



# The vanishing endangered incumbent

New Cook Partisan Index reveals an Indiana battleground for Congress likely a thing of the past

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Jim Jontz, Jill Long, Frank McCloskey, John Brademas, John Hiler, Baron Hill, Mike Sodrel, John Hostettler, Chris Chocola – the list of Hoosier members of Congress who ended their political careers in defeat over the past three decades is extensive.

Unless there are extraordinary political waves, the way Indiana's electoral process is trending, the congressional upset could become a rare event. Earlier this week, the Cook Political Report issued the 2017 version of the Cook Partisan Index and there are only



Democrat Baron Hill debates Republican Mike Sodrel in the 9th CD. Both experienced upset defeats as incumbents.

two Indiana districts in the single digit range. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky's 1st CD is +8 Democratic, and U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks' 5th CD is +9 Republican. The previous competitive district, U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski's 2nd CD, went from a +6 Republican in 2014 to a +11 Republican this year.

Remember the Bloody 8th? It's not so bloody anymore. When Cook came out with its first index in 1998, U.S. Rep. John Hostettler, who had defeated Democrat Frank McCloskey four years prior, sat in a +2.5

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## Cold beer curve ball

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – If there's been a curve ball in this waning session of the General Assembly, it's been the Ricker's cold beer controversy. And if key players aren't careful, this could signal a populist uprising in the age of Amazon, Trump and the anti-regulation fervor that has swept Indiana and the nation.



There is significant danger for the package liquor store industry and their lobby. As they attempt to defend the status quo, they risk an array of collateral damage. For instance, their attempts to thwart Ricker's in their legally obtained licenses at two stores in Columbus and Sheridan, they took aim at the



**“While we are seeing modest growth in revenues across our state, we must be cautious about the fact that projects have not always mirrored actual revenue experience.”**

*- Gov. Eric Holcomb, reaction to the April revenue forecast*



**Howey Politics Indiana**  
**WWHowey Media, LLC 405**  
**Massachusetts Ave., Suite**  
**300 Indianapolis, IN 46204**  
**www.howeypolitics.com**

**Brian A. Howey**, Publisher  
**Mark Schoeff Jr.**, Washington  
**Jack E. Howey**, Editor  
**Mary Lou Howey**, Editor  
**Thomas Curry**, Statehouse  
**Mark Curry**, photography

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HPI, HPI Daily Wire \$599  
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 Ray Volpe, Account Manager  
**317.602.3620**

email: HoweyInfo@gmail.com

**Contact HPI**

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

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Indiana Alcohol Tobacco Commission, and drew in Gov. Eric Holcomb, who up until this past month had been "laser focused" on his five-point agenda that didn't include cold beer. Instead, he stepped in to defend the conduct of this commission.

**It created headlines** over the past month and drew populist sentiments. Look no further than state Senate candidate Gary Snyder, who will challenge freshman Sen. Andy Zay, when he posted on Facebook, "As your next state senator, I will not vote to regulate the temperature of the beer you buy or what days you can buy it."

That could be the beginning of a 2018 cycle trend as Democrats attempt to claw back into relevance.

Bring the topic up in a room of average Hoosier Joe Sixpacks, and the notion that you can only buy cold beer at a package liquor store and not on Sunday brings derision. This is the age of Amazon, where people can order and buy just about anything, anytime, anywhere. It will be delivered to your front door, possibly soon by drone. This is an age where the Internet has changed everything, from how you buy your music, shoes, Christmas gifts and just about anything else. It has dramatically impacted the news media, higher education, state taxation, mobility, power and transportation.

**Over the past 15 years** or so, not only has the Amazonization of America occurred, there has been an explosion of vineyards, craft breweries and the transformation of grocery stores (and their pharmacies) that has opened up the sale of liquor, wine while perpetrating . . . warm beer.

Add in the anti-regulation environment that began here under Gov. Mitch Daniels, continued under Gov. Mike Pence, and has been embraced by President Trump, and what's transpired is a perfect storm of consumer demand and an assault on rules and regulations. Throw in cunning lawyers who found and exploited loopholes the package liquor store industry

knew existed years ago, and there will be news and controversy.

When it comes to the three-tiered alcohol system put in place overnight eight decades ago, these special interests now find themselves defending a status quo that seems absurd to the man on the street. The Average Joe can go to the Broad Ripple Brew Pub, the Oaken Barrel or Big Woods and quaff a couple of pints of beer on a Sunday afternoon, then



take home a couple of growlers. But our friend Joe can't go to the 7/11 and pick up a six of cold Budweiser.

**While Marsh, Kroger** and Martins have become literal package liquor stores, Joe can't go in and buy a cold 12-pack. On Sundays, he has to find a brewery or commercial vineyard, or cross into Michigan, Ohio or Illinois to buy cold bottled beer. Joe doesn't always plan ahead for that Sunday barbecue and this cold suds denial mocks and irritates him.

The 80-year-old three-tier system was thrust into place in 1933, with lessons learned two decades earlier, when brewers sold directly to taverns creating rampant consumption spurred on by saltpeter laced food. Prohibition brought about Al Capone and gangsterism, and when the epic social experiment finally fell apart and produced the 21st Amendment, the three-tier system was created to buffer the flow of alcohol, create a level of consumption control that promoted (to some degree) moderation, and taxation points.

There are some 12,000 points of access for alcohol in Indiana, and tens of thousands of suppliers worldwide. The three-tier system has been enduring because it allows the state to control access points, regulate and tax. Without it, the excise policing

would become a vastly larger force than is in place today.

The dilemma for the package store industry is that changing the temperature and Sunday restrictions will put them in direct competition with the big box stores. As one source told me, the more big box stores act like package stores, the more package stores will have to act like the big boxes. There will be price alterations and potentially specialty product deprivations.

**The real story here may be** the classic “follow-the-money angle.” One observer explained: The wholesalers play an influential role, but you can never tell what side they are really on. Example: Monarch Beverage/CEO Phil Terry claims to be “neutral” on the issue of Sunday sales, but underwrites the liquor store association run by Patrick Tamm to the tune of \$7,000, or \$84,000 per year. So, while claiming neutrality, they underwrite the biggest opponent of Sunday sales to the tune of about two average-salaried positions each year.

What’s the solution? Legislation by House Majority Leader Matt Lehman last year created a two-year study committee of the entire Title 7.1 three-tier system. The key players also include State Sen. Ron Alting and House Public Policy Chairman Ben Smaltz. That study is expected

to be completed in 2018, an election year.

Speaker Brian Bosma, Senate President David Long and others have described the evolved three-tier system as archaic and “antiquated.”

Bosma told the IBJ, “I really don’t have a problem with cold beer. We have to form a consensus over the next couple of weeks or there’s a potential for 5,000 new hard alcohol outlets ... throughout our state. For some that would be a great idea. I presume, once this gets into the hands of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking and some of the faith communities, once they figure out what this is, people will hear something different at home. We aren’t here to do just the will of what people think ought to be a good idea,” Bosma said. “We’re here to protect the public, to serve as their representatives, to dive deeply in these issues, and to try to do what’s best for all people in the state of Indiana.”

**The dilemma is that** in this populist environment, and in a new age of consumerism that has put entities like HHGregg, Payless Shoes, J.C. Penney and Sears on the endangered species list, there could be a political cost to those who simply seek to defend the status quo. ❖

## Partisan Index, from page 1

Republican district. It was +8 Republican in 2014 and is now a +15 Republican district today.

