



## Pelath studying gubernatorial race

House minority leader says Democrats will unite behind candidate

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – House Minority Leader Scott Pelath confirmed to Howey Politics Indiana that he is seriously weighing a 2016 gubernatorial bid.

The Michigan City Democrat said in an exclusive interview that he will make his decision not only via

internal and family discussions, but with other potential contenders and party leaders. "I'm going to take

some time to consider," Pelath said Wednesday morning. "Really, I've been looking for a reason to slam the door on the idea and I haven't quite found



House Minority Leader Scott Pelath debates HJR-3 during the 2014 session. He will make a decision on a gubernatorial candidacy by June. (HPI Photo by Matthew Butler)

it yet. Now that we're done, I have to really consider what is best for our party to move forward. One thing that's a blessing is our party has more of a bench than we've had in the past. There are other prominent Democrats interested in pursuing the governor's office. That's good. I have my own individual strengths and weaknesses and I owe it to the party to assess those and to discuss, sometimes with the other candidates and with the other leaders in the party structure, what's going to help us bring a real change in 2016 that I definitely

**Continued on page 3**

## Gregg's lesson\$ learned

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – I was doing a phone interview with John Gregg late Wednesday afternoon when my mobile device went "Ding!" At the top of the display, a Gregg for Governor press release appeared: "GREAT NEWS! Indiana Building Trades Council endorses Gregg for Governor."

This came seconds after the 2012 Democratic gubernatorial nominee told me the same thing. "Today I was endorsed by the Indiana Building Trades. That's a big deal."

Gregg made it official a week ago, sending what many saw was an effective video that



**"It's a message that they trust us. We have to use that trust carefully. We want to be something more than just a bedroom suburb. We want to continue to compete for the best jobs anywhere in the globe."**

*- Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard*



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**Brian A. Howey**, Publisher  
**Mark Schoeff Jr.**, Washington  
**Jack E. Howey**, Editor  
**Mary Lou Howey**, Editor  
**Maureen Hayden**, Statehouse  
**Matthew Butler**, Daily Wire  
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 Ray Volpe, Account Manager  
 317.602.3620  
 email: HoweyInfo@gmail.com

**Contact HPI**

www.howeypolitics.com  
 bhowey2@gmail.com  
 Howey's cell: 317.506.0883  
 Washington: 202.256.5822  
 Business Office: 317.602.3620

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criticized the incumbent. "Governor Mike Pence is giving Indiana a bad name," Gregg said of the Republican that barely fended him off in November 2012.

**It was a race** Gregg came so close to winning, but his fate might have been sealed in April 2012 when he reported raising just over \$500,000. He then hired a finance director, but it might have been too late as the Democratic Governors' Association did not ante up as anticipated. It was the DGA's biggest mistake of the cycle.

Does Gregg have a campaign manager or a finance director now?

A campaign manager is in the wings. His finance director, Lori LaFave, is already on board and leading a team of two others. "She is a national finance person," Gregg said. "We are focused on raising money. I am on the phone from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. making calls. We knew we needed a national fundraiser who had contacts beyond what we did."

Lesson learned, it appears.

Gregg's campaign manager "is a Hoosier who will be no stranger" coming on board soon.

"You learn a lot when you've run before," Gregg said.

The former House speaker said the reaction to his kickoff video achieved what he wanted: Generating earned media. "It was a great, great response. The message I think was real clear: Jobs, economy, workforce development. It has been well received. The response from the rank and file around the state has been overwhelming. We feel we are poised to build a coalition of Democrats, moderates and independents."

**How vulnerable** does he think Gov. Pence is?

"It's a long way until November 2016," Gregg responded. "If he wasn't vulnerable, I wouldn't be

interested."

Gregg said that the Howey Politics Indiana Poll released on April 16 "dove-tailed identically with what we're seeing."

He agreed with one conclusion from the HPI Poll: "One thing I think is telling, the governor would be real tough to take out in a primary. That's something I found interesting."

**The HPI Poll** showed Pence's job approval and favorable/favorables plummeting. "I'm running to win and I'm taking the fight to Mike Pence,"

Gregg said. Hoosiers, he said, "feel the leadership is missing. It's time for adult leadership."

The building trades council people underscored that with its endorsement on Wednesday.

"Mike Pence has

done everything within his power to discourage young people from pursuing careers in the construction industry," said Pete Rimsans, executive director of the council. "His latest attempt to slash the wages of construction workers by repealing the state's Common Construction Wage shows how shallow his rhetoric is. Pence undermines the very foundations of every idea he purports to support. John Gregg will bring integrity and common sense back to the Statehouse."

**As for potential** Democratic primary rivals, Gregg confirmed what House Minority Leader Scott Pelath told HPI in our lead story. They are keeping in touch. Gregg said Baron Hill told him more than a month ago he wouldn't run for governor. "I've called all of them," Gregg said. "We've had numerous meetings going back to December. So obviously I've got a long time relationship with Scott because we served together. Karen Tallian has been helpful. I helped clear the way for Supt. Ritz on the ticket. All are friends."

For Indiana Democrats, there's a lot of sorting out to do. ❖





## Pelath, from page 1

assess the state is crying out for.”

To date, only 2012 nominee and former House Speaker John Gregg has declared his decision to run. Democratic sources tell HPI that State Sen. Karen Tallian of Ogden Dunes and Supt. Glenda Ritz are also weighing potential runs. Former congressman Baron Hill told HPI on Tuesday that while he is exploring his 2016 options, presumably the U.S. Senate race, the governor’s race is “not in play” for him.

In the earliest hours after the conclusion of the Indiana General Assembly, Supt. Ritz jolted the beginning of the 2016 cycle by saying a week ago, “After this session there is absolutely nothing off the table. The first priority is getting through this school year; we’re in the midst of testing and getting all that done. But after that I’m going to sit down with my family and determine what’s best for the children and families of Indiana. I’ll tell you more about that in June.”

Three hours later, Gregg posted a video announcing his candidacy after months of hinting at a second bid while he spent a good part of 2014 stumping for local, legislative and congressional Democrat candidates. “Governor Mike Pence is giving Indiana a bad name,” Gregg said, pointing to the RFRA controversy. “While working Hoosiers are falling further and further behind, he’s been focused on social issues and telling people how they should live their lives. That’s not the business of a governor or any government.”

The challenge facing Gregg may be a historical one. Other than the two runs by Gov. Matthew Welch in 1960 in which he won, and in 1972 against Republican House Speaker Doc Bowen, which he lost, no Democrat in the television era of Indiana politics has ever won a second nomination after losing a gubernatorial race. That list includes Larry Conrad, Wayne Townsend, John Hillenbrand, and Jill Long Thompson.

Pelath explained, “The good thing is we’re all friends and mutual supporters. We have capacity to have candid discussions. The most important factor is that we’re talking about a group of people is to keep egos out of it. The worst reason to pursue an office, particularly one as significant as governor, has to be considered personal ambition. I think the leaders in the Democratic Party have the kind of relationships, where we’re going to be able to put our best foot forward in 2016, and be unified, not just as

individuals, but in the alternatives we’re going to provide to the voters.”

As Gov. Mike Pence faltered on ABC’s “This Week” as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act controversy shifted into high gear, Pelath caught the attention of many Democrats with his appearances on cable TV networks, rebutting Pence and House Speaker Brian Bosma on the impact of RFRA.

Pelath said, “One of my strengths is not about ripping off the most eloquent line. It’s about taking very complicated ideas and simplifying them in a way that can build consensus. That’s the key to communications. It’s not just style, it’s about building a clear vision in a simple way



House Minority Leader Scott Pelath greets Gov. Pence prior to his 2014 State of the State address as Sen. Tim Lanane looks on. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

to address very complex problems.”

Asked to describe his strengths, Pelath began, “Let’s talk about what a Democratic governor has to be. First, you have to be an outstanding communicator. I’m going to be working with a Republican legislature and the use of the bully pulpit is going to be essential for leadership. Secondly, you have to have a clear vision for what’s going to allow the state to prosper. You have to be able to articulate that vision. Thirdly, you’re going to have to be prepared to work with the Republican legislature. Sometimes that’s going to mean cooperation and sometimes having a very vociferous debate. A governor is going to have to be prepared to do those things.”

