled and obfuscated a clear path forward. On Monday, House Speaker Brian Bosma observed, "Rarely can you use 'fiasco' or 'debacle' with respect to government action. You might disagree with it, but the ACA is now a fiasco and a



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Change of the (Tweet) guard

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – As Mary Beth Schneider stood with her lovely family before the Indiana Senate on Tuesday, Senate President David Long commented on the vast changes coming to the news media.

"Some not for the better," Long would note as Schneider's chin was lowered toward her chest, her thumbs rapidly sending out her latest Tweet.

There is a change of the media guard under way once more, as the IndyStar's Schneider and WRTV's Norm Cox have retired, the Evansville Courier & Press's Eric Bradner



"His legacy is the thousands of missiles and bombs and submarines and warheads that no longer threaten us because of his extraordinary work."

- President Obama, in bestowing Medal of Freedom on Sen. Lugar



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migrated to Politico, and there is an erosion of news bureaus and engaged punditry.

Many of these changes were wrought by the news media itself, which gave away its product on the Internet a generation ago, and watched Monster.com erode its job listings and Craigslist severely dent the classifieds. It has resulted in the paring back of newsroom staffing, unpaid furloughs and layoffs. Morale in many newsrooms is quite low. Reporters are not happy campers.

In the past year, newspaper paywalls have gone up, but unofficial reports from the IndyStar puts its paid web scription in the 25,000 range, which is really a paltry sum given the 1.4 million people residing in and around the doughnut counties. The toothpaste is going back into the tube fitfully.

Schneider had been with the Star since the early 1990s, earning her the stature that came with long-time legendary reporters in the past – Ed Ziegner, Gordon Englehart, Hortense Myers – who knew where the bodies were buried.

With staffs cut to the bone, newspaper reporters are now charged with shooting and posting video while TV reporters post website copy and write columns. The news photographer is an endangered species.

But the most fascinating aspect of this is Twitter. During the disastrous Dennis Ryerson era of the IndyStar, reporters were ordered to tweet and Schneider did so prolifically. During the Senate ceremony honoring her journalistic contributions, someone observed she had made 3,000 Tweets in one month (which still pales compared to my younger son who lodged 5,000 texts in one month while

bombing out of college).

It was a young Eric Bradner who convinced me, a craggy but benign writer who began covering the Indiana General Assembly in 1985, that I had to join the Twitter universe.

I did, and now have 1,994 "followers" (ironically, Howey Politics began publishing in 1994), but I raised a question then that I still do today: How do you make money Tweeting?

In Schneider's case, her prolific tweeting, with other reporters doing the same, actually saved me the need to be at some events. I could ag-



Mary Beth Schneider @marybschneider
The Indiana Statehouse, in my rear view mirror.
pic.twitter.com/HohjcmGJg2

19 Nov



gregate the 140 character scraps and post a news story an hour before the actual reporters did.

The tweeters end up with a robust following, but these folks don't help pay the bills. Kip Tew told me that Twitter is the latest media bomb, the short, choppy link to news stories via a portal that often allows you to dodge a paywall. The irony is that Tweeting reporters were, in a way, undermining their company's own ability to make a profit.

I settled into a Twitter routine. I scope out the scene several times a day. I promote HPI content, and like to make the occasional wisecrack. The night Green Bay QB Aaron Rodgers was injured against the Bears, I took great delight in tweeting: "Vince Young: I will Tweet for cheese." I was devastated when Sports Illustrated's Peter King didn't include that gem in



the following Monday Morning Quarterback.

So many reporters tweet, instead of investigate. They make a crack, instead of analyze. The \$10 billion Medicaid drama is obscured by the DOE/CECI pissing match. Some have equated the journalism you read here

as “long form” and no longer cool.

The corresponding argument is that when society communicates in 140 character snippets and not much more, then we’re all in trouble. That’s the opening for a scandal. ❖

Health strategy, from page 1

debacle.”

Forty-eight hours later, Indiana Insurance Commissioner Stephen W. Robertson announced that Indiana could not comply with President Obama’s request from the prior week to reinstate cancelled insurance policies that exposed his oft-made promise, “If you like your health plan, you can keep your health plan.”

Robertson explained on Wednesday, “President Obama has asked that Indiana compel insurance companies who choose to do business in our state to reinstate carefully phased-out policies at a moment’s notice. Such action would seriously destabilize Indiana’s insurance market and create logistical chaos, fueling even more uncertainty for Hoosiers. Furthermore, we do not believe the IDOI has the authority under Indiana law to fulfill the President’s untimely request.”

And there is a recognition that if Obamacare collapses – and it is far too early to make that determination, though that potential has grown remarkably since the disastrous Oct. 1 federal exchange rollout – it will mean Congress and the state legislatures will enter a health policy triage.

“The fact is that we can’t afford the health care system that we had,” said House Minority Leader Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City, human resources director for the Swanson Center mental health facility. “As an HR director, I work in a place where people need stuff done. You can’t sustain 20- to 25-percent premium increases every year. You can’t do it. We can’t afford to keep sending people to emergency rooms as their only health care option. Are we going to have to make this work? Absolutely.”

Senate President David Long, in addressing Indiana’s decision to not leap into the traditional Medicaid expansion, said that once the Obamacare confusion settles one way or another, the Indiana General Assembly will be forced to act. “Twenty-five states have done just like Indiana. If those states band together and join together and say, ‘We’re going to have a plan,’ if we all stand together,

we all have an alternative plan, I think you could have something there.”

The political reality is that the Indiana Republican Party, dubbed the “Party of Purpose” that feeds on “Hoosier Common Sense,” controls virtually all the policy levers in this state with Pence at the helm of the executive branch, super majorities in both the House and Senate, with House



Ways & Means Chairman Tim Brown also a medical doctor, and controlling eight of 11 congressmen, that includes Rep. Larry Bucshon, a heart surgeon.

This emerging scenario begs for a comprehensive statewide approach in a potential three-year time frame that Obamacare establishes for a Medicaid expansion. The state has world-renowned research universities; life science, orthopedic and pharmaceutical clusters; entrepreneurs ranging from BioMet’s Dane Miller to a reservoir of innovation at companies like Cook Medical Group and Eli Lilly; and consumer-driven policy innovation that resulted in

#41 | Indiana
Overall Ranking: 41st

Overall State Ranking

-0.408 units below national average

National Average: 0

Best(#1): Hawaii (0.992)

Worst(#50): Mississippi (-1.044)



a post-IBM “hybrid” safety net program at FSSA to the forging of the fledgling Healthy Indiana Plan.

Asked about a potential blue ribbon commission pulling the various areas of expertise together to forge a state-based health care approach for Hoosiers, Gov. Pence reacted by saying, “I take your point that if we have the opportunity to continue to advance the kind of health insurance innovation that is in the interest of Hoosiers’ health, then I’m open to doing that.”

Pence has asked the various state agencies to assemble an array of health metrics. “We have specific goals for all of our agencies,” Pence explained. “We’ve got some very specific goals, very specific metrics we’re advancing regarding the health and well-being of Hoosiers. Back to that (campaign) Roadmap, that is one of our goals. In measurable ways, we want to improve the health outcomes in Indiana. I’m committed to doing that.”