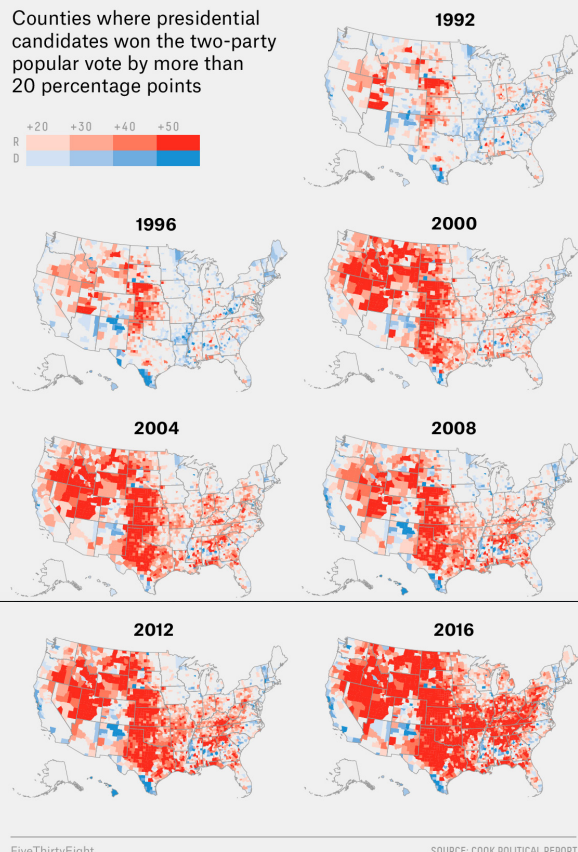
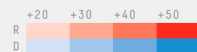
It’s a vast change with the maps that were drawn in 2011, compared to those that came about in 2001 and 1991. The Republican illusion is that the current maps are compact, hue to county lines and keep community of interests intact. But the fact is that on the U.S. House level, Indiana is no longer a competitive state. The same can be said for the Indiana General Assembly.

**“The most** striking House statistic in the last 20 years may be the decline of competitive districts, places where members have the greatest political incentives to work on a bipartisan basis,” writes David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report. “In 1998, our Partisan Voter Index scored 164 districts between D+5 and R+5, more than a third of the House, and greater than both the

number of strongly Democratic and strongly Republican seats.”

### More and more counties are uncompetitive

Counties where presidential candidates won the two-party popular vote by more than 20 percentage points



FiveThirtyEight

SOURCE: COOK POLITICAL REPORT

In the Hoosier context, in 1998 Cook rated four of our 10 districts in or close to that range: Democrat Rep. Tim Roemer’s CD3 at +5.5 Republican; Hostettler’s CD8 at +2.5 Republican; Democrat Rep. Lee Hamilton’s 9th at +3.2 Republican; and Democrat Rep. Julia Carson’s 10th at +4.4 Democrat.

Wasserman continues, “After the hyper-polarized 2016 election, there are only 72 districts between D+5 and R+5 – less than one sixth of the House and a 56% decline since 1997. This also represents a 20% decline from just four years ago, when there were 90 swing seats.”

**This is a distinct** departure from the maps drawn in 1991 and 2001 by a Republican Indiana Senate and a Democratic Indiana House.

In 2010, Republican Todd Young defeated Rep. Baron Hill 52-42%; Republican Larry Buc-

shon defeated State Rep. Trent Van Haaften in a seat vacated by U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth 57-37% (who replaced Evan Bayh when he abruptly pulled out of the U.S. Senate race); and U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly staved off Republican Jackie Walorski 48.2% to 46.8% in what was the Tea Party wave election.

**In 2006**, Rep. Chocola lost to Donnelly 54-46%, Ellsworth upset Hostettler 61-39%, and Hill returned to the 9th CD seat he lost two years earlier, defeating Rep. Mike Sodrel 50-45%. That was a Democratic wave year, brought on by opposition to President George W. Bush's Iraq War.

In 2002, there were three tight races, with Hostettler holding off Bryan Hartke 51-46%, Hill defeating Sodrel 51-46%, and Chocola defeating Jill Long Thompson 50-46%.

The key reason for this was the 2011 reapportionment, which Indiana Republicans controlled after retaking the Indiana House in 2010 with 60 seats. But Hoosiers and Americans are also self-sorting, moving into enclaves of like-minded people. These two factors combined and you have the polarization that has created an inert Washington, D.C.

Wasserman explains, "Of the 92 'swing seats' that have vanished since 1997, 83% of the decline has resulted from natural geographic sorting of the electorate from election to election, while only 17% of the decline has resulted from changes to district boundaries. More evidence voters are choosing sides with their feet: In the 2016 election, 78% of Democratic-leaning seats grew even more Democratic and 65% of Republican-leaning seats grew even more Republican. As a result, the two parties' House constituencies have drifted even farther apart; whereas the median

### Indiana's Cook Partisan Index Cook Political Report



#### 1998

Indiana 1: Pete Visclosky (D)	D +10.6
Indiana 2: David McIntosh (R)	R +7.3
Indiana 3: Tim Roemer (D)	R +5.5
Indiana 4: Mark Souder (R)	R +13.1
Indiana 5: Steve Buyer (R)	R +11.9
Indiana 6: Dan Burton (R)	R +23.8
Indiana 7: Ed Pease (R)	R +13.1
Indiana 8: John Hostettler (R)	R +2.5
Indiana 9: Lee Hamilton (D)	R +3.2
Indiana 10: Julia Carson (D)	D +4.4

#### 2008

Indiana 1: Pete Visclosky (D)	D +8
Indiana 2: Joe Donnelly (D)	R +2
Indiana 3: Mark Souder (R)	R +14
Indiana 4: Steve Buyer (R)	R +14
Indiana 5: Dan Burton (R)	R +17
Indiana 6: Mike Pence (R)	R +10
Indiana 7: André Carson (D)	D +14
Indiana 8: Brad Ellsworth (D)	R +8
Indiana 9: Baron Hill (D)	R +6

#### 2014

Indiana 1: Pete Visclosky (D)	D +10
Indiana 2: Jackie Walorski (R)	R +6
Indiana 3: Marlin Stutzman (R)	R +13
Indiana 4: Todd Rokita (R)	R +11
Indiana 5: Susan Brooks (R)	R +9
Indiana 6: Luke Messer (R)	R +12
Indiana 7: André Carson (D)	D +13
Indiana 8: Larry Buschon (R)	R +8
Indiana 9: Todd Young (R)	R +9

#### 2017

Indiana 1: Pete Visclosky (D)	D +8
Indiana 2: Jackie Walorski (R)	R +11
Indiana 3: James Banks (R)	R +18
Indiana 4: Todd Rokita (R)	R +17
Indiana 5: Susan Brooks (R)	R +9
Indiana 6: Luke Messer (R)	R +18
Indiana 7: André Carson (D)	D +11
Indiana 8: Larry Bucshon (R)	R +15
Indiana 9: Trey Hollingsworth (R)	R +13

Democratic-held seat had a D+7 PVI score in 1997, the median Democratic seat has a D+14 PVI score today. The median Republican-held seat had an R+7 PVI score in 1997; the median Republican-held seat has an R+11 PVI score today. In other words, the gap between the two parties' median districts has grown from 14 to 25 points."

Wasserman adds, "This is not to say redistricting hasn't had a big impact. Sorting has enhanced partisan mapmakers' ability to partition states into safe seats. And on a net basis, redistricting has helped bolster Republicans' edge in the House. The number of Republican (R+5 or greater) seats has grown by 14 as the result of changes to district lines, while the number of Democratic (D+5 or greater) seats has increased by just two. Democrats also suffer because their voters are disproportionately clustered on the map."

The Indiana "Exhibit A" on this are the two Democratic districts the CD1 confined to Lake and Porter counties, and the 7th confined to Democratic-trending Indianapolis.

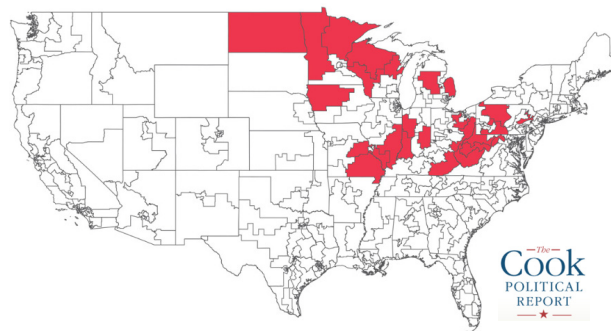
**"Overall, there are 241 House seats more Republican than the national average, and 194 seats more Democratic, mirroring the GOP's advantage in seats after 2016,"** Wasserman explains.

