



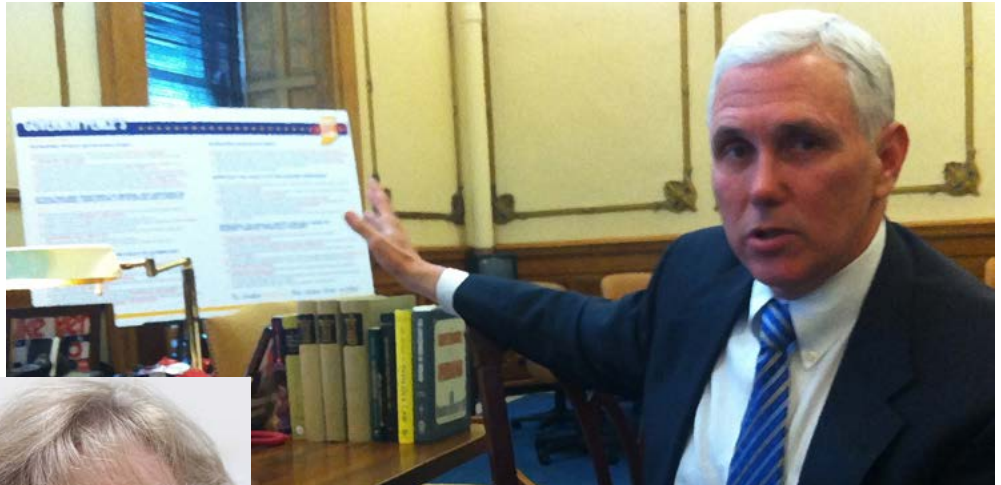
Pence in, Pelath out, and Ritz coming

Governor prepares to defend his record; superintendent poised to enter race

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – A fortnight ago, our analysis of the evolving Indiana gubernatorial race hinged on the decisions of three key players, Gov. Mike Pence, as well as Democrat Supt. Glenda Ritz and House Minority Leader Scott Pelath.

As things stand today, Gov. Pence has confirmed a reelection bid telling Howey Politics Indiana on Wednesday he is prepared to defend his first term record. Ritz is headed in that direction with an announcement coming next week, and Pelath has ruled out a run, saying that a



Gov. Mike Pence motions to his updated 2012 campaign “Roadmap” which will be the crux of his reelection bid, while Democratic Supt. Glenda Ritz is poised to enter the race next week. (HPI Photos by Brian A. Howey and Mark Curry)



Democratic primary “free-for-all” would damage the party’s prospects for the general election, but is open for a spot on the ticket.

Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., reliable sources tell HPI, is still pondering either a gubernatorial or U.S. Senate bid after an impressive mayoral primary vic-

Continued on page 3

Irish, marriage and us

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – It is probably not the best of ideas to allow the people to vote in a referendum on basic human rights. Our founding fathers were pretty specific about our rights being derived from God and not from man. After all, would a vote of our nation confirming slavery have changed the basic iniquity of the institution or altered the rights of any man to be free regardless of color? Would a vote by the people against allowing women the right to vote have legitimized denying universal suffrage? The law may or may not be changed by a referendum of the people, but human rights can never be changed by a



“Today we are at a juncture in our government in Washington, D.C. where we need people, more than ever, who are not afraid to speak out.”

- State Sen. Liz Brown, kicking off her Republican 3rd CD campaign Wednesday



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405 Massachusetts Ave.,
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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
Mark Curry, photography

Subscriptions

HPI, HPI Daily Wire \$599
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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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vote. Fundamental rights live whether or not they are codified.

In the United States, change comes slowly. Our legislative bodies move at a glacial pace when it comes to social change. More often than not, the courts write social law through judicial review and leave it to state and national legislatures to play catch up. Our founding fathers were pretty clever with that element of our United States Constitution.

It might seem awfully easy to just put the issue of basic human rights on the ballot and let the people speak. That was the ultimate concept, in 2014, behind HJR-3. Let’s canonize a definition of marriage in the Indiana Constitution, which requires a vote of the people of Indiana. “Let the people decide!” was the disingenuous cry of legislative proponents of HJR-3. Well, if the people know best, then give us a referendum on taxes, government spending, governmental gifts to corporate entities and speed limits. Ain’t gonna happen. Not no way. Not no how.

Which brings me to the extremely interesting referendum on gay marriage which was voted on by the people of Ireland on Saturday, May 23. Knowing a hot potato when they saw one, the Irish Parliament kicked the issue of marriage off to the people and the people responded in an amazing way.

Homosexuality was illegal in Ireland until 1993. The Catholic Church in Ireland has traditionally spoken out strongly against homosexuality and in favor of traditional marriage. Make no mistake about it, Ireland is a very Catholic country. However, Ireland has become a country that is being shaped more by its people and less by its religious leaders. Younger and much more progressive in regard to human rights than the people of pre-1993, the current residents of the Emerald Isle have become much more tolerant of differences of belief and they haven’t been bashful about expressing their tolerance.

The referendum results on the question of gay marriage in Ireland

were surprising and transformational. The right of gay men and women to contractually “marry” was confirmed by a vote of 62 to 38 percent. Those are landslide numbers and not just from a small percentage of the voting eligible population. The turnout was an impressive 60 percent. The people of Ireland spoke and they spoke loudly.

The “marriage” equality vote by the people of Ireland was actually more of a vote allowing officially recognized civil unions. The passage of this law will not obligate any priest nor pastor to officiate at a gay wedding ceremony. This is an important distinction for those groups who are worried that the state will override their religious freedoms by forcing the participation of the church in a gay wedding. In short, the Irish gay marriage vote merely extended the same legal rights that a heterosexual married couple have to a gay couple. No more and no less.

How can the marriage equality vote be beneficial and instructional to the good folks of Indiana and their elected officials? Better yet, and less couched, what can Gov. Pence and Indiana legislative leaders learn from Ireland so that we don’t step in a big pile of democratic doo-doo again? First, society is racing ahead of our government leaders on the issue of gay rights and equality. Our society in the United States is becoming more tolerant on this issue and it would serve Gov. Pence and our legislators to recognize that they are swimming against a powerful tide.

Second, the issue of contractually recognized civil unions should be separated from the issue of marriage. Let’s face it, the religious community in Indiana does not speak sotto voce. Some churches recognize gay marriage. It should be their religious right to marry anyone as their church sees fit. It should also be the right for any church to refuse to participate in any wedding service. Allowing civil unions in Indiana would go a long way toward diffusing an ugly time bomb. Let’s make everyone,

gay or straight, sign a civil union contract that enumerates rights and responsibilities.

Finally, Gov. Pence and the Indiana Legislature should make a powerful statement that gay people have the same protections against discrimination that are given to straight people in the areas of employment and housing. It is as Hoosier as apple pie to treat people fairly and we should not only pass a law to this effect but champion it far and wide.

My contention now and, incidentally, before the Indiana Religious Freedom Restoration Act was passed, panned and amended is that there is a happy compromise that can be struck between certain religious groups and the gay community that offers religious rights protection and rights of civil equality. The passage of a civil union referendum in Ireland serves as a good example that both points of view can be protected.

Of course, in short order, the United States Supreme Court may render this debate moot. There will be those on both sides of the marriage issue who will try and use the tools of government to circumvent an adverse court ruling to further their cause. Let's not be one of those states. Let's be a state with a great government, low taxes, super economic growth and Hoosier hospitality for all people.

In a store recently, I saw on the wall a green highway sign that read, "Entering Indiana, turn back your clock 200 years." For a real time change, let's turn the clock ahead. Please. ❖

Dunn is chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.

Governor, from page 1

tory earlier this month. One source described McDermott as "preparing to take soundings from around the state" on a potential candidacy.