“I have the potential to meet those criteria,” Pelath stated.

He added that other candidates also have that potential and ability to grow into that role. “Then it becomes

a matter of who is the best candidate at this particular time," Pelath said. "Sometimes people can be outstanding candidates, but the time isn't necessarily right. That may apply to me as well. Certainly some of the other names that are frequently mentioned; should they be the nominee I would be an enthusiastic supporter. As a party, we have to go through the process of who can best articulate a direction for the state."

Pelath said that Democrats need to look at the keys to prosperity, including the workforce and earning potential. He mentioned "the circulatory system of our state which is our infrastructure," as well as "what we just learned and some of us already knew, we have to be an extraordinarily welcoming and tolerant state. We have now seen the implications to our economic development. We're moving into the wrong direction. I believe the majority of Hoosiers sense that. They are going to be open to a new approach."

Asked about his time frame for a decision, Pelath said he will be on a similar schedule as Ritz, which she identified as June. "The biggest thing to be considered is the magnitude of the task, but secondly, in many ways running for governor has become a patrician endeavor and I'm a plebeian. It's about the time required, gathering the resources required, traveling the state and meeting with voters, and it's not just about capabilities. It's about capacity. That has to be considered very carefully. Look, I have a big job now. As leader of Indiana House Democrats, I understand very directly the commitment that's required in order to be a statewide leader. Running for governor is going to be a task that is greater by a whole order of magnitude."

Pelath leads a caucus of 29, which is the lowest since 1974. Does potential as a gubernatorial candidate to revive his caucus play a role in the coming decision?

"I am intensely loyal to the members who have selected me to be their leader," Pelath responded. "They are going to climb out of the minority. I think we've seen the beginning of the end of that particularly institution. But you also have to understand the importance of the Democratic caucus being strong even if it's not in the majority. We need to regain some of the procedural juice in order to help a Democratic governor. To be a Democratic governor and having two super majorities is not a very palatable scenario."

It was that very scenario that kept former Gov. Evan Bayh from seeking a return to the office.

"Those additional voices will assist the chief executive in ensuring the bully pulpit is effective," Pelath said.

How does Pelath assess Gov. Pence and his political standing today?

Pelath cites Democratic polling showing that when Pence's approval

was higher, it wasn't very deep. "His support was very thin, meaning voters were going to be open to unfavorable information about him. Secondly, he's dealing with two Republican parties. He's got the traditional business conservatives and leaders we both know and love. And he has the social conservative wing that is intertwined with the Tea Party. He reached a juncture where he had to choose, and he picked wrong."

"He took actions that are going to leave a lasting impression," Pelath continued. "It saddens me to say this because I like the governor on a personal level. But he had a choice to make and he chose to put the social agenda before the economic vitality of the state. To be a governor with two super majorities, and then sending us into an economic conflagration, is not going to be quickly forgotten. That's pundit Scott Pelath talking."

Is the Pelath family on board with a potential candidacy? Over the past several cycles, the Bayhs and Danielses have cited family concerns for not making a campaign.

"Family considerations are always there," he said. "That's why you have to approach decisions like this with your ego out of it. To do it based on ego is the wrong thing. To do it because you believe you have the ability to lead the state in a new direction, it's the right reason. Along with that, if you're going to take on such a difficult task, you've got to consider probabilities of success. The first thing to be considered is can you accomplish the mission? That ranks right up there with the other things."

Does Pelath believe he can win a gubernatorial race?

"That's what I'm still trying to figure," he said. "I believe there is a realistic path to accomplish that mission. But that doesn't mean I'm the only person who can accomplish that task. There may be others who have a better chance and I will be honest with them and myself about that."

## Pence political decision after China

Gov. Pence has stated several times he would gather family and friends after the General Assembly to decide his political future. He is departing Indiana on

Saturday and returning on May 16, traveling to Beijing, Shanghai and Hangzhou, the capital city of Zhejiang Province, Indiana's Chinese sister-state.

Campaign spokesman Robert Vane seemed to suggest to HPI any announcement of his political plans will occur after he returns. "As you know, the governor will be in China," Vane said. "Gov. Pence has always said he'd make his intentions known after session, and he plans to stick to that timetable." ❖





# Awaiting Evan Bayh on the U.S. Senate race

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

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosier Democrats are entering another wait-and-see-what-Evan-Bayh-does when it comes to the U.S. Senate race.

Howey Politics Indiana asked Bayh if he was planning any personal political campaigns in the next two years. He said he was focused on last Friday night's Jefferson-Jackson Dinner and the mayoral elections this November. There was no definitive slamming the door on the notion of a return to the Senate and a seat he abruptly walked away from in February 2010 on the eve of the filing deadline.

With Bayh pondering, potential Senate candidates include former congressman Baron Hill, State Rep. Christina Hale of Indianapolis, former congressman Brad Ellsworth and perhaps Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr.

The former U.S. senator with a \$10 million campaign war chest said he was definitely going to help Hogsett's Indianapolis mayoral run and, he added, also vote for him. Some believe Bayh not ruling out a bid for the Senate given next year's open seat is freezing the Democratic field. U.S. Rep. Andre Carson poked fun at the dilemma during a pre-recorded video address to the crowd. Bayh, Carson joked, "Was not ruling out considering, not ruling out pondering, not ruling out a special announcement this evening." It drew laughs.

Multiple Indiana Democratic sources are telling HPI that Bayh is the clear preference of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and that people like U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer are pleading with Bayh to enter the race.

**DSCC communications** director Sadie Weiner told HPI on Tuesday that it believes the Indiana Senate race is in play with or without Bayh. "It's clear Republicans are bracing for a messy primary in Indiana and that will hurt their chances. We are confident we can find a great candidate to win this seat and expand the map."

Thus far former Republican chairman Eric Holcomb is the only declared candidate, but U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman is expected to announce his candidacy in Roa-

noke on Saturday. U.S. Rep. Todd Young is also weighing a bid, as are State Sens. Mike Delph and Jim Merritt.

Last month, Hale told HPI that while many are urging her to seek the Senate seat, Bayh loyalists have not been so encouraging.

**Hill told HPI on Tuesday** that "I'm still thinking about things. I'm keeping my options open," though he said he is not focused on a gubernatorial race.

If Young opts into the Senate race, Hill could have a path to return to the 9th CD he represented for a decade. With Bayh hovering over the race, the ability for Hale or Hill to begin raising money is greatly impeded.

Indiana and Washington sources tell HPI that



Former U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh points out an HPI photographer to Indianapolis mayoral candidate Joe Hogsett at last Friday's Jefferson/Jackson Dinner. (HPI Photo by Matthew Butler)

former congressman and 2010 Senate nominee Ellsworth is also having discussions about the race.

Indiana and Washington sources indicate that Bayh has the luxury of time.

The Rothenberg/Gonzalez Political Report moved the race from "Safe Republican" to "Republican favored" after Sen. Dan Coats announced he was retiring. "But depending on the candidate fields and national environment, the race could become very competitive. If Bayh runs, it would vault to one of the Democrats' best takeover opportunities," Rothenberg/Gonzalez noted.

Howey Politics Indiana agrees with that assessment. ❖

# Money is poisoning American politics

By LEE HAMILTON

BLOOMINGTON – The surge of spending on campaigns promotes ideological purity, unremitting partisanship, and a political culture that exalts confrontation over consensus-building.

I've seen a lot over my decades in politics, and not much alarms me. But I have to be blunt: Money is poisoning our political system.



The people who matter most to a representative democracy, the ordinary voters in whose interests elected politicians are supposed to act, feel as though they've become an afterthought in the political process. The tidal wave of money washing over our elections, with no end in sight, is causing Americans to lose faith in the system.

In that way, the course we're on threatens the core values and principles that define us as a nation.