“There is a lot of work left,” said Pence, who governs a state where 30 of the 92 counties offer no neo- or post-natal care facilities, impacting the infant mortality rate. “Other than public safety, there is no more important work that we do than the health and well being of our people. I admire your passion on this issue and I share it. But I do think that with seeing the flawed concept of Obamacare stumbling at the national level, now more than ever the country is looking for solutions and Indiana, both in regard to how we manage the Healthy Indiana Plan, and with innovations with state employees, we’ve been demonstrating that consumer-driven health works and is another area where Indiana is recognized for our innovation and our leadership.”

Infant mortality test

It was Pence’s health commissioner, Dr. William VanNess, who earlier this year publicly flagged a shocking 7.7 infant mortality rate per 1,000 Hoosiers, putting the state on par with Russia. That spurred the state’s first Infant Mortality Summit in October, which brought together 500 people dealing with the issue.

“Infant mortality is the number one indicator of health status in the world,” said VanNess, an Anderson doctor who took on the role of the state’s top health officer earlier this year.



While Indiana Republicans constantly emphasize the business climate in the state, a critical component of that climate is the general health of the population. A healthier population and access to care can be an economic development tool.

Pence explained that concerning infant mortality, “We’re trying to identify what are the root causes here

and be prepared to advance policies at an administrative level and in the law that can address that issue.”

But the infant mortality summit brought this response from Dr. Sue Ellen Braunlin, co-president of the Indiana Religious Coalition for Reproductive Justice, who observed, “The summit was more theater than substance. Many possible solutions to high infant mortality were omitted. Indiana’s rejection of the Medicaid expansion denies health care to hundreds of thousands of low- income men and women before pregnancy, early in pregnancy and long after. Unintended pregnancy and short intervals between pregnancy are big risk factors that weren’t mentioned, and better contraceptive access isn’t in the plan. Exaggerated emphasis was placed on behavioral factors.”

Braunlin added, “Neonatologist Dr. Niceta Bradburn incorrectly reduced social determinants of health to obesity and smoking. The keynote speaker was the commissioner of health from Texas, not a beacon of health. Curiously, no obstetrician spoke. The blame was squarely on moms. Dr. Virginia Caine stood alone in naming stress on pregnant women as a cause of toxic cortisol levels, premature rupture of membranes, low birth weight, prematurity and infant mortality. These social determinants of health are factors outside of health care like unsafe neighborhoods, financial insecurity, lack of child care, relationship conflict, isolation, unhealthy food, unhealthy elders, racism and lack of power.”

HPI pressed Pence on the fact that the same access to health care issues that impact infant mortality are also precursors to problems such as smoking cessation, obesity, and disturbing trends in cardiac problems and diabetes, as well as mental health issues. Howard County Republican Chairman Craig Dunn notes that negative health trends tend to come together at the county jail, where sheriffs and staff are forced to deal with everything from



childbirth, methamphetamine addiction, and mental illness. "It all comes together at the county jail," Dunn said. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly observed that the Fulton County sheriff told him that of 90 beds at his facility in Rochester, a third are filled with those facing meth charges.

In October, Indiana lost \$63 million in tobacco settlement funds, with a three-member Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Board of Arbitration ruling that Indiana was one of five states found to not be diligent in compelling compliance with the terms of the 1998 tobacco settlement from those cigarette manufacturers that did not sign the original agreement.

"What is disturbing about this decision is that it appears to be tied to our state's complete failure to pursue compliance from those cigarette manufacturers that chose not to be a part of the original settlement," said State Rep. Charlie Brown. "Indiana was asked to make an effort to get companies that did not sign the agreement to make payments into an escrow fund if they chose to do business here. Obviously, they didn't try hard enough."

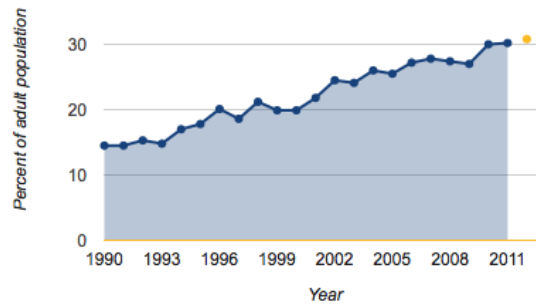
Porter and Brown said they have yet to hear from officials at the State Budget Agency on how they will handle the shortfall in revenue. "What makes this even more serious is that the arbitration panel's ruling only covers payments made in 2003," Porter noted. "The panel has yet to rule on similar sanctions from 2004 through 2012. There is a very real potential here that Indiana is facing multi-million-dollar sanctions over several years, which will have a disastrous impact on many of these programs."

This loss of funding paints a scenario that the state lacks an overall health strategy.

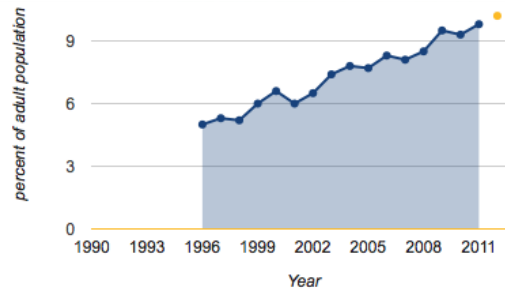
Sins of Obamacare

The factors Indiana Republican leaders face are an aversion to any notion of a tax increase, as opposed to extending service to constituents.

Pence and Long cited the \$25 million annual cost of running an Indiana-based health exchange. "My decision was based entirely on our analysis in the immediate days



■ Percentage of the population estimated to be obese, with a body mass index (BMI) of 30.0 or higher. (2011 BRFSS Methodology)



■ Percent of adults who responded yes to the question "Have you ever been told by a doctor that you have diabetes?" Does not include pre-diabetes or diabetes during pregnancy. (2011 BRFSS Methodology)

following my election that for the sum \$25 million it would cost to operate, it would gain very little control over and above what Hoosiers would gain if the federal government operated the exchange," Pence explained. "I think you're seeing some of the information coming from the handful of states that set up state-based exchanges. Other than enrolling people in Medicaid, the state exchanges haven't had a great deal more success than the federal exchange has. I think it's because it's a flawed idea."

"I do think Obamacare was a mistake," Pence continued. "What is happening now to millions of Americans and tens of thousands of Hoosiers

losing the health insurance they like was completely predictable and was predicted by many of us arguing against this policy when it was passed through the Congress on party line votes back in 2010."

'I told you so' to 'now what?'

What the federal exchange has done is to force Hoosiers to seek coverage in a logistical cul de sac. While the Kentucky state exchange enrolled 33,561 in Medicaid and 7,011 in private insurance by mid-November and another 16,425 have been found eligible for a federal subsidy to buy health insurance, Indiana Republicans used the 701 who had successfully traversed the federal exchange as an "I-told-you-so" moment.

It's a pyrrhic victory to celebrate a wobbling government program that has fallen so short of its goals. And it begs the question for Indiana's dominant political party: Now what?

"The real answer on health care reform is consumer-driven health care and transparency, both of which are being modeled here every day in Indiana, both at the state level, in the Healthy Indiana Plan, in health savings accounts, encouraging people to be consumers in health care purchases," Pence said. "Moving people as the Healthy Indiana Plan (does) from emergency room care to primary



care, creating incentives as health savings accounts do, as the HIP plan does for its incentives for people to make better health care choices in their own lives."

