



An important week for the 2016 cycle

Biden, Benghazi, Stutzman & Ryan set the foundation for a fascinating 2016

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. – It wasn't THE definitive week in setting up the 2016 cycle here in Indiana, but it was an important one. In the period of several days Vice President Joe Biden decided not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination, Hillary Clinton used a successful presidential debate as a springboard into her Benghazi testimony and emerged in good shape in the observations of many (with the conspicuous exception of Fox News), Donald Trump began to sag in the polls, and House Republicans, including U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman, coalesced around Paul Ryan as speaker.

And in the gubernatorial race, Gov. Mike Pence paid off what had been a multi-billion deficit in the state's



U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman got with the Paul Ryan program, U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks grilled Hillary Clinton, who ended the week as a fist-bumping bartender on SNL.



unemployment insurance fund that essentially resulted in a big tax cut for Hoosier businesses, heralded a 4.5% jobless rate, the lowest since 2007, and a top 10 Forbes Magazine

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The Indiana Wide Web

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. – As Gov. Mike Pence and Democrat John Gregg prepare for their rematch in our bicentennial election next year, there's one thing that's missing: The big idea.



With Doc Bowen in 1972, it was property tax reform. Pat Rooney hoisted the idea of "give it back" on the 1996 budget surplus. With Mitch Daniels, it was "aiming higher" that encapsulated an array of big ideas. Thus far, Gov. Pence is running on his record of jobs, tax cuts and cutting government regulations. Gregg right now is the anti-Pence. Missing is the big idea.

So here's one: Statewide



"We need to be a lot more inclusive as a party. I believe in the 'big tent' philosophy. On the national level, we've got a perception problem, there's no denying that."

*- Miami County GOP Chair
Ethan Manning, age 23*



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high speed broadband.

In a state where our rural areas are falling behind in per-capita income, are depopulating and aging, and we watch the scourge of meth, heroin and HIV spread in county after county, the idea that any entrepreneur could take an idea or a business and work from anywhere, would be a public investment in the league with rural electrification, a state highway system, or phone service.

The need for this jumped off the screen last January at an Indiana Public Policy Institute Thriving Communities/Thriving State presentation when it came to broadband access.

On a series of maps, broadband access exceeding 3 megabits per second covered about 80% of our state. But after the 10 mbps threshold, these areas encompassed less than half the state geographically, though it covered most of the population centers. When it came to exceeding 100 mbps, the map covered the major population centers, some small towns, and followed key interstates and state highways.

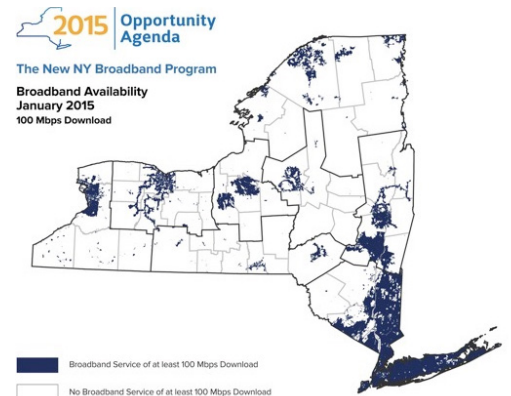
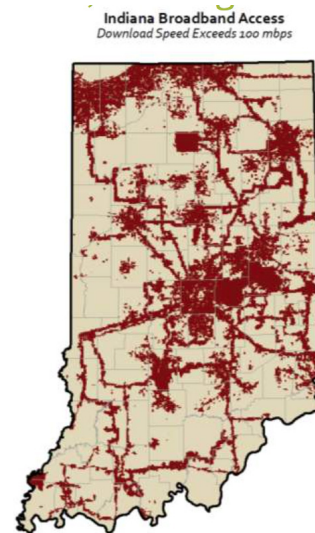
I experienced the lack of broadband at my cabin in Nashville, where I relied on a Hughes Net satellite dish for several years. I eventually made a personal appeal to AT&T President George Fleetwood on why I couldn't get the high speed Uverse package, and a couple of days later the Bloomington engineering office called me up and said they would set me up. It was a liberating experience.

My cabin is about a quarter mile north of SR46 and the Thriving Communities/State maps revealed I was on the northern edge of the key fiber optic cables that follow that highway between Bloomington and Columbus. If I had lived near Story or Bean Blossom, it would be S.O.L.

And then my hometown of Peru announced this week that it was extending free public wi-fi – PeruWIFI

– to its central core. "We always look at brick-and-mortar improvements, but why not improve services?" Peru Mayor Jim Walker told the Kokomo Tribune. "This is turning us into a 21st century city." Peru is located in the center of Miami County where personal income remains at 1974 levels (the year I graduated from high school).

High speed internet should be available in Swayzee, Judyville and Mineral City. And it is happening elsewhere. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo



Maps of Indiana and New York showing current 100 mbps coverage.

announced a \$1 billion plan to extend 100 mbps high-speed internet to every New Yorker by 2019. The plan, known as the New New York Broadband Program would include \$500 million in capital funds (taken from recent bank settlements), according to TechCrunch.com, which reported: The state wants those funds to serve as an incentive for private companies by offering 1:1 financial matching for broadband providers willing to invest their own money, hence the \$1 billion total size.

"At the end of the next four years," New York Lt. Gov. Kathy

Hochul said, "you'll see that every business in this community, in this state, is connected and will have the fastest-speed broadband of any state in the nation."

President Obama made a similar appeal in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, earlier this year. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, for example, will offer between \$40 million and \$50 million to rural carriers that invest in bringing broadband in rural areas under the Obama plan. CNet reported that according to a report from FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, 53% of rural Americans have no access to high-speed Internet, which he defined as capable of downloading content at 25 megabits per second.

The Rural Broadband Association applauded President Obama's focus on increasing every American's access to robust and affordable broadband. "But it's not clear that encouraging local governments to get into a very difficult communications business for the first time on their own is the best path to achieve that important goal," the association said last January. "There's already a great broadband success story out there in rural America, but its sustainability is at risk."

At the risk of associating the broadband extension effort with President Obama, who is unpopular here in

Indiana, it's worth noting that the Republican Peru mayor gets it, and there are many other Republicans across the state who would agree that fast broadband means more jobs.

So while the Indiana Economic Development Corporation is trying to pluck off New York, Connecticut and Illinois companies, New York is seeking to extend high speed internet to a state about a third larger geographically than Indiana is (and has many more physical challenges such as mountain ranges and large lakes), with more than three times the population.

I mentioned the concept to Gregg in French Lick last August and his response was encouraging, noting that his wife is a "techy" and has been talking to him about this very concept.

My suggestion to both Gregg and Pence is to embrace the concept, work to get the Indiana Farm Bureau, the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, and the Association of Indiana Counties conspicuously on board, and then debate the funding and logistics throughout next year, with the goal achievable by 2020.

It's a great concept: 2020 vision for every Hoosier having access to the World Wide Web. ❖

Important week, from page 1

business climate rating, three more reminders that defeating an unpopular Republican governor will still be an arduous task for John Gregg in the coming rematch.

Why are these scenarios important for Indiana in the 2016 cycle? Allow me to explain.

■ **The biggest one could be Hillary Clinton emerging from a spring** and summer of torpid campaigning, which often seemed over-scripted, with a wall between herself, the news media and the people. She entered October with an air of frailty facing her first debate and the Benghazi testimony, two events that if things had gone awry, might have prompted Biden to enter the race and expanded more doubts in the minds of Democrats here in Indiana and across the nation.

Instead, Clinton turned in a stellar debate performance, with U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders at one point saying he was tired of the "damn email" story, essentially putting the pin back in that primary hand grenade. Sanders came out swinging at the Jefferson-Jackson Dinner in Des Moines Saturday night, trying to link Clinton to her Iraq war vote and the various trade deals she's flip-



Vice President Joe Biden announced he would not run in 2016.

flopped on, but the email story is the big one that is now off the table for the Democratic nomination. She followed this up with a day of grueling testimony that most felt did little or no damage to her campaign. The Republican partisanship on the panel (Reps. Pompeo and Chairman Trey Gowdy at times seemed to ache with hope of a smoking gun to emerge) and pre-hearing comments by Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Rep. Richard Hanna that in the minds of many placed this committee deep into presidential politics, greatly aided Clinton. Since the debate, she has rebounded in a number of polls. "Hillary was 'meh' with a significant portion of the activist left," Markos Moulitsas of the Daily Kos tweeted Saturday night. "Thanks GOP, for helping change that!"

It was capped off by a savvy appearance on NBC's Saturday Night Live, with the real Hillary playing bartender to the comedian Hillary, who brought up many of the supposed arrows in the anti-Clinton quiver. The only thing missing was Tom McDermott pounding down a shot of bourbon with her (them).

