



# Rokita announces with Delph support

Braun, Rokita join Senate race, Delph out, and Messer announces Saturday

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The Republican U.S. Senate race took definition Wednesday morning with U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita's entry that came with a full-throated endorsement of State Sen. Mike Delph, who considered a candidacy himself.



Rokita's official entry will be bookended by the emergence of State Rep. Mike Braun into the race on Tuesday, and U.S. Rep. Luke Messer's official kickoff at his annual barbecue in Mor-

ristown on Saturday. Unless Attorney General Curtis Hill decides to get in, and his office did not return an inquiry on that from Howey Politics Indiana, the field looks to be set at six with Terry Henderson of Atlanta, Mark Hurt of Kokomo and Andrew Takami of New Albany already declared. Messer announced his candidacy on Facebook last week, and is expected to tout his resume



and make his case to voters on Saturday.

The presumption is that Messer and Rokita will be the brawling frontrunners, but Braun believes many

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## Coming fire and fury

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – On Aug. 6, 1945, President Harry S Truman, a mostly unknown political figure, commander in chief for just less than five months, and widely seen as a novice, made a stunning announcement:



"Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, an important Japanese Army base. That bomb had more power than 20,000 tons of TNT. We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there



**"I'm honored that people believe in my ability to help our nation succeed in the same way Indiana has prospered, but after much consideration, I have decided not to seek a seat in Congress."**

*- State Sen. Brandt Hershman*



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be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war." On Tuesday, President Trump, widely seen as a novice on all things military and diplomatic, reacted to a report that North Korea had attained a miniaturized nuclear warhead with arms folded and clenched to his torso, saying, "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States. They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."

**It was a chilling** moment, underscoring comments U.S. Sens. Joe Donnelly and Todd Young made to HPI earlier this summer that Americans need to wrap their heads around the notion that we may be at war – nuclear war – in a matter of months. Perhaps it's just weeks or days now.

Trump and Kim Jong Un are now locked in a duel of belicosity, neither providing the other much space to back down and save face. Kim responded to Trump with a threat to bomb Guam. And it had TV producers seeking B-roll of MSNBC's Joe Scarborough recounting a Trump conversation with foreign policy experts: "Three times [Trump] asked about the use of nuclear weapons. Three times he asked at one point if we had them, why can't we use them?"

**The real chilling** aspect came from former National Security Agency Director Michael Hayden when Scarborough then asked a hypothetical question: How quickly could nuclear weapons be deployed if a president were to give approval? "It's scenario dependent, but the system is designed for speed and decisiveness. It's not designed to debate the decision," Hayden said.

Quick, get Dennis "the Worm" Rodman on the phone.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, himself a novice in diplomacy, tried to reassure a jittery world. "What the president is doing is sending a strong message to North Korea in language that Kim Jong Un would understand, because he doesn't seem

to understand diplomatic language ... I think it was important that he deliver that message to avoid any miscalculation on their part," Tillerson said, apparently standing by Trump's threat. "I think what the president was just reaffirming is that the United States has the capability to fully defend itself from any attack, and our allies, and we will do so. So the American people should sleep well at night."

Defense Sec. Jim Mattis added, "It must be noted that the combined allied militaries now possess the most precise, rehearsed and robust defense capabilities on Earth. The DPRK regime's actions will continue to be grossly overmatched by ours and would lose any arms race or conflict it initiates."

The Wall Street Journal editorialized today: "Diplomacy works best when there is a credible stick to go with the carrots. The Trump Administration has the right idea, even if the President's

words lack the usual diplomatic politesse."

**We learned in 2016** when Trump's temperament issues were raised that there is no check and balance if a President orders a nuclear strike.

The BBC reported: "That military aide will be carrying a satchel over his or her shoulder containing a briefcase known as 'the nuclear football'. Inside will be a piece of digital hardware measuring 3 inch by 5 inch, known as 'the biscuit'. This contains the launch codes for a strategic nuclear strike. The briefing for the incoming president on how to activate them will have already taken place out of public sight, but the moment President-elect Donald Trump takes the oath of office that aide, and the satchel, will move quietly over to his side. Donald Trump will then have sole authority to order an action that could result in the deaths of millions of people in under an hour. The question on a lot of people's minds right now is, given his thin skin and impulsive temperament, what are the safeguards, if any, to prevent an impetuous decision by one



man with catastrophic consequences?"

Mark Fitzpatrick, a nuclear non-proliferation expert at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Washington, told the BBC that ultimately, the sole authority to launch a strike rests with the president. "There are no checks and balances on the president's authority to launch a nuclear strike. But between the time he authorizes one and the time it's carried out, there are other people involved," Fitzpatrick said.

That would include Sec. Mattis. Fitzpatrick notes, "The idea of a rogue president taking such a monumental decision on his own is unrealistic. He gives the order and the secretary of defense is constitutionally obliged to carry it out. The secretary of defense could, in theory, refuse to obey the order if he had reason to doubt the president's sanity, but this would constitute mutiny and the president can then fire him and assign the task to the deputy secretary of defense."

Whew.

**The questions quickly** percolated up Tuesday. Was Trump speaking off the cuff, or were his words vetted? Was he simply ratcheting up the pressure on Chinese President Xi? Or, as he's done in office and on the campaign, was he winging it?

Jeffrey Lewis, a nuclear nonproliferation expert who tweets as ArmsControlWonk, told Washington Post columnist David Ignatius, "Tillerson has drawn the line in a more traditional and reasonable place. The question is: What did Trump think he was saying? My guess is he didn't think about it at all. That's the problem. He doesn't



pay any attention to word choice."

The New York Times quoted White House insiders: "[Trump's] ominous warning to Pyongyang was entirely improvised, according to several people with direct knowledge of what unfolded. In discussions with advisers beforehand, he had not run the specific language by them. Among those taken by surprise, they said, was John F. Kelly, the retired four-star Marine general who has just taken over as White House chief of staff and has been with

the president at his golf club in Bedminster, N.J., for his working vacation.

**"But the president's** ad-libbed threat reflected an evolving and still unsettled approach to one of the most dangerous hot spots in the world as Mr. Trump and his team debate diplomatic, economic and military options. The president's aides are divided on North Korea, as on other issues, with national security veterans like Mattis and Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, the national security adviser, on one side and Stephen K. Bannon, the president's chief strategist, and his allies on the other."

White House adviser Sebastian Gorka said the situation was "analogous to the Cuban missile crisis" and trumpeted the supremacy of the American "hyperpower."

