

## Horse Race: Gauging mayoral races

Political minority mayors, big city incumbents appear to be in good shape

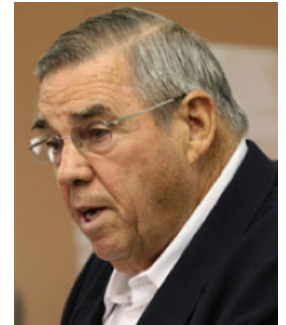
By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – In surveying the mayoral general elections less than two months away, the political minority mayors in big cities appear to be a good shape



for reelection. And a throw-the-bums-out trend doesn't seem to be taking shape.

By "minority party mayor" we mean Fort Wayne Democratic incumbent Tom Henry who presides in a city that is 57% Republican, or Republican Evansville incumbent Lloyd Winnecke where the city council is controlled 8 to 1 by Democrats, or Republican Kevin Smith in traditionally Democratic Anderson.



Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry (left) appears to have an advantage, while Elkhart Mayor Dick Moore is in trouble.

At this point in the campaign they all seem to be good bets for reelection. And

there's Republican Terre Haute incumbent Duke Bennett who is a nominal favorite for reelection.

On the upset watch list are Democratic Elkhart Mayor Dick Moore, who is facing an intense challenge from former state representative Tim Neese; Republican Portage

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## An international twist

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – For a generation, Indiana gave the United States and the world a legion of "internationalists": Sens. Dick Lugar and Dan Coats, Gov. Robert Orr, Lt. Gov. John Mutz, and U.S. Reps. Lee Hamilton, Tim Roemer and Frank McCloskey.



They forged historic non-proliferation efforts like the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program. They chaired congressional foreign policy committees (Lugar and Hamilton). They became ambassadors to India (Roemer), Germany (Coats) and Singapore (Orr). They opened Hoosier trade to the Pacific Rim (Orr, Mutz and Lugar followed by Govs. Mitch Daniels



**“We are falling behind here. We are struggling. It’s terrible. We need to keep that Major Moves money in there as a reserve until we are ready to go on this whole deal.”**

*- State Sen. Luke Kenley  
on the state’s roads*



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and Mike Pence). They assessed the security of the nation, as Hamilton and Roemer did on the 911 Commission, and Hamilton did with the Iraq Study Group. They forged new borders in war-torn places like Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo (McCloskey) that influenced historic pacts like the Dayton Accords. They monitored foreign elections in the Philippines that led to the ouster of President Marcos and convinced President Reagan to change his stance on South Africa (Lugar). They worked on worldwide hunger (Lugar).

And these Hoosier public servants followed a long line of internationalists, ranging from Sen. Albert Beveridge (a progressive ally of President Theodore Roosevelt who traveled extensively in pre-revolutionary Russia) to Sen. John Worth Kern (a key Senate ally to President Wilson), to Wendell Willkie, who lost the 1940 race to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, then traveled the world on his behalf. At key points in history, Hoosier politicians did not play roles in the defeat of President Wilson's advocacy of the League of Nations, or the ramp up to World War II.

**Indiana also has** history of isolationism, from Sen. Frederick Van Nuys, though he voted for FDR's Lend-Lease Act prior to World War II, to Sen. William Jenner, a fierce opponent of Gen. George Marshall (and, subsequently President Eisenhower). Throughout the 1950s, Jenner was allied with U.S. Sen. Joseph McCarthy and was at odds with his Republican Senate colleague Homer Capehart, who joined the upper chamber as an isolationist, but evolved more into the Eisenhower realm. Capehart opposed President Kennedy's Peace Corps but favored a crackdown on the Communist Cuban regime of Fidel Castro in 1962, the same year he would lose to Democrat Birch Bayh.

Today, we find the entire Indiana Republican congressional delegation lining up against President Obama's Iran nuclear deal. With Lugar, Hamilton and Roemer support-

ing the deal, the perception might be that the older internationalist order is evolving into something else. Isolationism would be too harsh a term. Some cite a profound political opposition to anything that President Obama touches.

"Partisanship is clearly a factor," Lugar told CNHI's Maureen Hayden. "From the beginning, when President Obama first took office, there was a desire on the part of some Republicans to stop him from accomplishing anything." Lugar would describe an emerging "hyper-partisanship" in Washington which he described as extreme and dangerous.



U.S. Sens. William Jenner of Indiana (left) and Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

In an op-ed article he wrote with former Sen. Bennett Johnston, Lugar wrote, "The scuttling of the agreement could also put the United States on a path to another war in the Middle East. The uncertainty about the restored, unrestrained Iranian nuclear program would rapidly become an unacceptable mystery. International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors would find the unprecedented inspections program of the Iran nuclear agreement foregone, probably forever."

**Hamilton explained**, "Those who criticize the deal's specifics have focused their attention on what they perceive to be an inadequate 10-year time frame and whether Iran will be in a strong position to restart its nuclear program once the deal expires. This is far from a perfect agreement, but it is a worthy agreement that represents the best way to prevent Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon, and

we would be wise not to walk away from it, especially since there is simply no better alternative arrangement out there."

**Hamilton added,** "To be clear, we're talking about a limited accord, one aimed squarely on preventing Iran from building an atomic bomb. It doesn't attempt to resolve our nation's long list of grievances with Tehran, which includes its support of terrorism, repeated human rights violations and continued antagonism of our Israeli allies."

U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly, who announced his support for the deal in August, observed, "If ... I am faced with a vote to authorize military force against Iran, I owe it to the men and women of our armed forces ... to have exhausted every other option to stop Iran."

But the current Republican Indiana delegation begs to differ citing broader concerns. U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita told CBS4 this week, "The choice for this is not this deal or war. This deal will bring war."

U.S. Rep. Todd Young, who is running for the U.S. Senate, said in an op-ed article today, "From my service in the Marine Corps, I know how difficult it is to uncover covert activity. Given Tehran's refusal to fully account for its illicit nuclear program, I expect the Iranian regime will be capable of exploiting weaknesses within the final deal to continue advancing toward a nuclear weapon at clandestine locations. Even if they don't cheat, under the agreement Iran maintains a legal path to a nuclear weapon and regains long-denied access to missiles capable of carrying a nuclear payload." Young added, "Our nation suffers from a deficit of leaders who can form strong coalitions, build consensus, and gain trust from the American people."

U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon said, "This deal threatens the security of Americans at home, our allies around the world, and the sovereignty of states, like Indiana, that have put in place sanctions against Iran."

U.S. Rep. Luke Messer added, "Under this secret agreement, neither which Congress nor the American people have seen, Iran will be allowed to use its own experts to inspect its own nuclear sites. This means that Iran, which has claimed repeatedly that it has no nuclear weapons ambition despite growing evidence to the contrary, will be able to deploy its own hand-selected team to search for evidence of nuclear weapons development and then report its findings to the IAEA. Then what? We just trust that the Iranian inspectors are telling the truth? It was President Ronald Reagan who said, "trust but verify" during arms control negotiations with Communist Russia. But, it seems the Obama Administration is asking us to trust and then trust some more."

**Gov. Mike Pence,** in a letter to President Obama and the Indiana delegation, said, "I am opposed to this agreement because it will not make the United States or our most cherished ally, Israel, safer. Instead, it promises Iran a lifting of United States nuclear-related sanctions for an agreement on Iran's nuclear weapons program that

will only halt its ambitions temporarily, rather than permanently dismantle its nuclear desires. These are not the kind of concessions that should be made to a country that supports terrorism and has funded and supported groups and attacks that have taken Hoosier and American lives."

**Coats is the bridge** between the old internationalist order, and the newer delegation.

The senior senator took time to study the deal, and explained this week, "In recent days, several respected political figures have announced their support of the Iran deal, including some from Indiana. I respect the deliberate approach taken by many who are supporting the Iran deal. At the same time, the importance of this public debate requires that I point out where their analysis may



Former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton and former Sen. Dick Lugar. (WFYI Photo)

be faulty. There are two main arguments used by these supporters of the agreement that deserve scrutiny and rebuttal. The first is that the deal blocks Iran's path to a bomb. Some claim that it does so permanently. This is not the case. Even if Iran follows all the requirements of the deal, nearly all constraints placed on Iran will disappear in 15 years, with many ending sooner. In 15 years, Iran will have the technology, wealth, nuclear infrastructure and clear international permission to pursue uranium enrichment at any level it chooses. There will be no obstacles in its path to the bomb other than an unenforceable promise that it would not do so because of the Nonproliferation Treaty."

**Coats said in response** to Gov. Pence's letter to the delegation, "Disapproval of the president's deal is bipartisan and growing. While the administration continues its campaign for public support, Congress can and should reject this deal. President Obama's deal with Iran is an agreement with benefits too small, a duration too short and a cost too high. No deal truly is better than this bad deal."

There are other key elements that suggest that the Iran deal rejection by Republicans will not usher in a period of isolationism. Indiana is firmly woven into the global economy. Indiana's foreign direct market exports rank 12th in the nation. Its exports of gross domestic state product are ninth in the U.S., and 11th in per-capita exports. "The economic bonds internationally are too strong to allow for isolationism," explained Indiana Chamber of Commerce Vice President Cam Carter. ❖



## Mayors, from page 1

Mayor Jim Snyder, who is facing an FBI probe as well as a challenge from Democrat Brendan Clancy; Jasper Mayor Terry Seitz, who survived a razor-thin primary victory; and first-term Logansport Republican Mayor Ted Franklin, who is trying to fend off a challenge from Democrat Dave Kitchell.

Howey Politics Indiana is also forecasting that Democrats will pick up the biggest cherry of the bunch as Joe Hogsett is in excellent position to win in Indianapolis, which could provide the party with a new cornerstone. Democrats are in good shape to pick up Elwood and Alexandria, while Republicans are in position to win with Kyle Ingram in Richmond and John Lawson in Marion.