What is the potential impact of this in Indiana? Despite the fact that

Indiana Republicans presented voters with an all-female ticket in 2014, Gov. Pence and 2012 U.S. Senate nominee Richard Mourdock bled female support in the homestretch

of that cycle. It nearly resulted in a Pence upset as he lost 18% of female support in the final six weeks of the campaign, while killing off Mourdock. At the presidential level, a best case scenario for Pence and the GOP ticket might have been a Biden or Sanders Democratic nomination, or Carly Fiorina emerging on the GOP ticket. And there is also the potential engagement of the Ten Million Dollar Man – former senator and governor Evan Bayh, a big Hillary ally – who could be an off-ballot player if Clinton’s campaign deems Indiana’s 11 Electoral College votes necessary.

■ **Donald Trump losing his lead** in Iowa to Dr. Ben Carson (28 to 19%) and faltering in other polls is the beginning of what many in the party hierarchy hoped would happen, described here last summer as a super cell thunderstorm collapsing into a microburst. For the first time in a national poll, Carson has overtaken Trump, leading in today’s CBS News/New York Times survey of Republican primary voters 26-22%. Meanwhile, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio came in third with 8% and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Carly Fiorina earned 7% each.

Trump, however, still has huge leads in New Hampshire and South Carolina and his numbers are edging into the 40th percentile in those states. At this point, the state-by-state polls are much more important than the national ones. It’s too early to tell if Iowa is the beginning of the end for a Trump GOP nomination. A Trump campaign tweet Saturday insulted Iowans (and won’t play well here in the Hoosier state): “#BenCarson is now leading in the #polls in #Iowa. Too much #Monsanto in the #corn crates issues in the brain?” If these trends continue, Republicans are in for a fascinating scenario of where the Titanic deck chairs end up while the band is still playing. Jeb Bush has deep support among the top of the Republican establishment here, though over the weekend he uttered these stunning comments: “I’ve got a lot of really cool things I could do other than sit around, being miserable, listening to people demonize me and me feeling compelled to demonize them. That is a joke. Elect Trump if you want that.” Jeb! is not the happy warrior.

If Trump does falter, does the now serene Dr. Carson emerge as the more durable outsider? And who becomes the “establishment” candidate? Most betting is on Sen. Marco Rubio, though he was completely tone deaf early last week when he advocated for the firing of Veterans Administration employees who miss work, while failing to cast Senate roll call votes 44% of the time. A Washington Post story on Monday said Rubio essentially gave up on his Senate career (and he has no endorsements from colleagues). Others who could rebound in a Trump collapse would be U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (with a huge super PAC behind him), Fiorina (though she seems to be fading after the second debate surge), and Govs. Chris Christie and

John Kasich, all who are in single digits right now, but who may get a second look early next year.

Few Hoosier Republicans we’ve talked with over the past several months really have a good handle on what a Trump Republican nomination would mean, though national pundits keep pointing to Trump’s skyscraper negatives with females, Latinos and independents as a case where he essentially is a “zombie front runner” according to Bush strategist Mike Murphy. He explained the Trump phenomenon to Bloomberg Politics’ Sacha Issenberg, saying, “He’s dead politically, he’ll never be president of the United States, ever. By definition I don’t think you can be a front-runner if you’re totally un-electable. I think there’s an a-priori logic problem in that. So there’s no meaningful outcome to it. But the question is what kind of catalyst is



Donald Trump fell behind Dr. Ben Carson in Iowa polling, then insulted the Hawkeye State.

it? It’s a huge amount of noise and so we’re trying to find the signal in all this. You’ve seen Trump start to drop now. I think it’ll be a very slow drop, but I think he’ll continue to drop and the question is: Is he ready to lose primaries, will he stay in? And nobody knows the answer to that.”

Weekly Standard columnist Fred Barnes notes the emerging Trump base of blue-collar Republicans, and observes, “That means Trump, with a solid base, could win the Republican nomination – not likely, but possible. That would probably be a disaster for the Republican party and the candidates for the House and Senate below Trump on the ballot. Trump’s negatives are so high his prospects of beating Clinton in the general election are very poor.”

The other huge impact would be if Trump drops in GOP polling, quits that nomination fight and reneges on his promise not to mount a third party run. If this scenario emerges, Trump could be a huge drag on the national Republican ticket, as well as here in Indiana. Remember, a damaged Ross Perot polled 20% of the general election vote in Indiana in 1992, and Democrats carried the governorship, attorney general and won the Indiana House.

■ **In the Paul Ryan speaker scenario**, there were potential impacts in the Republican U.S. Senate race. All eyes were on Stutzman at the beginning of the week as the state's lone member of the notorious Freedom Caucus. Would the Freedom Caucus preempt a Ryan run for speaker, setting off more chaos and a potential government shutdown in December over the debt ceiling? And if Stutzman were to be deemed as a culprit in keeping Ryan out of the GOP unification business, would that fuel the Senate campaigns of Eric Holcomb and U.S. Rep. Todd Young?

The answer came Thursday, when Stutzman endorsed Ryan after initially siding with U.S. Rep. Daniel Webster, saying, "Since coming into office in 2010, my single biggest focus has been on our annual deficits and our long-term debt. In my observation, no one is more qualified to tackle these issues than Chairman Ryan."

So on this story, Stutzman and Young ended up on the same side and, mostly, the same page. It defused a potential Senate campaign issue and might have fended off the government shutdown scenario, the one issue that could have pumped up Eric Holcomb's underfunded campaign, as he has been citing Republican partisan "disgust" at the dysfunction in Washington.

■ **Finally, with multiple sources placing Pence's reelect** in the lower 30th percentile, the governor notched several positive stories late in the week with the 4.5% and declining jobless rate, the UI payoff which at one point had the state \$2.2 billion in hock to the feds. This payoff will save Hoosier businesses \$327 million in the coming election year. And there's the top 10 Forbes rating for business. Can anyone envision a TV ad a year from now on those last two? On the unemployment insurance payoff, Pence explained, "We are leveraging the fiscal strength of this state in a way that will support the efforts of job creators in this economy. It is a short-term loan with long-term benefits for Indiana's economy. By avoiding this penalty, Hoosier employees will have the capital to reinvest in their business and hire more hard-working Hoosiers."

Another gift to Pence came from Forbes Magazine, which ranked Indiana eighth in business climate, the first time the state has been in the Forbes top 10. "Today, more Hoosiers are going to work than at any time in our state's history because Indiana has worked tirelessly to create a business-friendly climate that allows companies to grow and create jobs with confidence," Pence reacted. "Since day one of this administration, we have made job creation job one. By balancing our budgets, cutting costs, reducing burdensome regulations and investing in our workforce and in our communities, we have dedicated our efforts to supporting Hoosiers statewide and have sent a clear message that Indiana is a state that works."

Indiana Democrats reacted to the jobs report,

saying, "Today's figures once again fit the national trend established by President Obama. But for Indiana, the hardworking middle class know jobs in the state provide wages far lower than what they were in early 2000. With shrinking wages and sluggish economic growth, Indiana continues to fall behind the rest of the nation, and it's Mike Pence to blame for allowing the state to plummet to a rank of 46th in quality of life."

That's a convoluted message there. Democrats have ample ammunition on per capita income, state health rankings and the low infrastructure grades, though the governor has some ammunition on that front with CNBC's 2014 rankings actually rating the state's infra-



Gov. Mike Pence announced the pay off of the Unemployment Insurance loan, resulting in an immediate tax cut for businesses.

structure highly. Anyone who drives I-65 south of Indianapolis can watch significant strides coming on that front, and Pence's road program is a worthy start, with many details to be hashed out next winter.

Governors get blamed for bad economies and growing jobless rates. Pence has a tailwind on these fronts right now, though the Wall Street Journal was reporting on Monday that industrial sources are warning of a slowdown and Cummins announced 2,000 layoffs this morning, citing "worsening sales."

My analysis before the Energy Conference last week is worth repeating here: John Gregg and Indiana Democrats will have to run the kind of campaign that the heavy underdog Frank O'Bannon ran in 1996. That campaign built a library of opposition research that had the candidate and campaign responding to events within hours, if not minutes, built a durable infrastructure and positioned itself to take advantage of any stumble made by Mayor Goldsmith. To defeat an incumbent Republican governor in Indiana, Gregg will need to be as prepared and savvy as the O'Bannon campaign was two decades ago.

This past week was not defining, but it was important, like the quality of cement pouring into a foundation. ❖

Hillary's Benghazi Committee boost

By CHRIS SAUTTER

WASHINGTON – If House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy is correct in asserting that the Benghazi Select Committee's work was responsible for driving down Hillary Clinton's favorable ratings, it is equally true that the Oct. 22 Benghazi hearing gave Clinton a big boost in her resurgence. Clinton emerged from the hearing as a confident, poised victor while Republicans slinked away, tails between their legs, having failed miserably in accomplishing anything of value either for their side or the American people.