In the May 14 edition of Howey Politics Indiana, we reported that Ritz was "finding a wide array of encouragement to challenge Pence. The school of thought here – pun intended – is that Ritz is the perfect candidate to accentuate the deep education divisions that exist, and exploit them to bring out a coalition of teachers, educators, their wider families and friends, and the hundreds of thousands of moms out there who have lived with ISTEP glitches while adults feud on the State Board of Education."

Informed and reliable Ritz associates acknowledged an announcement is forthcoming next week, saying a decision has been made, and that the superintendent has been calling supporters. Asked if the decision is to challenge Gov. Pence, the source told HPI, "You laid out a logical scenario in your column, and Supt. Ritz is a logical person."

Our read on that is that Ritz will announce her candidacy.

Pence sticks to reelect game plan

In a lunch meeting with Howey Politics Indiana

on Wednesday, Pence said the plan for the past two and a half years was to set up a reelection bid. But for the past year, there was a persistent buzz about a potential presidential bid which he did little to tamp down. "I was always happy for the attention, always happy to listen," Pence said at McCormick & Schmick's. "But I really have more to

do with the state of Indiana. Indiana always came first."

Asked if the controversy over the Religious Freedom Restoration Act essentially ended his presidential prospects, Pence explained, "We've been working for the past two and a half years to seek reelection. Our priority has never changed."

He explained to the IndyStar editorial board last week of RFRA: "I certainly learned – again – that I'm not perfect. If I have a regret, I regret that we didn't spend more time listen-

ing before the bill got to my desk. My ambition is to be a better listener. I support religious freedom. I also oppose discrimination. I was raised to do unto others, what you would have them do unto you. Those are core principles for me. If I had thought it was about discrimination, I would have vetoed the bill. I meant that to my bone marrow." He repeated similar sentiments to HPI on Wednesday.

The fact that the Indiana Economic Development Corporation is in the process of spending \$2 million to repair the state's image after RFRA (likely to be much more once a global campaign is designed), the governor and



Gov. Mike Pence with out-going Indiana National Guard Adjutant Gen. Martin Umbarger (left) and Brig. Gen. Corey Carr, who will replace Umbarger, at McCormick & Schmick's Wednesday afternoon. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

his campaign openly acknowledge there has been damage and they will have to deal with it in a reelection context.

The governor and First Lady Karen Pence took some time off between the General Assembly sine die and their week-long trip to China to discuss where best to serve, as he had always put it, then gathered the family for a final decision. He explained that his 2016 options were "really about putting first things first. I was just determined to put all the focus on the session."

He said that the decision to run again was "unanimous by the Pence family to seek reelection."

Governor prepares to defend record

There is widespread concern in Republican circles that Pence is damaged goods, though most party mem-

bers HPI has talked to believe the governor has plenty of time to repair the damage. IndyStar columnist Matt Tully has repeatedly singled the governor, writing last week:

"Pence's past year has had so many spectacular crashes you'd think he was trying to qualify for the Indy 500. Listen, I'm not saying the governor's first term has been without positive developments. I've written about some of them: The Medicaid agreement with the feds, the focus on vocational education, and, until recently, a style that seemed aimed at calming political divisions. But all of those things have been overshadowed by the mistakes and the increasing feeling that he spends too much time in a political echo chamber."

But Pence told HPI that he will gladly defend his record, calling the 2015 budget session a thorough validation for his agenda. "What we set out to do, we accomplished," Pence said. "I thought it was a great credit to our team."

He cited increased education funding (including pay for teacher performance), k-12 budget increases, a quarter billion dollars invested in career and vocational education, and an expansion of the voucher program as part of his legislative agenda that passed this session. "We wanted to do three things," Pence explained. "We wanted to fund excellence, expand choice and fix what was broken." A few hours after the HPI interview, Pence joined House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President David

Long to name new State Board of Education members, saying that about half of his appointees are new and half were retained, adding that SBOE is now reconstituted to "refocus on our mission" (See page 16).

The governor said his administration's investment in career and vocational education was instrumental in attracting the GE Aviation facility in West Lafayette and the \$1.2 billion General Motors investment at Fort Wayne. "In virtually every conversation I've had, it was focused on this initiative,"

Pence said, "It's going to be a genuine change." He referred to a conversation in Fort Wayne Tuesday with UAW members about the administration's revamping vocational education to meet regional employment needs. The UAW member made reference to Ivy Tech, with Pence

breaking in, saying, "No, I'm talking about high school. The legislature sent us a package of common sense reform."

Pence pointed to the .4% decline in the April jobless rate to 5.4%, the lowest in seven years, and said the state is now just 7,800 jobs away from its historic private sector peak in 2000. The governor set a goal of 100,000 new private sector jobs. "I believe we will reach that goal" sometime in the autumn of 2015," Pence projected.

And Pence said that in 50 years, his

Regional Cities Initiative may well be seen as his most "consequential" and enduring legacy, allowing cities and towns in specific regions of the state to work together to form employment clusters, whether it is orthopedics in Warsaw or the recreational vehicle industry in Elkhart and LaGrange counties. "We got everything we asked for," Pence said, adding that he plans on finding permanent funding sources in the 2017 legislative session.

Finally, Pence heralded the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 rollout as effective, avoiding the predicted Obamacare mishaps. "I'm extremely proud of the team and the progress we've made," Pence said, citing the 285,000 Hoosiers who have enrolled in the plan that includes 60,000 from the original HIP. Pence said that 70% of the applicants have opted into the better coverage of HIP Plus, with 90% of those below the 101% of poverty. He called the "Gateway to Work" provisions of HIP 2.0 as a pathway for



Gov. Pence chats with Democratic Indianapolis mayoral nominee Joe Hogsett Wednesday afternoon at McCormick & Schmick's. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

enrollees to find employment options.

"HIP 2.0 is tied to human aspirations," Pence declared.

Matt Lloyd, Pence's new deputy chief of staff for communications, added that should the U.S. Supreme Court's pending Burwell decision go against the Obama administration, HIP 2.0 actually will prevent recipients below 138% of poverty level from being kicked off of coverage.

Pence added that the HIV epidemic in Scott County is showing signs of peaking, with those opting into the needle exchange program also transitioning into HIP 2.0. "The decline in the new infection numbers shows we're nearing the end of the increases," Pence said.

Reminded of his 1991 Indiana Policy Review Foundation essay "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner," Pence said he is committed to refraining from personal attacks.

"I said that negative personal attacks have no place in public life," Pence said. "We will adhere to that. Our campaign will be about who we are and what we believe," adding that campaigns are about "debating issues and records."

"My hope is, whoever is the Democratic nominee, they do likewise," Pence said.

Civil rights showdown

If there is an issue that clouds Gov. Pence's political prospects, it will be the coming expansion of Indiana's civil rights code to include sexual orientation. Legislative Democrats are vowing to bring legislation to the table, and President Long and Speaker Bosma have indicated the issue will be debated. Call it "Son of RFRA" that will take place between January and March of the coming election year. The April Howey Politics Indiana Poll revealed that by a 54-34% margin, Hoosiers favored expanding civil rights. It is this issue that has the potential to re-engage the corporate community, inflame independents and female voters, and anger Pence's evangelical/fundamentalist base. It will be his minefield.

Asked about expanding the civil rights code and what he will tell Hoosier voters, Pence responded, "I would just tell them my heart's desire is to focus on the issues we came to office on, the agenda that's on the Roadmap," he said of his 2012 campaign document outlining six key goals. "As other issues come up, I can tell you we're always willing to listen to what Hoosiers have to say."

Pelath opts out

On Wednesday, Pelath ended speculation he might



House Minority Leader Scott Pelath won't seek a gubernatorial nomination, but is open to a spot on the ticket. (HPI Photo by Matthew Butler)

seek the Democratic nomination.

"I have given this race a great deal of consideration," Pelath told HPI Wednesday morning. "I believe a free-for-all Democratic primary will hamper our chances for the fall. I will not contribute to that. I have a key job as leader of a Democratic caucus and our priority is to make gains there in the legislature. Doing the things I need to do while at the same time raising money for a wide field primary is something I cannot justify. I think a primary will hurt our chances next year. I am concerned the field is still expanding. I hope by next January the field will be reduced."

