



Social conservatives on revenge track

Nisly, Judy upsets set GOP on potential collision course over HJR3

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The headlines following the primary election upsets of State Reps. Rebecca Kubacki and Kathy Heuer were along the lines of “social conservatives strike back.”

The two northeastern Indiana Republicans voted to strike the second sentence of HJR-3 and then voted against the amendment itself. While it passed the House and Senate with large but diminished margins, the process was forced to restart and is now potentially up for the ballot in 2016.

The social conservative rebound wasn't complete, as State Sen. John Waterman lost, State Rep. Casey Cox



Curt Nisly (left) and Christopher Judy won upset victories over Reps. Rebecca Kubacki and Kathy Heuer on Tuesday.

survived, and State Rep. Bob Morris had a very close call.

But one thing is certain: The family coalitions will be active this fall in general election races, will recruit candidates for the 2016 cycles, and will press Gov. Mike Pence to back the amendment for the year when he could seek reelection. Pence administration sources have indicated to Howey Politics Indiana that they view support for the marriage amendment to be eroding, and that the emphasis on 2015 will be on the biennial budget.

Then there is the complicating factor of a potential

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Sen. Lanane and 2016

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – By this time in 1978, Lt. Gov. Bob Orr was planning his 1980 gubernatorial run. Ditto for Lt. Gov. Frank O'Bannon in 1994. White House Budget Director Mitch Daniels was departing the Bush administration and beginning to make Indiana appearances in 2002 after his allies seized control of the Republican Party earlier that year.

When you look at the anemic Indiana Democratic Party, beyond super minorities in the House and Senate and dozens of uncontested legislative races this cycle; with two more Southern Indiana “legacy” Senate districts poised to flip to



“It’s a bummer. I was bombarded on all sides. I felt I was on the right side of those issues. I refuse to cast a vote simply to get elected.”

- State Rep. Rebecca Kubacki, after losing to Curt Nisly in Tuesday’s HD22 primary



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the GOP; with the party holding only three of 11 Congressional seats and only one of the constitutional Statehouse offices; and with Democratic cities such as Indianapolis, Evansville, Terre Haute with Republican mayors, conspicuous in all of this is a compelling lack of activity in the 2016 gubernatorial race.

The party's traditional infrastructure is in atrophy, with the Indiana State Teachers Union under financial duress and the United Auto Workers no longer maintaining its region CAP council in state. Union membership is in significant decline.

While all of this looks rosy for the Grand Old Party, the underpinnings are suspect. There is the fact that Gov. Mike Pence was elected with only 49% of the vote, U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly won a Senate race two years after voting for Obamacare, and Supt. Glenda Ritz came out of nowhere to win her statewide race with less than \$400,000.

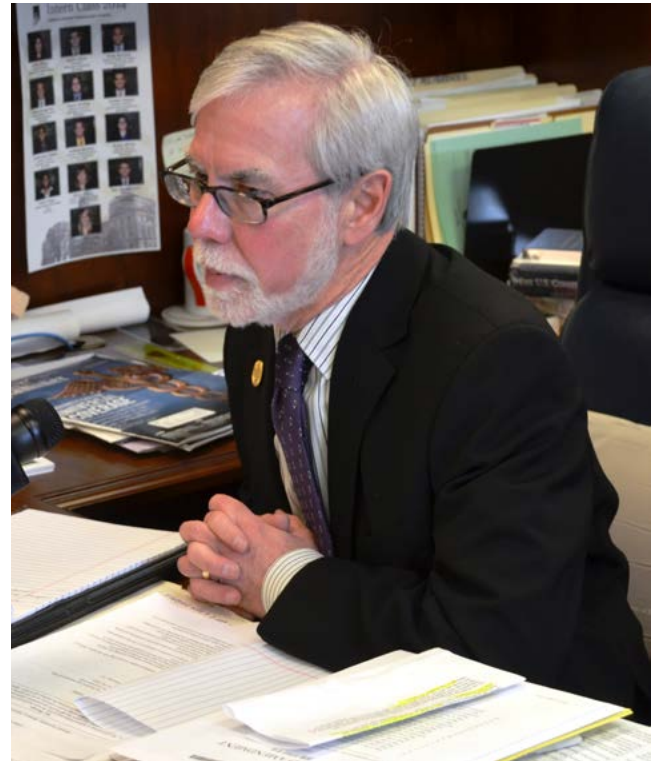
Evan Bayh only muddled this picture with a convoluted quip in Bloomington last month that he didn't know what his political plans are. John Gregg suspended any "active campaigning" last fall, Jonathan Weinzapfel took a job with Ivy Tech, and there is a noticeable lack of a statewide presence of former congressman Baron Hill and Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott, which led to a recent conversation with Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane that essentially began with "What about you?"

Lanane and House Minority Leader Scott Pelath have become the face and voice of the diminished loyal opposition over the past two years. And they have set aside the "Republican Lite" (or "Conservative Lite") messaging that dominated the

Bayh/O'Bannon era, conveying a more traditional Democratic positioning.

Sooooo, what about you, Sen. Lanane?

The Anderson Democrat, who leads the tiny 13-member Senate caucus, sat at Indiana Democratic Party



headquarters on the 11th floor of the Hyatt and pondered. "The best thing I can say about that is, you can't rule it out," he said. "The only reason I say that, as you've pointed out we are in a position as leaders to have an opportunity and a duty to watch the Super Majority; to make sure they are being responsible and to give the Democratic response to issues upon which there should be a fair debate.

"I can't sit here and say that I have any plans, but it's something which naturally comes with the position when you're a leader in the Indiana General Assembly caucus," Lanane continued. "You have a responsibility and say, 'Look, here are the problems we have in Indiana and here are what we think the solutions, other than the ones coming from the majority.'"

Indeed, Gov. Frank O'Bannon held Lanane's position when he first

ran for governor in 1987. Gov. Ed Whitcomb, Orr and Lt. Gov. John Mutz, Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman and Wayne Townsend served in the Senate. Doc Bowen and Gregg were House speakers, the same chamber that evolved Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann.

Are we correct in observing that the silence is deafening in the potential Democratic gubernatorial ranks? Are they awaiting a return of Jill Long Thompson?

"I think you're probably right," Lanane said of the lack of any activity. "I'm not aware of a person who is doing that. And you're right, it's getting time where that should happen, I suppose."

And are we correct in our observation that Lanane and Pelath are articulating a more traditional Democratic outlook?

Lanane agreed.

"Let me tell you why, from my own personal perspective," he began. "That is, there are two major problems in Indiana that are very serious. One is that we're too poor as a state, and we're too unhealthy. OK? When you're too poor and unhealthy, you've got some major problems. In any family where that is the general situation, you'd say, 'Wow, that family has some problems. They need to address those problems.'"

"We look at our per capita income," Lanane continued. "The Republicans want to just pooh-pooh it or ignore it. Under Republican leadership, on both of those factors, per capita income and overall health, we've gone from middle of the pack to the bottom of the pack. That's not a good place to be as a state. So when you are 38th in the nation in per capita income and 41st when it comes to the state of our health, you need to take a look at what have we done and why are we here? All I can do is surmise is we have not done enough to support increasing people's income, and to the contrary, we've implemented policies that do the exact opposite."

In his view, the Daniels/Pence era has weakened the unions and in this era, per capita income has declined 13%. Pence has eschewed the Obamacare health exchange, but 130,000 Hoosiers used the federal system to get coverage with virtually no assistance from the administration or the GOP congressional offices.