If there is irony in the Hoosier state of polarization, it is that while opinion leaders, Common Cause of Indiana, and even Republican House Speaker Brian Bosma, have all come out for an independent redistricting commission, Senate President Pro Tempore David Long has prevented legislation to be heard on the topic. Yet, Long has been an advocate for an

Article V Constitutional Convention, complaining that Washington has been too polarized to deal with issues such as a balanced budget amendment or immigration reform. In essence, Long has perpetuated the very forces that have created the Capitol Hill inertia.

It could have been a function of good government if the Republican congressional majorities displayed an ability to govern. But as the RyanCare debacle revealed,

### Top 25 Republican-Trending Districts, 2013-2017



soon to be augmented by Trump administration tax reform and infrastructure, the GOP can't. As people segregate and cluster themselves, and as the maps become more partisan, the Republican Party now has a wing that appears to be ungovernable.

**Not only that,** Republicans hold super majorities in the Indiana General Assembly with the House (70-30) and Senate (41-9), though Long, Bosma and Govs. Mitch Daniels, Mike Pence and now Eric Holcomb have displayed an ability to work together and actually solve tough policy questions. Beyond city halls, Indiana is on the verge of becoming a one-party state. Republicans also hold more than 75% of county offices, multiple sources have told Howey Politics Indiana.

This past winter, Bosma and Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane offered a redistricting bill, but House Elections Chairman Milo Smith refused it a vote in committee. Senate Republicans killed similar legislation by refusing to hold a hearing.

"We are extremely proud of the maps we drew in the 2011 redistricting effort, where the process was fair, open, transparent and totally compatible with the recommended guidelines set out by the U.S. Supreme Court," Long said. But those maps were generated with the help of Washington political consultants aiding a national Republican effort to gain majorities in legislatures across the nation. They were resoundingly successful. After the 2016 elections, 24 states will be under full Republican control in legislatures and governor's offices, according to the New York Times. Only six states will now have legislatures and governor's offices exclusively dominated by Democrats.

**The result has been** polarized congressional districts, as the Cook Partisan Index reveals, and epic inertia on Capitol Hill.

Long told the NWI Times that he is open to the idea of redistricting reform, promising to create a blue ribbon commission to see if there's a better way. But for reforms to be in place by 2021, a constitutional amendment would have to be in place by the 2020 election. "We are a state that embraces positive, common-sense ideas,

and we should be open to exploring the experiences and outcomes of states who handle redistricting differently than Indiana," Long said.

Long has said this before, backing a 17-member blue ribbon commission in 2009 after then Secretary of State Todd Rokita, with the imprimatur of then-Gov. Mitch Daniels, pushed for an independent commission. WIBC reported in November 2009 that Long favored making then Supreme Court Chief Justice Randall Shepard the "neutral" chair of the commission. While the 2011 maps followed Rokita's guidelines for compactness, respect for jurisdiction lines and communities of interest, he had a distinct falling out with the Senate majority caucus over the issue. The 2011 maps actually were drawn with Rokita living outside his 4th CD. That was not an oversight. As for Long's talk in 2009 about moving forward, obviously, it never happened.

**Princeton University** Prof. Julian Zelizer observed in The Atlantic this week, "Partisanship has taken its toll on Washington. While this is not the first period in American politics where partisan polarization divided the nation – think of the late 19th century, for instance – this is one of the worst periods. There is just very little common ground on Capitol Hill. I agree that Trump is a product and not a cause of bitter polarization. As the gridlocked nomination of Merrick Garland reminds us, politics was pretty bad before Trump took center stage. I don't think there are many straws in the wind though. Partisanship is not a product of bad feelings

or bad people, but of institutions and political structures, as well as demographic changes, that push our leaders apart. All of those remain firmly in place."

Exhibit B would be the RyanCare fiasco where Republicans couldn't muster 216 votes to repeal and replace Obamacare. The GOP is polarized because the moderate wing of the party has succumbed to the fringe. The moderate to conservative Blue Dog Democrats where past deals have formulated have been decimated.

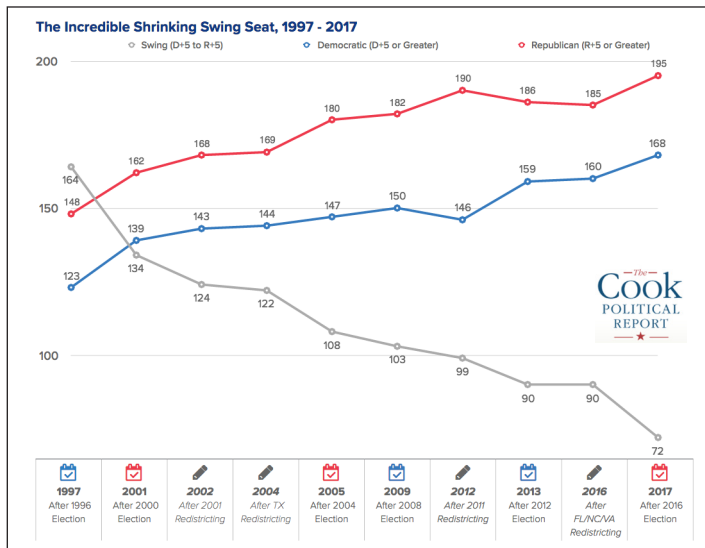
Zelizer adds, "The only way we really make progress is to reform the way that politics works. Without



**U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola (top) with President George W. Bush in 2006 in the 2nd CD; Democratic U.S. Reps. Frank McCloskey and Jill Long both were defeated in the 1994 tsunami, and lower photo, U.S. Sen. Barack Obama campaigns for Brad Ellsworth, Baron Hill and Joe Donnelly in 2006, with all taking upset victories.**

changes to our districting process, the Freedom Caucus will remain in place. Without campaign finance changes, politicians will still be turning to issue-based interest groups who will pressure politicians to stick to the party line. We would also need changes in non-government institutions such as media outlets to obtain less partisan news. Those changes can't be legislated but will have to be a product of the producers and editors who make the news.

**And Wasserman**, writing to FiveThirtyEight, notes the demographic sorting. "If you feel like you hardly know anyone who disagrees with you about Trump, you're not alone; chances are the election was a landslide in your backyard. More than 61% of voters cast ballots in counties that gave either Clinton or Trump at least 60% of the major-party vote last November. That's up from 50% of voters who lived in such counties in 2012 and 39



percent in 1992, an accelerating trend that confirms that America's political fabric, geographically, is tearing apart."

**Of the nation's 3,113 counties** (or county equivalents), just 303 were decided by single-digit margins – less than 10%, Wasserman explained. In contrast, 1,096 counties fit that description in 1992, even though that election featured a wider national spread.

During the same period, the number of extreme landslide counties – those decided by margins exceeding 50 percentage points – exploded from

93 to 1,196, or over a third of the nation's counties. The electorate's move toward single-party geographic enclaves has been particularly pronounced at the extremes. Between 1992 and 2016, the share of voters living in extreme landslide counties quintupled from 4% to 21%.

The emphatic Republican legislative majorities have achieved a party goal. The Pyrrhic victory is that empires that can no longer bargain and compromise are ones with short life spans. ❖

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# McDermott signals a possible gov run

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. spoke to the 59th Annual Good Government Day in Logansport on Tuesday, and he sounded like a future gubernatorial candidate. He told students, “I wish I could go back to high school again,” because he “gets it” now. Then he told students that by buckling down now, “You could be governor of Indiana.”



He was introduced by Logansport Mayor Dave Kitchell, who observed that McDermott was the only diver on the nuclear submarine USS Hyman Rickover during the Gulf War. McDermott later told students, “I’ve been 20 years of my life either in the U.S. Navy or running a city.”

Asked about a potential 2020 gubernatorial run, McDermott told HPI, “That’s a long way off, but I’m an executive at heart. I’ve done a lot of thinking lately about my future and I’ve come to realize that fact. I’m a boss. Always have been. I’m not sure how happy I would be as a cog in a machine as opposed to being an executive.”

McDermott has talked about a potential primary challenge to U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, but appears to be coming to the same conclusion as another potential 2020 gubernatorial candidate. South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg has said he is unlikely to challenge U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski, telling the Huffington Post in March, “Congress has become less attractive for people. I think a lot of emerging leaders take a look at opportunities to run for Congress and decide it is not for them.”