Incumbent Democrats Tom McDermott Jr., in Hammond, Karen Freeman-Wilson in Gary, Anthony Copeland in East Chicago, Ron Meer in Michigan City, Greg Goodnight in Kokomo, and Peter Buttigieg in South Bend are all likely to return. Democratic incumbents Tony Roswarski in Lafayette, Tom DeBaum in Shelbyville, Joe Stahura in Whiting, Joe Yochum in Vincennes, Dick Hickman in Angola, and Dennis Tyler in Muncie are unopposed.

Unopposed Republican incumbents include Norman Yoder in Auburn, Donnie Hastings Jr. in Aurora, rising star Blair Milo in LaPorte, Jim Brainard in Carmel, David Uran in Crown Point, Scott Fadness in Fishers, Susan Handshoe in Kendallville, Chris McBarnes in Frankfort, Joe McGuinness in Franklin, Gary Herbert in Greensburg, Mark Myers in Greenwood, David Wood in Mishawaka, John Ditslear in Noblesville, Mike Pavey in Rushville, Craig Luedeman in Seymour, Jon Costas in Valparaiso, Joe Thallemer in Warsaw and John Dennis in West Lafayette.

Primary upset victors include Columbus Council President Jim Lienhoop, who defeated Mayor Kristen Brown in the GOP primary and is running unopposed, as is Matt Gentry in Lebanon after upsetting Mayor Huck Lewis.

Here is our first fall mayoral forecast of major races:

**Anderson:** Republican Mayor Kevin Smith is seeking a third term, and a second consecutive one in his race against Democrat Thomas Broderick Jr. Smith recently announced 400 new jobs coming with NTN, and local observers tell HPI that this is the incumbent's race to lose. A sidebar is the GOP's efforts to remove the Libertarian candidate from the ballot, which was approved by the Madison County Election Board earlier this month. Past Libertarian candidates carried only about 3% of the vote in the 2011 election. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Smith.

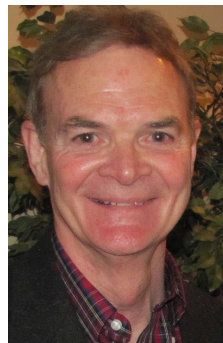
**Alexandria:** Republican Mayor Jack Woods is facing a tough challenge from former Madison County Democratic Sheriff Ron Richardson, whose biggest liability may be that he moved into the city just prior to announcing his candidacy. But a former sheriff means he has an extensive political operation, and this may yield an upset.

**Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

**Bloomington:** Democrat John Hamilton is facing Republican John Trumbull in this Democratic university city. "I'm an intentional thief of good ideas from any place we can get them," Hamilton told the Bloomington Herald-Times. "And there are lots of people with good ideas. There are council members; there are boards and commissions; there are people in our community; there are other mayors in Indiana and around the country." As mayor, Hamilton would want to gather those ideas, because "no one of us has the picture of where Bloomington should go." Trumbull has been critical of the out-going administration of retiring Mayor Mark Kruzan. He cites bird droppings downtown as what he told the Herald-Times is a "lack of focus." **Horse Race Status:** Safe Hamilton.

**Delphi:** Incumbent Democratic Mayor Randy Strasser was upset by Jack Wilson in the primary. Wilson will face Republican Louis Hayden. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

**Elkhart:** Eighty-year-old Democrat Mayor Dick Moore is facing an intense challenge from former state representative Tim Neese (pictured left). Moore unsuccessfully attempted to get an LGBT civil rights expansion ordinance passed, but was opposed by the various family organizations, including Advance America's Eric Miller. Neese is working hard behind the scenes, and recently announced endorsements from U.S. Sen. Dan Coats and U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita. Neese attacked Moore over the condition of the downtown river walk. Neese's extensive groundwork, in tandem with Moore's age and a measure of discontent local observers describe to HPI prompts us to put this race on our upset list. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Neese.



**Elwood:** Mayor Don Tucker is filling out the term of Republican Ron Arnold, who resigned following an Indiana State Police investigation. Local observers describe Tucker's brief tenure in office as a "disaster" and he is facing a strong challenge from Democratic Councilman Todd Jones. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Jones.

**Goshen:** Democrat Councilman Jeremy Stutsman, who has been endorsed by out-going Mayor Allen Kauffman, appears to have an edge over Republican Mary Cripe. Stutsman has been politically involved for a long time, and is described as a "behind-the-scenes guy" by local observers. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Stutsman.

**Fort Wayne:** This could be a prime pick-up opportunity for Republican Council President Mitch Harper, who is challenging two-term incumbent Democrat Mayor Tom Henry in a city that is 57% Republican. But many and persistent reports paint this picture: Harper likes to talk,

but he doesn't listen. He's not raising much money, though credible sources tell HPI that Bruce Dye donated \$100,000 and Bill Bean put in \$50,000, on top of the meager \$31,000 Harper reported on his April finance filing. The big Bean and Dye contributions may be more about saving the Republican majority on the city council than saving Harper. There is concern that if Henry polls in the 55 to 60% range, Councilman Russ Jehl could be in trouble. The \$150,000 Harper gained still pales to the \$722,000 Henry reported in April, with \$661,000 cash on hand. Harper ran about a week's worth of TV in August, while Henry started this week. Henry, however, is using his mayoral bully pulpit for a consistent level of earned media, something Harper hasn't been doing. Andy Downs of the Mike Downs Center tells HPI that while Henry's approval and job performance numbers are strong, this is a strong Republican city and Harper hasn't given voters a reason to make the change. Two things could boost Harper, one of which is the toxic national environment and angry Republican voters who are venting in the presidential race. Another is a recent spate of murders, including a recent Sunday that included two fatal shootouts and a fatal stabbing. Bottom line, Henry seems to be way ahead in money, trusted by most voters, but it is a volatile year and some issues could suddenly explode. It is not over, but Harper is in significant trouble. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Henry.

**Hammond:** Three-term Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., is expected to easily defeat Republican Humberto Prado. McDermott defeated Councilman Chico Hinojosa Jr. in the Democratic primary last May by a landslide. McDermott has had a busy third term, creating an extensive trail system and remaking Wolf Lake Park, and has been a tough negotiator on the coming South Shore Line extension, which could yield new development in the city's core. If McDermott prevails in November as expected, he will consider the next step in his career, which could include a U.S. Senate bid in 2016. **Horse Race Status:** Safe McDermott.

**Indianapolis:** This should be a major mayoral pickup for Indiana Democrats as Joe Hogsett is a strong favorite to defeat Republican businessman Chuck Brewer. While Marion County Republican Chairman Kyle Walker points to Greg Ballard's stunning upset win in 2007, that was fueled by a bonafide tax revolt. There is no similar dynamic in place this time, Hogsett (pictured right) has a huge money advantage, and has dominated the airwaves. A Hogsett victory gives Indiana Democrats a new station to breed the next generation of policy people that could end up in future gubernatorial administrations. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Hogsett.



**Jeffersonville:** Republican Jeffersonville Mayor Mike Moore is facing a tough chal-

lenge from Councilman Dennis Julius, though he announced a \$35 million development project for the city's Veteran's Parkway area a week ago. In August, Moore vetoed the use of \$1 million for completion of the Woehle Athletic Complex because he said the city needs all the money it can get to fund a proposed seven additional police officers and three more firefighters (News & Tribune). "I think we've got to put our needs in front of our wants," Moore said. The mayor said he will ask for the 10 new public safety positions. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Moore.

**Kokomo:** Two-term Mayor Greg Goodnight should easily cruise to another term over Republican Howard County Auditor Martha Lake. **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, who told HPI last month that his campaign is well positioned for November. Franklin's administration got off to a controversial start after the 2011 election, and it doesn't appear he has recovered, as evidenced by his primary win. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Kitchell.

**Jasper:** First-term Republican Terry Seitz survived a GOP primary challenge by just 44 votes and faces Democrat Wayne Schuetter in what could be a tight race this fall. The key for Seitz will be to bring back into his fold supporters of primary opponent Steven Messer. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

**Madison:** First-term Republican Mayor Damon Welch is facing a challenge from Democrat Jan Vetrhus, a former Cummins Engine executive. Vetrhus told the Madison Courier that jobs will be the top priority, saying the city is "treading water." She explained, "As mayor, I will work with our schools and employers, our entrepreneurs and investors so people want to live and work here." Welch's priority is public safety and further developing the city's "Envision Plan." **Horse Race Status:** Leans Welch.

**Marion:** Former Grant County Republican Sheriff John Lawson is facing Democrat Jess Alumbaugh in a race to succeed out-going three-term Mayor Wayne Seybold, who decided not to run again. Lawson is the city's transportation director and a current Grant County commissioner. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Lawson.

**New Albany:** Democratic Mayor Jeff Gahan defeated challenger David White with 60% and faces Republican Kevin Zurschmiede. 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. Snyder has been the subject of an FBI probe. This is poised for a Democratic pickup. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Clancy.

**Richmond:** Republican Kyle Ingram's polling shows him leading Democrat Dave Snow. Ingram has high favorables and is about to kick off his TV ad campaign as well as announce endorsements. Democratic Mayor Sally Hutton, who announced she is battling cancer, declined to seek a fourth term. **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 hard-hit by the property tax caps, and with the current cash flow issues, Democrat Mark Bird could make this interesting. The Terre Haute Tribune-Star's Sue Loughlin did an extensive expose on the city's troubled finances titled, "City on the brink: Despite warning signs, city descends into pool of red ink." The three-month Tribune-Star investigation found that while property tax revenues have declined and this year represent a \$10 million loss in the general fund alone, spending remained the same or increased slightly as years went by. According to official figures posted by the state, the city has spent on average more than \$2.34 million more each year over the past seven years in the general fund than it has received in recurring revenues. Bennett told the Tribune-Star he acknowledges the financial strains, but insists the city has made many cutbacks since he took office and has continually looked for new sources of revenue. If it had not, he said, the deficit would be much greater. The city has fewer positions than when he first took office, about 535 full-time employees recently, compared to 615 in 2008 (that includes both general fund and non-general fund). "We've had an unofficial hiring freeze for multiple years now," except for key positions, the mayor said. "We've asked our employees to take on a bigger burden of the activity."