"We talk a fairly good game at worker training, or retraining or closing the skills gap, but so far we haven't really put our money where our mouth is," Lanane said. "In order to see income rise, we have to address the skills gap and give people the wherewithal. We don't address the fact that there is a wage gap between men and women. We want to find excuses for why that exists or deny that it really does exist."

There is HJR-3, an issue that finds the GOP tearing at itself inside as polling support drops.

"Let's talk about health," Lanane said. "We're 41st overall. And then you look at individual health indicators like the rate of cancer, obesity, smoking rates, infant mortality, adult suicide, some of the highest rates of meth use

in the nation, heroin now, all of these portray a message that we are not a healthy state. I don't get the sense that the leadership in this state believe we need to change that culture. Instead of diverting funds of the tobacco settlement fund, we made sure we used those in an effective way to convince young people not to smoke and to convince pregnant mothers they should not smoke, and they shouldn't smoke when they're no longer pregnant. There's a lot we could do."

Are Republicans on the clock when it comes to all the corporate tax cutting and job creation?

"What's happened here is there has been an over-abundance of tax cutting for business, really without



showing that it's reaped benefits for the state in general," he said. "It has not led to the creation of meaningful jobs, jobs that are paying better than average wages and bringing Indiana out of being 38th in per capita income. We haven't seen that develop yet.

"On tax policy it's very important to consider good impacts, stability of tax, the fairness of the tax, and the tax equity," he said. "It just seems like we've run amok for tax breaks for business and at some point it is going to catch up with us. There's going to be a shift of taxes. I don't see them taking away those tax cuts. They're going to say we need time to let them take hold. So we're going to see a reduction of essential state services or we're going to see a tax increase in some other flat tax.

"I don't think we've seen a long-term plan for stabilizing Indiana. I'm concerned about the jobs created: Are they jobs a person can raise a family on? Are they meaningful employment opportunities? If you're talking \$10 or \$12 an hour jobs, those are jobs that barely allow a person, let alone a family, to live from paycheck to paycheck. That's the problem. You have so many families, so many people out there just going paycheck to paycheck. They can barely do that. The issue is the meaningful jobs."

The questioning returned to politics. If the dearth of Democratic gubernatorial activity continues into August when the party gathers at French Lick, then what?

"We'll see what the circumstances are then," the 61-year-old Democrat said. "You can't be blind to the political facts at that moment. Time will tell." ❖

Social conservatives, from page 1

Pence presidential bid. Team Pence insists the focus is on reelection, but then we watch the staff push his portfolio the way Gov. Mitch Daniels' staff did in 2010 and 2011 when he came close to launching a presidential bid.

The challenge for the family coalition is to counter the erosion of support in polls as well as to successfully target legislative incumbents beyond Elkhart, Kosciusko and Whitley counties. Kubacki and Heuer were two moderate Republicans representing some of the most socially conservative areas in the state, if not the Midwest.

Curt Smith of the Indiana Family Institute also put several Republicans, State Reps. Kevin Mahan, Steve Braun and perhaps even Senate President David Long, on notice that primary or general election challengers may be in the offing.

"The vote occurred so late we didn't have time to recruit," Smith told Howey Politics Indiana Wednesday morning. The House vote occurred close to the February filing deadline. Smith had grumbled to reporters after the House excised the second sentence to HJR-3 that a number of Republicans had not kept their word. He enunciated that as the primary campaign fumes were clearing.

"We won't make that mistake again," Smith vowed. "We'll spend more time recruiting. We will look at Democrats who support our views. We reserve the right to be active this fall."

Smith described Mahan and Braun as Republicans who "abandoned" the marriage cause. As for President Long, who at one point gaveled Smith as "out of order" during Senate testimony last February, Smith was asked if a primary challenge might be in the offing. "I think Bosma showed very strong commitment," Smith answered, mentioning Speaker Brian Bosma who shifted HJR-3 out of the Judiciary Committee after it had stalled there. Long also shifted the issue out of Senate Judiciary to Rules, which he controlled. "I wish Sen. Long had amended it back in," Smith said.

"I think Sen. Long thinks the Supreme Court will have the final word before it gets on the ballot. Long was saying in the Journal-Gazette that had Kubacki and Heuer not voted against it, they might have survived. I think that shows the political saliency it has and I would expect the legislature to address it in 2015. I think they should all worry about it. We'd rather have the vote in the Senate. If the political process isn't responsive, we know what we have to do. Imagine if we can spend some time and get focused on a few key races where we'd back candidates who won't buckle on family issues."

A handful of primaries

In the wake of the removal of the second sentence and the passage of the filing deadline, Smith and Ryan McCann of the Indiana Family Institute decided to pick a

"handful of races" to exact retribution. "Kubacki was chair of the Family Committee," Smith explained, "so we thought we'd send a message. Curt Nisly is very libertarian, but we thought he'd be a solid vote on family and life issues. Heuer had voted against the amendment and had a good challenger. Ryan really liked Christopher Judy."

Jeff Brantley of the Indiana Chamber said they realized Kubacki was in trouble last February. "That area is so evangelical," he said. "The HJR-3 votes were just killers. They were dominated by social religious conservative issues. Unlike Bassler and Waterman where the focus was on jobs and coal, Monica Boyer was having a fit about Kubacki. We knew it was going to be tough."

Brantley said that Kubacki mailers were able to



raise Nisly's negatives by his past support of libertarians who support pro-drug policies and other similar issues. He said the sole focus was on HJR-3. "It was all about retribution," he said.

Smith pointed out that Rep. Cox voted with them in committee and against on the House floor. "We thought it was important to have accountability in the system, so we got behind Denny Worman. We didn't get Cox, but he's below 50% and that's a warning sign for a Republican."

The family coalition decided to spend \$11,700 on a radio ad on WOWO in Fort Wayne, targeting Cox, Kubacki and Heuer. The ad ran 11 times a day for 15 days. "We thought we could reach the conservative, high-information primary voter," Smith said.

Brantley said that the WOWO ad was devastating for Heuer. "I was surprised about the Heuer race" he said. "The difference was, she didn't get hit until the WOWO ad. They started dropping mail. People started to remember how she voted on HJR-3 and her numbers just collapsed."

The family groups had a direct mail system that Smith described as better than the Washington, D.C., firm

Aristotle and the Indiana Republican Party data bases, though not as good as President Obama's campaign apparatus. Of Aristotle and the GOP, Smith said, "They can't tell you how intense I am about these issues. We had access to some technology through our national partners." Those national partners included the National Organization for Marriage, Jim Dobson's Focus on the Family and the affiliated Citizenlink, the American Family Association and the Family Research Council.

They spent about \$50,000 on the three races, as well as Sen. Waterman's losing race to Eric Bassler, and on behalf of Jeff Raatz in the open SD27 race, which he won.

Megan Robertson, who led the Freedom Indiana efforts against HJR-3, observed that Rep. Mahan and Braun's districts "are completely different" than Kubacki and Heuer's. She said that while the family coalition is touting their upsets, there were other issues, Common Core and daycare regulation, that were also in play.

"Kubacki was targeted before HJR-3," Robertson said. "Those races were already in play."

Of the family coalition, Robertson said, "They really needed a win."

Robertson added that while Indiana Freedom will not involve itself in election races, many of its members will fund Republicans who are challenged. As for reviving the issue during the 2015 and 2016 legislative sessions, Robertson said, "Freedom Indiana is ready to fight again. If they want to have that battle, we'll do it."