Pelath added, "There's going to come a point where there is going to have to be a reassessment as to who will be the optimal standard bearer and not deplete our resources. I don't think our party has deep enough pockets to fund a competitive primary."

Pelath told HPI that he has not had recent conversations with Supt. Ritz, Gregg or Sen. Tallian. "I've said this before, one of the positives is we have a deeper bench than in the past," Pelath explained. He said he would help lead a party discussion on rallying behind one candidate and a ticket, possibly by the Indiana Democratic Editorial Association convention at French Lick in late August. "I am supportive of that continuing to happen. If we go into next year, whatever positives of a primary will be outweighed by the negatives of the collateral damage that is done. We need to have resources in place to be competitive in the fall in 2016. Sometimes we go through a process, analyzing individual strengths and weaknesses. That should happen; we shouldn't have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to find that out."

Asked if he is open to a lieutenant governor nomination, Pelath said, "I won't close the door on anything if it furthers the goals that I think are important, which is to recapture the executive branch and make gains in the legislature. Both have to be accomplished. That's my goal and I am open to whatever furthers that endeavor."

The coming of Glenda Ritz

Next week, Supt. Ritz is expected to enter the race. In the April HPI Poll, she had the best head-to-head matchup against Gov. Pence, trailing 42-39%. This is after Pence spent more than \$15 million on his 2012 campaign, compared to about \$300,000 for Ritz. In comparison, Pence led Gregg 43-37%.

Pence's fav/unfavs stood at 35/38%, compared to 29/9% for Ritz, while her name ID stood at 62%, compared to 47% for Gregg. The Ritz/Pence SBOE wars have made the Democratic superintendent more famous.

More ominous for Pence, just 37% of female voters have a favorable impression, with 51% disapproving. Among independent female voters, he stood at 28/35%. That compares with Ritz, whose fav/unfavs among women are 56/37%.

Sources tell HPI that it was the continuing assaults by the legislature and Gov. Pence on her office's portfolio, as well as the HPI Poll that prompted Ritz to rethink her

planned reelection and take on Pence.

Pence and Ritz have sparred repeatedly over education policy. Pence has tried to work around Ritz and the DOE. As you've read above, he is touting his education accomplishments. He has visited about a half dozen schools since the legislative sine die in preparation for a potential showdown.

Stay tuned. ❖

Young venturing out to Lincoln dinners; Hale researching bid

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS – U.S. Rep. Todd Young is beginning to venture outside of his 9th CD for Lincoln dinners, another indicator that the Bloomington Republican will opt into the 2016 U.S. Senate race.



Young appeared at the Jennings County event on Tuesday evening and will be attending others in Blackford, Howard and Gibson counties in the coming weeks, as well as the June 18 Indiana Republican state

spring dinner. Since Young is sitting on a \$1.4 million war chest, his potential entry without a definitive pronouncement of candidacy is impacting the field.

Another prospective entrant is House Speaker Brian Bosma, who spent the first four months of the year immersed in the long General Assembly session, much of May on vacation, and is now settling into the business of his Kroger Gardis law firm. Informed and reliable sources close to the Speaker tell Howey Politics there is no deadline for a decision, particularly with Rep. Young's candidacy unresolved. Having said that, all of Bosma's roughly \$1 million war chest is outside of the federal system, meaning he would have a tough hill to climb to catch up with Young at the \$5,400 cycle donor limits.

The two declared candidates, U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman and former state GOP chairman Eric Holcomb, were in familiar modes this past week. Holcomb gave keynote addresses in Jennings County Tuesday night and will take the place of Gov. Mike Pence on the bill at the Porter County dinner Thursday. Holcomb has been endorsed by Porter Chairman Mike Simpson and Jennings Chair Mark Holwager.

Campaign spokesman Pete Seat told HPI that the campaign is "pleasantly encouraged by the support Eric

is getting." And, he notes, some of that is coming from Young's 9th CD.

Stutzman ramped up his staff, adding Brendon DelToro as his campaign manager. DelToro managed the 2012 and 2014 campaigns of U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski and his migration to Stutzman raised eyebrows, multiple sources tell HPI. He had also been Walorski's chief of staff until last week. Stutzman also brought on board Brooks Kochvar of GS Strategy Group as a general consultant and pollster. Kochvar had served as chief of staff and campaign manager for former congressman Chris Chocola. He has also worked for Walorski, as well as U.S. Sens. Kelly Ayotte and Mike Lee. Terry Nelson and Rob Jesmer of FP1 Strategies will be media consultants. Jesmer is a former director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee.

Stutzman found himself tamping down a relationship with Josh Duggar, the former Family Research Council Action director. Duggar, star of the reality show "19 Kids and Counting," is at the center of molestation allegations. Sources say that Duggar is accused of molesting underage girls as a teenager. Duggar labeled Stutzman a "good friend" in a Twitter post.

Finally, State Sen. Jim Merritt is preparing for a bid. He has selected a logo and has begun advertising his candidacy on internet sites. This past week he received earned media on his sponsorship of Senate Resolution 62 advocating the replacement of President Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill, and spoke at a Hamilton County summit on drug abuse. Merritt authored Indiana's Lifeline Law in 2012. The IndyStar reported Merritt telling the conference, "We need to create a security net for treatment and recovery. It's almost like you have to go into the Department of Correction to get clean."

For Indiana Democrats, Indianapolis State Rep. Christina Hale told HPI she continues to be in exploration mode. "I'm stilling doing my homework and taking the opportunity seriously," Hale said, adding, "I will come to a final decision very soon." Hale said she has "remained in contact" with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, though multiple sources tell HPI that it still hopes to attract former senator Evan Bayh and his \$10 million war chest into the race.

"I continue to get encouragement," Hale said, though, she explained, not so much from the "old guard" of the party that includes many former Bayh supporters.

"People across the board, aside from the old guard, are incredibly enthusiastic about this."

So far, only former congressman Baron Hill has declared for the Democrats, with a formal announcement coming in June. Hill sought the Senate seat in 1990, losing to Sen. Dan Coats. Hale said that she and Hill are communicating. "We chatted at the J-J dinner," she said. "We talked on the phone a week before that." ❖



State Sen. Liz Brown kicked off her 3rd CD campaign Wednesday night in Fort Wayne.

Sen. Brown kicks off 3rd CD campaign

State Sen. Liz Brown officially ignited her 3rd CD campaign Wednesday night, joining a field that includes State Sen. Jim Banks and former Wisconsin legislator Pam Galloway.

Brown said Wednesday she is running for Congress because there is a need in Washington more than ever for people "who are not afraid to speak out in order to affirm that our constitutional democratic principles and our faith are not broken or wavering."

"I entered into public service after years of volunteer work, because I knew that at a local level and then at the state level, that we could lay a better foundation, a stronger foundation, so that our children and grandchildren could continue the self-made successes of our grandparents," Brown told supporters. "I have applied my strong voice, a deep faith, and an immutable conviction to finding local and state level solutions. But today we are at a juncture in our government in Washington, D.C. where we need people, more than ever, who are not afraid to speak out in order to affirm that our constitutional democratic principles and our faith are not broken or wavering. Now is the time to reshape our economy and reaffirm our role as a leader on the global stage. I want to be your voice in Washington, and so I hope you will join me in that journey, as I am declaring, this day, that I am officially a candidate for the House of Representatives, for the Third Congressional District seat in Indiana."

She announced just six months after winning SD15. "For anybody who's in the race, in a sense it's a stepping stone," Brown said in Fort Wayne Wednesday evening. "None of us are currently sitting Representatives. We all are vying for the seat, and politics is a unique public job interview. So this is a unique opportunity." ❖

Being bipartisan in Congress doesn't mean trading values

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON – Being bipartisan doesn't mean checking your conservative or liberal beliefs at the House or Senate door, according to a longtime Hoosier lawmaker known for crossing the aisle.