Many Hoosier Republican leaders are now faced with either working within the Obamacare system, potentially changing the many parts that don't work, or forging a state-based strategy.

Last June, FSSA Commissioner Debra Minott said that in rejecting a Medicaid expansion, the state's poorer population will have to rely on safety net organizations. "We will be making sure they are aware of the community health centers in their communities, free clinics that are available in multiple places around the state and other safety-net type resources," Minott told a legislative panel. FSSA has yet to embark on such an awareness campaign.

Other challenges include the loss of billions of dollars in traditional Medicaid coverage to the Disproportionate Share Hospitals such as Eskanazi Health (formerly Wishard) and other urban medical centers that treat a mostly poor population.

The pool of uninsured Hoosiers is estimated to be in the 900,000 range. If Obamacare survives, it will provide services to about half a million Hoosiers. The Healthy Indiana Plan currently has just under 50,000 enrollees and the recent federal waiver could double that figure. Left out of the reforms is a pool of about 300,000 people.

HPI asked Pence: It seems your challenge is how do we bridge that gap between the Healthy Indiana Plan and those who would have been covered in a Medicaid expansion. It seems that the best strategy would be to assemble the wide spectrum of talent here in the state for a comprehensive strategy.

Pence responded, "Just rest assured we are taking a very thoughtful and deliberative approach to the question of Medicaid expansion. There are a lot of people who thought we couldn't get the waiver extended. Indiana is the only state in the country that got a waiver from the administration in the last year. We're taking exactly the same approach you've stated on this issue. I do think because the federal health care law is so deeply flawed, Indiana has an opportunity to lead by example. I am determined to do that."

Pence announced on Tuesday that he would seek a one-on-one meeting with HHS Secretary Sebelius. Asked if the tortured rollout of Obamacare has changed the tenor of Indiana's negotiations over HIP, Pence told HPI, "I am going to test that theory."

The need for a comprehensive plan

Speaker Bosma acknowledged the complexity of an evolving situation. "This debacle needs to shake out a little

bit," he said at the Indiana Chamber Legislative Preview on Monday. "I know there is federal money being dangled out there," he said of the estimated \$10 billion that would cover 100 percent of Indiana's Medicaid expansion for the first three years of Obamacare. Pence said a traditional Medicaid expansion would cost Indiana \$2 billion, the size of the current state surplus. But Indiana Republicans don't believe the 90/10% federal/state funding split thereafter is guaranteed. They view the dilemma as higher taxes in exchange for a more comprehensively insured and potentially healthier population.

What isn't acknowledged are the hidden costs of consumers covering the costs of the uninsured that are never presented to the people.

"I know there are people without insurance we have to address," Bosma said, "but this needs to be thoughtful, it needs to be foresightful, we need to understand the consequences fully before we jump in."



Other questions surround the viability of expanding the Healthy Indiana Plan, including Hewlett Packard's administration of the program, where enrollees contribute a small monthly amount, and what happens when they don't pay. Other questions about HIP's viability are the policies that govern the program. Scant media and legislative attention have been paid to HIP's viability, cost and capacity.

Long acknowledged that the "uninsured is a problem," but said that a traditional Medicaid expansion would cost the state \$2 billion. "That's a guaranteed tax increase for everyone in this room," he said.

This places the Indiana Republican Party at a crossroads, balancing the cost of a healthier population with the economic benefits it would bring. It's a tormented scenario that's played out over an array of issues ranging from federal school lunch programs, to separating our storm and sanitary sewers, to spending more on education up front to save the state from spending more on prisons later.

This is a state with a huge and growing prison population that is opposite national trends, finds citizens paying vastly higher sewer bills than previous generations because it neglected to fix the problem a generation before, and has an unhealthy population because it did not adequately invest in nutrition, early education, health care and insurance access, and smoking cessation.

Indiana policy makers are facing the same "pay me now or pay me later" dilemma.

With such a poor historical track record, the development of a comprehensive health strategy should be a compelling notion up for vigorous debate. ❖



Pence asked about 2016 presidential run

Reid Wilson, Washington Post

PHOENIX — Is Indiana Gov. Mike Pence (R) running for president? One of the closest observers of Hoosier State politics says no.

Last week, Brian Howey, publisher of Howey Politics Indiana, wrote that a senior Pence adviser told him Pence was fundraising exclusively for his reelection bid, rather than piling up federal funds for a presidential race. "He will seek a second term," the source told Howey.

Proof? "I don't believe I was quoted in that story," Pence said Wednesday while attending the Republican Governors Association's annual meeting here.

"What I can tell you on the record is I haven't spent one second thinking about any other job than the one I got elected to do in 2012."

Pence, the former House Republican Conference chairman and conservative favorite who briefly considered running in 2012 before ultimately deciding to run for governor, said he wanted to see a broader vision for the Republican agenda among candidates in 2016. "The cure for what ails this country is going to come more from our nation's state capitals than it ever will from our nation's capital," Pence said in an interview.

"**The states are** just better suited to solve the intractable problems that are facing this country than Washington ever will be. And the answer going forward, then, and I say this to Republicans every chance I get: The Republican agenda cannot simply be to cut spending in Washington, D.C. I think Republicans must make it our aim to permanently reduce the size and scope of the federal government."

"When I look at 2016, and I don't have a candidate that I'm backing, I'm going to be looking not for somebody that says I want to go to Washington, D.C., and run it like I ran where I came from. I want somebody that says I'm

going to go to Washington, D.C., and make it more possible for the next person running where I came from to do it with more freedom and flexibility," he went on.

That doesn't sound like someone willing to publicly snuff out his 2016 chances quite yet.

Gov. Walker hates/needs Obamacare

Scott Walker hates Obamacare. But Scott Walker also needs Obamacare (Cheney, Politico). The Wisconsin Republican governor, a potential 2016 contender for the White House, has drawn national attention to his ambitious health reform effort to cover the poor in his state without

buying into the president's health care plan. But his approach is nevertheless yoked to the new insurance exchange, a core component of Obamacare, and the federal law's early nosedive already has claimed collateral damage in the Badger State. "Anybody can recognize that, practically, the exchanges aren't working the way they were supposed to," Scott said in a telephone interview Wednesday.

Walker built his own plan on his rejection of Obamacare's Medicaid expansion. Instead, he's taking nearly 80,000 people off the state's generous Medicaid program and encouraging them to join the Obamacare insurance exchange, where they can get federal subsidies.

That would, in turn, make room to extend BadgerCare, as Medicaid is known there, to poorer people. He's calling it a "creative alternative" and using it to polish his reputation as an outside-the-box innovator.

To his allies, Walker's approach to Obamacare is a reflection of the governor's problem-solving persona, someone who comes up with bold answers to long-simmering problems that bog down other states. He rejected billions of dollars in federal taxpayer funds but still managed to add thousands of people to the health care rolls. To opponents, it's proof that he's burnishing his conservative credentials for an eventual presidential bid by trying to have it both ways on Obamacare.