Clinton is now on a roll that began with McCarthy's truthful gaffe on FOX's Sean Hannity show in late September. His comments amounted to an admission that Republicans were using tax dollars to derail her presidential campaign. Clinton's appearance three weeks later before the Select Committee further exposed the brazenly political nature of the committee's work as the rude, accusatory questioning was clearly designed to discredit her rather than determine the truth.

Indeed, the amateurish, bumbling performance by Republican members of the Benghazi Committee, including Indiana's Rep. Susan Brooks, handed Clinton a platform to appear presidential while they looked partisan and petty. The Republicans' bizarre obsession with Clinton confidant Sydney Blumenthal, in particular, underscored the partisan focus of the investigation as well as highlighting the ineptitude of the Republican members' interrogation strategy. Blumenthal's name came up more times than the actual attack on Benghazi.

The hearings reflect the mess that is the Republican Party today. A band of ideological, uncompromising radicals who form the ironically named Freedom Caucus are holding the U.S. House of Representatives hostage, preventing any important and sorely needed legislation from reaching the floor for a vote.

Similarly, rebellious outsiders and extreme right-

wingers are dominating the 2016 race for the Republican presidential nomination. The two leading contenders are a billionaire celebrity who garners attention by attacking anyone in politics or the media who annoys him and a medical doctor fond of Nazi references. Neither has held office or has a plan for how they would govern. No establishment candidate is currently polling in double figures nationally.

The GOP is in total disarray as ultra-conservative and establishment wings battle for the soul of the party. In recent times, Republicans have consistently nominated the establishment candidate with two notable exceptions, 1964 and 1980. This election could very well be another time in which Republicans choose a standard bearer who comes from outside the party's mainstream.

The roots of 1964 can be found during the Eisenhower administration. Conservatives, who chafed at the expansion of government under Eisenhower, began to organize in earnest in the late 1950's. In a speech to the 1960 Republican National Convention, Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater strongly urged conservative activists to take control of the party. That is exactly what they did, culminating in Goldwater's nomination four years later. Goldwater's candidacy in 1964 was doomed with a fractured Republican Party and in the wake of the Kennedy assassination.

But the conservative movement came roaring back in the late 1970's as the turmoil of the 1960's and 1970's produced a backlash that produced Ronald Reagan's election in 1980. During the 1980's, Reagan's conservative views became mainstream within the Republican Party.

The 2016 election is shaping up to be more like 1964 than 1980. Conservatives within the party, disillusioned by excessive spending during the presidency of George W. Bush and motivated by utter disdain for President Barack Obama, are determined to nominate one of their own. Like 1964, the GOP is bitterly divided between conservatives and establishment Republicans. However, unlike either 1964 or 1980, there is no consensus candidate driving the conservative message.

Instead, Donald Trump, running as a conservative, is leading in all the national polls, although he has no real allegiance to conservative or establishment elements in the party. Behind Trump (and ahead in some polls in Iowa) is Ben Carson, who has energized portions of the conservative wing of the party. The polling numbers of Trump and



Carson combined amount to more than 50% of Republican voters.

Meanwhile, none of the establishment candidates – Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, John Kasich, or Chris Christie – is generating any traction with primary voters. In fact, the Bush campaign seems to be unraveling as the candidate is losing his cool in public appearances while he has had to cut back drastically on campaign expenses. Rubio, for his part, is generating bad headlines as he has the worst voting record in the Senate, reinforcing skeptics who say he is not ready to be president.

On top of poor polling performances by establishment candidates, the theory that eventually Trump or Carson will have to face an establishment candidate is undercut by GOP delegate selection rules. Florida, where Trump is besting both “favorite sons” Bush and Rubio two to one in recent polls, is a winner-take-all state, as is Ohio, where Trump is crushing Kasich. In the March 1 Super Tuesday states, party rules require that a candidate receive a minimum 20% of the vote as a condition of receiving delegates. Under current polling, only Trump and Carson would be eligible to receive delegates to the Republican nominating convention. The decision by the party to front load the nominating process may for all practical purposes prevent an establishment candidate from catching fire in time to stop either Trump or Carson.

Democrats seem poised to produce an opposite result, an establishment candidate. Hillary Clinton capitalized on McCarthy’s admission about the Benghazi Committee’s partisan intentions with a strong debate performance punctuated by a Bernie Sanders’ gift about Clinton’s

emails. More problematic for Sanders is his record on guns that is clearly out of step with the views of most Democrats.

Clinton’s numbers began bouncing back even before her command performance before the Benghazi Committee. Her rising poll numbers put more pressure on Sanders to win both Iowa and New Hampshire – a tough assignment – to have any legitimate shot at the nomination.

Democrats have also front-loaded their nominating process. That may give Clinton a chance to wrap up the nomination in March. Unfortunately, an early result could give Clinton more time to make unforced errors. As Obama’s chief strategist David Axelrod points out, “She generally has been better with her back to the wall than when she is comfortably ahead.”

By overreaching and suggesting that Clinton was responsible for the deaths of Ambassador Chris Stevens and three others, Republicans on the Benghazi Select Committee missed an opportunity to challenge Clinton on flawed Middle East policy, a legitimate point of contention. And, by doing so, they may have immunized her against such attacks during the general election. The debacle of the Benghazi committee hearing demonstrates how right-wing politics in the Congress are having a critical impact on the presidential race. ❖

Sautter is a Democratic consultant based in Washington, an Indiana native, and a regular HPI contributor.

Freedom Caucus has chance to show GOP it can govern

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON – It looks as if House Speaker John Boehner is trying to give his likely successor, Rep. Paul Ryan a going-away present before Boehner leaves office later this week – a budget and debt-ceiling agreement worked out with the White House.

Such a deal is normally anathema to the group of hard-line conservatives who helped push Boehner out of office, the Freedom Caucus. It is likely to be redolent of compromise and



would need to attract Democratic support to pass the House and Senate.

It also was constructed in negotiations between congressional leadership and the administration, violating the principle of “regular order” – the system in which legislation percolates up from the subcommittee level to the House floor – that the Freedom Caucus says it holds dear.

But perhaps the Freedom Caucus, which includes Rep. Marlin Stutzman (R-3rd CD), will overcome what is likely to be initial resistance to the budget-debt-ceiling deal and let it proceed with bipartisan, if not unanimous Republican, support.

Congressional approval before early November, when the debt-ceiling limit is due to be hit, would spare the financial markets, and possibly the entire economy, a jolt. It also would be a graceful way to welcome Ryan, the current chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, into his promotion to speaker, which is likely to be affirmed in a vote later this week.

Grace has never been a hallmark of the Freedom Caucus. But its decision on how to react to a budget-and-debt ceiling deal will go a long way toward setting the Re-

publican atmosphere for the 2016 elections.

The Freedom Caucus can throw a fit just before Ryan ascends to the speakership -- or it can let the agreement proceed to approval. The decision on the path to take is an important one for Stutzman because it will reveal whether he will follow through on his support for Ryan, which will require more than a vote for the Wisconsin Republican for speaker. It also means giving him a solid foundation on which to launch his speakership.

For the deal to cross the finish line, the Democratic equivalent of the Tea Party – the far-left faction led by Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren – also would have to make a similar decision to let it proceed.

Starting the Ryan era in the House with a victory on the budget and debt ceiling would do a lot of good for Republican prospects in 2016. It would serve as a concrete example that Republicans have the capacity to govern, a messy process that necessitates accepting that you can't get everything you want all the time.

Washington works best when each party has to swallow something it doesn't like in order to move legislation.

Republicans needed Democratic help to fund the Department of Homeland Security in February, a move that left a bitter taste for many in the GOP. Republicans also were able to push through the fast-track trade bill with enough Democratic support, an outcome that caused pain for many Democrats.

The ability to governor could be the sleeper issue in the 2016 campaign.

The presidential campaign has been dominated so far by the overwhelming presence of Donald Trump and his anti-establishment message. He has embodied a desire by the Republican electorate to blow up the business-as-usual system in Washington and start over.

Although Trump is a bombastic vessel to channel the rage of voters talking to pollsters, it's less clear that he will be a similar outlet when the curtain closes at the polling booth and they have to make a decision on who should lead the country.

At that point, they may realize that what really frustrates them is a Washington that can't seem to get its act together and address problems they face, such as stagnate wages, deteriorating roads and rising living costs.

These are vexing problems that have no easy solution. In fact, they require hard work by Congress -- and



a willingness by legislators to give-and-take. A Republican Party that can show an ability to work with the other side, while pursuing its deeply held principles, could ultimately appeal to a disaffected electorate.

The other route for the GOP – to double down as the party of grievance and confrontation – will create a nice opening for Democratic presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton to obtain the White House.