McDermott is in his fourth term as mayor and is clearly ready to try something else. The former Lake County Democratic chairman has not only been a potent power center, but has a clean reputation in an area known for political corruption.

## U.S. Senate: Donnelly reports \$2.5 million

Just days after his controversial vote to confirm Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly announced he raised \$1.3 million in the first quarter of 2017. He now has more than \$2.55 million on hand. More than 4,700 donors from across Indiana contributed. “As

a Hoosier and a senator, Joe Donnelly has relied on hard work, frugality, and common sense. That approach hasn’t changed when it comes to the resources he needs to defend his record, and it’s produced the second strongest fundraising quarter of his career,” said campaign manager Peter Hanscom. “This wouldn’t be possible without the help of thousands of hard-working men and women from across Indiana who have joined in to help spread Joe’s message that the Senate needs more Hoosier common sense.”

Donnelly also responded to liberal Democrats angered by his vote for Gorsuch. He told the South Bend Tribune editorial board that his vote for Gorsuch was the right decision, saying he did not want to continue the political “warfare that has been going on in the Senate and this country. Was that what I was hired to do? And the answer is no. You love nine out of 10 of my decisions. So on the last one, you’re going to burn the house down?” He also noted that he voted against Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

U.S. Rep. Luke Messer is a likely Donnelly challenger and reported more than \$1.6 million cash on hand in March. U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita is another likely challenger and posted \$1.3 million in cash at the end of 2016. Rokita

has not released first quarter FEC totals. The Senate Democrats’ campaign arm is targeting potential Republican candidates for voicing support for the ObamaCare repeal effort (Hagen, The Hill). The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee expanded its healthcare-related website on Monday to include information about possible 2018 GOP Senate candidates who said they backed the American Health Care Act. Party campaign operatives from both sides are using Congress’s current two-week recess to begin testing the waters for next year’s midterm elections. The updated DSCC website, which was shown first to The Hill, includes videos or quotes from 13 potential GOP contenders in eight states where President Trump won: Indiana, Florida, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, North

Dakota, Ohio and Pennsylvania. In Indiana, GOP Rep. Todd Rokita, who is considering taking on Democratic Sen. Joe Donnelly, called the bill “good legislation.” And another possible candidate in the state, GOP Rep. Luke Messer, also signaled support for the bill a day before it was pulled from the House floor.

And the Washington Examiner reports that an ad produced by American Bridge 21st Century Foundation and titled “Trumpcare 2.0: Another Disaster,” accuses Republicans of wanting to undo the federal healthcare law in order to benefit wealthy Americans. It will also target Rokita and Messer.

Meanwhile, the Republican U.S. Senate field grew as Southern Indiana higher education leader Andrew Taka-



Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. says he’s an “executive” at heart.

mi entered the race. Takami, 37, is the director of Purdue Polytechnic New Albany, an arm of Purdue University. He announced his run through a news release Tuesday but will hold a more formal kickoff April 20 at The Barn in Floyds Knobs.

"As a Hoosier and American, I don't understand how our nation has lost sense of our most basic values. More than just conservatives like me feel this demise in both politics and beyond," Takami stated in a news release. "Whether you're a CEO of a Fortune 500 company, a mother working two jobs to make ends meet, or a college student trying to finance their future, this echo of loss reverberates to every corner of our lives. It has implications that we have yet to comprehend."



Andrew Takami is the newest Republican to join the U.S. Senate field. (News & Tribune Photo)

has created a potential firestorm for Republican moderates during the two-week Easter recess. U.S. Reps. Jackie Walorski and Trey Hollingsworth are taking heat for not hosting town halls.

WNDU-TV reported that hundreds from the community gathered at the South Bend Century Center to discuss the state of health care in the U.S. Organizers of the event invited a panel of experts to answer people's questions on major provisions of the affordable care act, quality of health care and affordability. Although Walorski didn't make it, the town hall went on. "We're extremely disappointed," said Nicole MacLaughlin, one of the organizers from the Northern Indiana Community Coalition for Health Care. "We feel that Congresswoman Walorski really made a move that wasn't good for her by not showing up today."

Walorski told WNDU-TV, "Whenever I am home in Indiana, I take the opportunity to meet with constituents and to travel around the district visiting local businesses, farms, and community organizations. Engaging in constructive dialogue is essential to finding common sense solutions to the challenges Hoosiers face. That is why I have an open-door policy so I can hear Hoosiers' views and experiences. I look forward to continu-

### Congress: Town hall heat

Axios notes that the failed RyanCare health reform

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ing these conversations.” And on health care: “Too many Hoosiers are facing higher premiums, fewer options, and a collapsing system under Obamacare. I remain committed to repealing Obamacare and replacing it with a patient-centered health care system that lowers costs, provides real protections, and returns control to individuals and families.”

Hollingsworth told the Bloomington Herald-Times that when he is in the district, both he and his staff are putting together meetings and having dialogues with small groups of constituents. He said he thinks that method is the best way to engage with people and work on solutions to issues. Although many constituents have called for a town hall meeting, he thinks those are less productive. “No one believes that the answer to solve Washington’s problems is to turn up the volume,” Hollingsworth said. “To me, the answer is always, how do we engage in a productive manner to be able to get to solutions.”

Politico reported that Hollingsworth’s father, Joe Jr., has admonished the Freedom Caucus. “First, let me disclose that I am not a resident or voter in your district,” said Hollingsworth, who pumped \$1.4 million into a Super PAC to support his son in 2016. “However, I am a conservative donor that has funded over a million in political campaigns for conservative causes. I was contacted today by a group that wanted to raise money to fund opponents against the House Freedom Caucus members... I have chosen not to participate in that cause but instead write you directly... [W]hat was done by the House Freedom Caucus was almost suicidal to the Republican Party, to your group and possibly individually.”

### General Assembly: Snyder to challenge Zay

Huntington political blogger and radio talk show host Gary Snyder has filed to run for the Democratic nomination in Senate District 17 (Kelly and Francisc, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Snyder wants to unseat Sen. Andy Zay, R-Huntington, who won the seat in a December caucus after his predecessor moved to Congress. But



U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski greets constituents, while she didn't show up at a town hall this past week.

Snyder hasn't always been a Democrat. The managing editor of the Internet radio station IndianaTalks.com ran unsuccessfully as a Democrat for a county council seat in the November 2008 general election. That came just months after he lost the May 2008 primary for a state representative seat in which he ran as a Republican. He also lost a bid for county clerk in 2010 as a Republican. Snyder told the Herald-Press in 2008 that “I've always considered myself a Reagan Democrat – socially conservative but a pro-middle-class person.”

### Kansas: Narrow GOP CD victory

On Tuesday night, Democrat James Thompson did not win the first congressional election in the country since President Trump was elected. But he came within seven points in one of the most Republican districts in the nation. And Democrats are

absolutely thrilled about what that says about their party in the era of Trump — with good reason (Phillips, Washington Post). “If we can make Republicans go into full-on freakout mode in a ruby red Kansas congressional district now,” said Jim Dean, director of the progressive group Chair of Democracy for America in a statement, “we have the power to rip the gavel out of Paul Ryan’s hands in November 2018.” Maybe. What happens in April 2017 does not mean the same thing will happen in November 2018, when the entire House of Representatives is up for reelection. But it’s the best evidence we’ve got that right now, voters in traditionally Republican districts aren’t thrilled with Trump. It’s hard to overstate just how Republican this Wichita-area congressional district has been: CIA Director Mike Pompeo’s old district gave Romney 62 percent in 2012 and Trump 60 percent in 2016. It was the 93rd most pro-Trump district in the country. On Tuesday, this district swung more than 20 points in favor of the Democrat. ❖

# Lugar pans Trump foreign policy

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON – Former Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar will deliver a sharp critique of President Donald Trump's foreign policy in a speech Tuesday night.

A former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Lugar warns that the Trump administration is pursuing objectives – such as building a wall along the Mexican border, pushing allies to contribute more to NATO, seeking trade concessions, removing illegal immigrants and slashing the State Department budget – that will weaken U.S. world leadership.