"**He's so tethered** to his own personal politics that he's tied himself up in knots," said Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) Walker has spent much of the year trashing President Barack Obama's signature law as "unworkable," yet his administration has been aggressively promoting the exchange, holding town hall meetings, pitching it to editorial boards, even sending letters to potentially eligible constituents. ❖



Gov. Mike Pence with Chief of Staff Bill Smith in the governor's office last week. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



Ads target Eberhart, Clere as marriage battle begins

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – A full-page ad ran in the Shelbyville News on Tuesday taking Republican State Rep. Sean Eberhart to task over recent comments on HJR-6, the marriage amendment. Another will be aimed at State Rep. Ed Clere of New Albany.



The ads, paid for by Indiana Family Action, the American Family Association of Indiana PAC, the Indiana Tea Party, Family Research Council Action and the National Organization for Marriage is the first targeted ad aimed at Indiana legislators

and intended to not only send a message, but to quell any mass migration away from a yea vote.

The ad came a day before Speaker Brian Bosma selected State Rep. Tom Dermody, R-LaPorte, to head the influential House Public Policy Committee, which is where HJR-6 will likely be assigned before a floor vote. Dermody replaces Bill Davis, who resigned last month.

The ad's headline states, "Rep. Sean Eberhart says 'it's 'very troubling' for Hoosiers to be able to vote on marriage."

Text in the ad continued, "Voters in 36 other states have been able to vote on the definition of marriage, yet Rep. Sean Eberhart says he's very troubled if the people of Indiana are allowed to do so. Why?"

Earlier this month, Eberhart, R-Shelbyville, told the News, "For us to put that amendment in the constitution and to lock down generations with bigotry is wrong." He was referring to the second sentence in HJR-6 which essentially would make civil

unions illegal.

The ad quotes from Genesis 2:24, saying, ". . . a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." It notes that "marriage between a man and a woman has existed since the beginning of time, yet Sean Eberhart explains his position thusly, 'times change.'"

The ad claims "Rep. Eberhart's position would leave Indiana's definition of marriage in the hands of politicians and judges. Indiana's proposed marriage amendment ensures that marriage will be controlled by voters. It takes away no rights or benefits from anyone."

Another ad, aimed at Clere, asks the question over the Republican elephant logo "What good is he?" It asks, "If he won't stand up for marriage, why should we stand up for him?"

HJR-6 promises to be an emotional lightning rod in the upcoming 2014 session of the Indiana General Assembly. If the resolution passes a second time, it will be placed on the November 2014 ballot.

The second sentence in the resolution reads, "Provides that a legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized."

Speculation in the legislative chambers and hallways during Organization Day on Tuesday suggested there could be a move in both the Senate and House Republican caucuses to remove the second sentence, but doing so would keep the referendum off the ballot in 2014, pushing it to 2016 when Gov. Mike Pence is expected to seek reelection.

The second HRJ-6 sentence would prevent any type of civil unions from becoming law. Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane, D-Anderson, said, "We ought not put forth a piece of flawed legislation and this is. Not only would it enshrine in our constitution a ban on gay marriage, it wouldn't allow the legislation of a civil union. For many people, they view that as ... we don't want to

Rep. Sean Eberhart Says It's "Very Troubling" For Hoosiers To Be Able To Vote On Marriage

Voters in 36 other states have been able to vote on the definition of marriage, yet Rep. Sean Eberhart says he's very troubled if the people of Indiana are allowed to do so.

Why?

He says that believing in marriage as the union of one man and one woman is "bigoted" and "this issue has changed."

"...a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."
Genesis 2:24

Marriage between a man and a woman has existed since the beginning of time, yet Sean Eberhart explains his position thusly, "times change."

Who Decides?

Rep. Eberhart's position would leave Indiana's definition of marriage in the hands of politicians and judges. Indiana's proposed Marriage Amendment ensures that marriage will be controlled by voters. It takes away no rights or benefits from anyone.

Email Rep. Eberhart at H57@in.gov or call 317-234-9499 to let him know you want your right to vote on marriage.

Paid for by Indiana Family Action, American Family Association of Indiana PAC, the Indiana Tea Party, Family Research Council Action and the National Organization for Marriage.



use words like 'bigot,' but perhaps radical and intolerable."

Earlier, Bosma had said, "This is an issue that is personal to people. It is a religious belief for some. It is a family member for another. It's a business decision for others. We have to deal with the issue with dignity and respect for opposing viewpoints. We can't call people bigots or sinners, or whatever. We have to deal with this together and bring this 12-year discussion to a conclusion in one direction or another."

On Tuesday, Republicans were carefully weighing the second sentence. Senate President David Long told the Associated Press that legislative lawyers have advised him that an altered amendment would likely restart the state's lengthy process for altering its constitution. Constitutional amendments must be approved in two consecutive biennial sessions of the General Assembly and then be placed on the ballot.

"What we've heard (from the Legislative Services Agency) is if we do that, it's likely it would not hold up in court. If we send it to the public in the fall, amended, it could be on very shaky ground," Long said. "Why would we send something to the public we knew could be challenged in the court as unconstitutional?"

Last summer, Bosma told HPI that "if I had my druthers," the second sentence wouldn't be in the resolution.

Eberhart, State Rep. Ed Clere and two Republican senators, Luke Kenley and Pete Miller, have indicated they likely will oppose the amendment. State Rep. Ron Bacon had questioned the propriety of the second sentence during the 2013 session, but the rest of the 37-member Republican Senate caucus and 69 House caucus have not broken ranks on the resolution to date. However, a number of influential Republicans oppose the amendment, including, sources say, a clear majority of the Indiana Republican Central Committee, where members fear repercussions from the amendment in 2014



House Minority Leader Scott Pelath (left) and Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane call for HJR-6 to be tabled for the 2014 session.

and possibly 2016.

Gov. Mike Pence told HPI last week that he will push legislators to pass the referendum this session. "I think it's important that we let Hoosiers decide," Pence said. "I have every confidence that the people of Indiana can take up this issue, hear all sides, respect all viewpoints. At the end of the day I think we should let Hoosiers decide and I'll continue to support efforts of the General Assembly to send this question to the people of Indiana."

Legislative Democratic leaders have called for the resolution to be tabled.

"I'm going to call on Speaker (Brian) Bosma to announce that he is not even going to assign the resolution to a committee and take it off the table immediately, so we can focus on the real issues that are facing Indiana," said House Minority Leader Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City. Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane, D-Anderson, said he will also urge Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne, to set the amendment aside.

Pelath said he held up the ban three times under former Democrat House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, and "lived to tell about it." He said Bosma could do the same, despite pressure from some conservatives to push it ahead. "Once he does it," Pelath said, "he'll feel better about it and realize we'll be able to face the difficulties Indiana faces." ♦

ED CLERE
Representing (and we use the term loosely) District 72

For all the good he's done, when a Republican won't stand up for the national platform of the party, why should we stand up for him?

WHAT GOOD IS HE?

IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO DECIDE ON THE FUTURE OF MARRIAGE. SO LET ED CLERE KNOW YOUR DECISION.



Long, Bosma eye personal property tax repeal

By MAUREEN HAYDEN
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

INDIANAPOLIS – Republican legislative leaders may push Indiana to join the growing number of states eliminating the business personal property tax, but they admit that doing so may cost local governments and schools about \$1 billion a year in revenue annually.