As for Gov. Pence, who sources say endorsed Kubacki and Cox but not Heuer, Smith said he has not circled back with the governor. Pence endorsed restoring the second sentence in early February at a family coalition luncheon.

"I don't know what Gov. Pence's thinking was there," Smith said of his endorsements. "Maybe he felt an obligation to be loyal."

Smith described some elements of the Pence administration as being "skeptical" and added, "Mike has never indicated to me he wants to back down. I haven't discussed it with him. What happened last night suggests that if they don't address this issue, the voters will have the final word. A lot of folks think the federal courts will decide, but we'll push for a vote next January."

Bassler overcame Waterman

While HJR-3 over took all other issues in northeastern Indiana, in the Bassler/Waterman race, the challenger was down by 30% in early spring. "But our research showed this area was not as liberal and pro-union as the Waterman people thought. We saw an oppor-

tunity on union issues," Brantley said.

Bassler began running TV ads in the Terre Haute market contrasting the two candidates on the coal tax and union issues. Waterman responded with \$10,000 in ads in Daviess County, which was Bassler's base.

Bassler was able to roll up a large margin in his home county of Daviess. He was a hard working candidate and his campaign hit Waterman at the right time.

"Negative advertising really worked this year," Brantley said. "The negatives really worked against Kubacki and Heuer, and they worked for Bassler and Behning." That was in reference to House Education Chairman Bob Behning, who saw his numbers start to erode in his rematch against Michael Scott.

Broadcast TV ads and direct mail against Scott saved the race after what Brantley called "panic time" about two weeks ago when Behning's voter ID numbers began to "slip big time." ❖



Republican Eric Bassler campaigns in tSD39.

Primary results

SD6

(D) Roxanna Hanford 1,717,
Lon Childress 1,558
(R) Rep. Rick Niemeyer 3,303
Chris Shepherd 2,346

SD15

(R) Liz Brown 3,641
Ken Fries 3,291
Darren Vogt 2,117
Jeff Snyder 567
General: Brown v. Jack Morris (D)



SD27

(R) Jeff Raatz 4,231
Bruce Wissel 2,548
Doug Williamson 1,443
Eric Atkinson 506
General: Raatz v. Jake Hoog (D)

SD31

(R) Sen. James Merritt 6,035
Crystal LaMotte 2,118
General: Merritt is unopposed

SD38

(R) Jon Ford 1,085
John Carson 939
General: Ford v. Sen. Tim Skinner (D)

SD39

(R) Eric Bassler 6,817
Sen. John Waterman 6,458
General: Bassler is unopposed

HD43

(R) Chip Perfect 5,278
Bill McDonald 2,946
Mark Schneider 2,545
General: Perfect v. Rudy Howard (D)

SD47

(R) Erin Houchin 5,384
Tad Whitis 4,046
General: Houchin v. Sen. Richard Young (D)

SD48

(R) Rep. Mark Messmer 7,643
Ted Metzger 1,904
General: Messmer v. Larry Vollmer (D)

HD11

(D) James Metro 1,439
Phillip Kuiper 1,257
(R) Michael Aylesworth 1,721
Michael Mears 1,230

HD19

(R) Julie Olthoff 1,314
Chris Retson 874
General: Olthoff v. Rep. Shellin VanDenburgh (D)

HD22

(R) Curt Nisly 4,623
Rep. Rebecca Kubacki 2,516
General: Nisly v. David Kolbe (D)

HD25

(R) Rep. Don Lehe 4,180
Franklyn Voorhies 1,901
General: Lehe v. Maurice Fuller (D)

HD32

(R) Rep. Eric Turner 2,037
Parvin Gillim 1,751
General: Turner v. Bob Ashley (D)

HD39

(R) Rep. Jerry Torr 3,009
Don Meier 1,756
General: Torr vs. David Russ (D)

HD48

(R) Doug Miller 2,076
Adam Bujalski 986
Jesse Bohannon 1,981
General: Miller is unopposed.

HD59

(R) Rep. Milo Smith 4,249
Ryan Lauer 2,895
General: Smith is unopposed

HD63

(R) Mike Braun 4,610
Richard Moss 2,292
General: Braun is unopposed

HD66

(R) Lisa Seng Shadday 1,368
Joe Van Wye 156
Ron Harsin 672
General: Shadday v. Rep. Terry Goodin (D)

HD83

(R) Christopher Judy 3,909
Rep. Kathy Heuer 2,951
General: Judy is unopposed

HD84

(R) Rep. Bob Morris 3,750
Michael Barranda 3,500
General: Morris v. Fred Haigh (D)

HD85

(R) Rep. Casey Cox 2,612
Denny Worman 1,514
Ken Knoblauch 1,148
General: Cox is unopposed

HD91

(R) Rep. Bob Behning 2,351
Michael Scott 1,731
General: Behning v. Patrick Lockhart

General races to watch

This is our first glance, preliminary list of general election legislative races we'll be following between now and November. This list takes into account past history, district make up, local and state issues, rematches, and potential candidate legal and ethical liabilities. All races not listed are "safe" for the incumbent.



CD2 U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski (R), Joe Bock (D)
Horse Race: Leans Walorski

HD11 Michael Aylesworth (R), James Metro (D)
Horse Race: Leans Aylesworth

HD15 Rep. Hal Slager (R), Jim Wieser (D)
Horse Race: Leans Slager

HD22 Curt Nisly (R), David Kolbe (D)
Horse Race: Likely Nisly

HD32 Rep. Eric Turner (R), Bob Ashley (D)
Horse Race: Likely Turner

HD35 Rep. Jack Lutz (R), Melanie Wright (D)
Horse Race: Tossup

HD45 Rep. Kreg Battles (D), Bruce Borders (R)
Horse Race: Tossup

HD56 Rep. Dick Hamm (R), Phil Pflum (D)
Horse Race: Leans Hamm

HD68 Rep. Jud McMillin (R), Rick Gill (D)
Horse Race: Likely McMillin

HD72 Rep. Ed Clere (R), Kevin Sue Bailey (D)
Horse Race: Likely Clere

HD78 Rep. Holli Sullivan (R), Steve Melcher (D)
Horse Race: Tossup

HD76 Rep. Wendy McNamara (R), Tony Goblen (D)
Horse Race: Likely McNamara

SD29 Sen. Mike Delph (R), J.D. Ford (D)
Horse Race: Likely Delph

SD45 Sen. Jim Smith (R), Julie Berry (D)
Horse Race: Leans Smith

SD46 Sen. Ron Grooms (R), Chuck Freiberger (D)
Horse Race: Leans Grooms

SD47 Sen. Richard Young (D), Erin Houchin (R)
Horse Race: Tossup

SD48 Rep. Mark Messmer (R), Larry Vollmer (D)
Horse Race: Likely Messmer

❖

Is there a place for Pence in wide open '16?

By CHRIS SAUTTER

WASHINGTON - For 50 years—since the era of presidential primaries and caucuses began--the Republican Party has nominated the candidate in waiting. Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bob Dole, John McCain, and Mitt Romney all ran unsuccessfully before a party that prefers the familiar turned to them. George W. Bush, riding the family name, became the heir apparent as soon as he defeated Ann Richards for Governor of Texas.



Barry Goldwater is the lone exception. Goldwater's nomination in 1964 represents the one time the Republican grassroots revolted against the establishment's preferences. Goldwater's landslide defeat in the general election has since led the party's

establishment to eschew any candidate from the party's right wing. Reagan, of course, had enormous and enthusiastic conservative grass roots support. And, by 1980, as a result of his two presidential campaigns—in 1968 and 1976—Reagan's brand of conservatism had overtaken much of the party establishment's ideology.