"One of the ironies of this is that a president who campaigned on his ability to achieve grandiose results is offering a vision that is so lacking in ambition and so devoid of American heroism," Lugar said in prepared remarks for a speech Tuesday night at the Foreign Policy Association in Washington. "Many of the Trump administration's foreign policy goals are simplistic, prosaic and reactive. These are goals that normally would be associated with a selfish, inward-looking nation that is motivated by fear, not a great superpower with the capacity to shape global affairs."

The recent Syrian airstrikes need to be augmented with a more comprehensive foreign policy approach, according to Lugar. "The president must understand that military power cannot substitute for other forms of leverage," Lugar said. "We cannot bomb our way to security."

**To exert U.S. leverage,** Trump must embrace rather than reject "trade, immigration and alliances," Lugar said. Lugar acknowledged that international trade can displace U.S. workers. But he said that problem needs to be addressed through retraining, not by withdrawing the country from trade agreements.

Trump's efforts to curb immigration from Muslim-majority countries undermine the fight against terrorism, according to Lugar. "In a world where dampening the rise of new terrorists is as important as dealing with existing ones, the ban on entrants from Muslim countries represents the most obvious recruitment tool against the United States since Abu Ghraib," Lugar said, referring to a notorious U.S. military prison in Iraq. "It also makes it more difficult to recruit allies, translators, sources of human intel-

ligence and other help that we need in Muslim countries around the globe."

Lugar cautioned that Trump's insistence that U.S. allies contribute more to NATO and other groups should not overshadow the underlying partnership.

**"The administration has** to recognize that it cannot allow any doubts in the minds of our adversaries about U.S. commitment to our allies," Lugar said. "Such ambiguity is not clever. It is dangerous and can lead to deadly miscalculation."

The United States has defined itself through history by its "moral identity" and generosity, Lugar said. Those qualities should imbue U.S. foreign policy.

"Our leverage in global affairs, and therefore our own security, is intimately connected to this heroic tradition," Lugar said. "Once it is gone, it is very difficult to retrieve." ❖



Former congressman Lee Hamilton and former senator Richard Lugar at the IU global conference earlier this month.

## Trump reverses on NATO

Jenna Johnson, Washington Post

WASHINGTON – President Trump on Wednesday pledged his full support to NATO, reaffirming the United States' commitment to the alliance and saying he no longer considers it "obsolete," a sharp reversal from his rhetoric on the campaign trail and during his first weeks in office. On a day when Trump dramatically changed his stance on several policy positions, his statement about NATO stood out given his consistent criticism of the military alliance and its importance to U.S. allies. For more than a year, Trump has said NATO is outdated and costing the United States too much money, suggesting replacing it with an alternative organization focused on counterterrorism and repeatedly using the word "obsolete." As recently as January, Trump continued to stand by this position — which alarmed many NATO members. "During a joint news conference Wednesday afternoon with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Trump professed that his criticisms prompted the alliance to make changes that satisfied his concerns—though he did not specify what those were. "I complained about that a long time ago, and they made a change — and now they do fight terrorism," Trump said. "I said it was obsolete. It's no longer obsolete." ❖

# How to handle Trump's Russia mess

By LEE HAMILTON

BLOOMINGTON – If we are to rebuild and sustain public faith in our democracy's integrity, we need an investigation conducted in the light of day, by people who seek the truth and have standing and legitimacy on both sides of the political aisle.

The recent announcement by FBI Director James Comey that his agency is investigating links between members of President Trump's campaign and Russia has upended Washington. Yet there needs to be an even stronger and broader investigation to get to the bottom of what happened.



There are really two questions at hand. The first involves Russian meddling in our election and their attempts to manipulate the outcome. They clearly have the ability to affect the public debate and public perceptions, and maybe hack the election itself. And it's not just us; they appear bent on meddling in elections in other Western democracies as well.

This is serious stuff. The Russians are trying to manipulate the very foundation of representative government, free elections and the integrity of our institutions. They want to weaken our system. It's crucial to understand exactly what they're up to, the capabilities they possess, and how effective they've been. There's a lot we need to understand before we move on to how best to respond as a nation to this Russian effort to subvert America democracy.

**The second investigation** is looking into the activities of the Trump election team, and whether anyone involved in some way colluded or worked with the Russians to affect the outcome of the 2016 election. The FBI has confirmed a list of Trump campaign officials who had contact with the Russians, but what's been revealed so far is a lot of smoke and not much fire – at least, not yet.

The FBI investigation will move the ball forward on both fronts. White House denials and the reluctance of Republicans in the majority on Capitol Hill to dig deeply into the election of a president of their own party has bogged the public investigations down.

Yet the truth is, we've been attacked by the Russians and we're not investigating it adequately — which is why the FBI's investigations are necessary, but not enough.

**The FBI's principal charge** is criminal law; what we need is much broader. However thorough and robust the criminal investigation mounted by the agency turns out to be, by its nature it will be unable to give the nation the open and bipartisan inquiry on a broad range of issues – not just criminal, but also civil, political, and diplomatic – that we need in order to move forward.

Getting at the facts ought not to be a political exercise, but resolving what to do about them surely will be. What the Russians did was an attack on the heart of our system; if we are to rebuild and sustain public faith in our democracy's integrity, we need an investigation conducted in the light of day, by people who seek the truth and have standing and legitimacy on both sides of the political aisle.

In theory, Congress could do this, either with a select committee or through its standing committees. But there are several problems with this. The first is that it would be a part-time effort, with members facing conflicting demands on their already pressured time; it would be impossible for them to give it their full attention. Moreover, the institution is already bogged down by so much partisanship that it's hard to imagine an investigation achieving the legitimacy it needs. Finally, a number of members have already made up their minds; they tell us there's nothing to investigate.

They're wrong.

**Clearly, our politics stand** in the way of an immediate, thorough and open investigation on a critically important question. So I'd suggest that what we need is a fully staffed, well-resourced commission that can look into all aspects of the Russians' involvement in our election.

What members of the Trump campaign did or did not do with the Russians should certainly be part of it, but the paramount focus should be to lay out the full extent of Russian involvement in our electoral system and how to prevent it from happening again. It's critical to the success of our representative democracy that we understand what happened. A highly visible inquiry by a credible, independent commission would give us the best opportunity to move forward.



**Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar, IU School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.**

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

# Wild week set for budget, roads, beer

By THOMAS CURRY

INDIANAPOLIS – Much remains up in the air with just one week of work remaining at the Statehouse, and it could be dominated by unforeseen debates. Joint conference committees took over the Statehouse schedule this week on a number of pieces of legislation, including the state budget and infrastructure plan, with the goal of sorting out key differences between House and Senate versions.



Wednesday also saw the release of a crucial budget proposal by the State Budget Agency which foresees more gains than it did in December.

All this sets up what will likely be a wild week of work for lawmakers.

Wednesday's budget projects a \$201.2 million increase in state revenue over the next two years, up roughly \$100 million from December's report. However, lawmakers that pull the purse strings aren't ready to go on a spending spree. House Ways and Means Chairman Tim Brown cautioned that "the second year is much more unpredictable" when it comes to budget projections.

Senate Appropriations Chairman Luke Kenley, who just last month told reporters that he has "no faith" in state budget projections, also says he will fight against increased spending after the forecast. Gov. Eric Holcomb chimed in, saying, "We must be cautious about the fact that projections have not always mirrored actual revenue experience."

Although the budget projection is being looked at cautiously, it can still play into a number of conversations in the last week of session.

**Just hours after** the projection was released, a joint committee was held on the budget, HB1001. Pre-K funding remains one of the most important differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill. Backed by Speaker Brian Bosma, the House budget increased pre-K funding by \$16 million, with much of it going to the state's current "On My Way" pre-K program, more than Gov. Holcomb's requested \$10 million.

State senators were less receptive of the increase and slashed it significantly, with a focus on online and home school programs. A number of people testified

before the joint committee Wednesday, urging the final budget to reflect the House version more in this regard, including an ITSA representative. It is unclear if the increased projection will sway any cautious minds when it comes to increased spending, but it will be an issue to watch next week.