At a legislative preview luncheon Monday, both Senate President David Long of Fort Wayne and House Speaker Brian Bosma of Indianapolis said the tax is one of the few hindrances still in the way of making Indiana more attractive to job creators.

"It's last piece of tax 'fruit' that you could deal with," Long said, referring to the series of income, corporate and other tax breaks that the state legislature has passed in recent years.

"It's a priority to get it right," he added. "Certainly low taxes for Indiana is something we have to keep foremost in our mind to keep us competitive and grow the economy."

But a sweeping tax break for businesses would have major impact on local units of government already struggling with declining revenues, including those caused by local property tax caps that were imposed by the General Assembly five years ago.

The personal property taxes, paid by businesses on machinery, computers, furniture and equipment they use, bring in almost \$1 billion a year to local governments and schools that use that money to pay their bills.

Communities with large manufacturing employers could especially be hard-hit. In some communities, the personal property tax produces more than 30 percent of their local revenue stream.

"It would be just devastating to some communities," said Andrew Berger, government affairs director for the Association of Indiana Counties. "We're talking about a dramatic cut in services in those places."

The proposal to eliminate the personal property tax paid by businesses is being supported by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce as one of its top legislative priori-

ties. A similar proposal failed in the last session.

But there may some momentum now for support. Several Midwestern states, including Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois have eliminated their personal property tax. Indiana Chamber president Kevin Brinegar said that puts Indiana at competitive disadvantage for luring new business into the state. "It's a remaining black mark on our tax climate. An area where we simply can't compete," Brinegar said.

So far, there's no proposal to replace the lost revenues to local governments if the business personal property tax was to be repealed.

Berger doesn't think there will be. "They just want to be able to say that they have another big tax cut," Berger said of the legislative leaders pushing for the measure.

Long said fiscal leaders in the legislature are aware of the impact on local governments if the personal property tax is eliminated. He said they'd be "very sensitive" to those concerns. "Particularly the small towns that are dependent on a few large taxpayers. We've got to be very careful that we don't destroy their tax base," Long said.

Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane of Anderson said it was critical to consider the impact on local govern-



ments. "We're going to have to come up with replacement revenue," Lanane said. "To me it's irresponsible to just say we're going to abolish another revenue stream without looking at the impact on local government services."

The General Assembly is scheduled to open its 2014 session on Jan. 7. ❖

Maureen Hayden covers the Statehouse for the CNHI newspapers in Indiana. She can be reached at maureen.hayden@indianamediagroup.com



JFK not welcome in today's Democratic Party

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – The fiftieth anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's assassination and the resultant reflection on his brief, but memorable, administration begs the question of whether a man with John Kennedy's beliefs would be welcome in the Democrat Party today.



The Democrats, who today seem locked in a death grip of European Socialism, income distribution, social engineering and disastrous fiscal policy might find it difficult to embrace a man of relative conservative principles and policies.

John F. Kennedy was not a tax and spend advocate. In fact, in August, 1962, he made this startling statement to a radio

audience: "A bill will be presented to the Congress for action next year. It will include an across-the-board, top-to-bottom cut in both corporate and personal income taxes. It will include long-needed tax reform that logic and equity demand ... The billions of dollars this bill will place in the hands of the consumer and our businessmen will have both immediate and permanent benefits to our economy. Every dollar released from taxation that is spent or invested will help create a new job and a new salary. And these new jobs and new salaries can create other jobs and other salaries and more customers and more growth for an expanding American economy."

Just try making this speech to Democrat Party activists before the Iowa caucuses. Goodbye JFK, hello Hillary!

Despite what liberal Democrats had to say about the Reagan and Bush tax cuts, Kennedy understood the math. In a press conference that same November Kennedy made the following pronouncement: "It is a paradoxical truth that tax rates are too high and tax revenues are too low and the soundest way to raise the revenues in the long run is to cut the rates now...Cutting taxes now is not to incur a budget deficit, but to achieve the more prosperous, expanding economy which can bring a budget surplus." I know there will be some readers who will say that the economic times were different then and that if Kennedy were alive today, he would want to jack up taxes and redistribute the money through free cell phones, but he went

on record too many times espousing the marvelous beauty of putting money in the hands of productive Americans by allowing them to keep more of their money.

Tax cuts and fiscal policy are not the only areas where President Kennedy would have run afoul of present day Democrats. Kennedy was a staunch believer in American triumphalism. He knew instinctively that the American Dream was unique and he frequently preached its virtues around the world. He was quick to let the world know that he took his oath of office seriously in regards to defense of our Nation. In his inaugural address he famously stated, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we will pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and the success of liberty." He and a post-9/11 George W. Bush would get along quite well. He might not win a Nobel Peace Prize, but he could win peace.

Kennedy's challenge to our nation to put a man on the moon was not done for reasons of exploration for exploration's sake. Kennedy's space program was a hand in glove effort between NASA and the military to perfect and expand technology that would keep the United States superior to the Soviet Union. Perhaps that is why President Obama has allowed our space program to sink so low, that our astronauts are now required to hitch a ride on Russian rockets. President Kennedy would find the concept repugnant.

When you place a higher value on windmills, a distinct 12th Century technology, than you do space exploration, it speaks to your ultimate vision. President Kennedy's vision would get him a lot of attention in the GOP and only derision in the Democrat Party.

Imagine John F. Kennedy speaking before a packed crowd of fourth generation welfare recipients, people who receive their healthcare, housing, food, childcare, education and cellphones courtesy of the Federal Government and proudly demanding, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Trust me on this one. There would be no Acorn organizer from Chicago busing voters to the polls to vote for JFK. The Democrat Party has gone from a President of vision and love of country, John F. Kennedy, to Barack Obama, a socialist who loathes the American ideal and who is morally and intellectually bankrupt.

President Kennedy once stated that, "A nation which has forgotten the quality of courage which in the past has been brought to public life is not as likely to insist upon or regard that quality in its chosen leaders today." Perhaps this explains the rise of Obama, Pelosi, Reid, Rangel and Wasserman-Schultz. No, President Kennedy would not be welcomed in his own party today.

Only a careful reinterpretation of his policies and



statements by liberals, playing for a far different end game, has retained Kennedy any modicum of relevance in the Democrat Party today.

Once, there were giants such as John Kennedy and

Ronald Reagan. Will our nation be blessed with one again?



Dunn is the chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.

A tale of two U.S. senators

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND – Is one among the best of senators, the other among the worst of senators? In this divided land of partisan differences, there won't be agreement on which is which in any evaluation.



Both senators are freshmen in the chamber, elected just a year ago. We'll call them Ted and Joe. Ted is from Texas. Joe is from Indiana. Ted is a Republican. Joe is a Democrat.

Joe is known in Washington as a moderate, reaching across the aisle for bipartisan compromise agreements, and he cultivates that image. Ted is known in Washing-

ton as an uncompromising conservative who denounces moderates and deplores reaching across the aisle, and he cultivates that image.

Joe was one of a bipartisan group of 14 senators who worked for the compromise that reopened government and staved off default on the nation's debt. Ted opposed the compromise and portrayed Republicans who agreed to it as traitors who surrendered just as the fight was being won.