The story is one of the dominance of the Republican establishment in the presidential nominating process. The freak show of 2012 that produced a Mitt Romney too compromised to win a general election does not alter the fact that the GOP got an establishment candidate, though many within it would have preferred someone like Mitch Daniels, who declined to run.

The 2016 Republican nomination may be the most wide-open race since 1964. There is no candidate in waiting, unless you count Rick Santorum or Mike Huckabee. The establishment is in a panic to recruit a candidate who can seriously compete with Hillary Clinton. First, Chris Christie rose to the top of the list. But troubles on the home front have wounded Christie, perhaps permanently. Now Jeb Bush is the establishment savior, though it is uncertain if Jeb has the fire.

Indiana's current governor Mike Pence would clearly like to run and has hinted as much. During a recent appearance on FOX News Sunday, Pence declined to rule himself out, saying only "my focus is entirely on the future of Indiana. We'll let the future take care of itself," when asked about his interest in running for president.

Mike Pence is no Mitch Daniels. Daniels had impressive GOP establishment credentials written all over his resume—Dick Lugar's Senate office, the Reagan White House, Bush's OMB director, Indiana governor. Daniels had a well-deserved reputation as one of the smartest leaders

in the party. He was a favorite of the Bush crowd and they practically begged him to run.

Though Pence has establishment credentials—12 years in the House including a stint as leader of the Republican Study Committee and governor of Indiana--the GOP establishment is not likely to court him to run for president as they did with Daniels. Some influential conservatives like Bill Kristol have recognized Pence as someone with presidential potential. But overall most observers doubt he has the gravitas to win a general election against Hillary Clinton. Not many Republican voters outside of Indiana have ever heard of Mike Pence. Further, Pence's name is not on the lips of those who handicap presidential races. The Washington Post's political editor Chris Cillizza regularly ranks the 2016 GOP field. His most recent top ten list begins with Jeb Bush, followed by Rand Paul, Marco Rubio, Chris Christie, Scott Walker, Ted Cruz, Bobby Jindal, Mike Huckabee, Paul Ryan, and Rick Perry in that order.

Despite Pence's efforts to discretely generate interest, there is no serious buzz around a possible Pence candidacy. If he were to jump in now, his candidacy would be regarded as a "dark horse." It's hard to imagine Pence would give up likely re-election for a dark horse presidential candidacy.

Pence considered running in 2012 and decided against it, wisely running for governor instead. The question for Pence in 2016 is the same one he faced in 2012: Is there a realistic path to the nomination for him?

Perhaps, Pence's best hope rests on the misfortunes of his fellow Republican governors who are potential candidates. The one realistic niche for Pence is the "governor track." Governors tend to perform well as presidential candidates because they can run as "outsiders" and because most have tangible accomplishments unlike most members of House and Senate.

As Christie's fortunes faded, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker had seemingly filled Christie's niche. But recent polling has Walker locked in a dead heat with his Democratic challenger Mary Burke. A loss would, of course, end Walker's presidential hopes. Even a narrow win might derail his chances. Ohio Governor John Kasich has also been mentioned. But Kasich, too, faces a tough re-election. While he seems to be in better shape than Walker, it is unclear whether he would want to embark immediately on a presidential run following a statewide campaign. If Christie, Walker, and Kasich take a pass, then there might be a genuine opportunity for Pence, though, he would probably have Bobby Jindal to contend with.

Mike Pence has a number of real strengths that should appeal to both grassroots conservatives and establishment Republicans. He has a consistent record of being out front on conservative issues. He has a record as governor that should impress Republican primary voters. He is telegenic and articulate. Yet, unless the field narrows considerably, Pence will have difficulty shedding the dark horse label. But you never know. Stranger things have happened. ❖

Lanane discusses jobs and health care

By **MATTHEW BUTLER**
and **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Following up on our 2014 Session exit interviews with the governor, speaker of the House, and Senate president, Howey Politics Indiana continued this series sitting down with Democratic Senate Leader Tim Lanane Monday. “There are in my opinion two major problems in the State of Indiana that are very serious problems,” he told us. “One is that we’re too poor as a state, and we’re too unhealthy. OK? When you’re too poor and unhealthy, you’ve got some major problems.”



Our discussion focused on those two key areas, economic development and taxation, and health care, particularly as it applies to the ACA.

HPI: Over several consecutive budgetary periods the Indiana Republicans have lowered taxes with the promise it will spur economic growth that will translate into nearly fully employment and higher wages. Do you think it’s now ‘showtime’ for these policies to start producing appreciable economic results and, if not, this might provide a real opportunity for a Democrat, say, running for Governor in 2016?

Lanane: I think what’s happened here is there has been an over abundance of tax cutting for business, and I think really without any showing that it’s reaped benefits for the state in general. It has not led to the creation of meaningful jobs, jobs that are paying better than average wages and bringing Indiana back out of this terrible state of being 38th in the nation in per capita income. We haven’t seen that develop yet. What I’m worried about is in a couple of years, will it result—and the governor wanted these deep cuts in the business personal property tax—in a shift in taxes to other property owners. You’ve got units that have reached their caps who would. Those are going to be your average homeowners. And likewise, we’re going to have such reliance on these deep corporation tax cuts they’ve enacted, and to the best of my knowledge no one was crying for. I was sort of surprised when the other side of the aisle said, “Governor, we’re not going to give you your business personal property tax cut.” That was irresponsible. But we’re going to enhance the corporate tax cuts. We’ve already enacted those and they haven’t fully kicked



in. It seemed at some point, you’ve got to either make up those lost revenues by cutting even more essential state services or you say we have to raise another flat tax that impacts individuals, whether it’s income tax or sales tax. It just seems like we’ve run amok with tax breaks for business and at some point it is going to catch up with us. There’s going to be a shift of taxes. So we’re going to see a reduction of essential state services or we’re going to see a tax increase in some other flat tax.

HPI: Why didn’t Republicans entertain something touted for being both pro-growth and helpful to working-class families like the Earned Income Tax Credit? Including it with their package of tax cuts would have deflected a lot of your criticism.

Lanane: Because I don’t think they’re warm to ideas like that. It’s the same reason they don’t want to increase the minimum wage or fully implement the Affordable Care Act. Those are means to address the issues of the working poor, to at least try to raise their standing of living for a little bit. It’s disappointing because certainly the earned income tax credit would be a way to help them.

HPI: The state has had four or five major job announcements in the past few weeks. Where do you think we are right now in terms of a recovery?

Lanane: I don’t think we’ve seen a long term plan for stabilizing Indiana. I’m concerned about the jobs created. Are they jobs a person can raise a family on? Are they meaningful employment opportunities. If you’re talking even \$10- or \$12-hour jobs, those are jobs that barely allow a person, let alone a family, go from paycheck-to-paycheck. That’s the problem: You have so many families, so many people out there just going paycheck-to-paycheck. They can barely do that. The issue is the meaningful jobs. You really have to have top notch talent and you have to have the best trained workers. You have to have a quality of life that attracts those types of jobs as well. I think that’s where we need to focus our strategy.

HPI: Are we starting to see the hens coming home to roost in terms of the property tax caps? In Brown County, for example, they are proposing to let nine paved roads go back to gravel. Gov. Daniels used to deride Michigan and Illinois for that very same thing. Muncie might not be able to afford school busing anymore.