Last week, former Sen. Richard Lugar released a ranking of senators and House members that shows how well they reach out to members of the other party when working on legislation.

The Bipartisan Index, produced by the Lugar Center and Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy, analyzed the 113th Congress (2013-14) against a 20-year congressional baseline stretching back to 1993.

The study looked at legislation that lawmakers sponsored or co-sponsored, allocating points for measures

that attracted support of the opposite party. It provided empirical evidence that partisan fissures in the capital are deep and that members of the Indiana congressional delegation tend to stay cloistered in their party enclaves.

Rising up the index does not mean moving toward the middle, Lugar said.

"Continue, if you wish, to be very conservative or very liberal, but at the same time offer

legislation and then seek on the other side of the aisle co-sponsors to it, so it will become law as opposed to simply a speech or a statement," Lugar said.

One Hoosier congressman who scored poorly in the index, Rep. Luke Messer, R-6th CD, said that his ranking, 416th in the House, was a product of his political beliefs and geography. "I'm a conservative," he said. "I represent a conservative district, and the results reflect that. There's not a lot of staunch conservatives or liberals scoring high on the index."

Where lawmakers rank on the index depends on the time and energy they devote to cobbling together diverse political support for their bills, said Dan Diller, Lugar Center policy director.

"We aren't asking members to change their viewpoint," Diller said. "The most conservative and liberal members of Congress can score well if they simply make the pursuit of a bipartisan partner part of their regular bill sponsorship and co-sponsorship procedures."

Messer, who said he has "all the respect in the world for Sen. Lugar," questioned the index's methodology.



"Looking just at bill co-sponsors is a little antiquated," he said.

He pointed out that he was the only House Republican to side with President Barack Obama when Obama sought congressional approval for military operations in Syria, a move that the president eventually abandoned.

Messer noted that he has worked with the White House on student data privacy and held bipartisan meetings when he was president of the freshmen GOP class in the 113th Congress.

As for bipartisan legislating, he said that he has twice been a co-sponsor of the Voting Rights Act. "I'm trying to do my part to make sure Washington works," Messer said.

Although co-sponsorships are a "proxy for fair-mindedness," Rep. Todd Young, R-9th CD, said that not all bipartisan bills are created equal.

"There are some really good bipartisan bills and some really bad ones," said Young, who came in at 193 on the index.

"Ultimately, Hoosiers want discernment and judgment from their elected officials."

Young said that he has attracted Democratic support for legislation he authored that would establish public-private partnerships to improve delivery of welfare services.

When he tried to get Democrats to sign on to his bill that would set the full-time work week at 40 hours in the health-care reform law, he ran into resistance from House Democratic officials.

"I worked very hard to get Democratic support," Young said. "[House Minority Leader] Nancy Pelosi and Democratic leadership worked hard to make sure Democrats didn't join my bill."

It was an example of behind-the-scenes intrigue that might not be reflected in the Bipartisan Index. "These things can be much more complex than meets the eye," Young said. "The senator has always been respectful of nuance."

One Hoosier lawmaker was perfectly happy with the index, Democratic Sen. Joe Donnelly. He ranked as the third most bipartisan senator in the 113th Congress. His Indiana counterpart, Republican Sen. Dan Coats, came in at 87.

His score is a product of the message that he says voters sent when he won Lugar's former seat in 2012,

Donnelly said. Donnelly beat Richard Mourdock, a Tea Party favorite who ousted Lugar in the Republican primary.

"They rejected partisanship," Donnelly said of Hoosier voters. "They rejected division. They said, 'Go get things done.' And that's what I've tried to do."

The fact that most legislation in the Senate requires 60 votes and Republicans only have 54 members puts Donnelly in a position to continue to build on his bipartisan credentials. "They need Democratic members

for every bill," Donnelly said. "I can help make sure that legislation that passes...reflects Hoosier common sense."

If a member of Congress wants to improve his or her bipartisan ranking, Lugar offers a straightforward formula.

"It's a very simple answer: Do your duty," Lugar said. "Your duty as a member of Congress is to offer legislation and then to participate vigorously with others on both sides of the aisle to affect change."

Things are already looking up for Messer's next index

score. A tally of the eight bills he has offered so far in the 114th Congress, which began in January, shows that three of them have garnered Democratic co-sponsors.

If more lawmakers achieve similar gains, the overall scores for Congress may rebound from the sharp decline in bipartisanship since 1999 that Lugar's index has recorded.

Many candidates for office have been driven to the extremes of their parties, Lugar said. But voters ultimately will support people who are serious about legislating.

The key is "getting beyond merely rhetorical flourishes," Lugar said. "The net effect of that will be...to change the opinion of the American people with respect to Congress."

The Lugar Center plans to generate more statistics that likely will stoke the debate over bipartisanship. It plans to release a lifetime ranking for all members of Congress back to 1993 this fall and will analyze the first session of the 114th Congress early next year. ❖

Disclosure: The author was an aide to Lugar from 1992-97. He also has made monetary contributions to the Lugar Center. ❖



U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly has sought a bipartisan mode during his first term in the Senate, as did his predecessor, Republican Dick Lugar. (HPI Photo by Chris Sautter)

Hoosier affinity for President Jackson

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. – Could it be? Are Indiana and Andrew Jackson splitting up?

From the standpoint of the Indiana Senate, a resolution passed in the recent session by a unanimous voice vote had that body officially recommending that Treasury Sec. Jack Lew replace the seventh president with a female on the \$20 bill. NWI Times' Dan Carden reported that Senate Resolution 62 declares: "To honor the enormous contributions women have bestowed on America's history, designating a woman on the twenty dollar bill would serve as a long overdue change and as a symbolic initiative to promote gender equality nationally."



It was sponsored by Republican State Sen. Jim Merritt along with Democrats Karen Tallian and Earline Rogers. Merritt was questioned by two Senate pages, who wondered why Indiana wasn't jumping on board a national movement to replace President Jackson with the likes of former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt or Underground Railroad hero Harriet Tubman. In a recent unofficial vote by the Women On 20s Campaign, Tubman narrowly edged Roosevelt, 118,328 to 111,227.

The significance of the Indiana Senate vote is that if the Hoosier state owes its policy identity to any U.S. president, it is Andrew Jackson, to whom the state pledged its five Electoral College votes in two successive elections, 1824 and 1828 over John Quincy Adams, the second with 56% of the vote. Abraham Lincoln was born here, the Harrisons were political forces that reached the White House twice, but it was Jackson who shaped Indiana in ways that exist to this day.

In his campaigns, Jackson used the "corrupt bargain" of Adams and Henry Clay as an example of federal overreach. The first came just eight years into our Statehood. After Jackson took office in March 1829 and wouldn't relinquish power until 1837, fledgling Indiana began to take shape, expanding beyond its original southern counties, while relocating

the state capital from Corydon to Indianapolis during the same year that Jackson first appeared on a presidential ballot.

President Jackson sounded "moralistic tones" that resonated with Hoosiers. When he took office, he invited the public into the White House, where the resulting mob drank punch from tubs brought in to accommodate them. Hoosiers of the day, no doubt, enthusiastically approved.

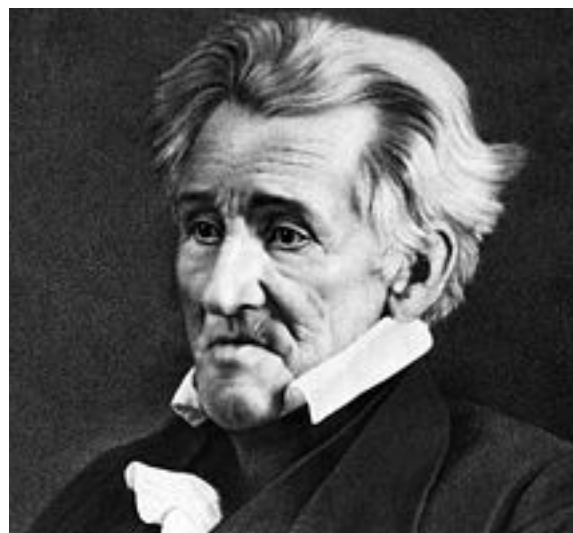
Many of Northern Indiana's cities and counties were founded during the Jackson presidency. And from a policy standpoint, the Jacksonian era has indelibly stamped itself on the Indiana brand to this very day. There were his 70 treaties made with the various Indian nations, including the Chippewa, Ottawa, and the Potawatomi here in Indiana, as the new nation began to forcibly move native Americans to the west.