Ted is running for president. Joe isn't.

Both now like to spend weekends in the Midwest, Joe in Indiana, Ted in Iowa. Joe declines most invitations to join in the cable news TV skirmishes that bring national exposure. Ted seeks maximum TV network and cable news coverage. He recently reached the entire nation on "The Tonight Show" on NBC. Joe recently reached the entire Michiana area on "Politically Speaking" on WNIT-TV in South Bend.

Both owe a lot to Chris Chocola, president of the Club For Growth. That organization threw bundles of money into Ted's primary campaign to enable him to pull an upset, win the Republican nomination in Texas and then coast to victory last fall. The club also threw bundles of money into Richard Mourdock's primary campaign in Indiana to enable him to win the Republican nomination in Indiana. Mourdock then self-destructed, losing to Joe last

fall.

Each will continue to be remembered by Chocola, Ted because of his presidential prospects, Joe because he once defeated Chocola in a congressional race.

Neither is always in good graces with party leadership. Ted belittles Senate Republican leaders and is blamed by them for plummeting favorability ratings for Republicans in the polls. Joe often breaks with House Democratic leaders and gets low ratings from progressive Democratic groups, such as being placed in the "mushy middle" category by the liberal "That's My Congress."

Both are attorneys. Ted has practiced before the U.S. Supreme Court. Joe has practiced before St. Joseph County Superior Court judges. Ted is an Ivy Leaguer, a graduate of Princeton and Harvard Law School. Joe is a "double domer," with undergraduate and law degrees from Notre Dame.

Joe speaks infrequently in the Senate, following the tradition that freshmen should first earn respect and do the hard work in committees before seeking to ham it up on the floor. Ted delivers lengthy speeches, including a filibuster-type performance in which he discussed green eggs and ham. Both have been associated with birds this session. Sen. John McCain called Ted a "wacko bird." Joe celebrated Larry Bird Day.

Joe voted for what he calls the Affordable Care Act and says it has many good features and can and should be preserved. Ted crusades against what he calls Obamacare and says it can and should be defunded and destroyed.

Both have had family members recently in the news. Joe's adult son received notice that his health insurance plan is being canceled, seen as embarrassing amid controversy over President Obama's promises that anybody can keep their health care if they want to. Ted's father, an evangelical pastor, was captured in a video saying that Obama should go "back to Kenya" and talking of health care law "death panels," seen as embarrassing perpetuation of untruths.

In this tale of two senators, evaluation of Ted and of Joe – as among the best, among the worst or somewhere in between – will depend on where along the partisan political spectrum an evaluator is situated. ❖

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



Time to weigh in on the 2014 HPI Power 50 List

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The year of 2014 will bring about the next round of mid-term elections, the second year of the Pence administration, and either the demise or fitful revival of Obamacare.

There have been big changes in both Indiana General Assembly chambers (40% of the Indiana Senate has changed since 2005), and newer members are beginning to acquire power.

As we have every year since 1999, we ask our readers to help us forge the 2014 Howey Politics Indiana Power 50. In the past, readers have nominated individuals, and in many cases, come up with their own list. We ask that this year be no different.

In 2013, HPI received unprecedented feedback from our readers on the list. Those wanting to participate should contact me at bhowey2@gmail.com.

We will present the 2014 Power 50 in our first January edition.

Here is the 2013 Power 50, to lend you some historical perspective. All of the Power 50 lists from 1999 through 2012 will soon be posted on the HPI website.

2013 Power List

1. Gov. Mike Pence
2. Speaker Brian Bosma
3. Senate President David Long
4. State Sen. Luke Kenley
5. District Attorney Joe Hogsett
6. U.S. Sen. Dan Coats
7. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly
8. U.S. Rep. Todd Young

9. Ways & Means Chairman Tim Brown
10. Purdue President Mitch Daniels
11. Indianapolis Mayor Gregg Ballard
12. Bill Smith
13. U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman
14. State Rep. Eric Turner
15. State Rep. Bill Davis and State Sen. Ron Alting
16. Secretary of State Connie Lawson
17. Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott Jr.
18. Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke
19. U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita
20. Evan Bayh
21. Supt. Glenda Ritz
22. Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry
23. Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight
24. Republican Chairman Eric Holcomb
25. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky
26. Chamber President Kevin Brinegar and IMA President Pat Kiely
27. Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann
28. State Rep. Judd McMillin
29. U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon
30. John Gregg, Jonathan Weinzapfel, Baron Hill and Woody Myers
31. South Bend Mayor Peter Buttigieg
32. U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks
33. U.S. Rep. Andre Carson
34. Chris Atkins
35. State Sen. Brandt Hershman
36. Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson

HPI Power 50: The Pence era begins
Dramatic changeover at Statehouse and Congressional delegation
By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis and MARK SCHOFFE JR. in Washington
You would have to go back to years like 1999, 1981, 1975 and 1965 to experience the kind of "change of the guard" feeling that exists in the Indiana political and public policy sectors today.
We have a new governor and same-party super majorities in the Indiana House and Senate for the first time in the television age. For the first time in half a century, there is no splash or luger in the U.S. Senate from Indiana. U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman, at age 34 and with two years and two months of tenure is the "dean" of Indiana's Republican congressional delegation. For the first time in Indiana, there are two Indiana Republican congresswomen. They part of an unmistakable trend of new-Howey women moving up the state's political ladders. Indiana Democrats have been reduced to an urban and college town party when it comes to the Indiana General Assembly.
Scattered across the political landscape are the 20- and 30-something nephews, as...

Pence talks his agenda
By BRIAN A. HOWEY
INDIANAPOLIS – Gov-Elect Mike Pence stopped by the offices of Howey Politics Indiana on Wednesday morning and participated in this interview:
HPI: Talk about the transition from being a legislator to being a governor.
Pence: This was something I was pondering five years ago. I kept the fact that I've been a legislative leader will make me a better executive. But I do understand the different types of leadership. As a legislator, you are an advocate. You represent your constitu-

QUOTE
"It's already illegal. What's to be gained other than ostracizing a whole section of the population?"
- State Sen. Pete Miller, one of a growing number of Republicans opposing the proposed Constitutional gay marriage ban

37. Marion Mayor Wayne Seybold
38. Attorney General Greg Zoeller
39. John Hammond III
40. Karen Pence
41. Joel Elliott
42. Heather Neal
43. Mike Schmuhl
44. Chris Crabtree
45. U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski
46. U.S. Rep. Luke Messer
47. State Rep. Rebecca Kubacki
48. St. Joseph County Republican Chair Deb Fleming
49. Club For Growth Chris Chocola
50. Whiting Mayor Joe Stahura ❖



Dogged journalism is a blessing, not a curse

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – There is a limit to how much secrecy a democracy can stand.

Let's start with the obvious: A democracy needs intelligence agencies. It needs to know what's happening in the world — and understand the plans of allies and enemies — to keep the nation prepared and secure.



If intelligence work is going to be effective, much of it has to be done in secret. "National security" is not merely an excuse for keeping intelligence activity under wraps. Often, the only way to protect our collective well-being is to pursue many national security activities, including intelligence-gathering, in the dark.