So, the strong message has been sent, but with very little wiggle room. Kim lobs another missile, and does Trump then order a preemptive strike? Does he do it before non-essential U.S. military personnel are evacuated from South Korea, Japan and Guam? If that does occur, what kind of panic ensues in Seoul and Tokyo.

What's that line I kept using through the 2016 campaign? Anything can happen. Anything. ❖

## Rokita, from page 1

Republicans have soured on the pair's negative attacks against each other. "During county fairs, I was talking to county officials as well and basically got the same reading," Braun said in a HPI Interview on Tuesday. "There was a presumption that one of the two would end up being the Republican nominee, and that wasn't resonating well."

**Braun also noted** the CBS Poll which has congressional approval at a scant 19%. "I think that's going to be tough for them, not only because they've been involved in politics most of their careers, but they've been part of the D.C. scene," Braun said.

Rokita's campaign comes with the trappings of the Donald Trump populist movement, with signage and an Internet video declaring "defeat the elite." It came after Rex Early and Tony Samuel of the 2016 Indiana Trump campaign signaled support for Rokita last week, though Messer finance chairman Greg Pence said the pair were not speaking for President Trump and his brother, Vice

President Mike Pence.

Rokita told a small group of supporters and the media on the south Statehouse steps just below his former office, of his 2002 secretary of state race. "The political elite didn't engage me when I was 30 years old," he said of that campaign, though he had the backing of financiers Bob Grand and Dan Dumezich, who is finance chair of his Senate campaign. "In fact they tried to work against me. But the good, hardworking people all over Indiana supported me and they supported me in great numbers, just like they do in my congressional district. I sat in diners, in living rooms, farm house kitchens, factory backrooms and went and continue to go almost anywhere you can imagine. I had thousands of conversations with real people, not the people to make policy.

**"I heard about the** growing distrust in our institutions," Rokita said. "People think public servants say one thing and do another. Hoosiers will believe that politicians are only looking out for themselves. When you visit Washington, D.C., these days or work there, you realize they



are right. You see in D.C., business is booming and the business is big government. The construction cranes of the rigged system are everywhere in Washington. Six of the 10 wealthiest counties in America are in the D.C. suburbs. They are signs of a gross government out of control."

"No wonder so many Americans believe there is a rigged system; politicians, bureaucrats and the media even, look out for themselves and look down at the rest of us," Rokita said.

**He contrasted himself with** Messer, whom the Rokita campaign portrays as living in a wealthy Washington suburb while claiming a Shelbyville address of his mother. "It's one reason I fly back and forth every weekend to be with Kathy, Teddy and Ryan," Rokita said of his wife and sons. "I sleep on my (office) couch in Washington. Being in Indiana keeps me in touch with Hoosiers and our values.

"When I see what goes on in Washington and talk to my neighbors, I see their disappointment, their anger and their distrust," Rokita continued. "Some go to Washington and get caught up in the distrust. They buy million dollar homes, move their families. The golf club memberships are sometimes worth more than the average Hoosier home. And, of course, the lobbyist dinners. They become Washington, and when they come back to Indiana, it's here where they get off the tower. If they lose an election, that's okay because they'll stay there and profit from the system. That's their world. That's not what we elected them to do."

That was in reference to former Indiana U.S. senators Vance Hartke, Birch and Evan Bayh, Richard Lugar, Dan Quayle and, for a time, Dan Coats, who either resided in Washington after leaving the Senate or worked there (Quayle, however, lives in Arizona).

**Rokita took aim at** Donnelly, saying, "They vote one way and vote the other way in Washington. In other words, they are hypocrites. This brings us to Sen. Donnelly. He personifies why there is distrust in Washington. Mr. Donnelly will tell you he is always with us in Washington, and that is somewhat true. He is usually with us every time it doesn't matter. Man, when it matters, he's not with us. He's with Nancy Pelosi, Chuck Schumer and President Obama. When it matters, Joe Donnelly is one of the final votes for Obamacare."

"When it's taxpayer funded abortion, when it's gun regulations, whatever it is that matters, Joe isn't with us," Rokita said. "And just recently, we find out that despite all of his rhetoric about protecting American jobs, he, himself, was profiting from jobs out-sourced to Mexico.

"Indiana needs a conservative senator who votes our values," Rokita added. "Indiana needs a senator who votes in D.C. based on the promises he's made right here

in Indiana. We don't have that in Joe Donnelly and there's too much at stake to accept it."

Rokita vowed to accomplish goals and pointed to his record as secretary of state to "back it up." He explained, "As secretary of state, I cleaned up our election data and fought for the integrity of our elections by implementing and defending all the way to the Supreme Court our voter ID law. It's now a national model employed in 28 states." Working with Gov. Mitch Daniels, Rokita said, "I took on my own party to push for reform in the redistricting process to make it less partisan and pushed for term limits for career politicians to get rid of the rigged system and I'm glad I did it. As secretary of state, right there in that office, we put white collar criminals behind bars with record jail time.



"And in Congress," Rokita continued, "I rewrote federal education laws to return power to parents, power to states and local school districts, and we stopped Common Core. On the Transportation Committee I brought over \$5 billion back to Indiana over a five-year period for the roads, bridges and infrastructure required to keep our economy growing. And no, Mike, we didn't have to raise taxes to do it."

**That was a barb** aimed at Gov. Eric Holcomb and General Assembly leaders who raised fuel taxes and user fees for a 20-year road funding plan. Sen. Delph has been critical of the gas tax hike.

In the Senate, Rokita vowed to "restore trust and defeat the elite. Only the elite will accept Obamacare. We must continue efforts to repeal and replace it and that will be one of my top priorities. We must reform taxes to make America competitive again. I will vote to rebuild our military, defend the border and end sanctuaries in cities and states. They need to follow the law when it comes to immigration. I will sponsor term limit legislation and support a lobbying ban for former members, removing incentives for people seeking the office in the first place." And Rokita advocated reforming federal agencies and "dispersing jobs" to other areas of the country as a "way to drain the swamp."

"President Trump and Vice President Pence have an agenda Hoosiers fully support," Rokita concluded. "They need more partners in the Senate willing to challenge the status quo from both parties and take on the failed policies of the Washington elite. We can change the Senate, we can change Washington, and we can defeat the elite."

Delph, who had pondered an entry into the race, was the surprise element to Rokita's kickoff on the south steps of the Statehouse. Rokita and Delph had opposed each other for the 2002 secretary of state race.