Oddly, many politicians see no problem, except perhaps the inconvenient need to spend a significant portion of every day dialing for dollars. They don't, however, believe this is corrupting. They don't believe they're selling their votes, or even that money influences their behavior. Most Americans believe differently. Poll after poll finds that about half the voters think members of Congress are corrupt. A Democracy Corps poll last summer found clear majorities across the spectrum worried about the impact of Super PAC spending as "wrong" and leading "to our elected officials representing the views of wealthy donors."

**In fact, while** it is a rare member of Congress who would change his or her vote because of money, there is ample evidence that where the majority of Americans and a small but wealthy minority disagree, the influence of money on politics tends to outweigh the views of ordinary voters. When donors contribute heavily, they have a disproportionate influence over the legislator; that's not "corruption," but it means that opinions of average citizens are diminished and the views of the big donors are amplified when it comes to policy-making.

If it appears that this state of

affairs has gotten worse in recent years, it has indeed. A series of Supreme Court decisions over the last half-decade has resulted in Super PACs' unfettered ability to raise and spend money, and freed individuals from limits on their giving. The result has been not just the surge in campaign spending we've seen, but the fact that much of it is "dark," or beyond the ability of journalists and regulators to discern its sources.

**This money purchases** attack ads that saturate the airwaves with scant clue as to who is funding them. It buys ads that drown out even the voices of the candidates and the parties themselves. It pushes our politics toward the extremes, emphasizing ideological purity, unremitting partisanship, and a political culture that exalts confrontation over consensus-building. In other words, it cripples representative democracy.

So what can we do? In an ideal world, we'd see a constitutional amendment or a reversal of the Supreme Court's recent decisions. I'm not holding my breath. For the present, we'll need to work within the bounds of the court decisions.

The first priority is to find ways of boosting prompt financial disclosure, ways to trace the source of campaign spending on behalf of candidates and incumbents before an election so that voters know who is supporting whom, and can match candidates' positions on issues with the interests of their financial backers. Disclosure done after elections is meaningless. Since it appears unlikely that Congress will soon step up to the plate, it may be that regulatory commissions, the FEC, IRS, FCC, will have to move on stricter disclosure definitions and rules. The White House could even consider an executive order requiring full disclosure of political spending by all companies with federal contracts.

**The second major reform** is to make public funds available for financing campaigns, thus amplifying the contributions of ordinary Americans, freeing candidates to spend more time on substance rather than fundraising, and letting them engage more fully with voters rather than donors. In states that have used it, public money works.

The odds of action are not encouraging. Yet I'm heartened by something Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham told reporters in New Hampshire the other day. "You're going to have money dumped in this election cycle that's going to turn off the American people," he said. "There's going to be a need and a movement to try to control the money in politics."

Let's hope he's right. ❖



Republican U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham says money in the 2016 campaign cycle will turn off the American people.

**Hamilton is director of the Center on Congress at Indiana University.**



# Scattered upsets while McDermott, Milo win landslide primaries

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayors in Columbus, Martinsville, Lebanon, Delphi and Lake Station lost reelection bids, while Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., rolled to a big reelection victory that could set the stage for a statewide bid. So did rising star Republican LaPorte Mayor Blair

Milo, who was renominated with 72% of the vote over City Councilman Roger Galloway.

In Carmel and East Chicago, Mayors James Brainard and Anthony Copeland won impressive primary victories over challengers from city government. Westfield Mayor Andy

Cook also fended off a spirited challenge from Jeff Harpe, using a \$99,000 infusion of cash from a political action committee to pull out what had looked to be a close race.

Brainard easily fended off Council President Rick Sharp with 63% of the vote in the GOP primary. "It's a message that they trust us," Brainard told the IndyStar. "We have to use that trust carefully. But we want to move ahead and continue to grow. We want to be something more than just a bedroom suburb. We want to continue to compete for the best jobs anywhere in the globe."

Mayor Copeland, who fended off East Chicago City Clerk Mary Morris Leonard with 53% that was backed by remnants of the old Democratic machine, was jubilant. "Everything I am is East Chicago," Copeland said during his victory speech (NWI Times). "Everyone knows that we are a city of hope and progress."

In the two nail-biters of the evening, Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser lost in the Democratic mayoral primary to Jack Wilson, while in Jasper, Republican Mayor Terry Seitz won a narrow victory over Steve Messmer. That contrasted with Democratic New Albany Mayor Jeff Gahan, who coasted to an easy win over businessman David White, and will face Republican Councilman Kevin Zurschmiede.

New names emerging include Martinsville Councilwoman Shannon Kohl, who upset four-term Mayor Phil Deckard in the GOP primary, Columbus Council President Jim Lienhoop, who defeated Republican Mayor Kristen Brown in a landslide, Lebanon Councilman Matt Gentry,

who defeated Mayor Huck Lewis with more than double the votes, Democrat John Hamilton, who won on his second try for the open Bloomington City Hall with a 58% win over Councilman Darryl Neher, and NCAA basketball official Kyle Ingram, who won the Richmond Republican nomination over Diana Pappin. He will face Democrat Dave Snow in November. In Lake Station, indicted Democrat Mayor Keith Soderquist lost to city Judge Christopher Anderson, who said, "Our voices have been heard today."

Elkhart Mayor Dick Moore will face former Republican state representative Tim Neese, who won with 73% of the vote against Dan Boecher. Another former Republican legislator, Fort Wayne Councilman Mitch Harper, will take on two-term Mayor Tom Henry.

Key fall matchups will include first-term Republican Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke, who faces a challenge from State Rep. Gail Reicken, Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett, who will seek a third term against Democrat Mark Bird, and Jeffersonville Mayor Mike Moore facing Democratic Councilman Dennis Julius. At Portage, Republican Mayor James Snyder, who is under an FBI investigation, will face Portage Township Trustee Brendan Clancy, who easily defeated long-time Portage real estate developer Leo Hatch Jr. Clancy was introduced by State Rep. Chuck Moseley as "the next mayor of the great city of Portage,"



**Elkhart Republican Tim Neese won a big primary victory and will challenge Mayor Dick Moore in November. (Elkhart Truth Photo)**

according to a NWI Times report.

In the open Marion City Hall, former Republican precinct committeeman Jess Alumbaugh won the Democratic nomination and will face Republican John Lawson for the seat being vacated by Mayor Wayne Seybold. At Princeton, Patoka Township Trustee Brad Schmitt will challenge Mayor Robert Hurst in November. Schmitt defeated Gibson County Auditor Sherri Smith.

Tough races shaping up for the fall include Logansport Democrat Dave Kitchell, who will challenge embattled Mayor Ted Franklin, who won a three-way primary with just 49% of the vote, and Anderson Democrat

Thomas Broderick Jr., who will challenge Republican Mayor Kevin Smith. Broderick won a tight three-way race that included former Mayor Kris Ockomon. Smith easily won his Republican primary, but had lost to Ockomon eight years ago.

Democrat South Bend Mayor Peter Buttigieg, Gary Mayor Karen-Freeman Wilson, Hammond's McDermott, Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski, Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight and Indianapolis Democrat Joe Hogsett, who faces Republican Chuck Brewer, will all be heavily favored to win in the fall.

### Early Horse Race lines:

**Anderson:** Thomas Broderick Jr. is the son of a former Democratic mayoral candidate and he will challenge two-term Republican Mayor Kevin Smith, who has served in the office in non-consecutive terms. That is the cautionary element to this race, but Smith can point to several big economic development projects and Indiana Republicans are going to want to defend this mayor. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Smith.

**Evansville:** This will be a marquee race between Mayor Winnecke and State Rep. Gail Riecken, who can expect a lot of state Democratic resources in an effort to regain an anchor for the party in southwestern Indiana that has seen many of its legacy congressional and legislative seats dissolve into Republican hands. Winnecke has a substantial money lead early, but this one is going to be one to watch closely. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Winnecke.

**Elkhart:** Democrat Mayor Dick Moore is 80 years old and will face a spirited challenge from former legislator Tim Neese. Twice in recent cycles, Neese has won what could have been tough GOP primaries decisively. Moore is pushing a civil rights code expansion to include sexual orientation, so this race will be a barometer on that social issue going into the 2016 cycle. This could be a GOP pickup. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Moore.