Lanane: There’s something wrong when you have to take a look at the possibility of advertising on the side of your school buses just to keep them on the road. Those are things we shouldn’t be hesitate to take a look at and address that. But the caps are in the constitution. You have to find a way to replace those revenues or you have to admit local government is not going to be able to do what is necessary to attract businesses. (Companies)

aren't going to come here if you're turning streets back into gravel roads.

HPI: Ideally, how would you address these pervasive local funding shortfalls?

Lanane: We may need to take a look at some kind of revenue sharing proposition. With a total limitation on the types of revenues local units can raise, you either have to give them other tools, in terms of a local income tax, or sales tax, something they can implement, or something in the way state revenues can drift down. But now we continue to reduce state revenues too with deep cuts in corporate taxes.

HPI: An argument behind a further reduction to the corporate rate is that it will attract more businesses and create even more revenue, no?

Lanane: I've heard these arguments before. I don't know if corporate revenues will increase or decrease but it's likely to stay about the same when you're looking at those deep cuts. Before we do these kinds of things let's have the studies that prove these are job creators — and meaningful job creators as well.

HPI: Do you know of any local officials or governments who are interested in exercising the new Business Personal Property Tax Cut Options?

Lanane: No, in fact, the communities I represent in Madison and Delaware County, they are scared to death they aren't going to be able to compete, when you've got this 20-year tax abatement you can offer and up to a 100%-abatement for each of those years. How are we going to be in a position to offer that? Maybe a more affluent community could do that, but we're not going to be able to say we're going to do that. They worry it's a little more rich get richer, poor get poorer scenario.

HPI: So you are worried this will worsen inequalities we see between counties, between regions, and even between states?

Lanane: This goes back to the income gap. The fact is the rich have gotten richer. The real concern that I have is that there seems to be a middle class and a lower middle class — the working poor up to the middle class — that just doesn't seem to have much social mobility anymore. That is a real concern.

HPI: It appears the two things that have really pinched the middle class as their wages remain stagnate is the increasing cost of health care and higher education. Can you talk about the challenges middle class families face when sending their children to college?

Lanane: It's a concern. As a state we have the duty to make sure our state institutions of higher learning are affordable. That calls for support. I know when I talk to any of the administrations of those institutions they say, "I would love to be able lessen the tuition rates but I need

more support from the state to be able to do that." Again, I think it all comes back to priorities and how you fund those priorities. The only way you can make sure middle class and lower middle class families are able to afford institutions of higher learning is for the state to step up to the plate and put in adequate support to those schools so they don't have to keep raising those rates.

HPI: Without increased state support do you think Purdue University President Mitch Daniels' multi-year tuition freeze is going run into some problems down the road?

Lanane: Absolutely they will. I think you're going to hear from administrators that they just can't go on. The cost of everything else keeps going up. As state policy-makers we have an obligation to make sure college is affordable. That doesn't mean we have to assure every state institution is 'The Harvard of the Midwest.'

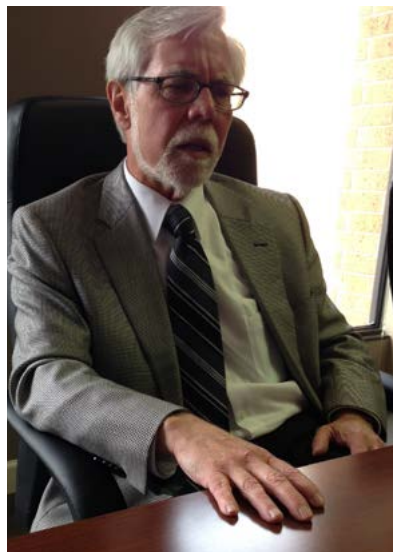
HPI: The Common Core chapter in Indiana education policy appears to be over but the implications of dropping it will still be felt by school corporations. The LSA estimated that it will cost \$125 million for local school corporations to retool for the new standards. Is there anyone talking about reimbursing those costs?

Lanane: It's unfortunate that politics became the driving force about what we should do about Common Core. I never really heard a logical argument or explanation as to what was wrong with Common Core, as to how the standards were wrong, as to how they could not

be effectively put in place by our school systems. It just seemed that there was this fear that this has something to do with the federal government and we don't want the federal government telling us what our education system should be in the state of Indiana, which is not how Common Core came about. It was an agreement between all the governors, at least almost all of the governors, that we need some standardization and agreement between the states. The impact to me is the money, you're talking about \$125 million, that school corporations cannot afford to have wasted, the time to implement these things up to this point, and the confusion. It was an unnecessary delay and I think it happened all in the name of politics.

HPI: Your thoughts on health care?

Lanane: We're 41st overall. And then you look at individual health indicators like the rate of cancer, obesity, smoking rates, infant mortality, adult suicide, some of the highest rates of meth use in the nation, heroin now, all of these now portray a message that we are not a healthy state. I don't get the sense the leadership in this state that there is a belief that we need to change that culture. It's cultural. I tell this to people and they say, "What are you talking about? We are not California. We could become the healthiest state in the Midwest if we have policies that



encourage stop smoking. Instead of diverting funds of the tobacco settlement fund, we made sure we used those in an effective way to convince young people not to smoke and to convince pregnant mothers they should not smoke and they shouldn't smoke when they're no longer pregnant. There's a lot we could do. I agree, it can't but up to government to change bad habits. You can't pass a law to change bad habits. But we can sure talk about it and be leaders.

HPI: Speaker Bosma and Sen. Long seemed to suggest in our sit-downs that cultural factors has something to do with poor health, particularly in terms of obesity, lack of exercise, and today, and that one can only hope for attitudes to change, which they are, albeit slowly, to realize true health improvements.

Lanane: I disagree with that. There are a couple of things you could do. One, you could fund the Affordable Care Act in a meaningful way. You could instead of trying to resist the implementation of the ACA, you could do the right thing and expand Medicaid, fully implement it, and get as many people health care coverage as we can. We could take a look at the schools giving meaningful physical education programs, given the cuts they've had to implement. We ought to be emphasizing health classes even at a younger age. Cancer, diabetes, a lot of that can be controlled by changing people's behaviors, like smoking and drinking too much, not getting enough exercise. When I was a kid, we did a lot of physical activity. This time of year we were out playing baseball. We played football in the fall. A couple of weeks ago, coming home from work. I looked at this field. What are those kids doing over there? They had actually organized a game of touch football. There were like eight guys out there. I thought, nice to see that, but it hit me, you don't see that like you used to.

HPI: Speaker Bosma and Sen. Long also indicated to us that we will be in a period of reassessing the health care landscape with the ACA now fully online. The Speaker even suggested the legislature might reassess whether the state should operate its own insurance exchange or expand Medicaid. Your thoughts?

Lanane: I'm glad to hear that. Maybe the latest figures that came out about the enrollment of Hoosiers, despite a lot of foot dragging on the part of the state, has convinced them this law is here to stay and we need to act in order to reap the benefits just like any other state. I hope they are willing to take a look at that and how is the most effective way to get people covered under the ACA. No matter what you say about the act and implementing it and for the first time the President was able to achieve meaningful, comprehensive health care coverage for the nation. I don't see where that's a bad thing. I think people should have health care coverage. I think in the long run we'll be a healthier state if we can get people covered by health care, without a doubt.

HPI: Have you heard any new statistics from the Indiana Department of Insurance regarding whether premiums rose as they expected, something like 71% was

predicted?