"I thought I'd make some news with my town

meeting, but this is a bigger deal," Delph began. "Todd Rokita is the right man for the job. He is a conservative who can defeat Joe Donnelly. He is the only Republican in this race who has won twice statewide as a Republican. Todd has the work ethic and determination to take the fight to Joe Donnelly and defeat Joe Donnelly in 2018. I know this because I remember our secretary of state race back in 2002 when Todd and I battled through all 92 counties for two years. I saw Todd's work ethic first hand. Todd is a tireless campaigner. His work ethic and tenacity are unmatched in this Republican field. Simply put, Todd is relentless and will be outworked by no one. He will be everywhere, all the time."

Delph added, "People are waking up and they want an end to the nonsense in Washington, D.C.," Delph said. "Indiana needs a conservative senator who will actually represent regular Hoosiers in Washington and will do what he says he will back in Indiana. On taxes, our 2nd Amendment, the right to life, Obamacare, the Iran deal, you name it, Joe Donnelly says one thing here in Indiana then turns around and votes with the Washington liberal establishment."

Donnelly campaign manager Peter Hanscom reacted, saying, "As Congressman Rokita has said, we need hard workers representing our state in the Senate. Joe Donnelly has built his career on reaching across the aisle to find the best solutions for Hoosiers, and he's worked every single day to strengthen his connection to the people he represents. He spends as much time as he can back home in Indiana when the Senate's not in session because there's no substitute for hearing Hoosiers' concerns firsthand. This race will come down to whomever has a strong connection to Indiana. We've been glad to see that both Congressman Rokita and ourselves feel that Joe Donnelly is that candidate, and we appreciate his praise."

Hanscom noted an April 20 Howey Politics Interview with Rokita when he said, "No. 1, [Joe] works the state real hard. I see him on the airplane with me every weekend. That's why we need a candidate who comes back to the state, lives in the state, raises his family in the state. It keeps me connected, just like Joe Donnelly, who is fairly connected to voters in this state."

### **Attorney General Hill says 'stay tuned'**

Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill is not ruling out a possible Republican bid for a U.S. Senate seat (Associated Press). Hill was asked about joining the Senate race a short time later at a separate news conference. Hill wouldn't rule out a bid and ended the event by saying "stay tuned."



### **HPI Senate race analysis**

Internal polling by both the Rokita and Messer campaigns reveal that while both have higher name ID than the other four candidates, neither candidate has a decisive edge over the other and both must build a statewide brand. Rokita has won two statewide races, but the last occurred in 2006, so he's not had that kind of exposure for 11 years.

Prior to his endorsement of Rokita, Delph made the same observation that Braun did, that running as a member of Congress could be a liability this cycle. Delph said there was a "conservative lane" for another candidate. Both Braun and Henderson have the ability to self-fund, to some extent. Braun says he will have about "two thirds" of the 70-member Indiana House Republican caucus either tacitly or publicly backing his candidacy, forming a skeletal statewide support system.

Henderson, Hurt and Takami have yet to show any traction financially (Hurt reported \$56,000 on his second quarter FEC report).

The failure of congressional Republicans to repeal and replace Obamacare is just now starting to impact national polls. Unclear is how Obamacare and

other GOP issues failing to gain traction and the chaotic Trump White House will impact Rokita and Messer. A Gallup survey earlier this month revealed Trump's job approve/disapprove stood at 47/48% in Indiana, a steep dropoff after he carried the state with a 20% plurality last November.

Rokita has clearly hitched his wagon to Trump populism. That could help him in a primary race, though a CNN Poll earlier this week revealed that base support is beginning to erode. It will be interesting to see how and to what extent Messer embraces the Trump/Pence White House. That Greg Pence is on his finance committee suggests he will mount as emphatic embrace as Rokita did on Wednesday.

Donnelly will gladly watch Messer and Rokita embrace Trump/Pence. It will provide potential fodder for the fall campaign once a nominee is chosen.

Continued Trump and congressional issue failures could open up that lane for one of the non-members of Congress. A complete wild card would be a war – perhaps even a nuclear war – with North Korea, which has the potential of completely transforming the 2018 cycle in ways hard to fathom at this writing. If perceived as a success, Americans could rally around Trump as they did in 1991 with President George H.W. Bush. Worth remembering is that Bush lost a reelection bid a year later. And his son, President George W. Bush, won reelection after his 2003 Iraq War, but Republicans suffered heavy losses

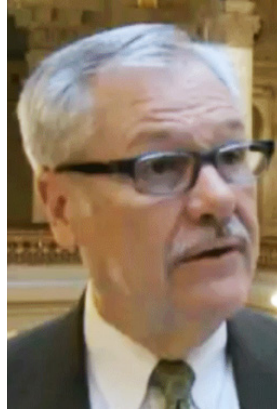
in the 2006 mid-terms after the quick invasion became a protracted and bloody problem.

**HPI Horse Race:** Tossup.

**Congress**

**2nd CD: Arnold eyes Walorski challenge**

Reports are circulating that former State Sen. Jim Arnold (D-LaPorte) is strongly considering a possible run for 2nd CD against incumbent Republican Jackie Walorski (Howey Politics Indiana). Arnold was first elected to the State Senate in a caucus in 2007 to file the seat of the late Sen. Anita Bowser (D-Michigan City) and then went on to win handily in 2008 and 2012. He did not file for reelection in 2016 reportedly due to concerns over his wife's health, but since that time she has fully recovered and is reported to be "very supportive" of his making a run for the congressional seat. Arnold filed for LaPorte School board last year and was the leading votegetter, winning a seat on the board. Knowledgeable observers in the district say that Arnold's status as a veteran with strong ties in the



law enforcement community (he's a former LaPorte County two-term sheriff) would aid him in the district. Rep. Walorski is viewed by many as vulnerable to a challenge for her unwavering support for the House Republican health care bill that President Trump labeled as "mean."

**4th CD**

**Hershman won't seek seat; Morales in**

State Sen. Brandt Hershman will not seek the open 4th CD seat. Hershman posted on Facebook Wednesday. "I'm honored that people believe in my ability to help our nation succeed in the same way Indiana has prospered, but after much consideration, I have decided not to seek a seat in Congress," Hershman said. "I have met with others interested in serving and believe that at least one talented and thoughtful leader with the right values for the state and nation."

Senate President David Long said during his sine die speech last April that the biennial budget could be the last one forged by Hershman and State Sen. Luke Kenley, who announced in July he would retire in September. Hershman was bypassed by the Trump administration for an FCC post, leading to speculation that he might try for the 4th CD. Hershman had been an aide to U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer.