Last week, she emerged from 11 hours of the Benghazi Committee hearing not only unscathed but also looking more presidential than ever before. Her message on the campaign trail has been one of getting things done – and she's getting stronger.

The Freedom Caucus, and lawmakers like Stutzman, have a decision to make over the next couple weeks. Give Ryan a good start as House speaker – or make it tougher for Republicans to appeal to voters outside their own primaries. ❖

Schoeff is Washington correspondent for Howey Politics Indiana.

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Mayoral upset watch for Elkhart, Portage, and Logansport

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Our mayoral upset watch is focused on Elkhart, Logansport, and Portage as the municipal elections head into the final week.

We believe the Elkhart race between Democratic Mayor Dick Moore and former Republican legislator Tim Neese has tightened after the Indiana Democratic Party dropped a mailer criticizing the Republican's House voting record. The Neese campaign is acting like it's in trouble.

Also on the upset watch list are Republican Portage Mayor Jim Snyder, who is facing an FBI probe as well as a challenge from Democrat Brendan Clancy, 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, 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 upset 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 final fall mayoral forecast of major races:

Anderson: Republican Mayor Kevin Smith is seeking a third term, and second consecutive one in his

race against Democrat Thomas Broderick Jr. For most of 2015 a lot of the focus of the administration of Smith has been on downtown revitalization, but his Democratic opponent Broderick calls the city's heart despicable (de la Bastide, Anderson Herald-Bulletin). The revitalization of downtown Anderson was just one of the issues discussed by the two opponents during a debate Tuesday night in the City Building auditorium sponsored by the League of Women Voters and The Herald Bulletin. Smith rolled out "Operation Downtown" last spring with proposals to be completed over the next 10 years. A major part of that plan is converting most of the downtown streets to accommodate two-way traffic. "There has been a cultural change," Broderick said Tuesday. "Over the years people came to like the idea of going to strip malls and the malls to shop." He said the downtown is despicable with trash-lined streets, weeds and cracked sidewalks and curbs. "I will work with existing businesses," he said. "I will have a person in economic development that is in constant contact with them to determine if they need assistance." Broderick said he is working on a downtown plan, one that will not cost \$40 million or \$50 million, adding he wants entertainment venues to attract people to the area. Broderick has also assailed Smith on street paving. "Streets stayed unpaved until before an election. Projects announced that there is no possible funding for. Lot of promises made without performance," Broderick said, ticking off criticisms of Smith. But the mayor defends his record, saying Anderson has turned a proverbial corner in economic development. **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. The key issues have ranged from affordable housing to bird droppings downtown. We expect Hamilton to easily prevail. **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: A mailer by the Indiana Democratic Party detailing Republican Tim Neese's voting record in the Indiana House has changed the dynamic of the race. The Neese campaign had been cruising to this point, but the campaign seems nervous heading into the homestretch. Moore had \$140,432.45 in contributions and other funds to work with between Jan. 1 and Oct. 9, \$24,742.50 of that left from 2014. As of Oct. 9, he still had \$43,982.16 in his campaign war chest. Neese had \$121,415.93 in contributions and other funds to work with in the same



period, including \$12,353.33 left from 2014. As of Oct. 9, the Republican had \$10,377.93 in funds left. In the latest reporting period, April 11 through Oct. 9, Moore had raised \$81,432.26. Neese raised \$100,097.55. In that same span, Moore had spent \$70,121.36 and Neese had spent \$100,046.22. The Elkhart FOP and the Elkhart Truth endorsed Neese last week. We think this race has tightened up. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

Evansville: Mayor Lloyd Winnecke is winning the fundraising battle against his main reelection opponent Gail Riecken by a wide margin, according to campaign finance reports filed Friday (Martin, Evansville Courier & Press). Winnecke, a Republican, has raised \$1.13 million, three times Democrat Riecken's \$369,000. Of Winnecke's total, about \$846,000 has come in this year. In terms of cash on hand, Winnecke's report showed \$369,000, compared to about \$88,000 for Riecken. Winnecke said his fundraising reflects a variety of donors and donations. According to his campaign, Winnecke's fund brought in 528 contributions of \$100 or less and 1,167 total givers, including 996 contributions of less than \$1,000. "It shows a broad base of support, and it shows a majority of people willing to make political contributions think the city is on the right path," Winnecke said. "We have small donors, and we have large donors." A late dynamic in the campaign was the news that Republican council candidate Jack Schriber had a sexual relationship with a student years ago. Winnecke asked Schriber to end his campaign, which he did, but Riecken used the issue at Thursday's debate, suggesting a coverup. "I am, more than anything, concerned about what I think is a knowledge on the part of the administration of the issue prior to what has been revealed to us in public," she said. Winnecke is still favored, but we'll be watching to see if the the Schriber affair further impacts this campaign. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Winnecke.

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: The Elkhart Truth and Goshen News have endorsed Democrat Councilman Jeremy Stutsman. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Stutsman.

Fort Wayne: Mayor Henry raised \$499,910 for the reporting period and has raised \$1.1 million for the campaign, with \$402,000 cash on hand, compared to \$198,758 for Councilman Mitch Harper and \$229,787 for the cycle, with \$76,000 cash on hand. The money is indicative that Henry is comfortable moving in the homestretch of the campaign. "I'm confident we'll have the resources needed to share the facts and get out the vote on Nov. 3." Henry stated. Harper said he's focused on small, local donors, rather than large companies or donors from out of state. "I think it shows who's relying on large donors and

who is relying a little more on the grass-roots campaign," Harper said, stating that less than a tenth of the contributions to his campaign were from outside Allen County. "I think we're on the verge of a pretty good victory," he said. We think Henry returns for a third term.

Facing a crowd of Fort Wayne residents and elected officials at IPFW's Walb Student Union on Monday night, Fort Wayne's two mayoral candidates fielded questions pertaining to community development, public safety and the city's future (Gong, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). The hourlong event was the first and only time this campaign season that Mayor Tom Henry and Councilman Mitch Harper, R-4th, will square off in a formal televised debate. The winner of a coin toss for the first question, Harper wasted no time attacking Henry on the city's growth, saying there are 4,000 to 5,000 fewer jobs in Fort Wayne than in 2007, when Henry was elected to office. "The mayor has talked throughout this campaign only of the unemployment rate," Harper said. "While we're very close to what the state of Indiana is on unemployment rate, the fact is, today Indiana is employing more people than it ever has before, and Fort Wayne, we're at a lower number of employees than we had eight years ago." Henry disagreed, saying 5,000 jobs have been created in Fort Wayne since 2011 and noting that the city's unemployment rate is 4.1 percent, the lowest it's been in 10 years. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Henry.

Indianapolis: Democrat Joe Hogsett has maintained a huge money lead and has dominated on the airwaves. Hogsett raised \$3,891,958 this year and had \$862,0422 in cash on hand as of last Friday. Brewer raised \$891,041 since Jan. 1 and had \$192,101 left. Mayor Greg Ballard cut a TV ad for Brewer, noting his 2007 upset victory came with even less money than Brewer has. But Ballard had a tax revolt that propelled his campaign, and Brewer doesn't have that kind of issue tailwind. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Hogsett.

Jeffersonville: Republican Jeffersonville Mayor Mike Moore is facing a tough challenge from Councilman Dennis Julius, though he announced a \$35 million development project for the city's Veteran's Parkway area a week ago. Moore's first term has been volatile, with the city council investigating his use of a municipal credit card, and another where police were called to his city hall office to break up a confrontation with his ex-wife. The mayor refused in 2012 to address local media questions on whether he had an extramarital affair. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

Lebanon: Republican Matt Gentry upset Mayor Huck Lewis in the primary, and now faces Democratic school board member Michele Thomas, who was slated this summer. Both candidates described the city as at a "crossroads" in an IndyStar story. Gentry is the son of Mike Gentry, head of the House Republican Campaign Committee and a partner in the Mark It Red campaign firm. Thomas has lived in Lebanon for 12 years and served on

the school board for seven years, two as president. Normally the Republican would be favored in this heavily GOP city, but worth watching is whether allies of Mayor Lewis cross over and vote for Thomas. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly campaigned with the Democrat earlier this month. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Gentry.

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:** Leans Seitz.

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, the city's transportation director and a current Grant County commissioner, has raised \$80,000 and is running ads on cable TV. Alumbaugh has conducted a daily door-to-door campaign, so his ground game has been strong. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Lawson.