Bird told HPI in French Lick last month that former Vigo County Councilman Bob Hellman warned the county of the coming tax cap problems years ago, and that allowed the county to make the proper adjustments. "The city didn't do that," Bird said. "They just kept spending." Bird acknowledged recent polling that shows the race winnable, but it "wasn't quite where we want it to be."

While Bennett may seem vulnerable, he has several things going in his favor. One, the police and fire departments which have fueled past mayoral defeats, are squarely in Bennett's corner. The Democratic Party doesn't appear to be motivated, local observers tell HPI. Bird was a late entry into the race, unable to seek another term on the council because he is a county employee. And local observers would be surprised to see Indiana Pacers President Larry Bird come back to campaign for his brother. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Bennett. ❖

## GOP prospects in Region are sparse

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – The passing of Labor Day marks the start of the fall political season leading up to the Nov. 3 general election. In this, an odd-numbered year, voters will be electing town and city officials only. Those living in unincorporated areas won't vote.

Although most of the games in heavily Democratic Lake County take place prior to the primary election, there have been a number of fall contests, particularly some mayoral races. But, not this year. In fact, there won't be a mayoral contest in Lake County worth the time of day. And in Porter County, it's a split decision.



Republicans never have mounted a mayoral challenge in Gary or East Chicago. And this year is no different. In Gary, Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson is

expected to win even more easily in November than she did in defeating a weak primary field. The mayor is facing one Republican, one Independent and one Unicrat this fall. None of the challengers has a political background.

And in East Chicago, Mayor Anthony Copeland is expected to cruise to reelection just as former Mayor Robert A. Pastrick did for more than three decades. Copeland faces Republican Arthur Santos.

What's really confusing is the county's five other cities where Republicans sometimes won mayoral races, or at least offered strong challenges. But, in Whiting, Mayor Joseph Stahura, who has won awards for his development of the city's Lake Michigan shoreline, doesn't have a challenger. The same holds true in Crown Point where Republicans won every mayoral election in history until the early 1990s. In fact, Crown Point during that period was one of the most Republican cities in the state. But, Democratic Crown Point Mayor David Uran doesn't have an opponent this year.

**In Hammond, Republicans** in recent years sometimes won the mayor's seat, but not lately. Democratic Mayor Thomas McDermott, who would like to be something other than mayor, doesn't have much of a challenge as he faces politically unknown Humberto Prado. Republicans have fallen on such tough times in Hammond that they have just one city council candidate.

Hobart, too, used to be a solid Republican city when it came to the council and the mayor's office. Not today. Democratic Mayor Brian Snedecor has a token challenge from Republican Larry Brown.

And in Lake Station, Democratic Mayor Keith



Soderquist lost the primary election and is on trial on fraud charges this week in federal court. Former Democratic Lake Station city judge Christopher Anderson is a heavy favorite to win the mayoral election over Republican Ed Peralta, who has tried and failed before.

**In Porter County,** Valparaiso Democrat David Butterfield held the mayor's office for several terms. But it is all Republican now as Mayor Jon Costas is unopposed. Portage is another story. While the mayors are

traditionally Democratic, Republican Jim Snyder won four years ago but has a stiff challenge from Brendan Clancy, who is serving his second term as Portage Township trustee. ❖

**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.**

## Winnecke running strong in Evansville

By **MATTHEW BUTLER**

INDIANAPOLIS – This November a Republican incumbent mayor will ask voters for a second term in a city dominated by Democrats. Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke is embracing and touting his record, praising the position his Democratic predecessor put him in, and stressing the bipartisan support he has received along the way. He faces



State Rep. Gail Riecken, who says his top projects have been mishandled and oversold while basic city services have suffered from neglect.

"I think we've done a very good job of taking the City of Evansville to a new level," Winnecke told HPI on Tuesday. "There is a great vibe in our city." The Republican mayor says his Democratic predecessor, Jonathon Weinzapfel, "did a very, very good job" in getting transformational projects started. Now, nearly four years on, Winnecke characterizes his tenure as a continuation of that legacy in seeing many of those efforts to completion. "I think I've taken the momentum that Mayor Weinzapfel started and continued to build upon it," Winnecke said.

Evansville's downtown is the epicenter of Winnecke's efforts, a game plan that is congruent with his colleagues across the state regardless of party. Mayors of Indianapolis, Carmel, Kokomo, and Fort Wayne, among other Hoosier cities and towns, have made downtown development and revitalization a top priority. The tenets of urban critic and planner Jane Jacobs are now the vogue: Walkability, new mixed-

use development, and repurposing historical structures and thoroughfares. Achieving a higher "quality of place" is the objective, the hope being that more businesses and residents will relocate to the urban core, thus creating a burgeoning tax base as well as a dynamism that keeps attracting (and retaining) capital, talent, and cultural activity. Toward this end, Winnecke told HPI that tackling litter was a top priority his first day in office, after hearing from a business site selector how off-putting the trash-strewn streets were to visitors.

Efforts like those are both Winnecke's record and his sales pitch to voters for a second term. The Ford Center, which basically began life with his administration, is hosting more large events throughout the year, such as the University of Evansville basketball teams, the city's minor league hockey team, and marquee concerts. Earlier this month the city concluded a frustrating multiyear effort to secure funding and a vendor for a downtown convention hotel. This October the city will break ground on a large facility for the IU School of Medicine. "It will totally change the look and the vibe of our downtown area," Winnecke said. This week he and INDOT officials will open a new interchange between U.S. 41 and the city-bisecting Lloyd Expressway. On the near horizon, Winnecke says there is the strong possibility that due to recent gaming reforms, their riverboat casino Tropicana will move onto shore and expand. "We expect they'll make a multimillion-dollar investment in our town too," he told HPI. "We have every indication and belief that it will be approved (by their corporate board)."

"Theoretically, you would have under construction at one time a convention hotel, a medical school, and a land-based casino. We think it's a phenomenal opportunity for the city," Winnecke said.

Riecken, on the contrary, says the Winnecke administration has let basic city services deteriorate, like repaving roads, and has mishandled many of the major projects it touts as accomplishments, particularly the IU Medical School and



Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke appears to be in the driver's seat for his reelection. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

convention hotel. The former was a missed opportunity by the mayor and should have been both larger and included Ivy Tech, argues Riecken. "It's a failure on the part of the mayor," Riecken told HPI. "He's Republican. The House is Republican. The Senate is Republican. The governor is Republican. And, he could not get Ivy Tech here."

As for the convention hotel, "It's an example of another bad deal. It's not doing right by our taxpayers." Riecken made headlines late last week characterizing the finalized plans as "a low-quality motel" that will be a "blight" on the downtown. Democratic Council President Dan Adams told the Evansville Courier & Press, "I don't think I would call it blight. I think that's political hyperbole. I think her point was that it's not the same hotel we approved initially." Another Democratic colleague on the council, Connie Robinson, said the blight comments were a "bad choice of words."

Speaking with HPI on Tuesday, Riecken said the hotel agreement has been a letdown and oversold. "You can't run a city without looking at the details and I think that's why we have to have a change," she added. The originally approved hotel was supposed to be a glass-clad, 10-story building with luxury amenities. Financing fell through in late 2014 and the city had to start over. The new agreement calls for a \$48-million, 240-room Hilton DoubleTree with a brick facade but no indoor pool or rooftop restaurant as initially hoped.

Late last week Winnecke told Evansville media that Riecken's disparaging comments on the hotel were "insulting." He says Riecken discounts how difficult it is to secure the funding and negotiate the contract for a convention hotel. This week Winnecke told HPI, "This is not a blighted property by any stretch of the imagination. This is coming from an opponent that has no traction and who has zero vision for the city. She has been highly critical, which I guess is to be somewhat expected. Given the fact that she is a state representative and wants to lead the city, I think it's disappointing."

Riecken counters that her vision includes a return to better managing core city responsibilities, such as budgeting. "The very basic, the non-ribbon-cutting issues haven't been attended to. The very basics which only city government can take care of have been left aside," she told HPI. The mayor's recently proposed 2016 budget has been excoriated by his challenger. "The problem with the Winnecke administration is that they're in denial, first off," Riecken said. "They don't recognize, maybe don't understand, there is a real prob-

lem with the budget. He has over-exceeded income with expenditures at least the last two years."

HPI asked the mayoral challenger about her policy proposals for the city. Riecken stressed training and higher education for Evansville area students. One of her first goals would be to bring Ivy Tech on board with the IU Medical School or somewhere else downtown. She attributes that failure to Winnecke being unable to influence policy and purse strings in Indianapolis. As mayor, the state representative says she would work with area chambers of commerce to build a southern Indiana caucus within the state legislature. "I will be working on that as mayor so that we definitely have the clout for the kinds of infrastructure and improvements we need," she told HPI. Riecken also argues that Evansville's geographic location is not being fully exploited. "We're right here on the river and there are opportunities galore with the Panama Canal opening up (widening). We're going to see increased barge traffic on the Ohio River with container barges and we need to take note of that," she said.

### Bipartisanship and intra-party squabbles

Given Evansville's overwhelming history of Democrat controlled politics, Winnecke has courted and collaborated with those from across the aisle. It's been absolutely necessary, since the Evansville City Council is controlled by Democrats 8-1. Asked how things get done, Winnecke told HPI, "They've gotten done because we've rolled up our sleeves and built really good partnerships with people all over the city, with the business community, with the labor community, with Democrats and Independents."

Concerning Winnecke being proud of his bipartisan record, Riecken told HPI, "I don't know where he gets that." Nonetheless, Winnecke has lined up at least some high-profile Democratic support. A recent Democratic Party chairman (2012-13), Jack McNeely, and several former elected Democrats organized and attended fundraisers for Winnecke this summer. Several trade union leaders, like McNeely, have also voiced support for the mayor. Riecken has dismissed some of these individuals as having interests in Winnecke projects.