Diego Morales, an Army veteran, former senior

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advisor to Vice President Mike Pence while he was Governor, and current Indiana business leader, has officially launched his campaign for the 4th CD. "Over the past several months and actually for the past several years, I've been exploring how I can best serve the people of our great state and, more specifically, the 4th District," said Morales. "What I've learned is that my fellow Hoosiers want someone with an understanding of national security who shares their conservative values and is guided by faith. As an Army veteran, I will stand firm in supporting President Trump and Vice President Pence's vision for a stronger America where our families can grow and prosper." Morales is particularly familiar with the 4th Congressional District, having studied for his MBA at Purdue University. "For me, living the American Dream in this great Hoosier State is a privilege that I never take for granted and it brings with it a duty to serve," Morales explained. "It will be my duty to ensure we protect our borders and enforce immigration laws, while fighting to preserve our Constitution so everyone can discover his or her own American Dream.

"I am 100% pro-life and believe in protecting the unborn," Morales continued. "Congress needs to understand our values can never be taken for granted and that is why I will always oppose any infringement on our right to keep and bear arms. I will work every day to repeal Obamacare and oppose Common Core, because I believe more government is not the solution." Morales is a graduate of Indiana University. He currently serves as Chief Business Development Officer for The Sodrel Holding Company, Inc., and is an Adjunct Professor at Ivy Tech Community College.

Fourth CD Republican Chairman Mike O'Brien told the Lafayette Journal & Courier that Steve Braun, Department of Workforce Development commissioner, is a potential candidate as well as State Sen. John Crane of Brownsburg. "I don't get the sense we're going to get another 13-way primary," O'Brien said. "We could have four, five or six. I think that's probably more likely than having a really crowded field like we did in 2010."

Jeff Fites, Indiana Democratic Party's 4th District chairman, had a handful of candidates lining up before Rokita's Senate ambition left an open seat. The candidates include Ivy Tech Dean Sherry Shipley and Joe Mackey of Lafayette, and Tobi Beck, Roger Day and Bruce Bohlander of Hendricks County. Fites said more could jump in ahead of the filing deadline for the May primary. "Rokita does give you a lot to work with, but if you're talking about reshaping an election, you're assuming the person on the ballot will be the opposite of Todd Rokita," Fites said.



Diego Morales (left) is running for the 4th CD GOP nomination and William Tanoos has declared for the 8th CD Democrats.



## 8th CD: Tanoos declares for Democrats

Today via an online video (<http://williamtanoos.com>), Terre Haute attorney William Tanoos announced his candidacy for the 8th CD. "I'm running because I believe our middle class is what has made America the greatest country in the world for generations. It's clear to most everyone that those currently in Congress have lost their way. They no longer work for the working families in their communities,

but instead for the special interests that have come to define Washington. I want to go to Congress to change that," Tanoos said. Tanoos currently works as a disability attorney. "The American dream is not dead. Together, we can rebuild the middle class and support working Hoosiers who have proven to be the backbone of this great country," said Tanoos. "That's what families all around our state have valued and relied on for generations and we have no intention of letting it go without a fight." Tanoos is an alumnus of South Vigo High School and Indiana University and IU's McKinney School of Law and practices law in the Northern and Southern Districts of Indiana.

## Moss primary rematch with Bucshon

Dr. Richard Moss will seek a Republican rematch with U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon (Evansville Courier & Press). Bucshon will mount his fourth reelection campaign next year, having ascended to his first two-year term in Congress in 2010. And, for the fourth consecutive time, he has drawn a challenger for the Republican nomination in the 19-county 8th District. Moss is a Jasper-based ear, nose and throat specialist who unsuccessfully tried to wrest the GOP nomination away from him in 2016. Bucshon easily turned back Moss's challenge then, winning by a margin of 65-35%.

## General Assembly

### Gambill to challenge Sen. Ford

Chris Gambill of Terre Haute announced his candidacy Tuesday for the Indiana Senate seat held by Republican Jon Ford (Taylor, Terre Haute Tribune-Star). The 59-year-old attorney said he is seeking elected office for the first time because of "the public cynicism that exists about public officeholders" who are often not viewed as an adequate voice for their communities. ❖

# Braun sees Senate path and a funded campaign

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Mike Braun became the fifth Republican to enter the U.S. Senate race on Tuesday. The Wabash College graduate first joined the Indiana House in 2014 and served on the powerful Ways and Means and Roads and Transportation committees.

The Jasper Republican stresses his business and entrepreneurial background and his ability to translate it into government action. “I’ve built a small company and made it into a big company. I clearly come out of the private sector, know my way around politics with my experience in the Statehouse and I think that’s going to benefit

me in the long run as people sort out a large field,” he said. “There is going to be a clear contrast between my background and the two frontrunners. If everybody else is coming from the outside, I don’t think anybody is going to be able to articulate infrastructure and health care and tax code issues as well as I can. That’s what’s going to be the essence of what I’m going to talk about.”

Braun is founder and CEO of Meyer Distributing, a company he began in 1981 as Meyer Body Company. He has served on the Jasper School Board and was a board member of the Conexus Indiana Logistics Council Southwest and the Mid-State Corridor Development Corporation.

HPI conducted this interview late Tuesday afternoon, just hours after he announced he would enter the race.

**HPI:** Talk about the process you just went through that brings you to the U.S. Senate race?

**Braun:** It started seven or eight weeks ago. I made as many phone calls as I could fit into a day. I’ve been traveling around the state as well. It basically grew and grew in terms of interest and enthusiasm, a lot of it due to the fact that it’s gotten so acrimonious between the two guys that were undeclared most of that time. As I asked state legislators, friends of mine, “Does this make sense?” It kept building. During county fairs, I was talking to county officials as well and basically got the same reading. There was a presumption that one of the two would end up being the Republican nominee, and that wasn’t resonating well because it implied that everybody else was just out of the field, so it just built for that reason. I’m a guy who’s made my cred in the private sector and know my way around government. I think there’s a real appetite for someone who solves problems, who has the experience that lends to the kind of change discussion we normally hear in D.C.

**HPI:** Can you describe your support? Will you

have support from Indiana House members?

**Braun:** I think two-thirds of my caucus will tacitly or overtly support me, some within the districts of Messer and Rokita, mostly because I’ve made friends there and they know I’m a no-nonsense guy with the nitty gritty of ideas on how to fix things. I think there’s an appetite for something like that; that’s what catapulted Trump to such a strong showing in the state. People were fed up with politicians as usual and Todd and Luke are going to have to explain they’ve been in that arena for most of their careers.

**HPI:** Have you spoken to Speaker Bosma and is he on board?

**Braun:** The biggest comment from the speaker and others is they’re going to miss me in the House, and I take that as a compliment. His was one of the early phone calls I’ve made; I owed it to him. I’ve been on two great committees, Ways and Means and Transportation, and he was very encouraging but cautious that I get my ducks in a row. I took that advice and spent eight weeks making phone calls and out in the field.