New Albany: Democratic Mayor Jeff Gahan defeated challenger David White with 60% and faces Republican Kevin Zurschmiede. Since he was first elected as mayor in 2011, Gahan has taken on large projects along with the city council. Such projects include a \$19 million bond that covered the cost of a water park that opened this summer, improvements to Binford Park, and a \$5 million indoor multipurpose sports complex on Silver Street (Louisville Courier-Journal). Gahan has faced some criticism from his opponents for spending on those projects, but he argues that assets such as these make New Albany an attractive place to live. "We're not finished yet," he said. "We've been able to do a lot of positive things for the people of New Albany, but we still see lots of infrastructure that needs to be improved." Zurschmiede, a contractor and real estate broker, is adamant that more people would want to live and work in New Albany if city codes were better enforced and crime dropped. Zurschmiede can give

dozens of local examples illustrating his frustration. As he's knocked on doors, campaigning through the neighborhoods he's lived in, Zurschmiede said there's been a trend — people don't feel safe and aren't happy with how the city looks. "I think a huge part of it is pride in ownership, and our community has lost pride," Zurschmiede said. His passion for improving New Albany started when he won a one-year term on the council in 2006, beating six opponents. He's been the lone Republican on the council since. He's often had a dissenting vote among the council and against the mayor. This will be another one to keep an eye on. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Gahan.

Michigan City: There are three candidates for mayor in Michigan City, which hasn't elected a Republican to the seat in more than 40 years (Maddux, NWI Times). Democratic incumbent Ron Meer, though, is just as busy as ever on the campaign trail. "You got to work hard no matter who your opponent is," said Meer, who's hoping for a second term. He's opposed by Republican Ken Behrendt and Libertarian Nick Hamill. Meer, 50, was elected in 2011 after losing his position with the sanitary district for reporting to the state a host of violations that contributed to years of raw sewage overflows into Lake Michigan. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Meer.

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. The city's debt was a topic of debate between the two candidates running for mayor this week (NWI Times). Each charged the other with running up the city's debt. Snyder accused Clancy of approving more debt for the city during his tenure as a city councilman than he has during his nearly four years as mayor. Snyder said during the debate that during Clancy's tenure on the council, Clancy voted for debt totaling \$26.5 million, while Snyder has added only \$21.5 million to the city's debt level. Clancy accused Snyder of doubling the city's debt while in office, giving the city "one of the highest debt levels in the state." **Horse Race Status:** Leans Clancy.

Richmond: The Richmond Palladium-Item endorsed Democrat Dave Snow, but Republican Kyle Ingram was able to land the endorsement of the firefighters PAC. Normally the unions have backed Democratic candidates. Retiring Mayor Sally Hutton offered to endorse Snow, but he turned her down. Snow didn't run a yard sign campaign, believing signage was bad for the environment, so he is using pumpkins with his name printed on them. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Ingram.

Terre Haute: Republican Mayor Duke Bennett has been endorsed by the police and firefighters. He appears to have endured a number of stories about the city's budget deficits. Democrat Vigo County Councilman Mark Bird, it appears, has not been able to pull together his fractured party or make sufficient headway on the budget issues. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Bennett. ❖

Setting road funding record straight

By DAVID LONG

INDIANAPOLIS – Having been involved in public service on the local and state levels for nearly 28 years, I've seen my share of wild claims tossed around by sparring political opponents.

Usually, these can be dismissed for the politically motivated attacks they are, but occasionally they fall so far beyond the pale that a response is required.

That's the case with the current coordinated attack from Indiana Democrats on the state of road funding in Indiana. Interestingly, they have chosen this as a political issue, despite having no plan of their own, and consistently opposing Indiana's major road funding accomplishments in recent years.



Finding ways to pay for roads continues to be a challenge facing Indiana and every other state in the nation. But as someone who has been involved in our historic infrastructure accomplishments over the last decade, I think it's important to remind Hoosiers of the facts.

When former Gov. Mitch Daniels came into office in January 2005, he inherited a \$3 billion road infrastructure gap, equivalent at the time to about 10 years' worth of road construction.

With the support of Republican majorities in the General Assembly, Daniels responded by undertaking an historic infrastructure initiative called Major Moves.

Made possible by the long-term lease of the Indiana Toll Road that included an up-front cash payment to the state of \$3.8 billion, Major Moves paid for a decade of road construction across the state, without a penny of new taxes or debt.

The accomplishments have been real: The U.S. 24 "Fort to Port" project in Northeast Indiana. The I-80/I-94 interchange in Northwest Indiana. I-69 in Southwest Indiana. U.S. 31 improvements in Central and Northern Indiana. The State Road 25 Hoosier Heartland Corridor. The Ohio River Bridges project in Southern Indiana. The list goes on and on.

These are just a few of the projects that would likely still be nothing more than proposals on paper if not for Major Moves. Instead, they are real roads that are carrying Hoosier motorists every day and have become part of the economic successes we've experienced as a state in recent years.

While outside observers have acknowledged Major Moves for the innovative public works accomplishment that it's been, Indiana Democrats have criticized it every step of the way. The legislation authorizing Major Moves received just two Democrat votes in the Indiana Senate and none in the House of Representatives.

None!

Yet even today, after billions of dollars in road improvements across the state, Democrats continue to slam Major Moves while offering virtually no alternative ideas for funding our transportation needs.

The same is true for the transportation investments made by the General Assembly since Major Moves.

The two most recent state budgets have added more than \$1.2 billion in new road funding, including \$100 million each year for local roads and bridges. Combined, these budget plans received just five Democrat votes in the General Assembly.

In recent days, Gov. Mike Pence announced his 21st Century Crossroads plan, which proposes to provide an additional \$1 billion for roads over four years through a variety of funding sources, none of which involve a tax increase.

Unfortunately, Gov. Pence's proposal has been met with the typical rejection by Democrats in the General Assembly, without any substantive ideas for a workable alternative.

The suggestion that our state has been negligent in its road funding over the past decade is demonstrably false. Still, road funding is an issue that never goes away. The gas tax remains the key funding source for road building, and it continues to dwindle. Indiana, like every other state, needs some new answers.

This will require Democrats and Republicans to work together to find solutions, rather than the misleading partisan rhetoric we are currently witnessing.

Finding these answers will be a top priority in the upcoming legislative session. I look forward to rolling up our sleeves and getting to work. ❖

Long, R-Fort Wayne, is president pro tempore of the Indiana Senate.

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

Testing ‘quagmire’ confronts legislators

By MAUREEN HAYDEN
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

INDIANAPOLIS – Lawmakers face what one calls a “quagmire” in student testing. Not only are they unsure how much time students spend taking standardized exams, local school officials are still awaiting results of last spring’s statewide exams.



Education officials pin the blame for the delay on the state’s outside testing company, CTB McGraw Hill, which has struggled

to finish grading the yearly exams. Some Republicans are blaming Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz, a Democrat.

A new delay arose earlier this month, when the testing company revealed difficulties evaluating scores depending on whether students took the test on paper or online.

Results, first expected before the start of the school year in August, may now not be available until January. The delay has had significant impact: Among other things, it means the state has yet to set cut scores – the point that differentiates between those who pass and those who fail.

“Right now, they’re so late, it screws up everything up,” said Rep. Tony Cook, R-Cicero, a former school principal, during a Monday meeting in the Statehouse.

Teachers and principals “are screaming” for results to be delivered before the school year starts, said Cook, so that they can use the data to develop teaching plans and decide teacher pay for the year.

Sen. Jeff Raatz, R-Centerville, called the current situation with the state’s standardized test, ISTEP Plus, a “quagmire.”

He and other Republicans want to mandate that Ritz turn over results of the test soon after exams are administered in the spring.

Lawmakers looking at the contentious issue of assessments in Indiana’s public schools also called for an accounting of time spent on mandatory exams.

Rep. Bob Behning, R-Indianapolis, pushed for the measure after hearing parents and teachers complain bitterly about over-testing to a legislative committee studying education issues.

“It’s important for us to find out what’s reality and what’s perception,” said Behning, chairman of the House Education Committee, who has been a testing advocate.

A recommendation approved by the study committee calls for a survey of the time that students are required, by grade, to participate in statewide testing or tests administered at the district level.

The ISTEP plus, which cost the state \$35 million to administer, ballooned from 9 to 13 hours in length last spring before it was reined back in.

In addition to that test, districts administer their own evaluations – some on a weekly basis - tied to the state’s evolving academic standards, Behning said.

The effort to quantify testing time also comes as the Obama administration calls for less high-stakes testing.

Over the weekend, the U.S. Department of Education released a “Testing Action Plan” that recommends a cap on standardized assessments to no more than 2 percent of the time a student spends in class.

The plan calls on Congress to “reduce over-testing” as it reviews how the nation’s public schools spend their federal dollars.

Behning estimates that Indiana’s ISTEP test – which has grown in length through the years -- plus other state-mandated exams, such a reading assessment given to all third-graders, may account for 1 percent of classroom time.

But that doesn’t include a range of additional tests that individual schools also give their students, such as the National Assessment of Education Progress.

That exam is considered by experts to be more rigorous than ISTEP Plus, and some school corporations consider it a better measure of college readiness.