**The budget proposal** could have the biggest impact on the discussion of the HB1002 roads bill which was the topic of joint committee on Monday. Roads and infrastructure will require on average a \$1.2 billion investment each year for the next 20 years. Talks between the Senate and House have focused on transferring the sales tax on gasoline from the general fund to road funding.

Originally, the House plan had called for the sales tax revenue to be transferred over immediately, which would total some \$300 million. Senate lawmakers, however, led by Sen. Kenley say that shift would not be wise, as it would require a cigarette tax increase to fill the hole in the general fund. On Monday numerous people testified before the committee, ranging from union heads, trucking corporation CEOs and mayors, who discussed their affinity toward the sales tax transfer. Kenley has said previously that the tax is unneeded, and a cigarette tax increase

has been met coldly in the Senate. While a cigarette tax increase is likely dead this session, the debate could be reignited with the increased revenue forecast.

A major talking point of the joint committee on Monday was local road funding. The House had focused on funding local roads, but the Senate gave a more statewide budget focus. Huntingburg Mayor Dennis Spinner and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg sent out tweets this week urging lawmakers to go back to a local road focus, with Mayor Spinner pointing out that "85K of IN's 95k miles are local." A number of county level representatives also appeared before the House-Senate committee urging a local road focus, citing that the current levels are too low. HB1002 author Rep. Ed Soliday will have to figure out how to best solve the

issue as it's unknown if Senate heads will budge.

Tolling was also discussed during the joint session, after being mostly left out of discussion early in session. Lawmakers have always said that all funding options are open, but the idea of increased tolling has entered debate in the last few weeks. Some senators remain cautious toward the idea, with Indianapolis Sen. Mike Delph not voting for the Senate road bill due to his concern that tolling language is too broad.

**Soliday on Monday** promised a study committee to look at tolling and its possibilities, but that would mean the issue and debate being pushed to next year. If opponents like Sen. Delph and Democrats are able to pick up more support, tolling could be a major talking point next week.



Chairmen Luke Kenley and Tim Brown during the April revenue forecast. They and Gov. Holcomb are urging caution on the biennial budget. (Indiana Public Media Photo)

## Cold beer drama

Finally, after popping up out of nowhere two weeks ago, Ricker's cold beer sales and the drama it created was quiet this week. A Senate committee last week voted to allow Ricker's to continue selling cold beer until its current license ran out, but changed the rule that allowed them to get a license in the first place.

CEO Jay Ricker has created quite a buzz about the issue and released a tweet calling Indiana's law reminiscent of the 1930's. Social conservative lawmakers have had few rallying cries this session, especially after the quiet death of an abortion bill last month. The publicity on the issue and potential defiant strike from more conservative Republicans, as well as many Democrats calling out the law, means it'll come up in some way as lawmakers move to close session.

"On behalf of the Indiana Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association and Ricker Oil Company, we support a measured, balanced solution to the current cold beer discussions," said spokesman Tony Samuel, adding that the solution should closely mirror the amendments adopted by the House of Representatives on April 5, including:

- Allowing Ricker's and other impacted permit holders to continue operating under their two current restaurant permits, with the ability to renew those permits;
- Prohibiting the ATC from issuing any new restaurant permits to restaurants located in a drug, grocery or convenience store until the legislature conducts a comprehensive study of the issue;
- Removing language currently in HB1496, which sets an arbitrary sales threshold to qualify for carryout cold beer sales and likely impacts hundreds of additional establishments; and
- Establishing an interim study committee to discuss this issue further through public hearings.

Samuel added, Ricker's has met all of the requirements and obligations imposed on restaurants as specified in current law:

- To keep up with national trends in the industry, and to meet growing consumer demand, Ricker's has begun offering made-to-order Tex-Mex food, including burritos, tacos and salads, along with pizzas and deli sandwiches;
- With these quality food offerings, the two locations meet and exceed the necessary sales and seating requirements outlined in current law;
- Further, the Ricker's restaurants comply with all obligations imposed on restaurants selling alcoholic beverages, including keeping all alcohol behind a counter and requiring licensed and trained clerks to serve the alcohol. Any other restaurant that had applied for the permit in Columbus would also have obtained the permit for \$1,000.
- All package liquor store, restaurant, grocery store, and drug store permits in cities and towns are limited, based on a quota set by population;
- Because Columbus had not yet reached their full

quota, the permit was available for \$1,000 as specified in the Indiana Code;

- Once all of the permits have been acquired in a specific area, the permits may be sold on the free market for the price the market will bear;

- While it is true that a package liquor store permit (in Avon) sold for approximately \$450,000 at an ATC auction, that amount is not the average or even the norm for a permit; the free market dictated the price. For example, restaurant permits, like the one obtained by Ricker's, have sold for over \$200,000 recently and liquor store permits, like the one in Avon, have sold for \$1,000;

- Ricker's (and all restaurants) are limited in the amount of carry-out space to the lesser of 300 square feet or 10 percent of the total floor space, so there is no risk of their providing a competing selection or quantity of products with package liquor stores.

"We look forward to working with the General Assembly to craft a solution that allows Ricker's to meet the needs of their customers while giving time for the legislature to establish a long-term policy on alcoholic beverage sales," Samuel said. "We think the proposal we have outlined – the same that the House adopted last week – achieves both goals. As a sign of good faith, Ricker's has voluntarily suspended the sale of spirits at the Columbus and Sheridan locations while the General Assembly further studies the issue, even though the permit allows them to sell spirits just like any other restaurant."

## Zody urges Holcomb to veto health bill

Citing an interview with Howey Politics Indiana in April of last year, Indiana Democratic Party Chairman John Zody issued the following statement upon passage of Senate Enrolled Act 404: "On the campaign trail, Governor Eric Holcomb repeatedly asserted he would focus exclusively on economic issues. In fact, in an interview just last week, Holcomb said he was "laser-focused" on these issues and was "not going to be distracted" by divisive social issues. This week, Holcomb's pledge will be put to the test. Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate have pushed through a divisive women's health bill, inserting the government between patients and their doctors. If Holcomb means what he says, he must veto Senate Enrolled Act 404." The legislation "is not on his agenda," Holcomb's spokeswoman said, offering no other comment except to say he will "consider it carefully" before deciding whether to sign it, veto it or let it go into law without his signature.

## Lawmakers urged to 'decouple' tests, evals

Indiana legislators were urged Wednesday to disconnect teacher evaluations from students' standardized test results (Miley, CNHI). The issue was pushed by school administrators during a conference committee of members from both General Assembly chambers discussing House Bill 1003. The current system has been criticized for basing

teacher performance grants on results from the troubled ISTEP+ program, which will be discontinued by mid-2018. Sen. Jean Leising, R-Oldenburg, said, "Until we get this whole testing issue settled out, we ought to look at least at a temporary decoupling of the test from teacher evaluation. I don't see how we can judge a teacher's performance on a test most of us don't feel is accountable." The bill is a critical component in determining how students will be assessed as the state begins implementation of the federal Every Student Success Act, the replacement program for No Child Left Behind.

### Teachers push for testing changes

Indiana teachers groups and some school administrators are pushing for further changes to an ISTEP exam bill as lawmakers negotiate a final version of the measure (Associated Press). The parties want a final bill to

decouple teacher evaluations from test scores and allow local jurisdictions to craft methods of evaluating teachers. They say they hope legislation isn't overly prescriptive and gives flexibility to the state school board and Department of Education. Lawmakers heard testimony Wednesday but negotiations will continue. The Legislature is expected to adjourn in less than two weeks.

### Peeping drone bill passes

Indiana lawmakers are sending Gov. Eric Holcomb a bill targeting drone operators who use the new technology for the age-old crime of voyeurism (Associated Press). The bill by Republican state Sen. Eric Koch of Bedford creates regulations that in part address operators with nefarious intentions who use drones to invade people's privacy or capture images of them in compromising positions. ❖

## Trust and the Border Adjustment Tax

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – I go to Econ Eddie, the go-to guy, when the inexplicable needs explication.