**HPI:** Who will be on your finance committee? And there’s been speculation that you might be a self-funding candidate.

**Braun:** My finance committee will be composed of people probably not in the normal political arena – other entrepreneurs and business guys, many from the southern part of the state. I believe I will have, now that things are sorting themselves out, new folks who have been involved in mainstream and establishment politics, but most of the people are out there touting my campaign and helping raise money are going to be business people, CEOs, individuals mostly not known in political circles.



**HPI:** Will you self-fund, at least partially?

**Braun:** I've worked too hard to build a business and finally create a bottom line. I'll have the ability to make the race competitive and I'm going to spend the time and energy to get buy-in, especially from the business community, friends outside of politics who are going to help financially and with moral support. But I will be there out of the gate if things equalize fairly quickly so there is no apprehension about getting behind my campaign because I'm not going to commit the resources to it. That's not going to be the case.

**HPI:** The field stands at five now; Rokita will announce imminently. I've got calls into Attorney General Hill and Sen. Delph, so this field could grow to eight. How do you win a primary in such a field?

**Braun:** The two front-runners out of the gate have been in politics for a long time. That may resonate. Throughout much of the state, there will be people who want to kick the tires on other options. The only candidate who is going to be able to put the funding together realistically is going to be myself, and I'm going to be talking about particular issues of concern, health care, infrastructure, tax code and jobs and the economy. I've lived it viscerally. I've had to react to politicians and government while being successful in those arenas. I think that's going to resonate. I'm going to have a message that people will say, "Hey, this is different; he's saying things meaningful to

me." And they realize I'm going to be able to put a competitive campaign together. As all of that gets out there, I think I will build gradual steam.

**HPI:** Congressional approval hovers between 17 and 22%, depending on what poll. I've heard people say they believe Rokita and Messer will be vulnerable on that front.

**Braun:** That's a known fact. I thought the percentage might have been lower. I think that's going to be tough for them, not only because they've been involved in politics most of their careers, but they've been part of the D.C. scene. Even though they can fall back on, "Well, we can't get things put together," I don't know how Republicans and conservatives will have a better chance to do this with the lineup we have now. We've had people in the Senate who are going to be behind Trump and his agenda and I think that's going to help. I don't know how you could possibly make a credible argument for those two when they've been part of the apparatus and have poor approval ratings for not getting anything done.

**HPI:** What would you like to see on health reform?

**Braun:** Obamacare came into place because the ball was dropped by the health care industry to address things like pre-existing conditions, limitations on coverage. I have the unique position over the last eight years of being able to put together a real working plan that has been

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consumer-driven, that has incentives to keep healthy, to manage wellness. If you get critically ill, or have a bad accident, your coverage is completely taken care of other than your deductible. We've done it out of necessity because it's become a hassle for most businesses to administer. I wanted to find a way, despite an industry that is not transparent, doesn't work to really engage in the free enterprise system like most of us do. We've found a way to do it. I've never heard a politician get down into the weeds like that. Health care is probably the single biggest issue that businesses and people grapple with, and we've got a system that is working, has drawn out costs and created better coverage.

**HPI:** What about tax reform? That seems to be coming up in Congress.

**Braun:** That is the one thing that is primarily driving where Trump is. The tax rate is 40% and it needs to be in to the high 20s to low 30s. Then you'd see the biggest explosion of economic growth we've seen in a long time. Some of that is being discounted in the stock market and the better approval ratings for Trump when it comes to handling the economy. It's based on the hope that might occur. It would be a game changer for small businesses that suffer with a burdensome tax rate if they are successful.

**HPI:** What is your take on President Trump's first six months in office?

**Braun:** Trump, like most entrepreneurs, those who have been outside of established politics, is viewed it as the guy who made it through the system, broke the glass ceiling of establishment politics. It's been the biggest disruption within the beltway in many years, if ever. Most people who have been involved with it hope he's going to fail, as well as most of the media. Some of the things are, would he put on hold an onerous federal government regulation that was going to take minimum salaries to \$47,000 and would have disrupted many small businesses. That's been rolled back. Lifting of other regulations put into place during the Obama era gets no coverage, but has lifted the burden and nobody's talking about it. He doesn't get any credit, and I don't think any other president would have done that.

**HPI:** What are the highlights of your General Assembly career?

**Braun:** Out of the gate I was on the Roads and Transportation Committee and Ways and Means. The first year on Ways and Means, we were interviewing the commissioners from each department and Karl Browning with INDOT made it clear that we were in trouble with



our roads; we were going to go from 7% of roads needing repair to 10%. We took a gut check. Many of us were fiscal conservatives, fiscal hawks who had to go along with raising user fees for infrastructure. Clearly it had to be done, should have been done 10 to 15 years ago if we had planned things appropriately. That didn't happen. I was glad to be a part of that. I co-authored SB128 that allows local regional areas to have skin in the game to help pay for a project that is being overlooked by INDOT. I couldn't find a national bill like that. We already have an RDA being teed up in the southwestern part of the state to do it. I was co-author on SB198, a workforce bill to get jobs filled that we are not filling currently. It is based on career and technical education. We're spending way too many dollars on four-year degrees, shipping many of them out of state. We've been neglecting low-hanging fruit that could dump billions of dollars into our economy if we start filling those jobs. They are going unfilled, currently. I feel real good about

that, common sense stuff that points to practical benefits.

**HPI:** We have the opioid crisis tormenting the state. How would you confront that as a senator?

**Braun:** It's not only a state problem, it's a national one, starting with the over-prescribing of painkillers. To me it's one of the easier things to fix in terms of the supply. Too many prescriptions are written too large or are done too casually. That seems like something we can put the clamp on right away. With opioids as well as other less expensive things on the street, in states and nationally we have to start insisting on rules and regs as to prescriptions, and trying to ferret out the dealers on the street. Like the drug war, we win some and lose some. Opioids has added a definite dimension where too many places are impacted. Everybody knows somebody who's had a family member affected. It's not going to go away.