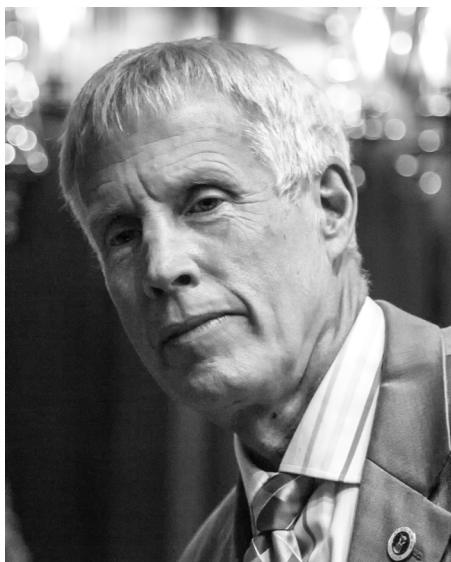
Standardized testing in

Indiana has come under fire, especially by teachers’ unions, because of the increasingly high-stakes nature of the tests. Results of ISTEP Plus help

determine teacher pay and can result in more dollars for high-performing school districts.

Indiana’s third-grade reading test, known as I-READ, and the math and English assessments of high school seniors also determine whether students can move on to the next grade or graduate.

The Obama administration is also calling for more purposeful testing – using assessments to help parents and teachers better measure a student’s progress and craft a plan for those who fall behind. ❖



House Education Chairman Bob Behning is seeking “reality” versus “perception” on testing. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

Millennial Republican calls for big tent focus

By MAUREEN HAYDEN
CNHI State Reporter

PERU, Ind. – Ethan Manning can trace his interest in politics to the day he checked out the book “Facts and Fun about Presidents” from this small town’s library and quickly became a fan of Teddy Roosevelt.



By age 9, he was following the presidential race and wishing he was old enough to vote for George W. Bush. At 18, he was traveling the state and stumping for GOP congressional candidates.

At 21, he was staffing a district office for U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, before moving onto to stump for Gov. Mike Pence.

And, at 22, he was elected chairman of the local Republican Party in his home county. Last year, voters put him on the Miami County Council.

“I think I was born a Republican,” said Manning, now 23.

He plans to stay that way, as he juggles his paying job as an auctioneer and real estate broker, plus work on the family cattle farm.

He aspires to higher office in years to come. But he also worries that his party isn’t doing enough to keep people like him, millennials, ages 19 to 30, who are far less likely than older generations to identify as Republicans.

“We need to be a lot more inclusive as a party,” said Manning. “I believe in the ‘big tent’ philosophy.”

It was a bit of pun.

The county GOP chairman’s office is located in the Peru Circus City Festival complex, located under a big tent-like roof, which celebrates the city’s past as winter headquarters to seven of the world’s major circuses.

Manning fears the Republican presidential primary has turned into a circus gone bad. Leading candidate Donald Trump may be entertaining, but Manning calls him “damaging for the Republican brand.”

Manning said Trump’s anti-immigration rhetoric – he’s called undocumented Mexican immigrants “criminals,

drug dealers and rapists” – was particularly alarming.

Manning said he’s read the so-called autopsy report, commissioned by Reince Priebus, chairman of the Republican National Committee, in the wake of President Obama’s 2012 reelection.

The authors delivered scathing criticism of a party that has marginalized itself from an increasingly diverse voter base, making it increasingly difficult for Republicans to win a presidential election in the near future.

Especially important to Manning was the report’s finding that young voters see the GOP as “scary,” “narrow-minded” “out of touch” and, most painfully, a party of “stuffy old men.”

“On the national level, we’ve got a perception problem, there’s no denying that,” he said.

Manning describes himself as “a realistic conservative,” likening his views to this of two of his political heroes, Lugar and former Gov. Mitch Daniels.

He appreciated Lugar’s willingness to work across the aisle, which got the senator in trouble with party ideologues in his failed 2012 reelection campaign.

He also appreciated Daniels’ 2010 call to fellow Republicans for a “truce” on divisive social issues so they could focus on fiscal ones. That call got Daniels in trouble with party ideologues, too.

But that resonated for Manning, who comes from a part of the state hit hard by the 2008 recession and still in recovery.

He’d like to hear Republicans talk less about opposition to gay rights, for example, and more about their opposition to crushing student-loan debt.

“Economic issues affect 100 percent of the people,” he said. “If anything, we need to be focusing more in economic issues.”

Personally, Manning said he’d like to focus on getting more young people engaged in the political process.

It won’t be easy.

Recent studies of millennial voters, including one this year by the Institute of Politics at Harvard, found that few believe voting is an effective means of changing society.

“I think the opposite way,” Manning said. “Whether we like it or not, government touches almost every part of our lives. What we need is more good people serving in government.” ❖



Maureen Hayden covers the Indiana Statehouse for CNHI’s newspapers and websites. Reach her at mhayden@cnhi.com.

Balkanizing the Republican Party

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO – My week begins the same way every Monday morning. At 7, I sit at my desk and plan the week ahead. My planning is simple. I divide my “to do” list up into three levels of priority. Items classified as “A” get my full attention until completed. They have the highest priority and most define who I am and what it is that I do. “B” items are completed only after the “A” items are finished. They are tasks that are worthy but don’t rise to the urgency of changing my focus to accomplish them.

The final classification is “C.” These are the “round to it” items that may eventually get done when I get around to it or when they rise in status.



Some might say that this slavery to a priority classification system makes me dull, boring and inflexible. I find that it provides me with the focus to stay on track when the daily world around me starts to unravel and the noise of distractions becomes deafening.

Politics is much the same as planning your week. Your “A” classified items are what amount to your core beliefs. You should plan your every action to the completion and realization of your core beliefs. If you fail to focus on your core beliefs, you will be doomed to ultimate failure.

The ultimate problem which I see as a severe threat to the Republican Party is a consistent failure to focus on our core beliefs. We are prone, at all levels of government, to wander out into the weeds and lose our way.

I don’t believe that this philosophical wandering is caused by a lack of talent by our Republican leaders, who are intelligent, dynamic and talented. No, the problem is not caused by a shortage of talent. I believe that the primary problem of the Republican Party, on all levels, is caused by a failure to define a set of unwavering core beliefs, without which you are left with petty squabbling and a daily battle over the direction of your party and country.

History is full of examples of great empires doomed to failure by their inability to rally the disparate corners of their empire behind a unifying cause or belief. Hatred of a common enemy or demonization of an ethnic or religious group might unify a diverse people temporarily, but ultimately, lack of a universal commonality doomed the empires to failure.

Nowhere in history is this better illustrated than the rise, mutation of and eventual disintegration of the Hapsburg Empire. Author Simon Winder tells a fascinat-

ing story of the empire in his book, “Danubia: A Personal History of the Hapsburg Empire.” Born from Charlemagne’s desire to reclaim the former Byzantine Empire, the Hapsburg family eventually hammered an impressive empire together through warfare, force, intimidation and economic pressure.

After nearly 400 years of rule, the empire morphed into the Austro-Hungarian Empire, held together only by a need for common defense and a common currency. Eventually, comprising different religious beliefs, ethnicities and languages and with no unifying ties, it was doomed to extinction. Its flashpoint was the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo by a young Bosnian (pan-Slavic) revolutionary. The outcome of the “cobbled together” Hapsburg Empire was the horror of World War I.

The disintegration of the Hapsburg Empire has been referred to as “balkanization,” defined by Webster as a “breakup into smaller and often hostile units.”

The Republican Party is perilously close to going down the path to balkanization. The roots of John Boehner’s demise as speaker of the House, Kevin McCarthy’s failure to form an effective coalition, and Paul Ryan’s Kabuki dance with the “Freedom Caucus” all present whiffs of the putrid smell of balkanization.

There’s an old saying, “When you are up to your ass in alligators, it’s easy to forget that your mission was to drain the swamp.” Such could be the malodorous destiny of the next speaker of the House, his primary focus being distracted by disparate interests, each taking their own bites.

I have always believed that a political party can have singleness of purpose and yet allow for a wide range of ancillary beliefs. We live in times today that make rallying behind a set of core beliefs nearly impossible. Today, with the destructive capability of any ideologue who owns a computer, to any billionaire willing to finance a cause, it is almost imperative that you not only get your “A” priorities agreed upon, but also your “B” and “C” priorities must be exactly the same or any prospective leader risks being vilified and pilloried by hundreds of special interests, lobbies or caucuses.

The National Republican Party is plagued today by people who would be willing to risk losing everything to espouse a narrow philosophy. They would willingly risk years of a further rush to Socialist ideology in order to advance their agendas. We have been plagued by an Obama second term because millions of voters didn’t vote for Mitt Romney because he didn’t match their standards of religious purity or didn’t adhere to an inflexible set of doctrines. Because of this balkanization of beliefs, we have been saddled with a dangerous second Obama term. How are you liking it now?