"The Border Adjustment Tax (BAT) is really simple," he says. "You're a manufacturer and you ship something to some another country. You get paid for that shipment. But you don't have to report that revenue on your tax return." "Ye gads," I shout. "The taxes I save are a direct subsidy from American taxpayers for me as an exporter. It also gives lower prices to companies and people in that other country, if I pass along my savings. It's forced charity! Americans can hold their heads high for their generosity to other, poorer nations."

"Oh, it's more than that," Eddie says. "Because you can sell for less, more buyers in other countries will want your product. This means you could invest more in America, hire more American workers, perhaps raise wages or increase your dividends, your executive pay, or up your stock price benefiting thousands of pensioners who hold your stock in their IRAs."

"**But what, I say,** "if I don't invest and expand my capacity, but just take the savings in taxes to make my life more interesting."

"Economic theory says competition will keep you from doing that," he tells me.

"Ah," I sigh, "saved again by economic theory. I

was afraid that, without increased capacity investment, domestic prices for my product would rise as Americans would have to compete with foreigners for my product."

"Now," Eddie says, "let's look at the other side of the story. Goods you buy from abroad require a tax making them more expensive to you. And, here's the genius of this proposal, the cost to you of those goods is not deductible as a cost of goods purchased. This increases your taxable income and your taxes."

"**I see it, I see it, I exult.** "Importing raises my tax bill compared to producing in the U.S. It induces me to make or buy domestically what I've been importing. That creates more investment in the U.S. and increases jobs and wages for Americans."

"Right," Eddie says. "Unless, you don't make those domestic investments. In that case, prices for American consumers will rise, wages might fall, and we'll get some pretty high rates of inflation."

"But that would be counter to economic theory," I say. "Is that possible?"

"Well, there are lags and sometimes the world does not follow the economics taught in freshman classes," Eddie admits. "But in the long-run,..."

"**The long-run? I say.** "This whole scheme is built on the assumptions of freshman economics. That's all the economics many economists, business and political leaders seem to know. The worst part of it," I continue, "is a new tax, probably increasing government and private employment to make the whole complex thing work. It doesn't have anything to hold it together but assumptions about how businesses will behave."

"If you can't trust economic theory," Eddie says, "what can you trust?" ❖

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



# South Bend and minor league baseball

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – With all the enthusiasm at South Bend’s baseball stadium and the excitement over related economic development, it will seem strange to many of the fans who so often pack the place that the stadium almost struck out. Naysayers, predicting that a stadium would be a failure, opposed it all the way to the Indiana Supreme Court and even sought criminal charges against city officials who built it.



If opponents had prevailed, there would not have been a record regular season attendance of 350,803 for South Bend Cubs games last season. Instead, zero attendance. Nor would team owner Andrew Berlin be pouring millions of dollars into stadium

improvements and a major mixed-use residential complex around it. He wouldn’t be here, already investing far more than the city spent to build the stadium in 1986-87.

The Chicago Cubs would not have displayed their World Series championship trophy at the site. Without a stadium, the Cubs would have no affiliate here. The site likely still would be the mostly blighted blotch on downtown that existed before construction. The stadium has been a gem since it opened 30 years ago, even though some past out-of-town owners didn’t always keep it sparkling.

**Why the opposition to building it?** There was a “can’t do” attitude lingering from the demise of Studebaker auto production in South Bend. Instead of looking for ways to promote new enterprises and new projects to improve the community, as we see today, many residents back then didn’t want to risk anything new. The mantra: We can’t afford it. We don’t need it. It will fail anyway. Opposition also involved failure to understand minor league baseball, starting back then to become more popular and profitable for owners and communities.

Roger Parent, South Bend’s mayor at the time, pushed hard for the stadium. He wasn’t and still isn’t a real baseball fan; he understood, however, the economic potential for the city.

An opposition group, Fair Tax Inc., ridiculed Parent and the proposed stadium, saying the city couldn’t afford it and nobody would want to go to bush league games at a dangerous downtown site anyway. Time after time, opponents thought they had fired strike three. But Parent always managed to foul off their pitch to avoid striking out, including coming up with creative lease-payment funding. Opponents even asked the prosecutor to consider criminal charges against Parent. Isn’t fouling off opposition pitches illegal?

While most of the city council was supportive, there was opposition from John Voorde, on the council then as he is now. Voorde predicted the name would become “the South Bend Albatross.” Nobody predicted the field would come to be named instead after an Indian casino.

**As debate raged,** The Tribune sent me to Peoria for the opening game of the 1985 season of the Peoria Chiefs, then the Midwest League affiliate of the Chicago Cubs. The purpose was to tell readers what this Class A ball is like, poor quality bush league junk or something drawing fans and deserving attention. Well, the story didn’t convince diehard naysayers. But it was in a way a preview of what could be in South Bend, even with no thought then of snaring the Cubs affiliate.

A crowd of 4,871 packed the field in Peoria. Chicago Cubs broadcaster Harry Caray arrived by helicopter to sing “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” in his unique style.



Former South Bend Mayor Roger Parent helping to open the South Bend Cubs season earlier this week. (South Bend Tribune Photo)

Shawon Dunston, then Chicago Cubs shortstop, came to throw out the first pitch at the field where he had played in Class A ball less than two years before. On the mound for Peoria was an 18-year-old pitcher named Greg Maddux, who struck out a dozen and gave up no runs in eight innings. Maybe the kid would have a future.

Wouldn’t it be great to have excitement like that in South Bend? Now, we do. We almost didn’t. We draw far more attendance than Peoria did. And we almost drew nobody at all. ❖

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

# Everyone loved Gary Mayor Johnny V.

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – There probably isn't another Johnny V. pounding the political paths anywhere in Indiana. He was one of a kind. And everybody liked Johnny Visclosky. But Johnny V. is what everyone called him.



He passed away a week or so ago at the age of 101. He was mayor of Gary in the early 1960s when Mayor George Chacharis went to prison. Johnny V. (pictured, right) was city controller at the time and became mayor because there wasn't a deputy mayor. He chose to serve only until the next election and gave way to A. Martin Katz.

Gary was a huge vibrant city at the time with some 180,000 people calling the Steel City home. There was little crime and anyone wanting a job simply had to knock on the door at U.S. Steel. Johnny V. stayed active in politics, helping people in his beloved Gary. And everywhere he went, people glad-handed the man who knew how to make things happen.

While he may have been mayor, he came to be best known as the father of U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky, D-Merrillville. Visclosky was elected in 1984, defeating incumbent Katie Hall, who once served as a state senator, and Lake County Prosecutor Jack Crawford in the Democratic primary. Hall had been picked in a caucus to replace Adam Benjamin, who died Labor Day weekend in 1982. Visclosky found Benjamin's body in his Washington, D.C., apartment.

**It was** Johnny V. who engineered his son's first campaign and had a hand in most of the 16 that have followed. There are those who think that Visclosky won in 1984 and every two years since



because of Johnny V. The saying goes that if everyone who knew Johnny V. voted for Pete, it would be impossible to beat him.

**Visclosky plans** to run for a 17th term in Congress next year. For the first time, he will be alone. He shouldn't have too much trouble. He learned from a master. ❖

**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**  
 Mark Curry On Indiana Politics  
 mark1tcphotography@gmail.com  
 http://mark1tc.smugmug.com/Political/



**Mike Allen, Boston Axios:** President Trump campaigned as an ardent and unapologetic nationalist, but in less than a week Trump has morphed into a guy who could almost be mistaken for a conventional Republican president. In the past six days, President Trump has: Fired 59 Tomahawk missiles at a Syrian government airbase to respond to Bashar Assad's chemical weapons attack on his own citizens; Belittled Steve Bannon in an interview with the New York Post; Stood in the White House next to the Secretary General of NATO and declared the alliance is "no longer obsolete"; Hosted China's President Xi at Mar-a-Lago and said they had great "chemistry" and "bonding"; Told the Wall Street Journal he no longer plans to label China a currency manipulator, despite repeated campaign promises to do so "on day one." ("They're not currency manipulators," Trump said.); Promised to repair the world during his presidency, not just America: "The world is a mess," Trump said in the East Room press conference Wednesday. "By the time I'm finished, it's going to be a lot better place to live in because, right now, it's nasty"; Talked with deep feeling about a foreign humanitarian crisis; Jettisoned Vladimir Putin, whom he'd resisted criticizing until now. "We might be at an all time low with Russia," Trump said on Wednesday. Cautionary note: Trump has been all over the policy map when it comes to issues he hasn't given much thought to (social issues, healthcare, Ex-Im Bank). But nationalism has been consistent in his speeches since the late 1980s. Let's see how long this version of Trump lasts. ❖