**Fort Wayne:** Two-term Democrat Mayor Tom Henry has a huge money advantage over Republican Council President Mitch Harper, who had a mere \$31,000 cash on hand in April. Henry has a lot to show in downtown development, and he will use the collective bargaining assaults by Harper and council Republicans to motivate his base. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Henry.

**Indianapolis:** Prominent Republicans avoided this race like the plague after Mayor Greg Ballard announced he wouldn't seek a second term. Republicans came up with obscure businessman Chuck Brewer, who won't have the tax revolt issue that propelled Ballard to an improbable win in 2007. Democrat Joe Hogsett is poised to win this race in an utter landslide, establishing a cornerstone for the party to build on in the future. **Horse Race**

**Status:** Safe Hogsett.

**Jeffersonville:** Republican Jeffersonville Mayor Mike Moore is expected to face a tough challenge from Councilman Dennis Julius. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Moore.

**Kokomo:** If there's a Democratic bookend to the kind of economic development fervor in Carmel, it's Mayor Greg Goodnight's Kokomo, but without the huge debt load. Goodnight faces Republican Martha Lake, and there is bitter blood between the administration and Republicans. But Goodnight has a big war chest and a lot of campaign on. He will take off on this race like a jackrabbit. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Goodnight.

**Logansport:** Republican Mayor Ted Franklin won his primary with only 49% of the vote. He faces former Logansport Pharos-Tribune editor and HPI columnist Dave Kitchell. This is shaping up to be a Democratic pickup. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Kitchell.



Indianapolis Democrat Joe Hogsett after winning the primary for mayor Tuesday night. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

**New Albany:** Democratic Mayor Jeff Gahan defeated challenger David White with 60% and faces Republican Kevin Zurschmiede and possibly independent Roger Baylor. Gahan has come under fire for some of his projects and the potential shutdown of the Pillsbury plant. This will be another one to keep an eye on. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Gahan.

**Portage:** Republican Mayor James Snyder may be the most vulnerable of his party in the fall and faces Democrat Brendan Clancy. This is poised for a Democratic pickup. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Clancy.

**Richmond:** Republican Kyle Ingram was recruited by business and industry leaders, and they gave him a key money advantage in his race against Dianna Pappin. He faces Democratic talk show host Dave Snow, who will have name ID. But Snow will have to defend the past Democratic administration of Mayor Sally Hutton, and



Richmond looks and feels like a city that needs new blood. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Ingram.

**Terre Haute:** Republican Mayor Duke Bennett broke a string of incumbents who lost reelection bids after one term in 2011. But with Terre Haute being hit hard by the property tax caps, and with the current cash flow issues, Democrat Mark Bird could make this interesting. Local sources say that Bennett should be considered a clear favorite for the fall. Bird, with all his favorable name recognition, does not present himself well in public and isn't likely to come across to voters as a viable alternative to the mayor. That said, lots could happen by fall. The city's chronic financial problems and the mayor's controversial sludge-to-diesel project may begin to take the shine off the Bennett administration. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Bennett. ❖

## Hall endorsed in 9th CD

After looking at potential candidates, the group Hoosiers for a Conservative 9th has chosen to endorse Robert Hall in the Republican primary next year for Indiana's 9th District seat in the U.S. Congress (Banta, Bloomington Herald-Times). According to a news release, the group met over a four-month period to interview potential candidates, searching for a fiscally responsible, conservative leader. It chose Hall because of his guiding principles — limited government, fiscal responsibility and a strong national defense. Hall is a Monroe County resident and graduate of both Purdue University and the University of Chicago. He has been a manufacturing executive and consultant for more than 30 years. He is the founder and editor of Grassroots Conservatives eNews. Republican U.S. Rep, Todd Young of Bloomington holds the seat now. ❖

# Incumbent mayors win impressive victories

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – There weren't any real election surprises in Northwest Indiana during Tuesday's primaries. But there were some impressive numbers for some winners, as well as failed attempts at comebacks.

The numbers were pretty staggering in several of the contested Democratic mayoral primaries. In Hammond, Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., who has aspirations for state-wide office, was nominated for a fourth term, which would be the most for any mayor in that city. McDermott's numbers were extremely impressive, particularly for someone who has had three terms to build enemies. The mayor defeated city Councilman Homero "Chico" Hinojosa, winning 78% of the vote. His impressive numbers rival some of those recorded by his father, Thomas McDermott Sr., who served as mayor as a Republican.



**Lake Station city Judge** Christopher Anderson won the Democratic nomination for mayor, winning 78% of the vote. Anderson topped three others, including sitting Mayor Keith Soderquist, who is under federal indictment. One of the other candidates, Robert Getzmer, may have gotten a record low for mayoral candidates, pulling just six votes.

In Gary, Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson pulled 72% of the vote while topping four opponents.

And the only Lake County mayoral primary that was expected to turn into much of a contest was in East Chicago where Mayor Anthony Copeland won 54% of the vote in defeating four opponents to win nomination to a second full term, after being selected to fill Mayor George Pabey's term in 2010. Copeland's biggest challenge came from city Clerk Mary Morris Leonard who received 40% of the vote. She served six terms as clerk.

**In Porter County,** Portage Township Trustee Brendan Clancy won the Democratic nomination for Portage mayor and will face Republican incumbent James Snyder in the fall. Clancy won more than 80% of the vote in topping longtime Portage real estate developer Leo Hatch Jr.

One of the most interesting races of the day was for Gary City Council at large. Topping a crowded field was Ragen Hatcher, daughter of former five-term Gary Mayor Richard Hatcher. Ragen lost to Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson four years ago. Councilman Kyle Allen Sr. and Ronald Brewer won the other two at-large seats.

There were two notable names who came up just short. Richard Ligon, who twice has lost strong bids for Lake County sheriff, finished fourth, about 200 votes behind. And Irene King, the wife of former Mayor Scott King, came in fifth.

**And, two of three school** referenda were approved in Lake County, allowing the River Forest (Hobart) and Hanover Central (Cedar Lake) school corporations to raise more money through property taxes. The referendum in Gary, which is badly in need of additional money, was defeated. The Gary schools have a deficit of \$23.7 million. ❖

**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.**

# Pence signs Regional Cities bill into law

By **MATTHEW BUTLER**

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Mike Pence signed into law the Regional Cities Initiative on Wednesday. Until the final week of the session, both legislative chambers were only willing to fund the effort at a fraction of what the governor initially requested. After late personal lobbying on his part, the Gov. Pence was able to secure the full \$84 million over the next two years and declare a victory for one of his top 2015 agenda items.



“As economies grow locally, they increasingly have to think regionally to realize their full potential,” Pence told the gathering. He said this program was the product of a nationwide study last summer of successful regional cities by the IEDC. “We then took those lessons and developed the Regional Cities Initiative and took that to Indiana General Assembly,” he explained.

The author of HEA 1403, Rep. Jerry Torr, R-Carmel, and sponsor Sen. Ed Charbonneau, R-Valparaiso, flanked the governor as he signed the legislation at the Indiana Economic Development Corporation’s Indianapolis offices.

Pence described the effort as mechanism to fund regional projects aimed at improving quality of life in order to retain talent and attract new residents. The state has failed to attract the level of immigration as hoped and many regions’ populations are stagnating or declining. “Young people today in this country first decide where they want to live then they decide what they want to do for a living. So thinking regionally and improving the quality of the place, in regions across our state, we believe is an idea whose time has come,” Gov. Pence said.

Indiana cities fully realize that “quality of life” is essential to attracting both people and businesses, asserted Sen. Charbonneau. He said transit and parks were examples of potential projects. He also likened this new effort as the successor to the state’s Regional Development

Authorities. “I keep coming back to the RDA in Northwest Indiana because I think it is the perfect the example of what can happen with this Regional Cities bill,” Charbonneau told reporters. “This is good legislation; the concept is excellent.”