Lanane: I haven't seen any solid evidence about 71% increase. To me when I saw that I felt like that was simply an attempt to scare people and pile on to the rocky start to the implementation of the ACA. It was irresponsible in my opinion for them to do that. There was not a solid basis for them to throw out that kind of scary statistic. We'll have to wait and see how that all shakes out.

HPI: The Pence Administration says it doesn't want to expand Medicaid now and have the state be stuck with the bill when the federal government cannot presumably cover the full costs in the future. Your thoughts?

Lanane: I think there are benefits that maybe you cannot even quantify and maybe there are some that you can quantify which is, before the ACA, people who were not covered did not get health care or they waited until they were so sick and they showed up in the ER—and they didn't pay for those costs by and large. A tiny, tiny percentage did. The idea that that was free health care? We all know that that wasn't free; it all got paid on and spread around to the people who could pay and they had health coverage and that was reflected into the rates. We'll never know if we had had comprehensive health care coverage how much would be the savings for everyone's premiums, but theoretically that should now occur. There should be that the lack of passing on those unpaid costs could alter or result ultimately in the stabilization of other health care cost rates. In fact, I think I did see where the overall cost of health care has gone down because of the implementation of more coverage; the more people covered the less uncovered costs are passed on to other people. As far as Medicaid costs being cataclysmic for the state of Indiana, I don't think that's going to occur. I think it's going to stabilize and in the long run, because we'll have a healthier population, it's going to be a net plus for this state.

HPI: Let's say the HHS approves the Healthy Indiana Plan waiver, where should HIP enrollment in terms of numbers be if we do get this waiver?

Lanane: I'll wait to see what the HIP waiver is because I cannot imagine they'll approve HIP the way it is now, like you say with the 40,000 waiting list. It's going to have to be where people actually get coverage and you're not excluding a bunch of people either with these high copays they're requiring. I don't think it's going to be the Healthy Indiana Plan as we know it. My guess it's going to be something that is more palatable to the federal government and if I'm the federal government I don't blame them. They can say, "Look, you're defeating the purpose of what we're trying to do here, which is to get meaningful coverage to people."

HPI: We spoke with Drs. Tim Brown and Larry Bucshon before they embarked on a state health care tour and they emphasized that we should not expand Medicaid because it is a broken system, in terms of its health outcomes and the increasing number of providers who refuse to accept Medicaid patients due to reimbursement issues. They want to reform Medicaid by making it more

consumer-driven and cost-transparent.

Lanane: Those are the types of discussions that should occur. There can be some modifications to Medicaid, so there can be some 'skin in the game,' that makes sense. As you increase the income level at which people would qualify and get into the system there can be some of that. But it can't be to the point where people won't or cannot do that because economically it's not feasible for them. If people want to sit down and have an intelligent, real reasonable discussion about that I think it could occur.

HPI: Another looming problem is the disproportionate share hospitals. Chairman Brown told us they are funded through 2017.

Lanane: That's why it's foolish not to do the right

thing and come up with a Medicaid plan that is acceptable to the federal government so that Indiana gets the benefits. The time is over for political posturing on this. We're past the tipping point; 8 million people across the country took advantage by getting enrolled and it's not going to go away. We need to find a way to implement it effectively in our state and deal with those issues like the disproportionate share hospitals.

HPI: Are those conversations happening, say with the Senate Budget Committee?

Lanane: No. No. I'm not aware of it. That's been one of the most frustrating things of this whole implementation has been the lack of involvement and sharing of information. It's just been so politicized. ❖

Legislature weakens local government

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Recently I heard a state representative and a state senator discuss the activities of the 2014 Indiana legislature. Both men are intelligent, articulate and seem concerned about the well-being of our state and their constituents.



After listening to them, I wondered how much they and their colleagues thought about the implications of the General Assembly's most recent attack on local government.

The legislature uses several means to weaken local government.

First, the unfunded mandate is popular. The state tells local governments (counties, cities, towns, school corporations, libraries, special districts) what they must do, but provides no money to carry out the designated activity.

Second, limiting local powers is common. Property tax caps, limitations on levies, restrictions on local gun laws and the denial of sales tax sharing are examples.

Third, the permission to do something possibly unwise and potentially unpopular is a specialty. Local option income taxes replacing local inventory taxes come to mind.

This third method set the stage for lowering business property taxes in the most recent session,. It was typical legislative sleight of hand, supported by the governor.

The legislators recognized reducing or eliminating business personal property taxes cuts about \$1 billion from

local government revenues. Therefore, they set a 2015 date for this provision to take effect. The same solons also approved a measure allowing local governments to offer firms 20 years of real property tax abatement.

They did not mandate the end to business personal property taxes. They did not require 20 years of real property tax abatement. They let the individual localities slit their own throats in the competitive battles to come between neighboring communities.

This is seen by the legislature as good government, allowing local officials to decide how to benefit businesses by raising taxes/fees on local residents or by cutting services. It takes the lobbying pressure off state officeholders and puts it on local politicians.

Where do these shenanigans leave local economic developers? To start, we have to ask: Why do we have local economic development?

Local residential property taxes alone do not support necessary government services to local residents. Hence, communities seek to attract businesses to help share the expenses for services they and their employees use. If businesses are exempt from all or part of property taxes on land, buildings, inventory and equipment, why try to bring new firms to town or encourage existing firms to expand?

Jobs? Local income taxes are currently minor supplements to local budgets. We would need extraordinary wages and salaries, taxed at much higher rates, to offset the giveaways being set up by the General Assembly.

In addition, many, sometimes most, employees of a company live outside the district where they work. Are we prepared for a complex set of commuter taxes?

Undoubtedly, the legislative study committee set up to find a solution to this problem will file a report. We can only wonder what magic trick they will endorse. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist, writer, and speaker who may be reached at mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com.

Carson talks about ACA, health exchange

By **MATTHEW BUTLER**

INDIANAPOLIS – Last Friday U.S. Rep. André Carson was at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center near E. 40th St. and Meridian St. speaking to 30-some children of the afterschool program Kaleidoscope. He stressed the importance of education in realizing one's dreams and not letting bullying or cultural pressures deter one from being interested in schoolwork or supposedly "nerdy" subjects, like math and science.

Carson spoke with Howey Politics Indiana after his remarks and on the heels of the latest ACA enrollment figures announcement on May 1 that Indiana's enrollment exceeded federal estimates of 125,000, reaching 132,432 by mid-April. Roughly 65,000 Hoosiers had enrolled through the federal exchange at the end of February, meaning a final surge helped meet and exceed the administration's projections.

Carson was not surprised by the final figures. "No," he said, "I think many of us worked very hard. Health care is a universal concern. I saw many of these concerns when I traveled the state, when I worked in Clinton County, Vermillion County, Boone County, all the way up to White County. Health care is universal. Despite the rollout debacle, the lies, the misperceptions, Republicans and Democrats were asking how do we solve these issues and how do we get folks' health care needs met. I think politicians failed miserably in not messaging this thing properly."

Questioned about whether Hoosiers would have enrolled earlier and in greater numbers if the state had created and operated its own health insurance exchange, Carson replied, "Without question." On this point Carson echoes fellow Democrats Sen. Joe Donnelly and State Senate Democratic Leader Tim Lanane. As to why Gov. Mike Pence passed on this option exercised by neighbors such as Kentucky, Carson said, "You'll have to ask Gov. Pence about that. I won't speculate; I have my own thoughts."