Hoosiers distrust the federal government, as Jackson did. Hoosiers were against centralized power as Jackson resisted attempts by Congress to reauthorize the Second Bank of the United States. Because of our suspicions of centralized power, two successive state constitutions passed in 1816 and 1851 carried the Jacksonian vision. As a state, we elect more public officials (about 11,000) than just about any of the other 49 states.

There have been attempts to do away with the township system of government, and early in the administration of Gov. Mitch Daniels, voters did approve eliminating more than 950 township assessors, but only after it was revealed that the proliferation of assessors was twisting property taxation to unfair levels. In the previous decade, voters approved a referendum allowing the appointment of a clerk to the Indiana Supreme Court. But there is an almost primal hesitancy of Hoosier voters to give up any other elected authority.

Even as Democratic Supt. Glenda Ritz clashed with Gov. Mike Pence and the State Board of Education, there was little appetite to make the superintendent of public instruction a gubernatorial appointed position, even though both Republican and Democratic party platforms in 2012 advocated that. Gov. Pence and legislative Republican leaders see that as a bridge too far.

Do away with the three county commissioners in lieu of a single county executive? Allen County voters rejected that in landslide proportions last November. Make a county sheriff an appointed position, as advocated by the Kernan-Shepard Commission? No one



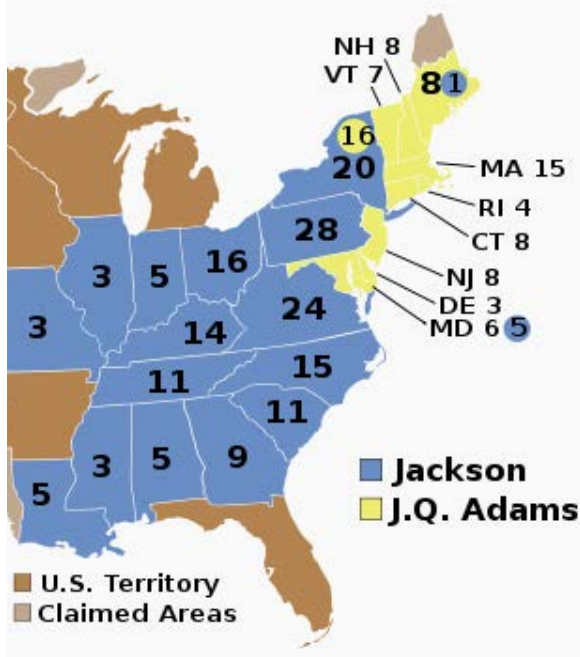
took that seriously. Hoosiers will always want to elect their sheriff, their school board, their township trustee, even if they don't know who he or she is.

President Jackson forged what is now the Democratic Party. And to this day, Hoosier Democrats of all genders, races and sexual orientation gather for the annual Jefferson-Jackson dinner, the irony being that both presidents were slave owners. There has been virtually no momentum to opt for a "Truman-Kennedy" or a "Roosevelt-Kennedy" dinner.

It is hard to find a Hoosier lawmaker of either Republican or Democratic stripe who doesn't acknowledge the 2nd Amendment constitutional right to bear arms. President Jackson loved his guns. He was a war hero and killed a man during a duel in 1806 after his wife Rachel had been humiliated.

Hoosiers have always had a soft spot for President Jackson. Times, however, do change, whether it was the defeat of a long-time ban on gambling to a shift to gay marriage, change comes slowly to Indiana. The idea of Harriet Tubman moving President Jackson off the \$20 bill is another irony. Tubman's Underground Railroad coursed through Indiana as runaway slaves crossed the Ohio and St. Joseph rivers to find safe haven in Michigan. The Underground Railroad is a source of Hoosier pride these days.

Indiana support for removing Andrew Jackson from the \$20 bill is both interesting and significant. ❖



Mayor Freeman-Wilson plays regionalism card

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – When it comes to being an advocate for regionalism, Northwest Indiana needs a few more Karen Freeman-Wilsons. Just this week, the Gary mayor urged the city council to have the city join 11 other Lake County communities in committing a portion of their economic development income tax to the extension of the South Shore line to Dyer.



The mayor wants the council to approve Gary's commitment of 7.5 percent of its income tax, or about \$300,000 annually over the next 30 years, to help fund the \$571 million extension. Although the South Shore extension won't have a direct impact on her city, Freeman-Wilson said it is all about regionalism, which she called the future of Northwest Indiana.

The mayor acknowledged the commuter rail extension might provide employment for the underemployed or unemployed, including residents of Gary. Retiring city Councilman Roy Pratt, who long has been a visionary, backed the mayor, saying, "We have to look at the big picture."

Freeman-Wilson made her commitment to the South Shore extension many months ago, long before the city received news about receiving financial help for improvements at the South Shore's Miller Station, which is home to the city's most affluent residents.

The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority has agreed to join the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District and the city to provide a large share of the local match needed for a \$21 million federal grant for development in and around the Miller station. Freeman-Wilson added that improvements to the Miller station would make it more attractive to Chicago commuters.

The RDA also intends to provide \$7.5 million to help finance the \$14 million project at Buffington Harbor, the site of the city's two casinos. The money would be for improvements to the access road, a plus for the conversion of the casinos to land-based gambling facilities.

The mayor said it was vital for Gary to support development on the west side of Lake County when a regional organization is helping Gary on the east side of the county. Freeman-Wilson also took on the critics who say Gary, as one of the poorest cities in Lake County, would be helping St. John, one of the wealthiest towns, with its income tax money to help fund the South Shore extension. The mayor said, "You know everybody talks about you are investing in Yuppies going to St. John and other places. The last time I checked, the lake hasn't moved. Young people love the lake, young people love breweries. You go on a Friday or Saturday night and you see people lined up outside the 18th Street Brewery."

Regionalism can be a mighty strong instrument. ❖

Rich James has been writing about state and local government and politics for more than 30 years.

Dan Quayle never got the Letterman hometown pass

By MAUREEN HAYDEN
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana native David Letterman signed off the air this past week amid waves of nostalgic adulation hailing him as the comic genius who changed late-night television.

At least one fellow Hoosier knows that Letterman also had the power to galvanize national opinion. Vice President Dan Quayle was an early political target of Letterman, suffering an outrageous fortune of slings and arrows painting him as a vacuous, plastic politician.

When the vice president suffered a slip-up in 1992, publicly misspelling “potatoe” while monitoring a grade-school spelling bee, Letterman fueled the public frenzy and helped turn the gaffe into a long-running joke. Letterman invited on his show the 12-year-old student who’d spelled the word correctly, only to be incorrectly corrected by Quayle. The boy asked Letterman, to his glee: “Do you have to go to college to be vice president?”

Democrats turned that into a campaign weapon in that year’s election. By then Quayle, a lawyer twice elected to the U.S. Senate by Hoosiers, had been a frequent subject of Letterman’s acidic “Top Ten” lists. He was the target of no fewer than a half-dozen “Top Tens” in 1988, the year that President George H.W. Bush chose him as a running mate, and he was mentioned in many, many more.

The litany included this reason why Quayle would make a good president: “Would not seem like brainy egg-head when visiting nation’s injured professional wrestlers.”