Meanwhile, recent Evansville media reports give the impression Riecken has butted heads with some of her fellow Democrats. Earlier this week WFIE-TV released details of a recent email exchange between Riecken and two Democratic City Council

members, Missy Mosby and Jonathan Weaver, who have supported and voted for Winnecke initiatives. Riecken wrote, "Polling is in from one of the most reputable firms



State Rep. Gail Riecken is facing criticism over her downtown "motel" remark.



and you both had better get on board with me and other Democrats...I expect you to endorse me within the next week." The Riecken campaign confirmed the email was genuine. Asked if she had lined up the support of all eight city council Democrats, Riecken told HPI, "I have all the support of Democrats on city council." As for an endorsement from the last Democratic mayor, Weinzapfel, Riecken said it would be inappropriate to ask him since he currently sits as the chancellor for Ivy Tech Southwest.

### The final stretch

With the first week of November little over 50 days away, the Winnecke campaign says it has knocked on thousands of doors since January, its phone bank is up and running, yard signs will be coming, and an absentee ballot drive is set. Neither campaign has taken to television yet. The Riecken campaign has shot an ad and plans to air it in the coming days. With a fundraising advantage, it would not be surprising to have the Winnecke campaign follow suit. Riecken gave the indication to HPI that her TV spots would be on the attack. "They are hard-hitting to the facts and hard-hitting to the truth. This mayor is not transparent. I don't think this mayor has been truthful to the city council and I'm going to be talking about the financial risk and irresponsibility that he does present," she told HPI.

The candidates have scheduled three debates. The first will be held by the Southwest Indiana Chamber in a breakfast format to be later televised on Sept. 10. The second will be a forum by the League of Women Voters on Oct. 6 and the final event will be a conventional live television debate on the evening of Oct. 22.

Riecken says her campaign is leaning on social media to reach voters considering what she feels is slanted local press coverage. "The media here has not been real favorable in terms of covering things we have going on or spinning them in ways that I wish I knew before they go out. But that's just part of it," she told HPI.

"You have anxiety like any other candidate that's running for office or for reelection," Winnecke said of the final stretch. "I got some really good advice from someone that I respect deeply when this campaign started. They said the best thing I can do as a candidate for reelection is come to work every day to be the best mayor I can be. And, that's what we're trying to do. We come to work every day trying to create the best environment for investment in our city. We come to work every day to try to make our community safe. And, we come to work every day to make Evansville a great place to live and work. We think we're checking all those boxes."

Riecken stressed that Evansville's working families have been slighted these past four years. "They have been forgotten," she told HPI. "They're the backbone of this community." She claims to be their champion and hopes after a four-year period that a traditionally Democratic city will return to form.

**Horse Race Status:** Likely Winnecke. ❖

## Awaiting decisions on INGov, INSen races

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – While the Indiana gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races have established general contours as the end of the third quarter comes up on the horizon, the decisions of five men – U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman, State Sen. Mike Delph, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard and Tom Sugar – stand to add final field definition that could provide

additional fireworks for what will almost certainly be a sensational 2016 cycle.



The persistent rumor regarding Stutzman, and amplified in today's Mark Souder column (see Page 13), is that he could resign his House seat so that he can fully

compete for the U.S. Senate nomination on the home front. Stutzman campaign manager Brendon DelToro told HPI in an email "There is no truth to the rumor."

The scenario now is that Delph and Eric Holcomb would have free rein on the ground, while Reps. Stutzman and Todd Young are tethered to Washington for congressional votes, risking criticism if they miss roll calls and committee meetings.

Delph told HPI on Wednesday that he still hasn't made a decision and is sticking to his original timeline, which would be by the end of the month.

In the gubernatorial race, Sugar has pondered a Democratic challenge to John Gregg for the nomination and has earned decent media coverage for his "Lead or Leave" redistricting commission issue. Sugar told HPI this morning from Houston, "I had previously said I would make a decision on the governor's race over Labor Day weekend and I did. I'll make an announcement of that decision as soon as I fulfill my previous obligations."

Sugar tweeted last night that he had made the decision and added, "Stay tuned." That sounds like he is preparing to enter the race.

**And as Howey Politics** reported on Tuesday, proponents of a statewide civil rights extension is prompting Mayor Ballard to consider a primary challenge to Gov. Mike Pence, several political allies of the mayor have told HPI. This may be nothing more than a conspicuous pressure point to prod the governor to move toward the expansion that would extend to sexual orientation.

It is that civil rights expansion issue that could redefine the entire political landscape during the first half of 2016. The issue could draw Delph and Ballard into the two races. It places pressure on Gov. Pence. A rejection of the expansion or a timid step attempting to appease both wings of the party could provoke the Daniels wing of the GOP into full revolt, with Bill Oesterle pushing a Ballard

challenge. An overt push for the expansion would enrage the governor's Christian conservative base, though it would make him more palatable to female and independent voters, both of which he needs to win a second term in a general election.

Sources close to Ballard tell HPI that he is currently in Europe, and has not attended any meetings regarding a political candidacy. He has no plans in place after he leaves office in January. Ballard also introduced Pence when the governor kicked off his campaign at the state GOP's spring dinner in June.

In modern gubernatorial politics, a sitting governor hasn't faced this type of wedge issue heading into a reelection campaign. The irony is that during the 2012 campaign, Pence in disciplined fashion sought to avoid the social wedge issues he championed on Capitol Hill as a congressman. Now he finds himself waist deep in them, with his footing on a muddy bottom.

Multiple informed and reliable sources had been telling Howey Politics Indiana about the push for a Ballard candidacy. When we finally caught up with long-term Ballard political strategist Jennifer Hallowell on Wednesday, she did little to douse the notion. "There's always a possibility," said Hallowell, who went on to characterize the talk as "cocktail chatter."

"This is not occupying his mind or time right now," Hallowell said of Ballard. "A lot of people would like to see what happens over the next few months and see how the Statehouse reacts."

But an indicator occurred later Wednesday when Freedom Indiana announced a campaign to push the extension. The campaign will be managed by Chris Paulsen, a veteran grassroots advocate who formerly served as president of Indiana Equality Action. "The fallout from RFRA harmed our state's reputation, but it also drew attention to the fact that you can be fired, denied housing or declined service in most places in Indiana if you are gay or transgender," Paulsen said. "A lot of people didn't realize that before RFRA, and we know now that a majority of Hoosiers want to see our laws updated to protect gay and transgender people," she said.

"It's an easy solution: Four words and a comma," she added, referring to the addition of "sexual orientation, gender identity" to the section of state code that already contains protections based on race, gender, veteran status and religion. This campaign comes after a leaked IndyStar memo revealed the newspaper was planning to use its editorial thrust to hold Pence and legislative leaders "accountable" and expand the code.



**Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard hasn't ruled out a primary challenge to Gov. Mike Pence. (HPI Photo by Brian A.**

Ballard was openly critical of the RFRA bill, coming just as the national media descended on Indianapolis for the 2015 NCAA Men's Final Four. "I had hoped the Statehouse wouldn't move in this direction on RFRA, but it seems as if the bill was a fait accompli from the beginning," Ballard said. "I don't believe this legislation truly represents our state or our capital city." And Ballard is a giant killer, upsetting Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson in 2007.

Asked if Ballard would be likely to issue a Gen. Sherman-style statement that would preclude a primary challenge to Pence, Hallowell said, "No, I wouldn't say that. There's always a possibility." But she described a likely Ballard candidacy an "over-statement."

In an April Howey Politics Indiana Poll conducted by Republican pollster Christine Matthews, Pence's favorable/unfavorables sagged to 35/38%, polled well below 50% in a head-to-head matchup with probable Democratic nominee John Gregg, and found support for a civil rights extension at 54-34%.

A second Bellwether Research Poll by Matthews conducted on behalf of Oesterle in mid-June showed Pence in a dead heat with Gregg, trailing 41-40% and his favorable/unfavorables stood at 34/43%.

Sources tell HPI that Oesterle and others have been shopping around numbers, including unpublished Ballard favorables,

The April HPI Poll showed that Pence's support among Republicans stood at 74%, making a primary challenge a significant if not unattainable hurdle. Normally a sitting Republican governor would see Republican support in the upper 80th to 90th percentile. That data has prompted some alarm in various GOP warrens that Pence could be defeated in November 2016. It comes after a blunder by 2012 U.S. Senate candidate Richard Mourdock almost cost Pence the governorship. Expected to easily cruise past Gregg, instead he won by less than 3% and became the first governor in half a century to win with less than 50% of the vote.

Indianapolis mayors haven't done well in statewide politics while in office. In 1974, Mayor Richard Lugar lost to U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh in a race that was not only impacted by the Watergate fallout and President Nixon's historic resignation and President Ford's "Whip Inflation Now" strategy, but he was hampered by a police scandal. A year after leaving office, Lugar defeated U.S. Sen. Vance Hartke, himself a former Evansville mayor. In 1990, Mayor Bill Hudnut lost a secretary of state race to Democrat Joe Hogsett.

Ballard will leave office in January 2016. A recent Indianapolis Chamber/MIBOR Poll showed he had 65% approval – in Indianapolis. If Pence were to mishandle

the civil rights issue and his base sits out the primary, that would be one path to an upset. But Indy mayors don't normally do well in outer Indiana. Ballard would likely do well in Indianapolis, and perhaps even the doughnut counties, where he has high name ID and where civil rights ordinances or executive orders have passed or are poised to do so in Carmel, Noblesville and Martinsville. He could also appeal to independent voters.

Our take is that it will be tough for anyone to unseat an incumbent Republican governor in a primary. Having said that, 2016 is looking about as predictable as 2008 or 1968.

There are a couple of other layers here. One is the U.S. Senate races and how they will attract voters. The other is whether there are unresolved presidential nominations that could bring that three-ring circus into the state, possibly with both Republicans and Democrats. There is a distinct possibility that buying TV air time next April and early May could be a dicey proposition.

Oesterle, who managed Gov. Mitch Daniels' 2004 gubernatorial campaign and contributed \$150,000 to Gov. Pence's 2012 campaign, said at the time, "When I announced my career change to pursue civic activities, my first step was to begin to understand the landscape in Indiana post-RFRA and post-education session. As part of that process, I asked Chris Matthews and Bellwether Research to conduct a very comprehensive poll and I wanted to share the results. My goal is to inform the discussion as we prepare for the 2015-2016 legislative session. It should come as no surprise that I care about a few of these issues."