## Current and future funding

“I’m very pleased that as I sign the budget into law tomorrow, it will include full funding for the Regional Cities Initiative,” Pence remarked Wednesday. It was a reference to the funding uncertainty until late into the session. The Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT) declared the initiative was one of their top legislative priorities heading into the 2015 session. HPI asked their thoughts on the governor’s full funding request being restored in contrast to the original house and senate versions that were limited to only \$20 million. “We had a bit of a scare toward the end of the session,” Justin Swanson, assistant government affairs director for IACT, told HPI on Wednesday. “With the leadership of Rep. Torr and Sen. Charbonneau, we came out looking pretty good.”

Lawmakers ultimately decided upon allocating the first \$84 million raised through a comprehensive tax amnesty program. Without any guarantees, Sen. Charbon-



Gov. Mike Pence is flanked by Sen. Ed Charbonneau (left) and State Rep. Jerry Torr as he signed the Regional Cities Initiative Wednesday at the IEDC meeting. (HPI Photo by Matthew Butler)

neau denied any concerns the necessary funding would be raised and within the next two years. “That’s how we’re going into this program,” he said. “I believe it’s a very creative way of funding the program.” He noted the last tax



amnesty under the Mitch Daniels Administration exceeded revenue projections.

If the program is going to continue after this biennial budget, a new funding mechanism will be required. The next budget is "going to be an issue," Charbonneau admits. The IEDC's summer study report calls for hundreds of millions of dollars be devoted toward the program over roughly a decade. The senator said future funding was the subject of discussion with his colleagues. "Two years down the road, hopefully this will be a flaming success and there won't be any question. Yes this is good, this works and it should be part of the general fund," Charbonneau said.



Gov. Mike Pence chairs the IEDC Wednesday after signing the Regional Cities Initiative. (HPI Photo by Matthew Butler)

**Local level excitement**

If Gov. Pence expended political capital on restoring full funding to the new program, he is finding widespread support at the local level.

"Last Friday, having met with a number of business leaders from Evansville to South Bend to Fort Wayne, the enthusiasm across the state of Indiana for the Regional Cities Initiative is truly palpable," Pence said. "I know we have leaders, that in some cases for the first time ever, have been willing to sit down and think, across county lines and across regional lines, and think about how they can develop that strategic plan that will make that area more attractive for investment and talent."

Sen. Charbonneau corroborated the governor on the anticipation for the Regional Cities Initiative. "Everybody is very excited," he told HPI. "It's amazing how many cities and counties around the state contacted me when it was a possibility this whole thing was going to die."

Without mentioning any specifics, IACT could confirm regions were already working on draft proposals for the program. "It's good to see our members engaged

on this and working with the state in a positive manner," Swanson told HPI. "We're already seeing locals, entire regions coming together. I think you're going to see that progress and it's going to be hard to stop that momentum midway through. It's going to be more than a two-year commitment."

Sen. Charbonneau hopes northwest cities collaborate and apply for the grants. He described it as the last fully developed suburb of Chicago ripe for an influx of people and capital.

Pence said the IEDC will develop the guidelines for grant proposals in the coming days. Further steps for the initiative will involve seeking and vetting candidates for its Strategic Review Committee and, if fiscal projections go according to plan, tax amnesty payments funding the program. ❖

**Pence signs energy efficiency bill**

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Gov. Mike Pence has signed a new law to reduce state oversight of the energy efficiency programs of major utilities (Associated Press). Pence approved a measure Wednesday to allow major utility companies to develop their own efficiency programs and charge customers to implement them. The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission will have final approval over the programs. Supporters say companies should have the flexibility to choose their own programs, which help decrease electricity use and save ratepayers money. But some experts say the bill is missing key elements for such programs to be effective and won't save consumers as much as supporters have advertised. Environmentalists also argue that Indiana will have a harder time meeting federal requirements for reducing carbon dioxide emissions under the new law, which takes effect immediately. ❖

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**YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?**

# Tax scofflaws get chance to avoid fines

By MAUREEN HAYDEN  
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

INDIANAPOLIS – Tax evaders are in for a deal. If they're willing to own up and pay up, the state will waive penalties and interest on their delinquent tax bills.

Analysts say money generated by a tax amnesty program passed by the General Assembly before session's end last week could top \$100 million, one-quarter of the back

taxes owed to Indiana by individuals and businesses across the country.

Details of the program, including when it will kick off, are still in the works. Lawmakers decided it has to be done before the end of next

year, during an eight-week window in which errant taxpayers can settle up or arrange a payment plan with the state.

"It's a win for both sides," said Rep. Todd Huston, R-Fishers, a co-sponsor of the measure that was included in the \$31 billion biennial budget. "It gives delinquent taxpayers a chance to catch up, and it accelerates our tax collections."

There's a catch for taxpayers, though. The amnesty will only apply to errant taxpayers who owed money to the state before Jan. 1, 2013.

The program takes a carrot-and-stick approach. For most delinquent taxpayers, the state will waive penalties, interest and the threat of legal action. For those who refuse the amnesty offer, the state will double the penalties owed on their back taxes. Some late-payers won't qualify, including those against whom the state has already initiated criminal action.

State officials don't know how many taxpayers are eligible or how many will take part. But they do know \$400 million in back taxes are owed to the state, dating from before Jan. 1, 2013.

**The last time** Indiana offered a tax amnesty, in 2005, more than 98,000 taxpayers took part. The first such program in the state's history, the 2005 program was expected to recover about \$65 million of \$1.5 billion in back taxes owed to the state when former Gov. Mitch Daniels took office. It exceeded revenue collectors' wildest dreams, taking in more than \$244 million, including payments from 38 taxpayers who handed over more than \$1 million each. The majority of those who participated owed and paid less than \$1,000.

Not everyone thinks a tax amnesty is a great idea since it seems to reward people who evade the law at the expense of those who pay on time. "Amnesty strikes the

public as a special deal for tax scofflaws. It can feel like it violates the principles of fairness," said Indiana University economist Justin Ross, whose research shows the use of tax amnesty programs has accelerated in other states.

**According to the** Federation of Tax Administrators, at least 119 tax amnesty programs have been offered in 45 states since 1980. Indiana now joins 32 other states that have offered tax amnesty more than once. This year's program came at the request of revenue officials, who saw it as a way to offset some of the collections lost through a sales tax break for manufacturers who purchase machinery and equipment. But it may also prove to be a speedier way to collect back taxes owed by more than 37,000 businesses for which licenses were revoked due to outstanding tax debt.

During the 2005 amnesty, businesses paid more than \$205 million, 84 percent of the collections, according to revenue officials. Individuals paid just over \$39 million in back taxes.

Of the money collected in the upcoming program, a big chunk has already been spoken for. The Legislature designated that \$84 million collected through the tax am-



State Rep. Todd Huston called tax amnesty bill "a win for both sides."

nesty will go for the Regional Cities Initiative, which aims to foster collaboration among communities on economic development efforts.

State revenue officials say it may be a month before details of the new tax amnesty are put into place.

**Maureen Hayden covers the Statehouse for the CNHI's Indiana newspapers. Reach her at [maureenhayden@cnhi.com](mailto:maureenhayden@cnhi.com). Follow her on Twitter @MaureenHayden.**



# The three ring circus gets high marks

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – I'm just old enough to remember the golden age of the circus. I can still close my eyes and envision the big top being erected north of town. The tent was enormous and contained a large center ring with two smaller rings flanking it. There was nothing like the sights, sounds and smells of the Greatest Show on Earth.

One of the things that I found fascinating about going to the circus was that strange menagerie of people, freaks and geeks that made up the sideshow. What a strange, scary and weird world the circus sidshow was!

There were the bearded woman, the alligator boy, the two-headed calf, the tattooed man, the sword swallower, the double-jointed woman, the smallest man in the world, the tallest man in the world and the snake charmer, just to name a few of the sideshow acts.



The people who promoted the sideshow acts were called barkers and they were a sight to behold, in and of themselves. With slicked-back hair, bad teeth and a usually strong

smell of alcohol, the barkers would promote, taunt and cajole people to pay the price and come into the darkened tents that lined the approach to the big top.