However, Carson thought that once the exchange website was operational, it should not be surprising that visits and enrollment began to accelerate. "Folks made inquiries, they went on the website and saw prices were pretty reasonable, at the very least you could get a plan that wasn't higher than a cell phone bill, which is what made this so important. In fact, the numbers don't surprise me. I voted for the right piece of legislation."



Republicans and harsh critics of the ACA were surprised by the higher-than-expected enrollment numbers, Carson said. "Oh, without question, without question. History and the scholars will be far kinder to the President than what we're seeing right now. Those of us who are parents can keep our children on our insurance plans until they're 26. Seniors who used to come to me and complain about having to cross the border to Mexico and Canada to get drugs once they hit Medicare Part D because they didn't have the coverage. That coverage is filled up by 50%; in five to seven years they'll have 100% covered by Medicare Part D. That's progress."

Carson, however, returned to an admission that the ACA's rollout was neither smooth nor well-packaged: "Democrats, we failed, admittedly, in messaging this properly. But throughout all of that, through the false starts we had with the ACA, people are signing up and enjoying it. I've heard from some of my Republican colleagues that folks in their constituencies, particularly those who vote Republican, have been pleased with the results."

Instead of expanding traditional Medicaid as mandated and funded by the ACA, the Pence administration has chosen to pursue Health and Human Services waivers to expand the Healthy Indiana Plan. The current waiver request is still under review. "I wish that our governor had accepted Medicaid expansion, but I'm still pleased with the success that we're seeing under the Healthy Indiana Plan," Carson commented. "I just want to make sure Hoosiers' needs are being met."

As for moving forward with the ACA a reality, Carson said, "The numbers speak for themselves. I hope that now we can have a turning point, particularly with the state administration looking at ways we can meet the needs of those 300,000 Hoosiers who live in poverty."

Such a turning point might have an opportunity, however slight, this summer and upcoming 2015 General Assembly Session. Speaker Brian Bosma told Howey Politics earlier this spring that he was open to the legislature considering and discussing whether Indiana should create its own health insurance exchange and whether it should expand Medicaid. The intimation was that the legislature had not contributed to these executive branch decisions. The stipulations attached to any waiver for HIP will likely greatly influence those discussions as will the outcomes of this November's midterms, in which the ACA is likely to be an important issue.

Shifting gears away from health care, HPI asked the congressman about the Indiana economy. "I'm pleased our unemployment numbers are lower than the national average, maybe slightly better, but there is more work to be done," Carson said. "That's why I talk about over \$500 million we brought to the district to help spur economic growth, but we need a greater investment from the federal government to bring back manufacturing jobs." On the point of infrastructure, particularly in regard to

Indianapolis, Carson stressed, "We need to have a series of capital infusions to make sure roads are paved and jobs are safe."

Carson cruised to an easy primary victory against three challengers Tuesday and will face Republican Catherine "Cat" Ping on the ballot in November. ❖

The justices and the scramble for cash

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Over many years both inside and outside Congress, I saw very little outright corruption. But frequently I saw money's disproportionate influence on the decisions of government.



Many trends in American politics and government today make me worry about the health of our representative democracy. These include the decline of Congress as a powerful, coequal branch of government, the accumulation of power in the presidency, and the impact of money on the overall political process.

Recently, the Supreme Court's five-member majority declared that it's unconstitutional

to limit the aggregate amount an individual can give to candidates, political parties, and political action committees. Campaign contributions amplify free speech, these justices maintain, and campaign finance laws violate the First Amendment: Any limit on the ability of individuals to contribute to candidates is a restraint of free speech. The only legitimate cause for the government to step in is to fight blatant, obvious corruption; it should not act to limit access and influence by well-to-do donors. The result of this decision will almost certainly increase the impact of money on the political system.

The problem is, money doesn't have to be handed over in an envelope filled with \$100 bills to be harmful. The Supreme Court decision seems to be insensitive to what money is doing to the political system. Big money is here to stay in politics. Those of us who wish it were otherwise have lost that argument, at least for the near term.

But we weren't mistaken about the impact of free-flowing campaign cash on the system. Politicians need large sums of money to run for office, and they spend a lot of time raising it. They are keenly attuned to generous donors. Inevitably, this gives more political influence to the relative handful of wealthy donors (only a few thousand at best) who choose to "invest" in politics and often, though not invariably, get what they want. The influence of voters without the financial means to command attention is diminished.

Lawmakers, of course, insist that big donors get nothing in response for their contributions except, perhaps, for a little face time. I am skeptical of that claim. Money buys access that people without money don't get, and access is nothing less than an opportunity to affect legislation. It is a rare politician who can remain entirely uninfluenced by large political contributions to his or her campaign. After all, members of Congress seek assignments to committees that are known to be useful for fundraising, and those wealthy individuals and interests spend large sums on wooing and electing politicians for a purpose: to get public policy favorable to their views and interests.

Over many years both inside and outside Congress, I saw very little outright corruption, but on a frequent basis I could see money's disproportionate influence on the decisions of government and its distortion of our representative democracy. With their decision the justices may have expanded personal liberty, but they've done so lopsidedly, boosting the liberty of ordinary individuals who cannot afford to give to political campaigns gains them nothing in the way of political influence.

The Court's decision further empowers a few rich people and disempowers many ordinary people. This is not a desirable direction for our representative government. Our system should encourage a government responsive to all citizens, not just a few.

What can we do? I would prefer that the President and Congress step in and design rules of campaign finance that would reverse the growing influence of money on our campaigns, but that does not appear likely to happen. Indeed, even now opponents of campaign finance laws are preparing challenges to the remaining limits on individual contributions and to the easily avoided disclosure laws we already have. I'm certain they'll get a sympathetic hearing in the Supreme Court.

Paradoxically, this may be our best hope. Because I also believe that Americans are growing tired of the outsized impact that great wealth enjoys in politics, and that a backlash to the Court's decisions is taking shape. My sense is that growing numbers of ordinary voters are recognizing that money is a poison in our system. I fervently hope that support for public financing and for muscular disclosure laws will grow with time, because our politics will be more democratic, more honest, and more free if we reduce the impact of money on elections. ❖

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.

Matt Tully, Indianapolis Star: There comes a time when radical ideas become acceptable, and this is one of those times. Of course, this idea is radical in name only. It's radical only because the political environment has become so toxic and so averse to new taxes that even suggesting the idea can put a politician in peril. The idea: Raise county taxes by a very modest amount to put more police on the streets. It's an idea that is both sensible and long overdue and, based on the lack of controversy it has generated, it is also quite acceptable to the people who live within Marion County's borders. That's not surprising. Perhaps nothing has united the people of this city more than the belief that the crime problem has crossed a tipping point, that it threatens the future of the city in a very real way, and that something must be done to bring at least a little more peace to hard-hit neighborhoods and a little more peace of mind to others. Raise my taxes for new cops? Not a problem. That seems to be the prevailing opinion these days, from Republicans and Democrats alike. "You have to weigh your priorities," City-County Councilwoman Mary Moriarty Adams said, referring to the city's many needs. "But people don't feel safe in this community right now. Our focus should be on hiring more police officers." Adams chaired the IMPD Staffing Study Commission, which did a masterful job of forcing local government to take a thoughtful look at the police department's needs, and the potential related costs of meeting them, before producing a bipartisan series of recommendations that it released last week. Chief among those recommendations was a slight income tax increase that would cover the bulk of the cost of increasing IMPD's ranks by 232 new officers over the next four years. Wisely, the commission did not toss out a feel-good proposal that just throws money at a problem. Instead, it proposed using the boost in police officers to rethink how policing is done in Indianapolis. It seeks to address a current problem in which a woefully understaffed department has little time to do anything but react to the latest emergency. It seeks to create a department in which police have more time to connect with residents, to learn about emerging threats, to build better relationships with schools and community organizations, and to do more than race from run to run. ❖