No matter how you look at it, Gov. Pence has crucial decisions to make in the fourth quarter of 2015, and he faces a potential food fight in the General Assembly next January through March. How it all settles out is anyone's guess at this point.

## U.S. Senate race: McDermott considers

Hammond Mayor McDermott's big Chevy Tahoe slowed and moved down the bike and running trails that coursed through the city park at Wolf Lake. Many Hoosiers cruise across this lake on an Indiana Toll Road bridge and have the notion that the waters and fish are toxic and the scene would be a good place to dump a corpse.

But in the three terms of Mayor McDermott, he has transformed this into a beautiful park where people run and bike, fish and kayak. There is a new performance pavilion that draws thousands of people to

concerts and festivals. To the south is the golf course the Republican he defeated in 2003 built on a slag heap, and under McDermott's leadership is now topped off with a beautiful Frank Lloyd Wright prairie-style clubhouse.

McDermott points to these kinds of amenities that urban planners say are essential for a city to draw younger people and prosper. As he points to the new trails, we see familiar sights, like the Chicago skyline from the marina on Lake Michigan, the Chicago Skyway, the Whiting BP refinery downwind to the east, and the gas storage farms. There are new dorms near the Purdue Calumet campus, a new brew pub and hotel under construction near the Cabela's complex on the I-94 corridor. His College Bound program that takes casino money to fund college scholarships for city residents, has sent several thousand Hammond kids to a free higher education.

Mayor McDermott is a builder mayor, in a style similar to that of Jim Brainard in Carmel or Greg Goodnight in Kokomo. McDermott and Goodnight have taken industrial "rustbelt" cities and rebuilt them with a certain degree of fervor. In Hammond's case, its 80,000 people make it Lake County's largest and it has held steady in the last two U.S. Census reports. McDermott faces Republican Humberto Prado on his way to a fourth term, and Hammond is minus the tell-tale signs of a competitive race. When McDermott wins an expected fourth term in November, the process of constructing the next phase of his political career begins.

McDermott acknowledges that John Gregg has consolidated his hold on a second gubernatorial nomination in 2016. There is the urge to perhaps challenge U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, which he acknowledges would be a high hurdle. And there is the U.S. Senate race that is drawing the ambitious McDermott's serious attention. He believes his resume – U.S. Navy officer, Purdue Calumet and Notre Dame Law School grad, a stint as Lake County Democratic chairman, and four mayoral wins that allowed him to poise Hammond for the 21st Century – positions him well for the U.S. Senate race.

Currently, former congressman Baron Hill and John Dickerson, who recently retired as director of Arc of Indiana, are the only two declared Democrats. In McDermott's view, neither is setting off the passions of Indiana Democrats. Hill posted only \$150,000 in his second quarter FEC report and a more robust third quarter showing will be critical for him to gain traction. Neither has much statewide name ID. Whether to enter the U.S. Senate race is a decision McDermott will make shortly after the



Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., at Wolf Lake Park by the Indiana Toll Road. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



November election.

In McDermott's view, his powerful Lake County Democratic base and potential inroads in Indianapolis would be a path for victory in a multi-candidate primary. He encouraged State Rep. Christina Hale to run, and campaigned with her door to door last November. Since she opted for reelection, McDermott has been contemplating her potential agenda, that Indiana is facing third-world problems, evidenced by the spike in HIV cases in rural communities like Scott County, and evolving infrastructure problems like the one that closed I-65 at Lafayette, and the constant irritant under his saddle, the state-abandoned Cline Avenue bridge in his city.

McDermott believes his inclusion on the ticket would help energize the party base in the Democrat-dominated Northwest Region, a scenario he believes would help Gregg in his attempt to unseat Gov. Mike Pence. "I would be good for the ticket," McDermott said.

### 3rd CD: Tom joins GOP field

Kip Tom, whose family runs a huge farming operation based in Kosciusko County, has become the fifth Republican to declare his candidacy for northeast Indiana's seat in the U.S. House (Francisco, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Tom filed a statement of candidacy in the 3rd District with the Federal Election Commission on Wednesday. He said he expects to make a formal announcement next month. "Over the past several months I have met with and listened to our neighbors," he said in an email. "Like them, I believe Congress needs a lot more conservative citizen leaders who have created jobs, met a payroll, and helped improve their communities." Tom, 60, said he stepped down last month as the chief executive of Tom Farms, which produces corn, soybeans and seed corn in seven counties in northern Indiana and in Argentina. He said he and his family "have grown Tom Farms into an industry leader. Now I want to direct my energy into helping our nation grow again." Tom seeks to replace third-term Rep. Marlin Stutzman, R-3rd, a LaGrange County farmer who is running for an open seat in the U.S. Senate in next year's elections. Other announced Republican candidates for Stutzman's seat are state Sens. Jim Banks of Columbia City and Liz Brown of Fort Wayne, former Wisconsin state senator Pam Galloway of Warsaw and former Whitley County Council member Scott Wise.

### 9th CD: Pfaff seeks GOP nomination

The 9th CD Republican field grew by two candidates this past week. Conservative talk radio host, and Bloomington native, Jim Pfaff is the latest candidate to throw his hat in the ring for Indiana's 9th Congressional District seat (Sharp, Indiana Public Media). While he has never held public office, Pfaff was the chief of staff for Congressman Tim Huelskamp, R-Kan., for three years. Pfaff is the fifth Republican to enter the race. The primary winner would face Shelli Yoder, who is the only Democrat

to enter the race so far. In a press release, Pfaff talked about the need to change the culture of Washington politics. "As a native Hoosier, I understand the continued frustration we and all Americans have with Washington, its bureaucrats, and its career politicians," he said. Pfaff will hold a series of campaign kickoff events today, including two in Bloomington. The second candidate is Tea Party activist Robert Hall, calling himself the "true conservative" who would vote against Republican House Speaker John Boehner and oppose raising the federal debt limit. Hall says he's been a manufacturing executive and consultant for more than 30 years. Hall joins state Attorney General Greg Zoeller and state Sens. Erin Houchin of Salem and Brent Waltz of Greenwood as Republican candidates in the 9th District, which stretches from the southern suburbs of Indianapolis to the Indiana suburbs of Louisville, Ky.

### SD36: Sandlin enters race

Indianapolis City-County Councilor Jack Sandlin formally announced today that he is running for the Republican nomination for Indiana State Senate, District 36, in 2016. Sandlin made the announcement at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Ernie Pyle Post. "Indianapolis, Greenwood and the entire State of Indiana face major challenges in the areas of education, jobs, crime prevention, law enforcement and the widespread use of illegal drugs. My background makes me the most qualified person to speak with authority and expertise for the people of District 36," said Sandlin. Sandlin's



Indianapolis Councilor Jack Sandlin kicked off his SD36 campaign on Wednesday. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

background includes more than 20 years of service with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, three years serving on the Federal Drug Task Force, and current owner of Jack Sandlin & Associates, a firm that provides security consulting, fraud examination and private investigation services. He is a U.S. Army veteran and has served as a city-county councilor in Indianapolis since 2010. "I am a lifelong resident of Indianapolis, an experienced law enforcement officer and someone who understands how government works," Sandlin said. "As an Indiana state senator, I will ask the tough questions, listen to the people in my district and make sure their voices are heard statewide. "I care about the future of Indiana," Sandlin added. "I promise to bring strong, conservative, family values to this position, so that our state can continue to improve the quality of life for all of our citizens." Indianapolis Councilor Jefferson Shreve is also preparing to seek this seat. ❖

# Running from Congress can be a tough campaign

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – Rumors continue to surface that Congressman Marlin Stutzman will resign from office to focus upon the Senate campaign. It just does not seem likely that they are true, but such a strategy has both some political merit and unique plausibility. Both Stutzman and fellow Congressman Todd Young face numerous problems.



Here is why:  
 ■ Missing the votes one was elected to cast in Congress is not an ideal way to convince primary voters than you can be effective U.S. senator. David McIntosh ran into this problem while running for governor.

How can we trust you to do the next job if you aren't willing to do the one we elected you to do?

■ The voters who elected the member of Congress don't appreciate being ignored so their representative can seek higher office. This probably impacts Stutzman slightly more than Young because Stutzman jumped from state representative to state senator to U.S. Senate candidate to U.S. congressman to U.S. Senate candidate in a relatively short period of time.

■ Eric Holcomb is running a credible ground campaign and does not have to worry about missing votes. Holcomb can taste local hot dogs and ice cream, as well as make more substantive visits, in all 92 counties. Again, incumbent congressmen running for another office are forced to stay in Washington as the same old debates drone on in the body they have chosen to leave. You can raise PAC money in Washington, and dial for dollars by phone, but it is harder to do the "meet, greet and grab the dollars" events back in Indiana. Not to mention actual meet some voters. If State Sen. Mike Delph joins the race, then there would be a second candidate back home in Indiana.

■ Incumbent congressmen become "part of Washington." While I doubt resigning would solve much in the eyes of most voters, Stutzman and Young have slightly divergent strategies. Stutzman has been at the margins of Congress, mostly as a critic both before and after his rejected efforts to advance internally. Young has prided himself more on being internally effective on policy. So a Stutzman resignation would better fit with an outsider strategy; it would not work for Young. In fact, Stutzman throwing bombs from the outside would reinforce Stutzman's claim (usually only effective by an outsider) that Washington is a cesspool as well as that the Indiana

Republican Party is full of people who aren't really Republicans. However, it would also reinforce Young's point: That he is an effective leader who can win. With the garbled mess of a presidential race on both sides, Republican control of the Senate is much more at risk. The last thing Republicans need is to blow an Indiana Senate race again.