**Brian Howey, HPI:** Since last July when he joined the Trump ticket, Mike Pence has chucked long-held stances on issues like free trade and Muslim bans. Now as President Trump evolves (or flip-flops), it will be fascinating to see how Pence responds. Will he flip and flop with him? Go with the flow, or end up on a policy island? ❖

**Richard North Patterson, Boston Globe:** Mike Pence exudes myopia. His fealty to the NRA is craven and comprehensive. He questions climate change and the theory of evolution. He tried to bar Syrian refugees from entering Indiana. In the cul-de-sac of his mind, he plays to the only audience he knows — people who think like him. By 2016, his reelection campaign was flagging, his normally polite constituents booing him in public. Locals were stunned when, bereft of attractive options, Donald Trump reluctantly offered him a shot at ultimate power. For Pence, this was a gift from God; for others, a revelation of character. Shamelessly, he combined obsequious testimonials to Trump as leader, family man, and Christian with transparent calculation. Particularly revealing was Pence's oscillation between toady and schemer in the wake of the "Access Hollywood" tape. At first, he crowed that Trump was "still standing stronger than ever." But as revulsion for Trump's serial groping mushroomed, Pence rediscovered

his moral compass, intoning prior to one of the presidential debates, "We pray for his family and look forward to the opportunities he has to show what is in his heart [in tomorrow night's debate]." Whereupon he vanished. His calculus was transparent: Pence would await Trump's performance before defending him, poised to resign from the ticket — or replace Trump at its head. But Trump survived. "Proud to stand with you," Pence tweeted, then attacked Bill Clinton for moral turpitude. That's Pence. His public persona reeks of smarmy sanctimony — every untruth, evasion, and vacuous bromide delivered in a portentous pipe organ voice accompanied by squints, nods, and shakes of the head which, Pence clearly imagines, convey a pious gravity. The effect is that of an unctuous church elder selling pyramid schemes to credulous parishioners, never doubting he is doing God's work. ❖

**Paul Krugman, New York Times:** Does anyone still remember the Carrier deal? Back in December President-elect Donald Trump announced, triumphantly, that he had reached a deal with the air-conditioner manufacturer to keep 1,100 jobs in America rather than moving them to Mexico. And the media spent days celebrating the achievement. Actually, the number of jobs involved was more like 700, but who's counting? Around 75,000 U.S. workers are laid off or fired every working day, so a few hundred here or there hardly matter for the overall picture. Whatever Mr. Trump did or didn't achieve with Carrier, the real question was whether he would take steps to make a lasting difference. So far, he hasn't; there isn't even the vague outline of a real Trumpist jobs policy. And corporations and investors seem to have decided that the Carrier deal was all show, no substance, that for all his protectionist rhetoric Mr. Trump is a paper tiger in practice. ❖

**Michael Warren, Weekly Standard:** Last week's strike on the Syrian airfield from which Bashar al-Assad launched his latest chemical-weapons attack on his own people has somewhat overshadowed President Trump's meeting with Xi Jinping, the president of China. The summit at Mar-a-Lago last Thursday and Friday was the first chance for the leaders of the world's two largest economies to get acquainted and, perhaps, talk frankly about the security and economic challenges facing both nations. But the Trump administration has been pretty quiet about what agreements, concessions, or potential deals it got from the Xi meeting, particularly regarding the growing nuclear threat from North Korea. Trump himself tweeted cryptically on Tuesday morning that he had "explained to the President of China that a trade deal with the U.S. will be far better for them if they solve the North Korean problem" and "North Korea is looking for trouble. If China decides to help, that would be great. If not, we will solve the problem without them!" That suggests that, at least on their first meeting, Trump and Xi didn't decide on much. ❖

## Trump abandons multiple positions

WASHINGTON — President Trump is abandoning a number of his key campaign promises on economic policy, adopting instead many of the centrist positions he railed against while campaigning as a populist (Washington Post). Trump will not label China a “currency manipulator,” he told the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday, despite a campaign pledge that he would apply the label on his first day in office. He also said he was open to reappointing Federal Reserve Board Chair Janet L. Yellen after saying last year that the central banker should be “ashamed” of what she was doing to the country. And he embraced the Export-Import Bank, a government agency that he mocked last year and that has long been despised by conservatives who labeled it crony capitalism.

The statements represent a move toward the economic policies of more centrist Republicans and even at times align with the approach of former president Barack Obama. Should he follow through on the newly articulated positions, it would suggest that the candidate who ran as the ultimate outsider is increasingly adopting a more moderate economic agenda. The reversals come amid a period of rapid evolution for Trump on both foreign and domestic issues. Trump’s commitment to repealing the Affordable Care Act has wavered. On Wednesday, he said repealing the Affordable Care Act needed to be Congress’s main priority after scrapping the effort several weeks ago. On the global stage, Trump’s reversals have been even sharper. Last week, he ordered airstrikes against the Syrian military, even though he promised during the campaign to keep the United States out of conflicts in the Middle East. He is also adopting the Obama administration’s call to oust Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad, a position he refused

to take during the campaign. The shift on Syria enraged some of Trump’s campaign supporters who had embraced his isolationist foreign policy.

## Carson to probe United Airlines

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. Andre Carson (D-IN) is a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. In a statement, he told 24-Hour News 8 he would be looking into the incident. “As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation, I am trying to get all the facts possible so that we learn what actually happened, and, in what order the events unfolded. In the coming weeks, I will be looking into the details of what went wrong to ensure that this type of unfortunate situation does not happen again.”



## Chinese plant will bring 441 jobs

GREENFIELD — A China-based auto-parts manufacturer has chosen Greenfield as the site of its first U.S. production facility—an \$80 million plant that is expected to employ 441 workers by the end of 2021 (Indianapolis Business Journal). BeijingWest Industries Co. Ltd., which designs and manufactures brake and suspension systems, plans to break ground on the 276,514-square-foot facility in Greenfield’s Progress Park this summer and launch production in August 2019, state officials announced Wednesday. The Indiana Economic Development Corp. is expected to offer BWI North America Inc up to \$4.55 million in conditional tax credits and up to \$200,000 in training grants based on the job-creation plans.

## Pence to travel to Japan

WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross will travel to Japan

to discuss trade later this month (Hoozier Ag Today). The duo is scheduled to travel to Tokyo on April 18. The U.S. officials will meet with Japan’s finance, foreign, and industry Ministers. Japan is the top export market for the U.S. pork industry, and the National Pork Producers Council has urged the Donald Trump administration to begin negotiations on a free trade agreement with Japan.

## Buncich proclaims his innocence

WASHINGTON — Lake County Sheriff John Buncich broke his months-long silence Wednesday following his November indictment on federal corruption charges, calling the claims “absurd” and pledging to fight (Napoleon & Lyons, Post-Tribune). “I have long wanted to issue a statement of my innocence to allay any concerns that you may have and to maintain your confidence in the Lake County Sheriff’s Department. But, on the advice of my attorneys, I have remained silent,” Buncich wrote in an open letter to Lake County residents. Buncich said he had expected the case to be resolved by now, but since it’s continued until August, he wanted to speak out and assure residents the work of the Lake County Sheriff’s Office will continue without disruption.

## O’Reilly to Vatican as Fox investigates

NEW YORK — Bill O’Reilly left Fox News this week for a long-planned vacation to Italy and the Vatican, with his fate in the hands of a Murdoch family calculating the risks and rewards of keeping him on or forcing him out of the network. Facing a boycott by advertisers, unrest inside the company, protests outside Fox News headquarters and public calls for human rights investigations into company culture, Rupert Murdoch and his sons, Lachlan and James, are reckoning with the fallout of a sexual harassment scandal that has once again engulfed Fox News.