Gary Welsh, Advance Indiana: In 2007, Matt Tully was screaming at the top of his lungs that crime had become too much of a problem to ignore, and that we needed to raise our income taxes 65% so we could put more police officers on the streets and reduce crime. Tully got his wish. We got socked with the income tax increase, which boosted annual city-county revenues about \$90 million a year, but we never got any of those new police officers we were promised. A funny thing happened though. Every year that Mayor Greg Ballard has been in office he has boasted that overall crime in the City was down, ex-

cept for the surge the past couple of years in the homicide rate. Nonetheless, Tully received his marching orders from his downtown mafia masters who need to replenish the till to fund future public subsidies for the next round of real estate development projects from which only the elites will derive a benefit. "Raise our taxes!", the sycophant columnist blares, a notion he calls "radical" supposedly "because the political environment has become so toxic and so averse to new taxes that even suggesting the idea can put a politician in peril." Will he bother to ask what happened with the money from that 65% tax increase? Oh, he's got that one figured out. That's your fault too for complaining about property taxes so much that the state legislature capped them, effectively starving local governments of much needed revenues. But what about the \$120 million a year in property tax revenues the politicians are diverting to their real priority-TIF slush funds to be used to reward their campaign contributors? Oh, but we have to hand out money to the politically-connected campaign contributors because, you know, nobody would ever invest in our City otherwise. Yeah, he knows that the politicians aren't seeking this money for more cops, but he's so anxious to please his masters that he has not a concern in the world how devoid of credibility he's become to the Star's readers, what few are left. It's also a reflection of the total disdain he holds for average taxpayers in this city. Go to hell. Why don't you just say it, Matt? We know that's what you're thinking. ❖

Chelsea Schneider, Evansville Courier & Press: Tuesday's primary is low key for Indiana House and Senate races in Southwestern Indiana. No incumbents face challengers in their respective primaries. But an interesting race to watch for November's general election is between Republican and incumbent Rep. Holli Sullivan and Democrat and Vanderburgh County Commissioner Stephen Melcher for Indiana House District 78, which covers portions of Warrick and Vanderburgh counties. The match-up will pit Sullivan's conservatism against Melcher's local government experience. As the lone GOP contender for the seat, Sullivan, who won the office through a Republican caucus in January, comes into November's race without first having to compete with members of her own party. Contested primaries can be expensive and time consuming, and not having a challenger has allowed Sullivan to set her sights on November earlier. But she'll face her second test in Melcher, a long-time Evansville politician who benefits from local name recognition. Melcher was first elected to office in 1991 as an Evansville city councilman and now serves as a Vanderburgh County commissioner. "When I campaign for office, I really don't do anything different than what I do every day – I work for the citizens of Vanderburgh County and I make sure everything is going well with the county," Melcher said. "Because I'm a county commissioner and that's my job." ❖

Only 8% turnout for primary

INDIANAPOLIS - A ho-hum Indiana primary election without a key statewide race or issue to pique interest failed to draw many voters to polling booths. Fewer than 8 percent of registered voters in Indianapolis cast ballots, according to the data from the Marion County Election Board. Records kept by the Indiana secretary of state's office show that's the lowest voter turnout for any non-municipal election in Marion County in at least 25 years. Election officials in some of the state's other large counties reported similar results. Allen County (Fort Wayne) had 12-percent turnout and Lake County's (Gary) primary drew 12.8 percent of voters, while fewer than 6 percent of voters in Vanderburgh County (Evansville) bothered to go to the polls. In Hamilton County, turnout was an anemic 12 percent countywide, with fewer than 25,000 ballots cast despite the historic mayor's race in Fishers.



Low turnout roils GOP

FORT WAYNE - It was the same old same old – low voter turnout and highly partisan participation. But those old primary election standards resulted in upsets of incumbents and near misses for others in Tuesday's Republican primaries around the area (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). In Noble County, longtime Prosecutor Steve Clouse was upended by a former employee, Eric Blackman, by 435 votes. There were only 4,573 cast in that particular race, out of 29,877 registered voters in Noble County. Blackman drew the endorsement of conservative Rep. Marlin Stutzman, R-3rd, and alleged that Clouse's approach to crime would lead to future tax increases. On

his campaign Facebook page urging his election to the spot as the county's top law enforcement officer, Blackman expressed excitement at drawing the endorsement of a pro-gun political action committee. Blackman said on the page that "law enforcement is most often reactive to violent crimes and we cannot always rely on the Government to protect us." The largely administrative positions of prosecutor, recorder, assessor and clerk of the courts are drawing candidates who are more conservative than they used to, said Andy Downs, director of the Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics and associate professor of political science at IPFW. "The Republican Party is experiencing a bit of in-fighting, and it is more visible than it may have been in the past," Downs said. "You have the conservative part of the party trying to assert itself. "I think it's safe to say that there are some people that truly believe that prosecutors are not using their discretion appropriately." "This is not a political office in terms of gun control and pro-life," Clouse said. "Those issues really are left to the legislatures, and (prosecutors) support the Constitution." Clouse bristled at the insinuation throughout the campaign that he was against the Second Amendment, the right to bear arms. "I swore to uphold the Constitution," he said. If his loss was truly political, it is disappointing, he said.

SBOE to discuss federal warning

INDIANAPOLIS — The State Board of Education will meet Tuesday to discuss the federal government's warning that Indiana could lose its waiver from a waiver from requirements contained in the No Child Left Behind law. The Indianapolis Star reports the meeting was scheduled at the request of five members of the state board. In a May 1 letter, Assistant U.S. Education Secretary Deborah

Delisle told Indiana schools Superintendent Glenda Ritz that federal monitors had identified problems with the state's handling of the waiver. The issues include handling of teacher and principal evaluations, monitoring of college- and career-ready standards and technical assistance for local school districts. The state has 60 days to respond to Delisle's letter. Gov. Mike Pence has asked the board to work with Ritz in addressing the issues.

Camm seeks \$30M for wrongful convict

NEW ALBANY - Ever since he was released from prison last year, David Camm has said "Indiana owes me." Now he's going to court with a bill in hand — \$30 million — for what he alleges was malicious prosecution following his arrest and imprisonment in the fatal shootings of his wife and two children in September 2000. In a tort claim notice dated April 16 and hand-delivered to Floyd County officials late last week, lawyer Garry Adams of Louisville wrote that Camm will seek the damages for his wrongful convictions, the trauma he suffered while held in prison and his past and continuing loss of income and emotional well-being. The notice is required by Indiana law before suing public officials and was sent to the Floyd County commissioners, Floyd County Council and the Indiana Political Subdivision Risk Management Commission. It names former Prosecutor Stan Faith and four former employees — Jacque Vaught, Tony Toran, Mark Henderson and Emily Fessel. Also identified are current Floyd Prosecutor Keith Henderson, deputy Floyd prosecutor Steve Owen, former investigator Wayne Kessinger, and two men who were hired by Faith to work the crime scene and analyze forensic evidence — Robert Stites and Rod Englert. A second tort claim notice will be sent to the Indiana State Police within the next two months identifying specific employees.