But that's if they're legitimately in the national interest.

All too often, governments use secrecy to protect themselves politically or to shroud activities that, seen in the cold light of day, their citizens would reject. This is why secrecy in government can be dangerous, and should be subject to the checks and balances of our constitutional system.

However legitimate secrecy may be, though, there is a limit to how much a democracy can stand. As ordinary citizens, we need information about what our government is up to in order to make informed and discriminating choices about politicians and policies. Journalists and their media outlets are indispensable conveyors of this information. The work of the journalist, who often presses for a more open, accountable government, creates tensions with a government set upon guarding state secrets. But it's a healthy, much-needed tension.

Which brings us to Edward Snowden's revelations to the press about the National Security Agency and its vast efforts to monitor communications. Around Washington, Snowden is routinely excoriated, and he's none too popular in the country at large, either. But whether he's a hero or a criminal in your book, there's no question that because of him, we know far more about the surveillance our government has been carrying out. The expansion of government power that the leaks reveal is without precedent in the modern era. Technology, along with the surveillance and monitoring it enables, has clearly outrun the policies to

deal with it.

Although many commentators have raised questions about Snowden's leaks, the journalists who have dug into the NSA files he provided are doing the job that democracy depends on them to do: getting information that details government actions and prompting a badly needed debate.

It's one of the most important ways to hold government accountable for the use of its power. Our ability to judge whether it acted appropriately or abusively and to act as responsible citizens is buttressed by journalists who are skilled at finding and keeping confidential sources, who know how to dig through copious records or amounts of data, who have learned how to build a story from a tip or a leak, and who are accurate, honest, rigorous and fair-minded.

Now, I don't want to whitewash what's happening in the media right now. There are plenty of worrisome trends. As a whole, media outlets are less interested than they used to be in accuracy, objectivity, and solid coverage, and more interested in advocacy, persuasion, and entertainment. Even at the largest papers, cutbacks have reined in their ability to cover the world and to launch expensive investigative work.

The recent rise of alternatives — such as the non-profit ProPublica and the investigative reporting venture just announced by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar — may go some distance toward recovering what's been lost, but they're also an acknowledgement that we have lost ground.

And we've done so precisely at a time when we face a real challenge in constraining the reach of government into our lives. Its powers of monitoring and surveillance are astonishing and are being used aggressively. It is classifying secret information wholesale, it is vigorously seeking to prosecute leaks, and it is trying to intimidate journalists. All of these are signs of a national security state that is determined to bulk up.

Congress is only now beginning to stir; until recently it has been a passive and willing participant in secrecy. At a moment like this, we have to depend more than ever on the curiosity, skill and determination of good reporters to spur the kind of debate we should be having as our society tries to strike the right balance between security and freedom. ❖

Lee Hamilton is director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



A police chief for Lake County

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE – Even when it comes to crime, politics gets involved in Lake County. It's no secret that there is a good bit of street crime in the county. There also are a number of fine law enforcement officers doing what they can to slow criminal activity

Among the best of the best is East Chicago Police Chief Mark Becker, who is a retired FBI agent. If Becker had his drawers, he would be the police chief in Gary, the Lake County city with the most crime.



Becker would have been a perfect fit for Gary. He spent the end of his FBI career heading the Gary Response Investigative Team. GRIT, which included local, state and federal law enforcement, evolved into the Gang Response Investigative Team that took a more regional approach to crime.

But when new Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson took office and began a search for a police chief, she essentially threw Becker's application into the waste basket. She took a parochial approach and demanded that her police chief be a Gary resident. That was unfortunate, especially since crime isn't confined to city limits.

Despite the snub by Freeman-Wilson, Becker is helping Gary anyway. Last summer he spearheaded the formation of the Region Stop Team that primarily includes police officers from Gary, Hammond, East Chicago and the Lake County Sheriff's Department.

The officers patrol those three communities, and walk beats as well, in an effort to make connections with and earn the trust of local residents. Since August, the Stop Team has made 390 traffic stops, responded to 178 suspicious incidents and made 107 arrests, while seizing weapons, drugs and cash.

In addition to the county's four major police departments, officers from Munster, St. John, Highland, Griffith, Schererville, Dyer, Whiting, the Indiana Commuter Transportation District and Indiana University Northwest are part of the team on a part-time basis.

As one might imagine, little happens in Lake County without political overtones. The Stop Team is no different. Some middle- and south-county politicians have criticized the use of officers from their police departments

to help fight crime in other communities.

One of the most notable criticisms comes from Republican Eric Krieg of Munster. Krieg is a frequent candidate for local office, most recently county surveyor. He has argued that it is wrong to use the resources and the the money of middle-county communities to fight crime in north-county communities.

The attitude is that they allowed crime to grow so they should solve their own problems. Fortunately for Lake County, Krieg never has won an election. Unfortunately for the Lake County GOP, no Republicans have ever stepped forward to condemn the comments of Krieg and others. And, Republicans wonder why they can't gain a foothold in the county.

Speaking of the team's success, Becker recently said, "The most important statistic that you won't see is the crime that isn't happening." ❖

Rich James has been writing about state and local government and politics for more than 30 years. He is a columnist for The Times of Northwest Indiana.

Gov. Quinn signs gay marriage bill

CHICAGO - Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn signed legislation Wednesday allowing same-sex weddings starting this summer, making President Barack Obama's home state the 16th overall — and largest in the nation's heartland — to legalize gay marriage (Associated Press). The festivities at the University of Illinois at Chicago featured a family-friendly crowd, musical performances and a stage lined with American, Illinois and rainbow flags.

"We understand in our state that part of our unfinished business is to help other states in the United States of America achieve marriage equality," Quinn said before he signed the bill on a desk once used by President Abraham Lincoln. He said part of that mission was to ensure that "love is not relegated to a second class status to any citizen in our country."

References to freedom, equality, fairness and Lincoln — the desk was where he penned his 1861 inaugural address — were peppered throughout the event. In attendance were top elected officials, including Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Organizers estimated roughly 2,300 attended, including activists and members of the public.

Illinois, where Democrats lead both legislative chambers and the governor's office, legalized civil unions in 2011, but the road to same-sex marriage was bumpy. ❖



Marc Chase, NWI Times: "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ..." The words are from an immortal speech — one of the briefest of any great oratories but exceptionally long on brilliance and meaning. I wonder if we still take these words — and the sacrifice they eulogized — to heart. Arguably the greatest president in our history, Abraham Lincoln spoke these words 150 years ago Tuesday, consecrating a cemetery for fallen warriors on the grounds of what remains America's bloodiest battle. The speech, which became known as the Gettysburg Address, should remind us all of the heroism and bloodletting that forged a foundation for the lives we enjoy today. It's also a reminder to our government leaders not to muck it up any further. Lincoln, a boyhood Hoosier, followed a two-hour speech by Edward Everett, a Harvard professor and a 19th century oratory rock star, with the two-minute Gettysburg Address. All in attendance on Nov. 19, 1863, were awestruck at both the brevity and power of Lincoln's words, including Everett. "I should be glad, if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion, in two hours, as you did in two minutes," Everett wrote to Lincoln in a note of praise after the dedication. Are we still in awe? Multiple cases of local government officials on the take, federal government shutdowns prompted by unwillingness to find common ground and misguided federal plans that are high on promises and short on delivery should make us all wonder how deeply we're actually appreciating the sacrifices of our forefathers. ❖