I remember, like it was yesterday, dad loading all seven of us Dunn kids into the 1959 Ford Country Squire station wagon and taking us to my first circus. We parked the car and trudged through the muddy field to get to the big top. We walked past the sideshow tents as the barkers called out. One barker grabbed me by the arm and in a very scary voice said, "Don't you want to see the alligator boy, little boy?" It terrified me.

The circus was very entertaining and I recall thinking that someday it might be pretty neat to work in the big top. I didn't want any part of flying through the air or walking on the tight rope, but working with elephants seemed like a pretty cool gig.

**When the Dunn children** returned home, mom, who had stayed home to do the enormous daily amount of laundry and cooking, asked me what I thought about the circus. Without hesitation, I told her that the circus was terrific but the sideshow was terrible. She smiled, patted me on the head and said, "Maybe it will be better next year."

I'm an older man now, but I still find myself enjoying the circus and hating the sideshow; the circus and sideshow that now entertain and frighten me are located in the hallowed halls of the Indiana Statehouse.

If my mother were alive today and asked me what I thought about the circus that was the just-completed Indiana General Assembly, I'd tell her that the main show was pretty good but that I was terrified by the sideshow.

When you look at the totality of work done in the 2015 legislative session, you need to give high marks to the ringmasters, Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate Pro-Tem David Long. Along with their leadership teams, Bosma and Long can be proud of some significant accomplishments.

**The Indiana Legislature** passed a balanced two-year budget with no tax increases. Years removed from the whopping budget deficits of Democrat Speakers John Gregg and Pat Bauer, we tend to take for granted fiscal responsibility and spending less than you take in. Our legislators should be commended for this every time it happens.

The Legislature also gave a big boost to education spending. Priority was given to K-12 education with a \$474 million increase coming their way. Of course, to some critics, you can never spend enough on education, but those criticisms generally come from teacher unions, school building contractors and purveyors of goods and services to schools.

The Legislature chose to codify their commitment to spending restraint by restricting state expenditures to a level less than state revenues, unless two thirds of the General Assembly concurs. There will be no busting into the piggy bank and spending state reserves unless it is vitally important.

Indiana's best teachers will be rewarded with higher pay as a result of SEA 566. What a novel concept to actually reward people for performance! Bravo, legislators!

The General Assembly tossed more than 50 outdated and burdensome regulations that forced schools to devote resources to administrative overhead and took money from classroom instruction.

**The Legislature addressed** continuing dysfunctionality on the State Board of Education by passing a compromise that will allow the board to select its own chairman beginning in 2017. This will keep the doyenne of the liberal left, Glenda Ritz, from being forced to sit in the corner at board meetings, until her day of reckoning in 2017.

The Indiana General Assembly took a major stride forward by enacting stronger government ethics laws, including expanded financial disclosure requirements for legislators and a slowing of the revolving door of government employment to jobs with the regulated. The public should be happy with this tightening of ethics law.

A hodge-podge of additional legislation tackled some tough issues. Live dealers will be allowed at the racinos beginning in 2021. Teachers received additional tax breaks. Terminally ill patients were given the right to try experimental drugs and treatments. Powdered alcohol was blocked from store shelves. Hoosiers wanting to run out at half-time and buy a sixpack of beer on Sunday will

continue to have to think 24 hours ahead if they want to imbibe while watching the Colts.

**The circus** in the big tent of the General Assembly was a good one with meaningful action going full tilt in all three rings. Unfortunately, this session will be tainted by the sideshow of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, that when initially passed, restored no freedoms because none had been lost. The fetid and obnoxious barkers of the sideshow so frightened the average Hoosier that all

the great acts of the circus were obscured from view. That is a shame because, all in all, it was a pretty good show.

But the circus comes `round every year and I can still hear my mother's words, "Maybe it will be better next year." Let's hope the sideshow gets cleaned up so we can all enjoy the circus! ❖

**Dunn is chairman of the Howard County Republicans.**

## Time for Republicans to move past Obama

By PETE SEAT

INDIANAPOLIS – Our nation's problems are bigger than Barack Obama. Yet, by the logic espoused by the most ardent opponents of the president and his agenda, he is the only thing that stands in the way of results. We



only need to sit it out for two more years before rainbows and unicorns dance in the streets.

But, that won't happen. To bring about real action, Republicans, and our nation, have to move on from Obama before Obama moves on to his post-presidential life. Republicans need to realize that Obama won't be here forever. He's the favorite chew toy of many, but I'm not certain some are prepared for a world without him, a world where they have to actually do stuff rather than just complain all the time.

That becomes complicated, though, when the president insists on signing executive orders that bypass the check and balance of the legislative branch. By playing a constitutionally questionable hand on the issue of immigration, Obama shrewdly forced Republicans to keep their attention focused squarely on him. He knows they're obsessed. He knows he can withstand a few more blows to his approval rating. But they have to be smarter than that.

**Like Seinfeld suggested** a Band-Aid should be removed, "one motion, right off," so, too, should Republicans give up their Obama obsession. In an ironic twist of political fate, they should act more like the Democrats who have put more effort into making a clean break from Obama than have Republicans.

For the past several years, Democrats have distanced themselves from their own president whenever it suited their personal political destiny. Every so often an

issue causes Democrats to vocalize their displeasure with Obama, and those tend to get highlighted closer to election time.

**Trotting ever closer** to the first votes of 2016, Democrats instead spend their time fighting over who is more ready for Hillary Clinton, much like desperate parents fought over the last Tickle Me Elmo on the shelf many Christmases ago. Who's fighting over who supports Obama the most? No one, as far as I can tell.

Flip to the Republican side, and there is a persistent battle over who dislikes Obama the most. Why? He's been good for business. I once wrote about the phenomenon I called "Obamanalia," the paraphernalia with his likeness that sold like hotcakes in late 2008 and early 2009. Those days are long gone, yet from time to time I will spot someone with an Obama shirt, probably hoping to rekindle the romance. Or more likely they just got to the bottom of the drawer and had yet to do their laundry.

Those disliking Obama's politics have made a Joe Biden-like killing on bashing the president. What the heck are they going to do when Obama is living it up in Hawaii and downing cocktails with donors in Chicago come Jan. 21, 2017?

Here's a novel idea: Moving on from Obama could actually be good for business. It could lead to galvanizing Republicans and independents to be for something rather than always against something or, in this case, someone.

**Paul Ryan has echoed** this point, as have many of his fellow Republicans, most notably those in the intellectual reform movement. But to do that, Republicans need to leave Obama behind. He is not only the biggest obstacle to seeing Republican legislative priorities get signed into law, he's also the biggest obstacle in offering Americans a bold and comprehensive plan for the future. If they can't see past him, how can they cast a vision for the future? ❖

**Pete Seat is senior project manager at the Indianapolis-based Hathaway Strategies. He was previously a spokesman for President George W. Bush, U.S. Sen. Dan Coats and the Indiana Republican Party. He joins Howey Politics Indiana as a regular columnist.**



# Measuring school quality keys on family

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Much of individual student performance depends on the family, not the school.

Over the past 30 years, American households have been answering questions about their choice of homes. In the 1980s, only about one in 10 recent movers reported choosing their current home because of schools, but today seven out of 10 do. That shift has enormous implications on matters ranging from economic development policy to school quality measures. This column will focus on measuring schools.



There are lots of ways to measure school quality. The easier ones are athletic performance or other competitive measures like band competitions. If you are more worried about academ-

ics, the issue is a lot murkier.

Test scores, such as ISTEP+ and NWEA scores, tell us fairly well how children have absorbed information. Other standardized scores, like the ACT or SAT do the same, but with a smaller sample of kids. These tests are imperfect, but for all the criticism they receive they do measure effectively in this domain. The problem is that this does not measure how good schools are, but how well the students perform. That is not the same thing because much of individual student performance depends not on the school, but on the family.

**Like several states,** Indiana has adopted a growth model of school performance. This approach assigns each student to a cohort of kids that are statistically similar, and then compares their progress over a year. These scores are then averaged across a particular school or school corporation, yielding a growth score. Done well, this would be a great way to compare the impact of a particular school because it tells us how much the average student learned in a year relative to other kids with similar backgrounds. In practice, the model is very difficult to assess because it is proprietary to the consulting firm that performs the assessment.