■ Incumbents actually have to vote. Stutzman has struggled with how to reconcile an "outsider" strategy with an "insider" one. For example, he has flip-flopped on whether or not he would support McConnell for Leader if he had an opponent (I am uncertain of his current position). More significantly for this race is Stutzman's quandary on voting whether to shut down the government over Planned Parenthood funding. Most of his base would assume that he would side with Ted Cruz and the hardliners (on Iran as well), but Stutzman has apparently rejected such a vote. Mike Delph must be wondering if Stutzman actually represents the hard core social conservatives should Stutzman compromise in this case. If, bluntly, Stutzman votes like Young, what is the compelling reason for Stutzman's candidacy?

■ The Christy Stutzman factor. It has come up numerous times that Marlin's wife Christy could fill his seat on an interim basis (possibly run if his senate campaign falters). Third District congressional candidate Jim Banks's wife Amanda was selected by caucus to replace Banks in his state senate seat. However, this requires the incredible stretch that Sen. Banks being called up by the military to serve in Afghanistan during an Indiana legislative session is the moral equivalent of resigning a congressional seat to seek a higher office. Ambition and serving in a war zone do not compare. In other words, it is not a plausible option. Furthermore, my resignation has led to a ridiculous after-effect of repeated resignations and caucuses in northeast Indiana. The voters here would like to pick some candidates themselves.

**There are major advantages** to being a sitting congressman and running for Senate. You have a presumably strong base among one-ninth of the voters. You can stay in steady contact with those voters at taxpayer expense. You have district and Washington staff to indirectly boost your Senate race in that part of Indiana. You are of value to all groups – gun owners, business people, teachers, pro-lifers, unions – who have a stake in getting a hearing on the many issues that come up every day in Congress. This certainly helps fund-raising. The ability to earn media coverage is easier because what a congressman says actually matters; it could impact a policy decision as opposed to just being the opinion of a wannabe. In other words, Young and Stutzman have some major advantages over Holcomb and potentially Delph.

On the whole, being an incumbent congressman benefits Todd Young because it meshes with his core strategy. It is a less clear call for Marlin Stutzman. If Stutzman remains congressman, it is likely a sign that he will continue to simultaneously moderate his positions while trying to hold his far right base.

That, however, is problematic. Political strategies are not always just what you see in front of you, they are layers upon layers. ❖

**Souder is a former Republican Member of Congress.**

**Publisher's Note:** The Stutzman Senate campaign's Brendon DeToro told HPI in an email on Wednesday, "There is no truth to the rumor." - Brian A. Howey

## Sugar continues to ponder a governor run

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Why don't people vote? Because they don't want to.



Tom Sugar, a key aide to Evan Bayh in campaigns and in office as Bayh served as governor and senator, is campaigning now for a change aimed at getting more Hoosiers to want to vote. Oh, Sugar also would like them to vote for him for governor.

The change for which Sugar is crusading would eliminate political gerrymandering that leaves very few competitive congressional and state legislative districts in Indiana. He contends that lack of real choices – not a single competitive congressional race in the state – was a major factor in Indiana's abysmal voter turnout, 28 percent of the voter eligible population in the 2014 election. That was the worst in the nation in a New York Times tabulation, 51st place, behind all of the other states and the District of Columbia.

Legislation to take blatant partisan politics out of redistricting after the 2020 Census, bringing competitive races rather than so many "safe" seats and unopposed candidates, no doubt would result in more Hoosiers wanting to vote in the future. But will Sugar's call now for this better-government change make large numbers of Hoosiers want now to vote for Sugar for the Democratic nomination for governor in 2016?

Sugar knows other issues would be important, too. So are other considerations, political and personal, as he prepares to announce very soon whether he will run for governor.

**During a stop in South Bend,** Sugar made clear that he wants to run. But he knows that John Gregg, the party's nominee for governor last time, is piling up endorsements and doing well with fundraising. Gregg seems likely to be the Democratic nominee again for a rematch with Republican Gov. Mike Pence.

Still, Sugar says he finds many Democrats con-

cerned with whether Gregg, though he came surprisingly close last time, is the right candidate with the right image to take advantage of perceived vulnerability of Pence.

Many other Democrats, including numerous party leaders and key supporters in organized labor, prefer to see Gregg run unopposed for the nomination, thus avoiding a primary contest and saving resources for the general election. It looked as though that would happen after Gregg's early support convinced Glenda Ritz, superintendent of public instruction, and state Sen. Karen Tallian to drop their candidacies for the Democratic nomination.

Now comes Sugar?

**If he runs, Sugar said,** a contest would make the Democratic Party stronger and enable the party's nominee to be better prepared to take on Pence. He knows state government and knows the problems, Sugar said, and he would articulate issues as "an independent Democrat," appealing to voters in the center of the political spectrum, voters a Democrat must sway in order to win in Republican-tending Indiana.

Sugar's ties with Bayh would help him in developing a campaign organization and getting started with fundraising. Asked if he would expect to receive some of the \$10 million in campaign funds that Bayh still retains, Sugar just laughed. "You know Evan," he said. Bayh never has been known for throwing money around either in government or in a campaign.

Sugar said he would not even suggest that he "deserves" a Bayh endorsement. But he said he would hope to "earn" that endorsement through an effective and impressive campaign.

**While he worked closely** with Bayh and clearly would hope to appeal as Bayh did to moderate Republicans and independents, Sugar said he would be no Bayh clone and doesn't agree with Bayh on everything. For example, Sugar said, he disagrees with Bayh serving as a contributor to Fox News. He also said he is "not sure" about Bayh's opposition to the Iran nuclear deal.

Personal factors in his decision on running, Sugar said, include concern over family finances if he leaves his position as senior vice president of Complete College America, a national non-profit group, and plunges immediately into a statewide campaign.

Is he going to run? "Let's just say the pieces are falling into place," Sugar said. ❖

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



# Awaiting the next political tsunami

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO – Last summer my family vacationed along the Oregon coast. As we crossed the Columbia River from Washington State into Oregon, you couldn't help being awestruck by the rough and rugged beauty of the coastline. Miles and miles of crashing waves, wide expansive beaches and monolithic rock formations called haystack rocks poking out of the sea for miles and miles dominated the landscape. The scenery was beautiful, the people mellow and it made a Hoosier feller wonder just why he was living in the middle of cornfields instead of living the beach life.



After a couple of days of wide-eyed wonderment, I started to take a broader look at life on the Oregon coast and I couldn't believe that it had taken me two days to notice the signs. What signs, you ask? The signs warning of impending doom in the form of a tsunami.

Now we don't have tsunami warning signs in Kokomo, so maybe I can be excused for not seeing the signs right away.

After you noticed the first sign, you couldn't miss seeing the other 10,000 warning signs that directed you up the side of the mountain to your potential deliverance.

It wasn't just the signs that I began to notice. There was a detailed pamphlet on the subject of tsunamis in my hotel room informing my family that a wall of water, perhaps 20 feet high, could come rising up out of the Pacific Ocean as a result of an offshore earthquake. The pamphlet told us that we would have about 15 minutes from the time of hearing the tsunami siren until the arrival of the wave. Fifteen minutes to get in the car and drive upward or to run for the hills. In an area already traffic snarled by tourists, our chance of escape looked pretty slim, so we joined the other fatalistic tourists and Oregoners and returned to just enjoying the scenery and hoping that our week in Oregon wouldn't be the week the wave came.

**And what, you may ask,** does any of this have to do with politics?

I believe that a political tsunami is coming in American politics. I believe that the signs are all around us but we are distracted from noticing them by the task of living our daily lives. We can't see the forest for the trees. We focus on the trivialities of life and totally miss monumental developments lurking around us.

Barack Obama, Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders, Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina are all signs of the politi-

cal tsunami boiling up from the bowels of the American people. Hogwash you shout! Perhaps I should make my case.

In 2008, we elected a totally inexperienced and unqualified person to be president of the United States. Nothing in Barack Obama's resume qualified him to become the leader of the free world. Like him or not, serving as an Illinois state senator and serving two years in the U. S. Senate before commencing a run for the White House are not credentials of legend for an aspiring presidential candidate.

**What Obama lacked in experience,** he made up for with a mantra that captured the mood of a country concerned about its direction. Repeat after me, "hope" and "change."

The electorate was so worn out from fighting terrorism, fighting wars, exploding deficits and a perceived decline of our national fabric that they willingly bought the arsenic-laced tonic from the snake oil salesman.

But just two short years later, the voters rose up in the 2010 election and threw Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid to the sidelines as they repudiated Obama's vision of hope and change. Obama may have brought change but it wasn't the change that the American public wanted.

This political ying and yang continued into Obama's reelection in 2012 and then into the devastating off-year elections of 2014 as the Democratic Party was thoroughly repudiated. Republicans were elected in huge numbers by promising a disgruntled public that they would repeal and replace Obamacare, cut the budget deficits and block President Obama's dismemberment of the Constitution. To date, they are promises unfulfilled.

That brings us to the 2016 election.

How do you explain the rise of Socialist Bernie Sanders in his presidential run against the early prohibitive favorite Hillary Clinton? How do you explain the strong and increasing political potency of Donald Trump, Dr. Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina? I think it is pretty easy to explain. The American people are so sick of how things are today and so afraid of the direction that our country is headed that they are willing to try just about anything but the status quo. Governmental leadership experience is poison.

**Anyone with a single ounce** of intelligence in either political party knows that we are mathematically guaranteed a financial disaster in our future unless we do something about our national debt. Yet the debt grows relentlessly.

We see nearly 20 million illegal aliens in our country. Everyone knows this is an untenable situation that gets worse by the day and yet nothing is done. We see our country's enemies grow stronger and bolder from a dismantling of our military and fetid foreign policy and yet we do nothing.

We see poverty and its despair worsen while pouring our nation's wealth down the rat hole of social programs and do nothing about it. We see the power of

the Wall Street monoliths take our country to the verge of collapse and then punish no one and reward those who created the problems in the first place.

**We see the champions**, the producers, the creators and the innovative punished for their success and reward the malcontents, the bomb throwers and the lazy. American business finds itself blocked from growth by oppressive taxes and regulations and yet the solution of government is to extend unemployment benefits.