Larry Riley, Muncie Star Press: Indiana's lieutenant governor, whose name I suspect escapes many people, came to Muncie a couple of weeks ago to talk with — actually more to hear from — local farmers, business folks and elected officials. Delaware was the 78th county she's traveled to in a "Listen and Learn" tour this year. Hopefully, her schedule is not based on order of county importance. Two stops were on her agenda: first to talk to agriculture and business leaders at Mursix Corp. in the Park One industrial complex along I-69, and then a session with local public officials in the Delaware County Building. I attended the latter, but I suspect Sue Ellspermann felt at home in Mursix, a multifaceted manufacturer formerly known as Twoson Tool, which punches and stamps, does precision machining, injection molding, plating, and parts assembly for a variety of businesses, including automotive. That's because the lieutenant governor is an industrial engineer by education and trade — Purdue grad, class of '82 — and worked in industry until founding her own business consulting firm in Evansville. "I know my county and some

of those around it," she told a dozen people assembled, "but I don't know yours so well. What are the challenges, and how can we do a better job? Every elected official who turned out to meet with Ellspermann was either a dissident Democrat or a Republican. I asked her afterward whether she could make anything of that, but she begged off: "I've only been in politics two years," she replied." "What," asked Ellspermann, "worries you the most?" Sheriff Mike Scroggins had the quickest reply, but the "threat" wasn't what you might expect from law enforcement: "Congress," he answered. ❖

Peggy Noonan, Wall Street Journal: Why do we still talk about JFK? 1. We talk still about JFK and his death because the biggest generation in all U.S. history, that part of the population known as the baby boomers, watched it all, live, on that new thing called TV, and it entered our heads and never left. It was the first central historical fact of our lives, so we still read about it, think about it, and watch anything having to do with it. 2. Our parents experienced it as a different kind of trauma. They had lost one of their own. He had fought in World War II, like them. He was still young, like them, and now he was brutally cut down. What a lot of them felt was captured in the famous conversation of the newspaper columnist Mary McGrory and her friend Pat Moynihan. McGrory said: Oh Pat, can you believe we're at Jack Kennedy's funeral? "I feel like we'll never laugh again." He replied: "We'll laugh again, but we'll never be young again." 3. We talk about JFK's death because for the 18 years leading up to that point—between the end of the war, as we used to say, and 1963—America knew placidity. Many problems were growing and quietly brewing, but on the surface America was placid, growing more affluent, and politically calm. 4. And what followed—growing political unrest, cultural spasms, riots at political conventions, more assassinations and assassination attempts—was so different from the years preceding that we couldn't help look back at JFK's murder as the breakpoint, the rupture. After that, things turned difficult. 5. Why, after all the historians' revelations and the stories of the past 30 years—the women, the drug use, the Kennedy White House's own farfetched efforts to do away with Fidel Castro, the fantastical nature of the Bay of Pigs, the failure of JFK to anticipate and answer the crude communist clichés of Krushchev at Vienna, etc., etc.—why do we continue to hold this special place for JFK? Because in the months and years after his death we fell in love with him as he was presented to us by those who knew and cared about him. Youth, beauty, charm, high intentions, wit, a certain fatalism and, deep down, a certain modesty. "Camelot." ❖





Obama honors Lugar with Medal

WASHINGTON - Just two days before the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, a ceremony at the White House honored the 50th anniversary of one of his last executive orders and a Hoosier stalwart was front and center (Rader, WTHR-TV). Former Senator Richard Lugar received the Presidential Medal of Freedom Wednesday, along with former President Bill Clinton and several others. White House veterans say the East Room of the White House has never been as packed as it was for Wednesday's ceremony. President Barack Obama placed the Medal of Freedom around Sen. Lugar's neck after the following statement was read: "Representing the state of Indiana for over three decades in the U.S. Senate, Richard G. Lugar put country above party and self to force bipartisan consensus. Throughout his time in the Senate, he offered effective solutions to our national and international problems, advocating for the control of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. Working with Sen. Sam Nunn, Richard Lugar established the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, one of our country's most successful national security initiatives, helping to sustain American leadership and engage nations in collaboration after decades of confrontation. He remains a strong voice on foreign policy issues and his informed perspective will have broad influence for years to come." The President described Richard Lugar as a proud Hoosier. He was all of that and then some Wednesday. "His legacy is the thousands of missiles and bombers and submarine warheads that



are no longer threaten us because of his work. Our nation and our world are safer because of this statesman," Obama said. His efforts to contain weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union may be his signature achievement in the U.S. Senate, but it should also be noted that Lugar spent 36 years there, longer than any other Hoosier and in the top 20 in American history. Lugar shared the stage with Oprah Winfrey, Ernie Banks, Ben Bradlee and Bill Clinton, but for a short time he had the stage to himself. "I am grateful for that opportunity to hear the praise and, more importantly, hear how important our work is," Lugar said.

Rep. Radel takes leave of absence

WASHINGTON — At a press conference Wednesday night, embattled Rep. Trey Radel (R-Fla.) refused to resign, saying he will instead take an extended leave of absence from Congress to enter in-patient treatment for alcohol addiction (The Hill). "I knew this day would come," he said, adding that his struggles with substance abuse had continued on and off for years. Radel said he would donate his Congressional salary for the period he was away from Washington. "I hate the word constituents. What this is about is my friends, my family, and my neighbors," Radel said. "I hope, like family, southwest Florida can forgive me for this."

Grissom letter expressed jealousy

Concord, N.H. — In October 1961, Gus Grissom glumly confided to his mother in a letter that is now up for auction that he and his fellow Mercury 7 astronauts resented John Glenn after he was picked to be the

first American to orbit the Earth (Associated Press). Within the famously competitive group, Glenn had emerged as the face of the space program, while Grissom was reticent in front of the press. When he wrote to his mother, Grissom was still stinging from his Liberty Bell 7 flight on July 21, 1961, that ended with a blown hatch, a sunken space capsule and accusations that the former Air Force fighter pilot had panicked. "The flight crew for the orbital mission has been picked and I'm not on it," he writes in slanting script, each line of blue ink climbing slightly from left to right on the Project Mercury letterhead. "Of course I've been feeling pretty low for the past few days. All of us are mad because Glenn was picked. But we expressed our views prior to the selection so there isn't much we can do about it but support the flight and the program." The letter is being auctioned online by RR Auction of Amherst, N.H., which got it from Grissom's brother, Lowell."

ISTA's Margraf dies at age 75

INDIANAPOLIS - Long-time Indiana State Teachers Association chief lobbyist Robert Margraf died on Sunday at age 75.



After graduating from Notre Dame and teaching in Ohio and at South Bend LaSalle High School, he joined the staff of the Indiana State Teachers Association as a regional director of field services in the Mishawaka office and was appointed to the state staff two years later. Better educated kids with quality teachers were his goals. He retired as chief lobbyist in November of 1997 and received a Sagamore of the Wabash award from Gov. Frank O'Bannon.