A third way of measuring schools is to statistically estimate what their raw test scores should be given their community demograph-

ics, and then compare these predictions with the actual test scores. The difference, plus or minus, may be interpreted as the "value added" of the school. This is the most common external evaluation of schools and is often called the "Adjusted Performance Measure." This is probably the best measure of the actual difference a school makes on a child's performance. This is also the most politically sensitive measure because it measures what many schools don't really want measured.

**There are also measures** that are less quantitative and may be useful to parents. The number and pass rate of AP tests or the process for mentoring new kids also matter. Indiana uses see types of categorical measures, as do many federal and media measures.

There is no single 'best' way to measure school quality. This is especially true because there is such incentive to mislead prospective parents. That's why every community's website touts their great schools. So, the least imperfect way to measure schools is to compare multiple rankings, perhaps over multiple years. Indiana would be well served to choose that path over the impossibility of a perfect measure. ❖

**Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University.**



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# Sabato's Crystal Ball 2016 EC map

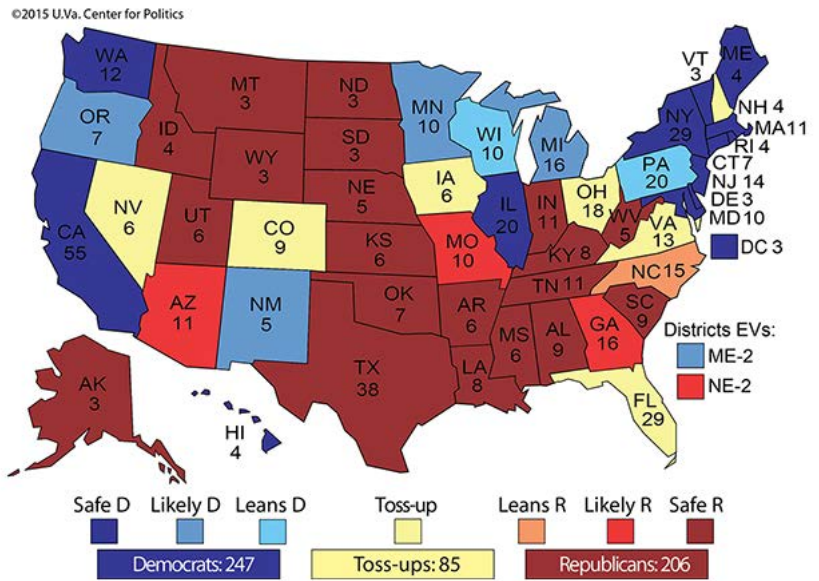
By **KYLE KONDIK, GEOFFREY SKELLEY and LARRY J. SABATO**  
**Sabato's Crystal Ball**

CHAROTTESVILLE, Va. – In our internal deliberations on these initial ratings we quickly agreed on a large majority of the ratings, which shouldn't come as a surprise given the rigidity of the modern Electoral College.

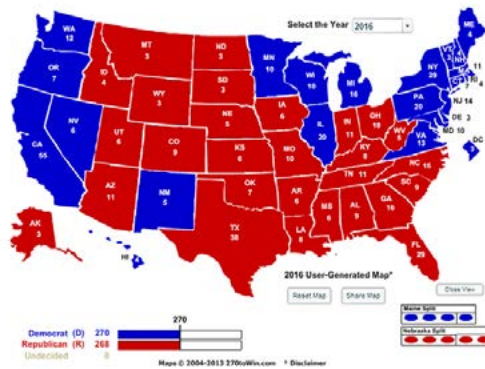
We had some differences of opinion about the Leans Democratic states in the Midwest and the Northeast, as well as a handful of states that typically go Republican. For instance, we considered starting Pennsylvania and Wisconsin as Toss-ups to reflect how close they could be in a tight national election. However, given that both states have voted Democratic even in years when the Democratic nominee has lost (2000 and 2004), and because neither state has shown a clear pro-Republican trend in recent presidential elections, we could not justify portraying either state as a coin-flip to start.

We also debated what to do with Arizona, Georgia, and Missouri, states that have consistently voted Republican presidentially since 2000 yet have yielded very close results (Missouri) or have demographic trends favoring the Democrats (Arizona and Georgia). They are certainly not Safe R -- or not the way they used to be, at least in the case of the latter two -- but if the GOP nominee is losing any of them, he is almost certainly on his way to a large national loss. Therefore, Likely R is the logical

Map 1: Initial *Crystal Ball* 2016 Electoral College ratings



Map 7: A narrow Democratic presidential win in 2016



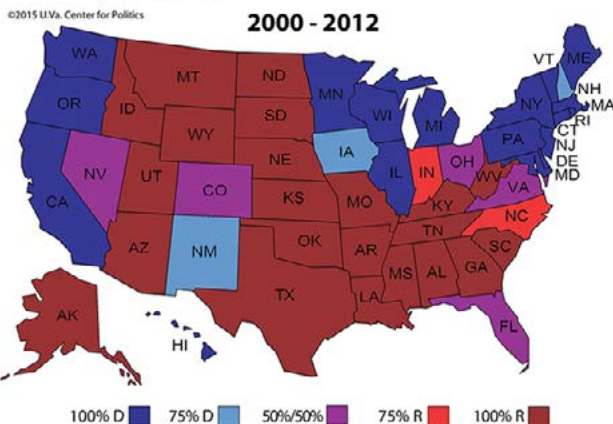
Map 6: A narrow Republican presidential win in 2016



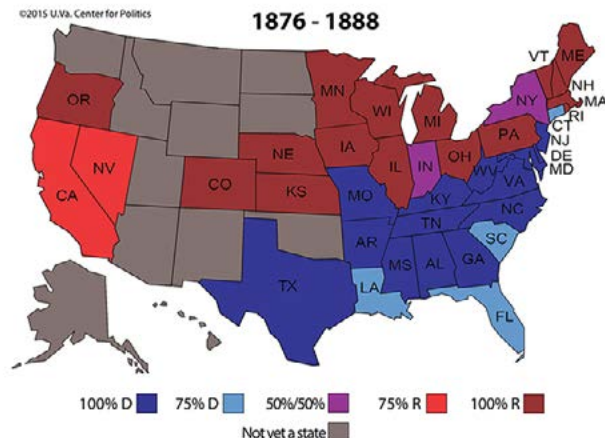
place for them.

Indiana was easier. Barack Obama's 2008 win was something of a fluke; it was only the second time since the end of the World War II that the state voted Democratic, and Mitt Romney strongly restored it to the GOP column in 2012. So we've started it as Safe R. Finally, after a vicious argument that resulted in bloodletting, New Hampshire was designated Toss-up instead of Leans Democratic. ❖

Map 2: 2000-2012 party support by state



Map 3: 1876-1888 party support by state





**Dave Bangert, Lafayette Journal & Courier:**

Sounds like someone's been listening to the occasional Glenda Ritz for Governor rants that come from mouths of Hoosiers frustrated by Statehouse efforts to undercut the lone, duly-elected Democrat in a Statehouse office. After a long, lonely session, one where Ritz and her friends in an overmatched Democratic minority at the Statehouse had to fend off a semester's worth of Republican power grabs, the superintendent of public instruction said she might be game for taking on Gov. Mike Pence in 2016. "There's absolutely nothing off the table," Ritz told reporters on Thursday, a day after legislators limped home and the same day Democrat John Gregg announced he'd make another run for governor in 2016. Maybe nothing's off the table. Her campaign themes practically wrote themselves this session, one dismissive blow after another from Republicans. Ritz's critics alternated between doubts about her qualifications, frustrations over her ability to work with the State Board of Education and wariness about her willingness the reverse trends in testing, vouchers for private schools and other GOP-led school reform initiatives. Her slogan is ready-made: Not Just a Librarian. It would rank up there with My Man, Mitch. And it will resonate with more Hoosiers than a Republican supermajority seems willing to believe. ❖