On a state level, a winning coalition was forged by Gov. Mitch Daniels, House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate Pro-Tem David Long around a desire to reverse Indiana’s long slide into government by wasteful tax and

spend. A common agenda of economic prosperity, lower taxes, government reform and educational advancement provided the core beliefs necessary to carry Republicans to overwhelming victory and majorities. Today, with the victories of the core beliefs a fading memory, we risk losing it all over non-core issues. To lose it all over the narrow agendas of a few special interest demagogues would seem to be the height of folly.

We live in a country with an \$18 trillion national debt. It is a virtual mathematical certainty that the growth and trajectory of our debt is unsustainable. We live in a very dangerous world filled with a wide variety of people intent on destroying us and our way of life. Our economy has moved from a powerful manufacturing focus to a declining income service-based economy. Public

education is failing in much of our country. There is less middle in our middle class as we relentlessly move to a nation of haves and have nots. We spend trillions on social programs with no dividends to show for it. These issues should provide plenty of areas where the formation of a renewed set of core beliefs could rally our party and help save our nation.

Here's hoping that Paul Ryan as speaker of the House and whoever our eventual presidential nominee shall be will stop the balkanization of beliefs and renew the focus our Republican Party on the issues that truly matter to the American people. ❖

Dunn is chairman of the Howard County Republicans.

Hoosier hype debunked

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Every administration, regardless of political party, claims remarkable success in promoting job growth in Indiana. If times are bad, we do a sensational job, given the difficulties we face. If times are good, Hoosier job creation out-paces (pick from the following) the nation, Illinois, Kentucky, Burma, or Antarctica.



However, I looked at the data after the recent self-congratulatory claims from the State Office for Ooze. Instead of focusing on the latest release of data from a volatile monthly data source, I chose annual data for two decades (from 1994 to 2004 and 2004 to 2014). This gives us a firmer view of how Indiana has been doing compared to the nation.

As many have noted, job growth has been slowing. At the national level, the number of jobs grew by 17 percent from 1994 to 2004. In the next decade (2004 to 2014), U.S. jobs grew by 10 percent. For those two decades, Indiana's job growth rate was 9 and 4 percent respectively.

Over that 20-year period, jobs in the U.S. grew by 29 percent while Indiana advanced only 13 percent. Where was the press release admitting the Hoosier state ranked 47th among the 50 states in the rate of job growth from 1994 to 2014?

Instead, we get monthly and annual trumpeting of progress made without context. Yes, Indiana may add jobs in a given month, but how are we doing among the

states? In the years from 1994 to 2014 we fell from having 2.3 percent to barely 2 percent of all American jobs.

"Not much," a state apologist would say. But that "little difference" is the equivalent of 950,000 jobs over those 20 years. That failure, to just keep pace with the nation, means our addition of 442,000 jobs between '94 and '14 was 53 percent short of mediocrity.

At the same time, the kinds of companies employing Hoosiers were changing, and changing in ways different from the ways national employment changed. We don't have the space for a detailed analysis, but between 2004 and 2014 we lost 26,000 construction jobs or 12 percent of the jobs in that industry while the nation dropped only 7 percent.

Although both Indiana and the U.S. lost about 12 percent (one in eight) of their durable goods manufacturing jobs, we saw greater percentage declines in computer and electronic products than did the nation. This was opposite to Indiana's lesser percentage losses in primary metals and motor vehicle manufacturing.

Indiana had job losses in every category of retail shops, while some types of retail grew at the national level. Despite the Great Recession, finance and insurance jobs grew by 22 percent nationally, but only 9 percent in the Hoosier state. Food service and drinking places had job growth of 20 percent across America, but only 10 percent here.

Parents and school counselors should pay attention to the numbers, even if Hoosier policy makers continue to delude themselves. ❖

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Family dynamics drive poverty, income inequality

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – A recent book by Harvard professor Robert Putnam is causing quite a stir among online scribblers. His book tells a familiar story similar to that of MIT economist David Autor and that of Charles Murray of the American Enterprise Institute. To faithful readers of this column it is not a new story, nor does it stretch common sense or the accumulated wisdom of the ages. In fact,



the need for this story to be told convincingly through statistical research is a damning indictment of popular culture and fashionable thinking.

The fundamental observation is that, over the past half century, the collapse of the American family has generated terrible economic and social consequences that have profoundly negative effects on future generations. While the research

is more nuanced than that, and the authors do not agree in remedies, the ultimate implications are clear. Three of these research findings will dominate American political, economic and social discourse over the next century.

First, two-parent families are, on average, far more successful in raising successful kids (by almost any measure) than any other arrangement. Second, most pathologies of poverty and its immediate causes can be linked to bearing children outside of a stable, two-parent family. Third, social mobility among children (especially boys) is terribly stunted in single parent households.

Most folks will implicitly understand these truths. To do so is evidence that your intellect has not been drained by the vagaries of modern social science research. It is high treason in academic conferences to suppose that bad economic outcomes may be the consequence of poor personal choices. These folks look elsewhere for an explanation, and Neo-Marxist class conflict theory is far more pliable and warming, which is a feature it shares with fresh cow manure. But how bad is the situation?

Sometime this decade, most children in America will be born into households without a father around. On average, these children will graduate from high school but not step foot in college, resulting in incomes far below average. Kids born to married couples, even if they later separate, have far better outcomes. They will, on average, go to college and graduate, earn above-average incomes,

and importantly marry before having their own kids. The effect of single parenting is a dismal, self-perpetuating dichotomy.

Reading this, some folks will argue that marriage is harder now than before. They may argue that single-parent households stem from too many men being incarcerated or from poor women lacking unequal access to birth control. They may argue that poor teens are steered towards childbearing as opposed to the drudgery of low-wage work because of a lack of economic advantage. I disagree with these sentiments.

In the economic catastrophe of the 1930s, out-of-wedlock births were lower than they were in the 1970s. In the racially unequal 1950s, out-of-wedlock births by black women occurred at lower rates than those among white women. Although divorce has led to a reduction of spouses trapped in abusive relationships, the general trend of family dynamics today is not that two-parent families are forming and dissolving, it's that two-parent families are failing to form at all.

We hear a great deal about criminal reform, income inequality and other problems. These are actually symptoms. Until family dynamics improve, we can expect poverty, income equality and social mobility to get worse.



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Dunes liquor license divides the Region

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – Never, perhaps, has an issue divided Northwest Indiana like the proposal for upgrading the pavilion at the Indiana Dunes State Park, including approval of a liquor license.



A group of environmentalists living near the park have fought the project, including making threats against the three principals who make up Pavilion Partners, the group behind the renovation plans.

The plan is to renovate the 80-year pavilion that has been virtually ignored by the

state, with the intent of opening a fine-dining restaurant with the help of a liquor license. Included in the project are plans to build a banquet center adjacent to the pavilion on existing concrete.

The project received rave reviews from a host of organizations including the Northwest Forum Inc., area chambers of commerce, the South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority and the Porter County Visitors and Tourism Bureau.

But the opponents berated the Porter County Alcoholic Beverage Board, which denied the liquor license after first arriving at a deadlocked vote.

The Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission then upheld the local vote. But Pavilion Partners, led by Porter County developer Chuck Williams, came firing this week and filed an appeal to the state agency's decision. The appeal will be heard by an administrative law judge assigned by the state.

In announcing the appeal, Williams said, "There was a concerted effort to confuse the public by disseminating inaccurate information about the project and those involved with it.

"We hope this appeal will allow our request to be heard in a forum where it can be considered based solely on the facts and not impacted by the malicious and libelous propaganda that some have put out there.

"We never expected thje kind of personal attacks that my partners and I, along with our families and businesses, have experienced in the last few months. Sadly, many of those opposed to this project have engaged in an erroneous, slanderous and short-sighted campaign aimed at misleading the public."

The Indiana Dunes is the only state park where alcohol is prohibited. But Pavilion Partners points out that liquor would be allowed only in the pavilion and not on the beaches.

There was a problem two decades ago at the Dunes when Chicago street gangs, fueled by liquor, were engaged in fights at the park. That led to the booze ban. A fine-dining restaurant at the park would be unique for the southern shore of Lake Michigan.

The only existing restaurants on Lake Michigan are part of the casinos in Gary, Hammond and East Chicago. They are very expensive.

Many remember the Red Lantern restaurant in Beverly Shores. It was razed as part of a federal plan to eliminate all structures on the water in the national park. ❖

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.