When nations lose hope they often turn to false prophets and politicians who offer up easy solutions to complex problems. History is littered with societies that

traded their freedom for salvation and received neither. The year 2016 may very well be the year that the most effective campaign strategy will be to say, "This country is in a mess and I have no track record in government. Vote for me!"

The political wave is rising and it will come crashing down on the political class if nothing is done to stem the tide. The signs are all around us. Will we miss them for the pretty scenery? ❖

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

## Indiana drawing people from Illinois

By **MORTON MARUCS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Frequently I get emails saying if I don't like what's happening in Indiana, I should move, preferably to Illinois. So I was delighted last week when the U.S. Census Bureau released estimated migration data for 2013 to see what's actually happening.



In 2013, 15,800 persons lived in Illinois who were residents of Indiana a year earlier. That's 12 percent of the 135,500 Hoosiers who left the state in that period. Fewer people from other states (133,500) became Indiana residents and 23 percent of them (30,600) came from Illinois. Thus, for every person leaving the Hoosier Holyland for Illinois, nearly two were coming to this Pensive

State.

Indiana gained population from 25 states and the District of Columbia while losing to 24 states. After Illinois, the states receiving 10,000 or more Hoosiers were Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and Texas. While Indiana had a net population gain from Illinois of 14,800, we lost 9,600 to our other three neighboring states. Thus, our four adjoining states accounted for one-third of our out-migration and 29 percent of our in-migration. On balance, our net out-migration was almost balanced at just fewer than 2,000 persons.

**The state government** has been eager to attract businesses from Illinois to Indiana. They have not made an equal pitch for residents, but no doubt now will claim the uneven transformation of Illini to Hoosiers is due to Indiana's low business and individual taxes, our state

surplus of funds, low debt obligations and relaxed regulations – as if these were the major reasons people move.

An alternative explanation is the on-going expansion of Chicago (Cook County) into its hinterlands. For 2013, the number of people moving from Cook County to Northwest Indiana (NWI) was just over 10,500 or 64 percent of the 16,400 persons who left Cook County for Indiana. Meanwhile, of the 9,100 Hoosiers who moved to Cook County, 5,000 (55 percent) came from NWI. The draw of Chicago for Hoosiers traditionally has been great and is naturally strongest in the region closest to that great city. That Chicago continues to expand in our direction is not necessarily a testimony to our state policies.

**The data for 15 metropolitan** areas containing Indiana counties are built upon the period 2009 to 2013, while the estimates discussed above were for the year 2012-13.

The Chicago metro area had the highest percent of non-movers (88 percent) while Bloomington, a smaller college town had the lowest percent of persons (70 percent) who lived in the same residence a year later. Only the three college towns of Bloomington, Muncie and Lafayette saw more than 10 percent of residents move into their metro areas from elsewhere.

For the sum of the 15 metro areas, newcomers accounted for only 3.2 percent of the population. When we leave out the Chicago area, newcomers rise only to 4.2 percent of residents. Where is that new, stimulating and reviving blood in our region? Is there a deficiency in our Hoosier Hospitality? ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an economist, writer, and speaker who may be reached at [mortonjmarucs@yahoo.com](mailto:mortonjmarucs@yahoo.com).**

# Regional cities? How about cage matches?

By SHAW FRIEDMAN

LaPORTE – First off, let’s be clear this column isn’t directed at Victor Smith, Indiana’s energetic director of commerce, or the state’s new IEDC chairman, Jim Schellinger, both of whom are disciplined and capable cheerleaders for our state, genuinely seeking to aid Indiana’s business attraction efforts. Frankly, their time and inestimable talents would be much better spent focused on inducing new business to locate here, rather than being



forced to decide which five regions are “losers” in the competition for ever more scarce state dollars earmarked for local economic development.

It’s just they’ve got the unenviable job of presiding over grant awards, as a result of legislation backed by the governor and his brain trust who think it’s a good idea to pit regions of our state against one other. Both Smith and Schellinger have to

put “lipstick on this pig” and make the competition sound somewhat fair, because IEDC is given the job of deciding two winners in this insane competition.

In an age when the legislature continues starving cities, towns and counties in Indiana of the revenues needed to provide basic services, much less expand and initiate creative measures, the Regional Cities legislation was a lousy idea designed to divert Hoosiers from the notion that their state government should support all regions of our state. Instead we are pitting one region against another, fighting for scraps from the state’s table.

Look at what’s involved here: Rather than develop a much-needed revenue-sharing formula for cities, towns and counties to do infrastructure and develop 21st century technology, GOP super majorities pushed through legislation with a one-time funding burst of \$84 million (from a once-in-a-decade tax amnesty) that will be split into two \$42 million grants to a winning Regional Development Authority. Only one-third of Indiana’s counties chose to participate in an RDA, meaning that two-thirds, like my county, took a hard look at the legislation and said, “Thanks, but no thanks.”

**Rather than deal with the** fact that there are entire regions of this state, like Northwest and Southwest Indiana, that have been badly neglected in the allotment of state highway and economic development funds over the past 10 years, the Darwinian leaders in the GOP super majority thought it funny to set up “law of the jungle” cage matches between competing RDA’s. So, for the privilege of competing for a one-time shot of \$42 million,

counties were forced to join together and expend massive amounts of time and expertise putting together proposals so that a stacked committee from Indianapolis could choose two winners from seven competing RDA’s.

**So fundamentally flawed** and undemocratic was the legislation that elected officials were specifically barred from sitting on the RDA boards. That’s right, only non-elected officials will be appointed to regional RDA boards. There is no guarantee of equal representation and losing RDA’s that don’t win any state money still have the ability to embark on joint projects and potentially demand cash calls from participating counties (with the state authorized to withhold tax dollars from counties delinquent in their RDA dues) without any taxpayer input or representation.

Furthermore, development experts like Dr. Michael Hicks of Ball State have questioned whether development dollars shouldn’t be targeted to areas of the state other than the Indianapolis suburbs that have traditionally benefited by state largesse. Worse yet, the 10-member board picking the “winners” is largely composed of what the Times of Northwest Indiana called “the usual suspects from the Indianapolis business community” and had no representation from elsewhere until former Lt. Gov. John Mutz, who sits on the panel, lobbied for appointment of a couple of members from outside our capital city.

Just how stacked is the deck? Why did so many counties “just say no” to the notion of a RDA to go after these funds? Many cited the reasons given by Floyd County officials who said “giving a non-elected board the ability to enforce eminent domain and incur debt” was justification alone to oppose an RDA, according to the Aug. 11 News & Tribune article. Floyd County resident Joseph Moore spoke for many who are concerned that minimum participation in an RDA under the statute is eight years and “once authority is granted to the RDA board, you can’t do a darn thing to change it. This would be more of a competition for projects, not a partnership.” Floyd County Councilman Jim Wathen put it best when said if the state simply divided up the \$84 million among the 92 counties, that’s nearly \$1 million to “make jail repairs, and fix roads and potholes.”

**Rather than pit regions** of our state against each other, why not use the time and brain power involved in judging this competition and improve our historically anemic return in federal funds, Gov. Pence?

The \$80 million in one-time funds from the tax amnesty that you are using to fund these cage matches could have been equalled in one fell swoop had you agreed to go forward with that \$80 million federal grant for early childhood education you took a pass on, fearing “too many strings from the feds.”

Or why not improve our collection of state tax revenues from multi-state corporations, which is estimated to cost the state \$400 million a year in lost revenue from corporations using gimmicks like tax shelters and offshore funds to hide Indiana tax revenues, and share those rev-



enues instead with cities and towns starved for funds?

Nah. Better to divert the time and attention of regional and city planners, with this breathless race to outdo each other in competing for the two grants where at least five regions will come away empty-handed. How does your "select panel" fairly pick among proposals that are all worthy, like double-tracking the South Shore Railroad, revitalizing Muncie's downtown or the food innovation center in Bluffton or the Warrick County Wellness Trail or developing New Castle's art district, all of which are among proposals by the competing RDA's?

**Why not come up with a way** to help fund all these worthy projects around the state rather than design-

ing a competition that's more befitting of a Mark Burnett reality show like the "the Apprentice" rather than good government? You've done nothing to enhance overall quality of life throughout our state with this competition, but have ensured regional rivalries remain intense. This does nothing to bring Hoosiers rowing together for a common goal.

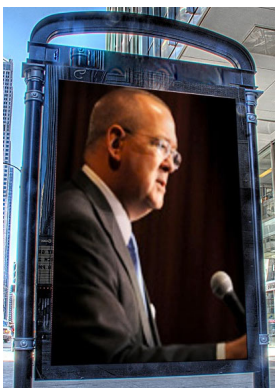
Maybe these cage matches are great entertainment on Monday Night Raw, but this doesn't make for good public policy, Governor. ❖

**Shaw Friedman is former legal counsel for the Indiana Democratic Party and a longtime HPI colum-**

## The stunning decline of unions

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

MUNCIE – Labor Day weekend is a good time to reminisce upon the American labor movement, and muse a bit on its future. I begin with stark statistics. Overall,



private sector unions represent just 6.7 percent of workers, while public sector unions represent 35.3 percent of those workers. Both types are in long-term decline. Fifty years ago, a third of workers belonged to organized labor; now it hovers just above 10 percent and dropping.

Many theories underlie this stunning decline. I think the best evidence suggests that there are two dominant factors:

Job changes and union goals. Since the peak of union membership, employment in the large, union-filled shops has dwindled and assembly line jobs in large factories are increasingly rare. Today, most new jobs require at least some college experience, and the skills of the individual worker play a greater role in the success of that employee.

**A large, homogenous** assembly line has been replaced by smaller, more technically savvy workplaces. As a consequence, the typical employee is more closely connected to the success of his/her employer than the success of his/her economic class. This is a natural sentiment in an environment where it is easy to measure and reward individual skills and effort.

In that sense, the American workplace is now more like the early 19th century of de Tocqueville, filled with independent workers than it is to industrial revolution that informed the political perspective of Karl Marx. At the

same time the typical American workers are more affluent than they were at any other time. In that sense things are far better for the typical household, even if everything isn't rosy. Household income is becoming more bi-polar, with less of a middle class majority. Much of this has nothing to do with the workplace, but it is too early to know what that dynamic will yield economically or politically.