Yet, Quayle, who now lives in Arizona, eventually made the best of it. In 1999, just as he was making the painful decision to end a brief campaign for the 2000 presidential election, he appeared on Letterman’s program. “It was fun,” reflected Quayle, two days after Letterman’s finale. “I actually enjoyed being on the show. Why wouldn’t I?”

Quayle said he learned some lessons from the years of Letterman’s taunting. Among them: Don’t count

on a hometown connection for cover. Quayle’s wife, Marilyn, had gone to high school with the comedian in Indianapolis. “I sort of figured I’d get a pass from Letterman,” Quayle said. “Instead, he doubled-down on me.”

Maybe tripled-down. Feigning a Midwestern politeness that hid a brutal bite, Letterman included in his Top Ten reasons for electing Quayle as president: “Would satisfy little-known constitutional requirement that Chief Executive be ‘dumb as a tree.’”

Having suffered through that and more, Quayle went on Letterman’s program at the suggestion of Republican media strategist Fred Davis. “It’s commonplace now for politicians to get on late night TV,” said Davis from his home in California. “At that time, it was a very dicey proposition.” The candidate’s staff was skeptical about Davis’ idea. “There was great gnashing of teeth,” he said.

“I thought we had nothing to lose.”

Quayle agreed. He was gracious and funny in his banter with Letterman. He was applauded by the audience when he told Letterman: “I’m here for my apology.” Quayle said this week, “I never did get it.”

Not long ago, Gov. Mike Pence found himself the subject of Letterman’s mockery after signing into law the controversial Religious Freedom Restoration Act. “It may be legal but it ain’t right,” Letterman said of the legislation widely criticized as a license to discriminate against gays and lesbians. A Letterman “Top Ten” likened Pence to, among other things, the “guy who makes his dog sleep outside.”

Davis said Republican clients from all over had already been calling him, frantic about how to respond to Pence’s bungled performance just

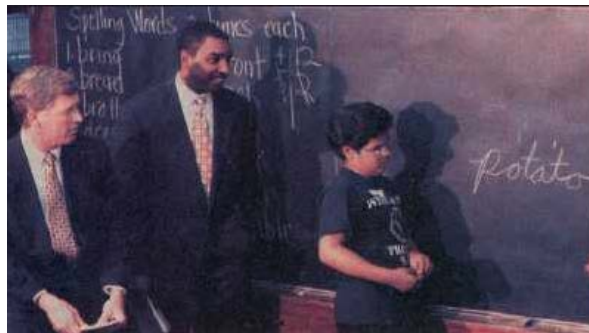
days earlier on ABC’s “This Week with George Stephanopoulos.”

“Hindsight is 20/20,” Davis said, before offering what his counsel would have been, had Pence asked. “My advice would have been to call Letterman’s producer and ask, ‘Do you want me on tomorrow?’”

“He’s no fool,” Davis said of the governor. “I think he could have acquitted himself well.” Mirroring advice he once gave to Quayle, Davis said Pence would have had nothing to lose but much to gain had he used some self-deprecating humor to turn the narrative.

“To leave it as a lingering national joke is no good,” Davis said. “You need to fix it at the time the problem occurs.” ❖

Maureen Hayden covers the Statehouse for CNHI’s Indiana newspapers. Reach her at mhayden@cni.com. Follow her on Twitter @MaureenHayden



The Killer State

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – A few weeks ago some Hoosiers were worried about the image of our state because of the ill-advised, ineptly named Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Gov. Pence was so worried he decided to spend \$750,000 with some opportunistic, out-of-state firm for Righteous Image Restoration Advertising (RIRA).

It did not seem to me that our image was seriously compromised by the RFRA's passage or the virtually meaningless "fix" applied after a massive public outcry. Our reputation was already well established as being backward-looking and ignorant. RFRA only confirmed what most Americans who thought of Indiana already believed.



Little noticed at the time was the Pence turn-about when the largest-ever outbreak of HIV hit the state. Long an ideological opponent of needle- and syringe-exchange programs, the governor authorized such an effort for Scott County alone. The rest of the state would remain in the dark ages.

Most Hoosiers did not notice this because HIV and Scott County are not on their radar screens. HIV no longer has a prominent place in the popular imagination. Scott County, with fewer than 24,000 persons (and declining), is virtually unknown in the state. Only if you drive frequently on I-65 between Columbus and Louisville, or have relatives there, would you be aware of Scott County.

The governor's action, however, was noticed nationally in the highly prestigious and widely read Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Two medical doctors from Brown University in Providence (RI) published (May 22, 2015) an article titled "Ideological Anachronism Involving Needle and Syringe Exchange Programs: Lessons from the Indiana HIV Outbreak."

The doctors trace opposition to such programs back to 1988 and Jesse Helms, a U.S. senator from North Carolina. Opponents like Mike Pence believe these programs "condone and encourage drug use, dissuade injection drug users from seeking help, signal governmental acceptance of illegal behavior," among other sins.

Supporters of exchange programs contend that research demonstrates "the safety and efficacy of [exchange programs]," and "do not result in increased drug use." In Indiana, which ranks 47th among the states in funding for health programs, the insistence on banning needle- and syringe-exchanges means continuation of an intentional policy that kills Hoosiers.

Drug use can be curbed by needle- and syringe-exchanges. Such programs, properly funded, also offer much needed "counseling, testing, and treatment for HIV as well as for hepatitis, tuberculosis, and sexually transmit-

ted diseases." Addicted persons "have a chronic relapsing disease that is amenable to intervention were they not stigmatized, incarcerated, deprived of employment, or kept at arm's length from medical care," according to the JAMA article.

Instead of recognizing a successful way of advancing public health, the Pence administration signals to the medical world, and to the health-related business firms we are trying to attract, that Indiana ignores the evidence of science and sits firmly upon a shaky, outdated moralizing platform. ❖

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

Lessons from Guadalcanal

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

MUNCIE – The things that divide us matter less than those things that unite us. James Jones, the great American novelist of World War II, told a superb story from his time as an infantryman fighting the Japanese. It appeared in his non-fiction book "WWII". The story is a humorous and bawdy demonstration of the things that bind us together. It is worth retelling on this weekend when we remember those who died for our Constitution and Republic.



As Jones wrote, it was mid-1942 and the outcome of the war was still very much in doubt. During a lull in the fighting on Guadalcanal ridgeline, a Japanese soldier yelled a long string of unprintable epithets about President Roosevelt toward the American lines. One G.I. stood up, loudly agreed with the sentiment, and fired several shots at the enemy, silencing him. While dislike of the commander in chief is a bipartisan sentiment, one can safely assume that particular G.I. was a Republican.

Perhaps this is apocryphal, James Jones was a great storyteller; but to my ears, that one story tells us a great deal about what we can and should be as a nation at peace than almost anything else from the unfamiliar experience of combat.

Whatever else their motivations, our guys on that hill in Guadalcanal ended up on the battlefield because they thought preserving the Republic was worth risking death. Their thoughts on domestic policy were secondary.

I think they were right. By extension that means that the things that divide us, like how much you like the president, matter less than those things that unite us, like being able to freely say so. And that brings me to today.

So much of our public debate focuses solely upon divisions. Now, I don't mean a policy argument where there are reasonable disagreements. That is the useful part of a democracy and we should welcome strong partisan debate. Instead, there seems to be a rush toward issues that have no purpose other than to polarize sentiment. I think this is caustic, and the fault for it falls upon those of us who are silent.

Our political leaders seem trapped by the loud voices of the few on the fringe. This afflicts both parties. On the right, the calls to pass an RFRA were few, but loud and mostly dishonest. The left is also guilty. One needs look no further than Ferguson, Missouri or the intentional

distortion of the gender pay gap to see the divisive exploitation of untruths. These issues are fought simply to score points, raise cash and divide us. Our world today needs less of much less of this.