**HPI:** What is the case you're going to make against Sen. Donnelly?

**Braun:** Sen. Donnelly, from everything I know, has voted almost completely out of sync with what most Hoosiers would have in terms of values. He's made some strategic votes to keep himself in play, but he has been mostly in line with the Pelosi, Reid, and now Schumer kind of thinking. He's voted mostly with President Obama. I think we'll clarify that. I don't think he's going to be able to make up for a very out-of-sync voting record with what he claims he does in constituent services. I think that's going to fall short and it's going to be easy because he's created a record where it's very clear where he's been. ❖



# Prosecutors call for more drug enforcement

By **PATRICIA A. BALDWIN**

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana Drug Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement Task Force has released a plan for dealing with the state’s opiate epidemic. Laudably, the plan proposes increased prevention and treatment



efforts. However, the plan lacks meaningful enforcement proposals, without which the prospects of controlling the epidemic through prevention and treatment are impossible.

Drugs like opiates are classified as controlled substances by the federal government. These drugs are controlled because they are dangerous if not delivered properly. There are effectively two delivery systems for controlled substances in Indiana,

the legitimate medical industry and the illicit drug industry. The legitimate medical industry is highly regulated and provides several important functions regarding controlled substances. Pharmaceutical companies test and develop drugs, and are overseen by federal regulators to ensure efficacy and purity of the substances. Highly trained medical professionals evaluate patients, make diagnoses and prescribe medications. Pharmacies help screen for drug interactions, and guarantee purity and dosage. Patients are monitored with an end goal of restoring health.

The illicit drug industry has different aims. It is driven solely by profit. It has traditionally been even more highly regulated than the medical industry. It is a criminal offense to possess or deliver controlled substances outside of the legitimate medical processes. The aim of the criminal justice system in this area is to discourage participation in the illicit drug industry. Prosecutors and police do this by attacking the supply side of drug use by arresting, prosecuting and incarcerating drug dealers. We also apply consequences to drug users to encourage rehabilitation. Since 2014, law enforcement has suffered from a weakened ability to accomplish these two important parts of the equation – holding dealers accountable and encouraging users to get help.

**The 2014 criminal code** reform to a large extent deregulated the illicit drug industry. Penalties for drug dealing and possession were dramatically decreased. As an example, dealing over 3 grams of heroin under the old criminal code was a class A felony with an advisory sentence of 30 years. That same offense today would be a level 5 felony with an advisory sentence of 3 years. Prior to the criminal code reform, 60% of A and B felony

admissions to prison were for drug dealing. Today, the comparable number is 5%. Fully 30% of the worst of the worst drug dealers convicted in Indiana received no prison sentence last year. Prosecutors never disagreed that drug penalties were too high before the criminal code reform. Our position has been and remains that a 90% reduction in prison sentences for drug dealers goes too far, and that there is no justification for the worst of the worst drug dealers failing to go to prison.

**There have been real** consequences from this dramatic reduction in penalties. Our prison population has fallen from 29,377 in January of 2013 to 25,117 in March of 2017. At the same time, local jail populations have exploded because the people we are not able to put in prison are still committing crimes. They now revolve in and out of local jails on short term sentences. Consequently, offenders are increasingly on the streets creating problems for our communities.

Reports of child abuse and neglect are up as evidenced in the increase in CHINS (Child in Need of Services) cases, which have risen from 14,227 in 2014 to 23,120 in January of 2017. Further, Indianapolis and Fort Wayne are now among the top 30 cities in the nation for murder per capita, and both cities experienced record murder numbers in 2016. The extreme violence in these cities evidenced by the murder numbers is due in most part to gangs fighting over drug dealing territory.

The narrative that spurred the criminal code rewrite, and that informs the Indiana Drug Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement Task Force report is that drug use is a medical issue and not a criminal issue. The report urges us to think of a heroin user as having a substance use disorder (SUD), and to ignore the illegal aspects. Proponents of this way of thinking suggest that SUD is no different than diabetes.

**Most in the law enforcement** community do not accept the comparison. In my analysis, I won’t quibble with that issue. It is not necessary to make my point, and I believe the criminal justice community and the medical community can agree to disagree and still work effectively together. I suggest that the criminal justice systems does, in fact, treat SUD and diabetes the same. Diabetes sufferers almost exclusively participate in the legitimate medical industry in treating their disorder. If a diabetes sufferer were to opt out of the legitimate medical industry and instead purchase medications from a man on a street corner, the criminal justice system would rightly intervene. As a matter of public policy, our state does not want diabetics to get medication that is illicitly obtained, not tested or labeled for purity, not prescribed after examination by a doctor, not monitored for dosage and usage, and not administered with the goal of maintaining the patient’s health.

Conversely, most addicts obtain opiates outside of legitimate medical channels. There are, of course, avenues in the legitimate medical industry to treat addiction even with the use of opiate replacements like Suboxone, but un-



like diabetics, most addicts do not choose this path. That choice is where the corrective action of the criminal justice system should be applied. If a person suffers from SUD, he or she has an obligation to seek treatment through the legitimate medical industry.

**If we excuse or enable** an addict to seek opiates through the illicit drug trade, we endorse, then, all of the negative consequences associated with that industry. Further, we undermine the efforts of the legitimate medical industry to treat this problem. The more readily available opiates are through the illicit drug trade, the less likely an addict will seek legitimate medical assistance. The less severe the consequences for possession of drugs, the less likely addicts will take corrective action. A robust enforcement effort is absolutely necessary to a functional preven-

tion and treatment effort.

I, and prosecutors around the state, certainly appreciate the efforts of the task force to bolster prevention and treatment resources in our state. We want the plan to succeed. It cannot succeed, however, without a comparable and equivalent improvement on the enforcement side. Penalties for drug possession and dealing are too low. Prosecutors are asking the governor and his task force to recommend balancing the equation, and give law enforcement the tools necessary to help our state. ❖

**Baldwin is president of Indiana Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Inc., and is in her sixth term as elected prosecutor of Hendricks County. She was a deputy prosecutor for 14 years prior.**

## Can Donnelly win reelection?

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – Perhaps the biggest political question in Indiana is whether U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly can win reelection next year. Judging by the crowded field of Republican hopefuls, the answer would have to be no. But given that he is the second most bipartisan member of the Senate, the answer would have to be maybe.



Indiana Democrats suffered a stinging defeat last year when Evan Bayh lost in his bid to win back the Senate seat he gave up several years earlier. So, for the first time since the 1970s, Indiana doesn't have one

of its native sons, Democrats Birch and Evan Bayh and Republican Richard Lugar, in the U.S. Senate. That can't change next year, but Democrats are bent on making sure Donnelly is reelected. Democrats think that's possible, because there won't be a presidential race heading the ballot. There won't be a governor race high on the ballot either.