**For much of its history**, the American union movement lived and breathed the class struggle dynamic. During the Cold War, many unions linked their efforts to a stronger democracy, but the argument of industrial and public sector unions has always been about more than the workplace. The results of this are mixed, but for good or ill there seems little prospect of unions regaining their fire. Now that class struggles have been largely replaced by identity politics, expect more of the Bernie Sanders versus #blacklivesmatter tussle and less of Mother Jones versus the coal mine operators.

Some unions are saddling up to change. Something known as Alt-Labor is taking on many of the non-workplace issues. These are groups of non-affiliated activists, so their sustainability model is questionable. I think far greater success will be seen by industrial and public sector unions adopting the trade union model.

The industrial union model has failed, while skilled and professional trades from doctors to plumbers has a few hundred years of success. The modern trade union movement won't be adopted by all unions, just those likely to survive in the 21st century. ❖

**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.**

**Doug Ross, NWI Times:** Tom Sugar was a top aide to Indiana's top Democrat, Evan Bayh, for years, but lately he sounds a lot like Republican U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita, at least in one respect. Sugar is campaigning for a redistricting plan he calls Lead or Leave, which would set up a nonpartisan redistricting commission to avoid gerrymandering. Sugar is weighing a run for governor. But if he runs, he said, he would be a single-issue candidate, running on the platform of redistricting reform. We'll hear from him soon on whether he exercises that option. Rokita proposed a similar redistricting plan about a decade ago when he was secretary of state, but the Legislature rejected his idea. In fact, his party drew boundaries that excluded Rokita from his own congressional district. That was a slap in the face, but not a fatal one. To run for the U.S. House of Representatives, you must be an Indiana resident, but not necessarily a resident of that congressional district. If anyone needs proof of gerrymandering, there's a way to look at it without asking where Todd Rokita lives. In the 2012 presidential election, 44 percent of Hoosier voters chose Democrat Barack Obama, and 54 percent chose Republican Mitt Romney. Yet just two of Indiana's U.S. House seats are Democrat; the other seven are Republican. The legislative districts are drawn by incumbents in Indiana, so look at those, too. There are 10 Democrats and 40 Republicans in the Indiana Senate. In the Indiana House of Representatives, the representation is only slightly more balanced, with 29 Democrats and 71 Republicans. So why does this matter? Simply put, Indiana has set up legislative districts that don't reflect the Hoosier mood. Fellow columnist Brian Howey, of Howey Politics Indiana, was in Northwest Indiana last week and discussed this. The Legislature appears to be about 10 years behind shifts in public opinion, he said. That was true on legalization of gambling, which 64 percent of voters approved in a referendum. It was true on same-sex marriage, which is now legal in Indiana despite the attempts to rewrite the Indiana Constitution to ban it. And Howey's polling showed Hoosiers are way ahead of the Legislature on other issues, too, including decriminalization or legalization of marijuana. House Speaker Brian Bosma has said he supports redistricting reform that includes a nonpartisan commission. Good for him. Senate President David Long needs to feel pressure to do the same. ❖



**Jon Webb, Evansville Courier & Press:** I want Gail Riecken to become the next mayor of Evansville. I have no idea what kind of mayor she would be. I just hope she prevails for one reason: So she can cut the ribbon at the newly built Downtown convention hotel, the same hotel she disemboweled and left for dead during a press conference Thursday afternoon. "If we build a low-quality motel like the one proposed by the mayor, it will be a blight on Downtown for years to come," Riecken said Thursday. "... The administration failed when it scrapped

the hotel for a motel." Imagine Mayor Riecken a year-and-a-half from now. A red ribbon stretches in front of her as the hotel shimmers behind her head. She opens the ceremonial scissors. "Well, this thing is a real piece of (expletive)," she says. "But here you go anyway." Snip. Mayor Lloyd Winnecke wouldn't find such a scene as wonderful as I would — at least judging by his reaction on Thursday. "The fact that someone considers this to be a blight on Downtown, I think it's just one of the most insulting things I've ever heard in a long, long time," he said. "Maybe one of the most insulting things I've heard since I've been mayor."

**David Graham, The Atlantic:** It's a bad sign when your presidential campaign needs a reboot. It's a worse sign when your advisers announce that reboot publicly. That's exactly where Hillary Clinton finds herself this week. In an attempt to right what is universally seen as a listing campaign, the Democratic frontrunner is attempting to reassure her supporters, donors, and party—as well as prospective supporters and donors—that she has what it takes to run and win a race. But so far, the hamfisted execution of that reboot suggests that she hasn't learned enough from the debacle of her 2008 campaign, and it's hard to imagine that events of the last two days will do much to reassure major donors and party leaders. The precipitating cause of all of this is the continuing drip-drip of Clinton's State Department email scandal. Her supporters have wrung their hands in dismay that Clinton has not yet found a way to put concerns about the emails to rest (without ever considering that there may not be any especially good political answers). On Friday, in a first stab at turning things around, Clinton granted a rare interview to Andrea Mitchell, in which she refused to apologize for using a private email account and server, though she did offer a classic non-apology, expressing regret that "this has been confusing to people." On Monday, she spoke to the Associated Press, which kicked off its story this way: "Hillary Rodham Clinton said Monday she does not need to apologize for using a private email account and server while at the State Department because 'what I did was allowed.'" Tuesday morning, however, The New York Times ran a big story based on "extensive interviews" with Clinton advisers, in which they "acknowledged missteps—such as their slow response to questions about her email practices—and promised that this fall the public would see the sides of Mrs. Clinton that are often obscured by the noise and distractions of modern campaigning." The aides said they want Clinton to show humor and heart. Then, during an interview Tuesday with ABC, Clinton actually apologized: "I should have used two accounts. One for personal, one for work-related emails. That was a mistake. I'm sorry about that. I take responsibility." The reversal—two almost diametrically opposed answers to the same question in two days—does not suggest a campaign that is confident and has a plan. ❖

## Soderquist takes the stand in trial

HAMMOND — Lake Station Mayor Keith Soderquist admitted Wednesday to taking money from his election campaign fund and food pantry fund to gamble, but said it was money owed for expenditures he made for those accounts (NWI Times). Soderquist and his wife, Deborah, are on trial in U.S. District Court on charges of improperly taking money from his campaign fund and the city's food pantry account and failing to record the money taken on federal tax returns. Soderquist took the stand after the prosecution rested its case earlier Wednesday. Witnesses for the prosecution used cellphone, ATM, and casino records to try to show how withdrawals were made from the city's food pantry account and Soderquist's campaign committee fund prior to them going to Four Winds Casino in New Buffalo, Mich. "That was the convenient way to take cash out of the committee to pay me back for my expenses," Soderquist said. Soderquist indicated the campaign expenses included paying poll workers and other campaign needs going back to 1999 when he first ran for the Lake Station City Council. In the case of the food pantry, Soderquist said he paid mileage to volunteers who picked up goods for the pantry.

## Vendor fires 2 former officials

INDIANAPOLIS — A BMV vendor that is fighting for survival has fired two employees who are at the center of a state ethics investigation (Cook, IndyStar). Express MVA Chief Operating Officer Shawn Walters and Director of Special Operations Robert "Pete" Wood were terminated last week, said company CEO Kevin Calvert. The two men are former officials with the Indiana Bureau of

Motor Vehicles who played substantial roles in the state's relationship with Express MVA, then went to work for the company. At issue is whether they violated a conflict-of-interest law designed to prevent state employees from using their office to help a future employer at the expense of the public. Gov. Mike Pence last month declined to renew Express MVA's contract with the BMV and asked Indiana Inspector General Cynthia Carrasco to launch an ethics probe. Those moves came in response to an Indianapolis Star investigation into BMV contracts and fees.



## State revenues up \$6.5 million

INDIANAPOLIS — State revenue in August surpassed expectations by \$6.4 million putting Indiana's finances back in the black after July revenue came in \$6.1 million short (Carden, NWI Times). August tax collections totaled \$1.079 billion. That's 0.6 percent greater than the \$1.073 billion predicted by the state's revenue forecast. Better than expected personal income tax payments of \$409.3 million helped fuel the monthly surplus. Income tax revenue was \$16.4 million, or 4.2 percent, more than anticipated. Those gains, helped by an extra Friday payday in August, offset a \$14.9 million, or 2.4 percent, shortfall in expected sales tax collections. Hoosiers paid \$611.1 million in sales taxes last month compared to predicted collections of \$626 million. August was the eighth month in a row where sales tax revenue has come in below the estimates crafted by state budget officials..

## Reece joins House GOP

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana House Speaker Brian C. Bosma (R-Indianapolis) announced today that Erin Reece has accepted the position of communications director for the House Republican Caucus. "We are

excited to welcome Erin to our staff," said Speaker Bosma. "Her experience working in government, communications and technology will make her a great addition to our team." Reece currently serves as communications director for the Indiana Republican Party.

## Snyder to retire from Ivy Tech

INDIANAPOLIS — Ivy Tech Community College President Tom Snyder plans to retire in 2016 after nearly 10 years as leader of the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system, school officials said Wednesday. Snyder, 72, received a transitional contract from the college's board of trustees Wednesday morning that will allow him to step down a year before his current contract ends. He received his last contract—a five-year extension—in 2012. The college will soon start looking for a successor.

## House GOP has no plan on funding

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republican leaders returned to Washington this week with no clear plan for extending government funding later this month that risks shutting down federal agencies amid a growing outcry from conservatives ready for a fight over funding Planned Parenthood (Washington Post). The once-normal process of approving a stopgap bill that keeps the federal government operating on the previous year's fiscal budget has become anything but routine during House Speaker John A. Boehner's five-year tenure. This latest showdown, like its recent predecessors, is another example that brinkmanship — involving countdown clocks and advisories to federal workers about the possible expiration of funding on Sept. 30 — is the new normal. Boehner (R-Ohio) said Wednesday that there was "widespread support" among House Republicans to approve a stopgap bill.