My lesson and hopes are simple. The next time you hear someone say that this is our "Bonhoeffer moment" about gay marriage or "hands up don't shoot" about inner city lawlessness, don't ignore them, challenge them. Make them cite facts, and come armed with truth. You won't win the argument, but at the end of your talk tell them about that G.I. on Guadalcanal and how the future of the Republic belongs to those who bring us together.

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.

A story of frugality in Congress

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND – This is a story of frugality. You know, curtailing spending, saving money. It's a story about a homeowner doing just that, curtailing spending, saving money. Let's call him Ira M. Frugal. (Get it? I.M. Frugal.)



Mr. Frugal and his family reside in a home in Granger, an older home but in a nice suburban area where there's good resale potential. Alas, a few winters ago, lake-effect snow and bitter cold created ice dams in the gutters and resulting leaks. Various ways of coping with the problem were suggested: Heating units in the gutters, adding insulation, a service to rake snow from the

roof. Mr. Frugal said any of those things would cost too much, cause him to break his pledge never to increase his household budget. Even as water drips down the walls and soaks the carpets each winter, I.M. refuses to spend for remedies. His frugality calls for curtailing spending, not increasing it.

When the roof began leaking in the summer of 2012, Mr. Frugal heard cost estimates for a new roof. "I reject wild spending like that," I.M. shouted as he ordered a roofing contractor from his property. "Just a little leak," he said. And it was, at the start. Things got wetter in 2013 and 2014. It became a real nuisance when the kitchen ceiling collapsed during the rain earlier this month. "No problem," Mr. Frugal claimed. "We'll just eat all our meals

at restaurants."

I.M. also saved money by refusing to call an electrician when a short in wiring left the kids' bedrooms without lights. "The Founding Fathers didn't have electric lights," I.M. declared. "Why should my kids have those frills?" I.M. was proud of the way he saved money, never going over his set household budget. Never. Ever.

It's not that Mr. Frugal didn't have money. He spent a lot on other priorities, always away from the house, especially on trips to Las Vegas. "Spending there is really an investment," he reasoned. "Gives me a chance to win big." That was more important than wasteful spending on his home, even though the value of the house keeps dropping with disrepair, down to less than half of his purchase price. All the more reason not to waste money on repairs, he reasoned.

Mr. Frugal should run for Congress. His brand of frugality prevails there. Heck, with speeches he could give about his personal success in curtailing expenses and saving money with his house, he might become Speaker of the House. Congress, too, saves money by refusing to spend on repairs here at home. Billions for Iraq – a great investment there – but not one cent more for improving highways, fixing crumbling bridges, dealing with third-world rail transportation, updating airports, modernizing waterway dams and ports or updating the power grid.

The cost of saving is high, with the United States ranking in one listing as 28th in the world in infrastructure. The latest study by the American Society of Civil Engineers gives the nation a D+.

Business and labor are together in concern. Tamar Lundgren, chair of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce board of directors, warns of how China is investing more in roads, bridges and transit systems for global competition. "Competitors like China are not thinking about how to patch the next pothole," Lundgren says. "They are thinking

about how to build the next major supply chain.”

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka says the infrastructure woes are a self-created crisis. He suggests that saving on bridge repairs can be costly when a bridge collapses. Trumka also laments that Congress, in doing nothing on repairs, fails to bring the job growth and economic

boost that would come with infrastructure improvement. I.M. Frugal is the name of our homeowner in this story and also the battle cry of our Congress. ❖

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

Why the Indiana GOP war on public schools?

By SHAW FRIEDMAN

LaPORTE – Once it was different growing up in Indiana. Mainstream Republicans, while they were never close to the teachers’ unions, tended to understand that the success of public schools was critically tied in to our state’s success.

Whether it was a Richard Lugar who first got involved with Indianapolis public schools or Doc Bowen and then Bob Orr with his “A+” commitment to funding K-12, there was a broad, bipartisan consensus around supporting public schools. Toss in revered Republican lawmakers like State Sen. Virginia Blankenbaker from Indianapolis or the late Phyllis Pond from the Fort Wayne area, you could count on mainstream Republican support for funding our public schools. Not any more.



Hard to believe that our current governor proposed only \$200 million in new school money, with nearly all of it directed at corporate-run charter schools as well as the state’s private school voucher program at the expense of traditional public schools. The governor’s budget guru back in January, Chris Atkins, was quoted as saying the governor’s office was most concerned that some “high quality charter operators,” translated big bucks education corporations, “are not willing to look at investing here because of our charter financing system.” Huh? When did we have to start worrying about some out-of-state for-profit education firms needing subsidies?

The Indiana House Republican budget was so badly tilted toward wealthier school districts, it practically screamed out for correction. Had that first GOP House budget passed untouched, two of the wealthiest school districts in the state, Zionsville and Carmel, would have seen large increases in basic education aid while needy districts like Indianapolis, Gary or Hammond got zapped. Where’s the equity or fairness in that?

Even though the State Senate tweaked the punitive House budget and increased the public schools’ share

somewhat, the final budget still punishes public schools. What’s the matter with Dr. Tim Brown, the Scrooge who runs House Ways & Means, with comments like, “Did Mary’s mother get arrested the night before? Did Johnny not come with shoes to school? Those to me are not core issues of education.”

Sorry, Tim, those ARE core issues. If our kids in public schools are coming from broken homes, homes where families can’t get a decent living wage or can’t provide the basics, then kids are coming to our public schools in need of help, remediation and support. I can’t imagine Doc Bowen or Dick Lugar ever offering a similar asinine comment like Tim Brown’s remarks that practically scream out, “I’ve got mine. Tough luck if you can’t get yours.”

Why are we spending \$2.8 million to provide scholarship tax breaks to Hoosiers earning \$100,000 or more a year? How about it, Tim? Most obscene is we’re spending \$100 million in Hoosier tax dollars to subsidize private schools as well as contracts with for-profit, out-of-state corporate school takeover providers. As Cathy Fuentes-Rohwer of Bloomington, chair of the Indiana Coalition for Public Education, wrote eloquently in a recent Op/Ed: “Children who are hungry or living in a car really do have a difficult time paying attention to long division. The new budget gives more dollars to the wealthiest districts while decreasing the aid to the least. Teachers are losing control over what goes on in the classroom because of test-driven “accountability” and most haven’t had a raise in years. Teachers know best how to educate kids.”

Despite the governor’s out of touch comments that this past session was the “education session,” those in the know decry the modern Indiana GOP’s war on public education. There was a reason that thousands came to the Statehouse in February to support traditional public education, which is the backbone of our democracy. Doug Ross of the Times of Northwest Indiana stated the case well when he wrote that “the perception is that Gov. Pence wants to privatize public education. He didn’t help convince anyone otherwise when his budget gave more per pupil to charter schools than traditional public schools.”

Education session, huh? We all got educated as to the lengths that some Indiana Republicans are willing to go to punish and impede the work of educators in our public schools. That’s the lesson that needs to be remembered in 2016. ❖