**Jon Webb, Evansville Courier & Press:**

It was election night, and Glenda Ritz had just unseated Bennett to become Indiana's next superintendent of public instruction. My family's reaction sounded like a ticker-tape parade. I half-expected to see a jubilant sailor roam past and plant a kiss on my wife's nurse. But in the three years since, Ritz has given them little reason to celebrate. Bennett — the educator, not Lady Gaga's duet partner — was a villain for teachers. Working closely with former Gov. Mitch Daniels, he placed great importance on standardized testing, supported legislation to limit teachers' collective bargaining rights, and pushed for school system superintendents to have more leeway in the firing of educators. He also fought to allow public funds to be funneled into private schools, leaving teachers believing he saw public institutions as second-rate. But he was gone, and months later would be accused of possibly criminal acts. In his place was Ritz, a new superintendent who would champion teachers' causes and right a faulty Indiana educational system. At least that's how it was supposed to work. Since becoming superintendent, Ritz has met nothing but opposition from her colleagues. Now Ritz is considering a run for governor. But if she can't navigate the State Board of Education, there's no way she could handle a super majority Republican Legislature. Yes, Ritz should be able to do her job without the passive aggressive tactics of her opponents. But that's not going to happen anytime soon. Her supporters have to realize that. If they want results,

they have to ditch their blind optimism and start putting pressure on their superintendent to produce real change. To paraphrase the great monogamist Gary Hart, you can't be serious about Indiana education and be infantile about it at the same time. Ritz got a raw deal. But those who don't do their work get a failing grade. Any teacher should know that. ❖

**Matthew Tully, IndyStar:**

A white wine in his hand, Carmel Mayor Jim Brainard stood in his campaign headquarters Tuesday night as the election returns began to trickle in. It was early, but it was clear things were going his way. "This one is going to feel really special," he said, noting the harsh criticism he had faced during the campaign. An hour later, the results were in. It wasn't even close. Central Indiana's most intriguing mayor had won the GOP primary in a walk, paving the way for a sixth term. Questions about the city's debt, and attacks on his methods, had not had an impact. Given the choice between a mayor who likes to think and spend big, and a challenger who wanted to pull back, Carmel Republicans gave Brainard a thumbs up. "It's a message that they trust us," the mayor told a group of reporters. "We're going to take that trust seriously." And, he said, "We're going to continue to do what we're doing in Carmel to create a city that is able to compete with the greatest cities in the country." ❖

**Bob Kravitz, WTHR-TV:**

Sorry, Bob Kraft. There will be no apology coming from the National Football League or anybody else, something he demanded at the Super Bowl should the league exonerate his club. If anything, Kraft should be offering organizational apologies for a team that has now been found guilty of circumventing the rules twice in recent years. How about an apology from Tom Brady, who lied through his perfect pearly whites before and during this process? The Patriots cheated, and it's fair to assume they've been cheating — specifically, playing with deflated footballs — for a very long time. This is not a minor issue; we're talking here about the integrity of the game, about maintaining a level playing field. Nobody ever suggested the footballs played any role in the Patriots' 45-7 battering of the Colts, but if I'm, say, the Baltimore Ravens, I'm absolutely furious. If I'm any of those teams the Patriots beat over the years on their way to all those Super Bowls, I'm furious. And if I'm Roger Goodell, who was directly challenged by Kraft but properly hired independent investigators to pursue this case, I'm furious, too. Bottom line, his league's Super Bowl champions have a Scarlet Letter, another asterisk to add to their growing collection. This couples up with SpyGate, another misdeed that cost Bill Belichick a half-million dollars, and it makes it more likely that the league will bring the hammer on a recidivist organization. ❖



## NFL Wells report implicates Brady

NEW YORK — New England Patriots personnel likely manipulated the air pressure of the footballs used in the AFC championship game against the Indianapolis Colts, a report by independent investigator Ted Wells concluded (Sports Illustrated). The report, released Wednesday, found "it is more probable than not that New England Patriots personnel participated in violations of the Playing Rules and were involved in a deliberate effort to circumvent the rules." The report also states that it is probable Tom Brady "was at least generally aware of... the release of air from Patriots game balls." The report found that officials' locker room attendant Jim McNally and equipment assistant John Jastremski "participated in a deliberate effort to release air from Patriots game balls after the balls were examined by the referee." The NFL is considering discipline for Brady, McNally and Jastremski, ESPN's Adam Schefter reports. After the Patriots defeated the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC Championship Game, New England was accused of playing with balls that were inflated below league requirements. Subsequent investigations found that 11 of the Patriots' 12 footballs were, in fact, under-inflated by two pounds of air (psi), based on league regulations, sparking reaction all across the NFL. It was later revealed that the 12th football was also under-inflated, but by less than two psi. The league confirmed that prior to the game, the balls were all tested and found to be of satisfactory inflation, and that the balls were all properly inflated for the second half and remained that way. At a press conference in January, Brady said he "didn't alter the balls in any way" and "would never have someone do something that was outside the rules." The league launched the investigation into Deflategate in January and



interviewed Patriots personnel, game officials, and third parties, as well as New England players after the Super Bowl.

## Solutions needed for low turnout

INDIANAPOLIS — Most of the people who made it to the Indianapolis Farmer's Market didn't make it to Tuesday's primary. Unlike here, there was no waiting and no crowds at the polls. "I was the 51st voter at in the afternoon. That's a lot of people doing nothing all day," said Bryan Truex (Milz, WTHR-TV). No wonder. Turnout was just seven percent, the second lowest in 25 years. In Tipton County, turnout was 4%. As Republican Councilor Marilyn Pfisterer knows, that comes with a hefty cost. "It's a huge amount of money budgeted for each election," said Pfisterer. The county budgeted \$1.2 million for this one, meaning it cost nearly \$25 per voter. "We really do need to look at how to increase civic engagement," said political columnist Brian Howey. Howey believes part of the problem is voter apathy, but he also thinks making voting easier and more accessible would help a lot - whether it's extending hours or changing days. "Why do we vote on Tuesday as opposed to Sundays as they do in Europe, for instance?" he said. Oregon, Washington and Colorado all have mail-in voting, while Arizona is giving e-voting a try. "Society has changed in so many profound ways and yet our election system hasn't changed at all," Howey said.

## Pence signs wage repeal law

INDIANAPOLIS — With the stroke of a pen Wednesday, Gov. Mike Pence ended a system the state and local governments have used for eight decades to set wages on most publicly funded construction projects (Carden, NWI Times). House Enrolled Act 1019,

which takes effect July 1, repeals Indiana's common construction wage, also known as prevailing wage, by eliminating the wage-setting duties of local boards of taxpayers and contractors in favor of free market pay scales. "Wages on public projects should be set by the marketplace and not by government bureaucracy," Pence said. "By repealing the common construction wage, our state is putting hard-working taxpayers first, lessening the burden on cash-strapped local governments and schools, and opening doors of opportunity for small businesses across our state." The new law also is a personal political victory for the Republican governor who spent thousands of dollars from his campaign fund on television ads trying to win over reluctant members of the Republican-controlled General Assembly. It ultimately passed by narrow margins, 27-22 in the Senate and 54-40 in the House.

## State starts ag news service

INDIANAPOLIS — It is not the all-encompassing propaganda network his staffers once envisioned, but Gov. Mike Pence has signed legislation creating a state-run news service for farm commodity prices (Carden, NWI Times). House Enrolled Act 1170, which takes effect July 1, permits Pence's Department of Agriculture to operate a market news service pilot program intended to provide Hoosier farmers unbiased reports on the prices paid for their products in different regions of the state. In January, the Republican governor made national headlines and earned Indiana unfavorable comparisons to Soviet Russia and North Korea when his office's plans for "Just IN," a state-run news outlet to compete with traditional media, were leaked. State Rep. Matt Uebelhor, R-Bloomfield, sponsor of the farm news service law, said, "Most states have a market watch thing for farmers to get on and check out what their agriculture prices are for corn, soybeans, hogs cattle, whatever it is."