**Who Republicans nominate** remains to be seen, but chances are it will be someone out of the Donald Trump mode. That would have meant a great deal last year but won't mean nearly as much next year. Republican candidates thus far are U.S. Reps. Todd Rokita, a Munster native, and Luke Messer; State Rep. Mike Braun; Hamilton County businessman Terry Henderson; Kokomo attorney Mark Hurt; and Floyd's Knobs educator Andrew Takami. Although most

of those candidates have embraced Trump, that may be a mistake, given his plunging approval rating.

While Republicans are wrangling, Democrats, particularly in northern Indiana, have taken to social media to promote the reelection of Donnelly. He also has become a frequent visitor to Northwest Indiana, where he is particularly close to Lake County Democratic Chairman James L. Wieser.

**While Indiana remains** a red state, Donnelly notes that he substantially defeated Richard Mourdock, who beat Lugar with the help of the Tea Party. Donnelly also is expected to campaign on Democrats taking control of the Senate, or at the least, keeping Democrats within striking distance on key issues.

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**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.**

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

# It's who you know

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – “It’s not what you know but who you know.”

While researching the history of Tammany Hall and its relationship with professional baseball, I came across an interesting little book titled, “Ethnicity and Machine Politics,” by Jerome Krase and Charles LaCerra. It is a history of how the Madison Club dominated Brooklyn politics from 1905 to 1978.

In the 1970s, club member Emmanuel “Manny” Cellar was the senior member of Congress. Other Madison Club members included then-New York Gov. Hugh Carey, New York City Mayor Abe Beame, New York State Controller Arthur Levitt, and Speaker of the State Assembly Stanley Steingut. It was a small, but very powerful, political club reminiscent of the Tammany Club across the East River.



One insight in particular jumped off the page, turning the original quote with which I started this column on its head. “It is not who you know but

rather, who knows you.” Power and influence is signified not by your name-dropping, but whether people in charge know you by name.

In reading the descriptions of the Madison clubhouse, it was like many political headquarters in Indiana. The patterns are similar, regardless of size. The authors note how the regulars at the clubhouse often greeted some people more warmly and loudly, which they took to be a sign of the person’s power. But it was not. It was a sign of friendliness among the second echelon. The “important” people breezed by without greeting, were talked about reverentially as if they were powerful, and always seemed to be coming from something important and about to head to something else important.

**In other words**, like any machine, it had many tiered levels that adjusted around each other and which built a team of mutual interests – sometimes personal, sometimes social, sometimes around an issue. In Indiana, when I was a student, I was fortunate to be able to be involved with and observe Old Guard people like Seth Denbo and Orvas Beers. It was a privilege to one of the “token yutes” in the BPMS (The Beer and Pizza Marching Society, or William Jenner Society) of conservatives led by M. Stanton Evans, even if they considered me too “squishy” at times. I saw how both party and ideological loyalty and teamwork were supposed to work.

My research also has uncovered how Charles Ebbets gained ownership and built in steps, back in the late 19th and early 20th century, what were the Brooklyn

Dodgers and are currently the seemingly invincible Los Angeles Dodgers. His core friends – the man who invested to give him majority control, another man who became the team attorney and handled the legal dealings in building Ebbets Field, and a third who purchased half of the team’s stock so Ebbets could construct the ballpark – were all bowling buddies of Ebbets. They were also political allies and held powerful offices in New York City government. In other words, whether they were winning bowling competitions, building an historic baseball team or winning elections, they had decades-long core friendships anchoring their trust of each other.

**And internal New York** politics could be almost as brutal as Indiana primaries. The featured speaker at one large gathering of reform Democrats railed against the Brooklyn Democrat bosses with rather harsh words: “Brooklyn has been ring-ridden for over a quarter of a century by the same hoggish ringsters who are still feeding and fattening at the trough. These inveterate grabbers, for whom the prisons yawn, and who ought to hide their faces in shame, are holding high their haughty heads, as if their ill-gotten wealth entitled them to special distinction in the community.”

By the way, the reformers were crushed in the primary. Noise is not the same as votes.

For the record, as an incumbent, my view on people who challenged me in a primary was simple: They were a traitor to me, to the Republican Party and possibly America. Whoever is the favored candidate hates the idea of being challenged. The question is not whether primaries are destructive to your side – I had eight of them and never lost a primary or a general election campaign – but whether the candidates endorse each other and work together in the general election. Tomorrow your intra-party rivals may be your best allies, so don’t torch every bridge beyond rebuilding.

When you currently watch the chaos in Washington, the traditional glue seems to be absent. The president, and too many others, don’t know what a political clubhouse looks like or even a bowling club. Who are the president’s real friends that he can trust? He seems to turn on about whoever he appoints. No bowling buddies of decades around him.

When one becomes president without a pyramid underneath, it is tough to accomplish much. The year 2017 requires different approaches to teamwork than 1917, of which alternative media can be one, but you still need a team of allies to implement those goals, not just insult those who don’t salute your every idea.

**Some of the president’s strong** rhetoric has seemed, along with other variables, to have improved the economy, made America stronger, and reduced illegal immigration for at least the short term, but a strategy to make them stick is lacking. The Trump allies in government, even loosely defined, are a small little band standing atop a government largely run by Obama political appointees.

The president, not seeing himself as a part of a team and rocking between assisting and attacking Republican legislators, still has not nominated personnel for many key positions. And many of them were so recently announced that background checks and hearings for even those nominated are going to drag on for a long time. Furthermore, the president seems to regularly undermine even his understaffed closest allies.

Politics is a team sport. The president is steadily running out of time as he pursues personal vendettas and seems to trust no one for more than brief periods of time. It's sad because the opportunities remain great for him to make a real difference beyond his rhetoric. ❖

**Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.**

## Joking with Trump

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Most people can take a joke. Some can't. Make fun of them in a punch line, and they don't laugh, don't smile, don't joke back. They punch back, angry, vindictive.

In "Devil's Bargain," new best-selling book about President Donald Trump and his chief strategist, Steve Bannon, author Joshua Green, national correspondent for Bloomberg Businessweek, poses the question of whether Trump ran for president because he couldn't take a joke.



Well, it was a series of jokes that Trump didn't take well.

It was on April 30, 2011, at the White House Correspondents' dinner in Washington. That's a swank event attended by elite of government, business, society and entertainment. The president traditionally attends, taking a lot of ribbing and then responding with humorous remarks of his own, usually poking fun at himself as well as at the news media and political officials and other important people in the room.

Trump was in the room. He was invited to sit at the Washington Post table. He was then a TV celebrity who was toying with running for the Republican nomination to oppose President Barack Obama's 2012 reelection. And he was getting national attention with his "birther" charges, perpetuating the fake news that Obama really wasn't born in the United States.