Photography With Punch
A Fresh Look At Indiana Politics Through The Lens Of Mark Curry
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Mark Halperin, Bloomberg Politics: A virulent strain of Clinton Derangement Syndrome, which scientists and Republicans thought had been wiped out at the end of the last century, is now inflicting millions of conservative Americans. Some Republicans so detest Hillary Clinton they are badly underestimating how likely she is, at this point in the campaign, to be America's 45th president. Their denial is just as strong now as it was a month ago, before Clinton began a run of political victories that have enhanced her prospects, all while the roller derby/demolition derby that is the Republican nomination contest has continued to harm the GOP's chances of winning back the White House. To be sure, nothing ever happens in a linear or tidy fashion with the Clintons; she is certain to add more chapters to the Perils of Hillary saga before Election Day 2016. Even if Clinton is nominated, a strong Republican candidate could absolutely defeat her next November, with victory as simple as the party putting forth a nominee who is more likeable to voters and better on television. Indeed, many elite and grassroots Republicans believe Clinton's personality, which they can't stand, will keep her out of the Oval Office no matter what. But October has been good to Clinton: a glittering debate performance, the decision of potential rival Joe Biden not to run (greatly simplifying her path to the nomination), the vanquishing of Republicans during her daylong Benghazi hearing, and a solid turn at the Iowa Democratic Party's Jefferson-Jackson dinner Saturday night. All have improved Clinton's odds of cruising into the White House 12 months hence. ❖



Fred Barnes, Weekly Standard: Republicans are in trouble. A significant bloc regards their congressional leaders—House speaker John Boehner, Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell, and their underlings—as enemies. A quarter or more of grassroots Republicans think Donald Trump should be president. And to make things worse, Hillary Clinton has a glide path to the Democratic presidential nomination in 2016, making her tougher for any Republican to beat. Paul Ryan's elevation as speaker, assuming it happens this week, will ease the furor of dissident Republicans. But the differences between them and GOP leaders, including Ryan, have not gone away. When issues like increasing the debt limit and new spending arise, Ryan and the archconservative faction may split angrily. The contrast with Democrats is striking. They're united. Donald Trump has thrilled many rank and file Republicans. Ron Brownstein of National Journal says the blue-collar, noncollege wing of the Republican primary electorate has "consolidated" around Trump. Chances are, these Republicans won't cut and run from Trump any time soon, even when he tweets that Iowa Republicans who put Ben Carson ahead of him in a poll last week have "issues in the brain." That means Trump, with a solid base, could win the Republican nomination—not likely, but possible. That

would probably be a disaster for the Republican party and the candidates for the House and Senate below Trump on the ballot. Trump's negatives are so high his prospects of beating Clinton in the general election are very poor. ❖

Tim Ethridge, Evansville Courier & Press: We occasionally run across stories that we wish we didn't have to pursue — that, in fact, we wish had never occurred. Such was the case on Tuesday morning when we broke the news that former educator and then-current Evansville City Council candidate Jack Schriber had been investigated this year for sexual misconduct with a Central High School student in the mid-1970s. I did not write "allegedly occurred" because, in the course of the investigation, Schriber put into writing his regret for "sexual boundaries" being blurred and the student becoming a victim. There has been outrage. Much is directed, rightly, at Schriber. He broke a trust, with at least the one student and later with a community that embraced him for his positive outlook and energy. We asked Mayor Lloyd Winnecke the direct question: When and how much did you know? Winnecke asked Schriber to step away from the campaign just before we broke the story on Tuesday. On Thursday, he told us he was informed of the investigation when it started but not that Schriber had confessed. Winnecke said he remained silent in order to let the police do their job.

That's a stock answer when we seek information in any investigation, and Winnecke is firm in his belief he acted appropriately. ❖

Maureen Dowd, New York Times: Nobody plays the victim like Hillary. She can wield that label like a wrecking ball. If her husband humiliates her with a girlfriend in the Oval Office, Hillary turns around and uses the sympathy engendered to launch a political career. If her Republican opponent gets in her space in an overbearing way during a debate, she turns around and uses the sympathy engendered to win a Senate seat. If conservatives hold a Salem witch trial under the guise of a House select committee hearing, she turns around and uses the sympathy engendered to slip into the HOV lane of a superhighway to the presidency. Hillary Clinton is never more alluring than when a bunch of pasty-faced, nasty-tongued white men bully her. And she was plenty alluring during her marathon session on Thursday with Republican Lilliputians, who were completely oblivious to the fact that Hillary is always at her most potent when some Teanderthal is trying to put her in her place. Trey Gowdy and his blithering band of tea-partiers went on a fishing expedition, but they forgot to bring their rods — or any fresh facts. They crawled out of the ooze into the sea of cameras, blinking and obtuse. Ohio's Jim Jordan, bellowing. South Carolina's Gowdy, sweating. Alabama's Martha Roby, not getting the joke. And Indiana's Susan Brooks, allowing that "most of us really don't know much about Libya." ❖

Boehner, Obama budget deal

WASHINGTON – House Republican leaders introduced legislation just before midnight on Monday, finalizing a two-year budget agreement between Congressional leaders and the White House. The introduction sets up a vote as early as Wednesday on the bipartisan budget deal which would increase military and domestic spending and avert a potentially catastrophic default in exchange for long-term spending cuts (Washington Post). The 144-page bill, which is the result of weeks of negotiations between the White House and Congressional leaders, would increase spending by \$80 billion over two years and would increase the federal borrowing limit through March 15, 2017. A Wednesday vote all but ensures the budget deal will be one of the last acts for House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) who intends to step down from the speakership by Friday. The legislation is expected to be the primary issue discussed on Tuesday morning during a weekly closed-door meeting of House Republicans. But it remains unclear if House conservatives will support the deal, leaving Boehner and his allies to spend his final days in office rallying support for a potentially unpopular agreement. If he is successful the deal could clear the slate for House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) who is expected to be elected speaker later this week. The agreement includes about \$80 billion in additional spending over two years, divided equally between defense and domestic programs.

Conservatives not happy with deal

WASHINGTON – The ink isn't even dry on a tentative two-year budget agreement, but conserva-

tives in Congress are already pouncing (Politico). GOP leaders from both ends of the Capitol met privately with their rank-and-file Monday evening to outline the general contours of the emerging agreement between Congress and the White House. It would boost defense and domestic spending over the next two years, and lift the nation's debt limit through March 2017 — thereby eliminating the twin threats of a government shutdown and a debt default until after the November 2016 elections. But conservative lawmakers, eager to keep the strict spending caps from a 2011 budget agreement

intact, were very skeptical of the deal after they emerged from close-door briefings with their leaders on Monday night. Asked about the tentative agreement after the briefing, Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions replied: "My knees quiver at the sound." "Looking at the information that we've gathered so far, I'm not necessarily in a position where I think that's in the best interest of our country going forward," Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) told reporters. "It's just hard to justify that we're not figuring out how to clamp down on spending."

'Get a backbone' say mayors on guns

WASHINGTON – The mayors of America's cities are deeply concerned about rising crime and homicide rates—and deeply frustrated with the Congress' continued inaction on gun control amid a spate of mass shootings (Politico). Stronger gun regulation is needed right now, mayors say, and Congress has hung them out to dry. Senators and representatives "will not be able to escape responsibility for the deaths of innocent Americans," said Mayor Stephanie Miner of Syracuse, New York. "Failure to address an issue that amounts to slow-motion mass murder of American citizens, many of whom are black and brown, is political cowardice. Stand up! Do the right thing," said Mayor Sly James of Kansas City, Missouri.

Chula Vista Mayor Mary Salas said she had a simple message for Congress: "Get a backbone—do your job."

Evansville Council passes budget

EVANSVILLE – The 2016 budget approved Monday by City Council eliminated a blight elimination program and made cuts to a variety of items, including the Ford Center and Victory Theatre, public safety overtime pay, grants for nonprofit agencies and more (Martin, Evansville Courier & Press). One council member thought not even those cuts went far enough. The spending plan that emerged from a lengthy, chaotic council meeting passed in an 8-1 vote, but it seemed to leave no one happy. The council, in addition to about \$3.2 million in cuts negotiated with Mayor Lloyd Winnecke's administration, on Monday tacked on about \$1.7 million more.

Auditor sues over BlueIndy

INDIANAPOLIS – Marion County Auditor Julie Voorhies sued the city of Indianapolis on Monday over its contract with BlueIndy, saying the city illegally paid \$6 million to the electric car-sharing service (IBJ). The complaint over the contentious deal—which was filed in the Marion County Circuit Court and asks for a temporary ban on any future construction on city-owned land—comes a week before the city's elections. Voorhies is a Democrat; the BlueIndy deal was negotiated by aides to Republican Mayor Greg Ballard. Voorhies' office said she "had no choice but to file suit after repeated efforts to seek redress from the city of Indianapolis were unsuccessful." But Ballard's spokeswoman, Jen Pittman, called the lawsuit "nothing more than a stunt orchestrated to create headlines." "Taxpayers deserve better and so do the union workers whose jobs the auditor is threatening," Pittman said.