Shaw Friedman is former legal counsel for the Indiana Democratic Party

Dave Bangert, Lafayette Journal & Courier: In a busy season of graduation stage platitudes, the single best commencement line didn't come from any high school or university dais. It came from the Onion. "College allowing students individual commencement speakers to make ceremony acceptable for all," was the headline in the satirical online site. The Onion's punch line, in a season of high-profile graduation speaker "disinvitations," was delivered by the made-up president of fictional Boswitch College: "We believe this arrangement will guarantee that none of our students will be forced to contend with disagreeable opinions while observing this momentous milestone." "One day, I'd like to meet those guys (at the Onion)," said Mitch Daniels, the actual president of the very real Purdue University. "That's great." The timing of the Onion's account was pretty ripe for Purdue, with its fresh Commitment to Freedom of Expression policy approved by university trustees on May 15, and for Daniels, who immediately afterward spent a Saturday and Sunday overseeing the parade of 2015 commencement ceremonies in West Lafayette. At Purdue, the former Indiana governor stepped onto a campus with a long tradition of generally skipping commencement speeches from the rich and famous in favor of ones from the university president. And the chances of a Purdue president – whether named Beering, Jischke, Cordova or, now, Daniels – getting disinvited for potentially being too provocative have been less than slim. So it went with spring commencement this year. As students, faculty and the rest of campus tried to figure out what the new free speech policy might really mean in practice in the coming semesters, Daniels devoted a big chunk of his commencement address to the topic. In particular, he spoke about the presumed right to be offended. "Were you issued your B.S. detector? That stands for 'bogus statistics,' by the way," Daniels said on graduation day. "I mean, did you learn to think critically, to know when you are being conned, or misled, or indoctrinated? ... "At a minimum, you should have learned that our freedom starts with free speech, and free speech means disagreement, and disagreement means that now and then you will be upset by things you hear and read. Or, as people like to say these days, 'offended.' "If you absorbed anything of our Constitution, you know that it contains no right not to be 'offended.' If anything, by protecting speech of all kinds, it guarantees that you will be. As they say, 'Deal with it.' And if you are disturbed enough, then answer it, with superior facts and arguments. Your diplomas say that Purdue has equipped you for this." ❖



William Kristol, Weekly Standard: None of the three most recent presidents had much to show for himself by way of accomplishments, personal or professional or political, when he ran for office. Each could in fact be said to have had more in the way of disqualifications than qualifications for office. Yet Bill Clinton, George W. Bush,

and Barack Obama all became president. Once is happenstance. Twice is a coincidence. Three times is a trend. Perhaps lack of accomplishment is a feature, not a bug, for baby boomer presidents. After all, in the world of the baby boomers, what is an accomplishment? Accomplishments are what their parents, conventionally patriotic and earnestly bourgeois, labored and strove for. Baby boomers, by contrast, aspire rather than labor, and seek rather than strive. Baby boomers aspire to the appropriate attitude and affect, and seek the suitable sense and sensibility. Accomplishments are old school. Truman, Ike, JFK, LBJ, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and George H.W. Bush—all had accomplished things, often difficult things, in their personal and public lives before they ran for president. We dare say all (even Carter) had done more than any of their boomer successors. That all served in the military is only a small part—though a telling part—of the story. The boomer presidents, of course, didn't serve, or barely served. As the late Dean Barnett wrote in these pages, "History called the baby boomers. They didn't answer the phone." The boomer presidents were indulged as young men. They then indulged themselves with the fancy that they should be president. The voters indulged them, too, passing over the question of their qualifications, and, indeed, excusing several manifest disqualifications. So Hillary Clinton would fit right in. ❖

Chelsea Schneider, Evansville Courier & Press: When Gov. Mike Pence announces his reelection bid next month, as of now, he's the lone GOP candidate running for the state's top executive spot. But over on the Democratic side, things are getting interesting. Former gubernatorial candidate John Gregg and State Sen. Karen Tallian, D-Ogden Dunes, have launched campaigns. Speculation is swirling state Democratic schools chief Glenda Ritz may enter as well, a decision that would serve as a game changer for the race. A contested Democratic primary would provide great political theater. But Democrats will likely hope for a tighter field heading into May and then the fall of 2016. Contested primaries are competitive and thus expensive. The party likely will want a candidate who can sail through May and still have the fiscal strength to mount a legitimate run against Pence, who is now sitting on \$3.5 million as of the last reporting period. Indiana Democratic Party Chairman John Zody said on Friday, "On the gubernatorial front, we believe Mike Pence is vulnerable. Certainly this legislative session made him more vulnerable," Zody said. Yet, Andy Downs, director of the Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics, said if Ritz chooses to get in the race, the decision would add another level of complexity within the primary. Downs said he anticipates the Democrats' best bet to grow their statewide offices is if Ritz remains a candidate for state superintendent of public instruction and someone else runs for governor. ❖

Pence, leaders revamp SBOE

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Mike Pence and legislative leaders revamped the State Board of Education, with board members Brad Oliver and Dan Elsener not reappointed. “Today marks a fresh start for the State Board of Education,” Gov. Mike Pence said. “Hoosiers can be assured that the individuals appointed today to the State Board of Education bring to the table a wealth of unique educational experiences and remain wholeheartedly committed to serving our kids, our families, our teachers and our schools.” The clashes at state board have become infamous, and lawmakers recently passed a law requiring a new board to be appointed by June 1 (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Legislators hope a new panel will ratchet down the discord. It will still have a majority of Republican members. Two of the board’s most vocal critics of Democrat Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz – Dan Elsener and David Oliver – were not reappointed. Others who won’t return to the board are Andrea Neal, Tony Walker and Troy Albert.

Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne, was the first to announce an appointment Wednesday with his pick of Yager. “Few public officials in Indiana have more direct impact on Hoosier students than the members of the State Board of Education, and I’m confident Dr. Yager will make a valuable contribution as the Board moves forward,” Long said. “He brings a proven record of accomplishment and leadership in our local schools, where he has earned widespread respect from students, parents, faculty and members of the surrounding community.” House Speaker Brian Bosma appointed Byron Ernest, head of Hoosier Academies, a public charter school authorized by Ball State University. Previously, he



was the principal at Emmerich Manual High School in Indianapolis, which was a school taken over by the state after failing for seven years in a row, often referred to as a Turnaround Academy. The governor reappointed Whicker, of Uniondale, to the board. She is a middle school teacher who has been on the board since May 2012 when she was appointed by former

Gov. Mitch Daniels. His other reappointments are Gordon Hendry, B.J. Watts, Sarah O’Brien and David Freitas. Pence’s new appointments are Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, a school administrator from Greenwood; Vince Bertram, a former superintendent from Zionsville and Eddie Melton, a utility employee from Merrillville.

Oliver comments, may seek GOP supt.

INDIANAPOLIS – Board member Brad Oliver issued a statement about his departure. “I leave my public service to the State Board with nothing but appreciation for the work of parents, teachers and school leaders across our state,” Oliver said in a statement. “Because of their efforts, the children of Indiana continue to grow academically and our state continues to prosper.” Republican sources tell Howey Politics Indiana Oliver may seek the Republican nomination for superintendent in 2016 (Howey Politics Indiana).

Fed inquiry called for Lake candidate

CROWN POINT – A Lake County government official has called for a federal inquiry into the winner of the May 5 primary for Gary’s 6th District City Council (NWI Times). “I’m a whistleblower, and I’m not ashamed of it,” Eugene Krasoczka, a former deputy director of the Lake County Economic Development Department, said Wednesday of a complaint he

recently filed with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel. He asked Erica Hamrick of the OSC to investigate whether LaVetta Sparks-Wade violated the Hatch Act, a federal law forbidding political campaigning by federal employees or local government employees whose salaries come entirely from federal grants. Sparks-Wade, who became deputy director of the Lake County Economic Development Department on March 6, declined to comment.

New toll road lease deal closed

CHICAGO – Australian investment consortium IFM Investors has closed on its \$5.72 billion purchase of the Indiana Toll Road lease and is promising to improve the 157-mile road (NWI Times). “We believe the Indiana Toll Road is a terrific and complementary addition to our existing portfolio of toll road and other infrastructure investments,” said Julio Garcia, the company’s head of North American infrastructure, in a prepared statement. Notice that the purchase had closed was filed with the federal bankruptcy court in Chicago on Wednesday. On Sept. 21, Toll Road operator ITR Concession declared bankruptcy on more than \$6 billion in debt, as years of traffic shortfalls and bad bets on interest rate swaps caught up with it. Almost all the \$5.72 billion paid will be used to pay off bondholders who owned the bonds backing up the \$6 billion in debt ITR Concession had run up.

Helton stepping down at Vincennes

VINCENNES – Vincennes University President Richard Helton, who arrived at VU in August 2004, is ending his 11 years of service to Vincennes to serve his family, effective July 31. His daughter, Lori, is facing “major health challenges,” he said (Evansville Courier & Press).