**Green writes of Obama's** introductory musical video, with American flags and screaming eagles to highlight a display of Obama's long-form birth certificate from Hawaii – the certificate Trump had said was nonexistent. Obama already had released it publicly.

"Donald Trump is with us tonight," Obama said. "Now I know he's taken some flack lately. But no one is happier, no one is prouder to put this birth certificate matter to rest than the Donald. And that's because he can finally get back to focusing on the issues that matter, like .

. . . did we fake the moon landing? What really happened in Roswell?"

The crowd was laughing uproariously. Well, not everybody, not Trump. Then Seth Meyers, the master of ceremonies, came on with more jokes about Trump. One example: "Donald Trump often appears on Fox, which is ironic because a fox often appears on Donald Trump's head."

**I remember watching** the event on TV. The cameras focused on Trump as Obama and then Meyers drew laugh after laugh with barb after barb. Trump didn't laugh. He sat frozen, at first trying to force what author Green called a "rictus grin." Then he gave up any pretense of finding anything funny. As Green describes it: "Trump was plainly humiliated – and it showed."

Trump didn't run for president in 2012. It appeared, as Green writes, that he had been "brutally dispatched – his dignity snatched away from him, his foray into politics swiftly cut short, the preening, grasping interloper who had barged into a world where he didn't belong sent crawling back to his rightful station: A tawdry world of bimbos, pink marble, reality TV . . . Only that wasn't what had happened at all."

No, it wasn't. Trump continued to stir "birther" suspicions, despite the birth certificate, playing to conspiracy believers. But that wasn't enough to win. Then Bannon, the populist pugilist heading "incendiary" Breitbart News, found Trump, a candidate to promote his populist-nationalist beliefs. And Trump found with Bannon what he needed to expand his base and win: How to use the news media while denouncing it. How to make angry Americans angrier. How to stick it to the establishment, Republican as well as Democratic, and make conventional political wisdom look stupid.

Trump long had toyed with running for president. He really wanted to do it. Obama's comedy routine neither started nor stopped the desire to run. He likely would have run in 2016 – now-or-never time – whether or not he was at that 2011 dinner. But would animosity now toward Obama run so deep? He now would sign any health care bill, even if "mean," as long as it removed "Obama" from in front of "care." ❖

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



# The earnest irony of Indy's civic pride

By JAY RUCKLESHAUS

INDIANAPOLIS – The sign in the airport was hard to miss: A giant blue banner suspended in the glass atrium: "WELCOME TO INDY." Groggy from my flight, I blinked at it for a few seconds, then smiled broadly. Indy.



After living in England for the past year, I had gotten used to telling people I was from Indianapolis – not "Indy," a name no one would've recognized. It was great to be back where using the city's more pronounceable nickname doesn't raise confused eyebrows. Quite the opposite; it was striking, returning home, to notice the seemingly-universal insistence on using "Indy" in everything from shop names to the Visit Indy tourism agency to those giant, cursive-scripted "Indy" photo ops sprinkled

throughout the city.

It's tempting to see in this embrace of our nickname an affectionate kind of civic pride, one that aims to present our city as lively, hip, modern. It can seem almost self-conscious – a concerted, officially-sanctioned effort to project a certain image of this mid-sized city to the world. "Indy" is on the rise.

But this way of talking about the Circle City doesn't always gel with the way young people and recent college grads like me describe our home. We, too, embrace the name "Indy." But there's an apparent disconnect between the sincere tone of civic enthusiasm, on the one hand, and the understated sarcasm many of my friends use to describe this place, on the other.

**Some typical** formulations: "You won't believe they're actually building new apartment buildings," or "There's a lot going on...for Indy," or, even more explicitly, "Who knew there could be so much culture in the midst of cornfields!"

At first blush, this tone might seem scornful, or at least at odds with the sentiment of the airport banner. You might ask, then, "Does my generation lack civic pride? Or is Indy civic pride simply a spiritless marketing strategy?"

I believe the answer to both questions is a firm no. And in fact, in using an ironic edge to describe this node at the Crossroads of America, I argue that we reveal a richer and more complex kind of civic pride than is possible in many other cities.

Tom Collins, a British geographer, explains that the concept of civic pride is rooted in the idea that "cities constitute distinctive political communities where people share a sense of identity." Any conception of civic pride requires some "other" to compare our city to and define it as a distinct entity. The obvious candidates are other cities – e.g., Indy is better than Boston. So one way of constructing civic pride is to ground it in a reflexive sense of home turf. This is the civic pride of hometown sports loyalty; we root for the Colts (and against the Patriots) largely because they're simply our team.

**Now Indy residents** are fiercely loyal sports fans, but our civic pride runs deeper than this. To see why, we have to examine the way young people talk about Indy. The irony and notes of bemusement aren't belittling. Instead, I think this tone shows a kind of honesty and points to a unique feature of Indy civic pride. When we add a self-deprecating wink to our praise of Indy, we're acknowledging that it's sort of a surprise that our city is as vibrant as it is.

The same dynamic is at work in the embrace of that other nickname – "Naptown." We took the sleepy sobriquet that residents of other cities used to disparage us and made it our own, redefining it as a badge of honor. So the posture of ironic affection reveals not boredom or disappointment with our city, but something like their opposites.

It's also, I think, something more. When we factor in the earnest irony I've mentioned, we see that we're not – or not exclusively – defining Indy's character against other cities. Nobody seriously thinks we're battling New York or LA for cultural supremacy, which is partly why it's funny to compare us to them and find us lacking.

Instead, the relevant comparison is between Indy and itself – the city now and the city as it once was. I think we're proud of Indy not merely for what it has to offer, but because the merits of what we have are thrown into relief by what others presume Indy to be like.

So Indy civic pride is aspirational; it contains an implicit vision of progress that motivates us to improve the status quo. We're optimistic.

Part of what we're proud of is the

fact that Indy isn't sitting still; it's aggressively pursuing talent and 21st-century investment and striving to become a welcoming place for folks of all kinds.

This is a kind of civic pride that couldn't exist in



New York. There's a unique energy in creating something that's never existed before, in pushing Indy forward. It's intoxicating.

**So Indy civic pride**, at its best, is a political ideal that challenges us to consider what it really means to be from this place. Like all political ideals, it's partly moral, and it's this morality of geography that turns the 317 from a place on a map to a community to be proud of.

At stake in our self-referential and dynamic civic pride – in the difference between Indianapolis and Indy – is nothing less than a vision of active citizenship, grand as that may seem. It takes seriously the ideas of commitment and improvement. It allows – actually, it requires – taking stock of the parts of our city of which we may not be proud.

So yes, Indy is on the rise. It's lively, hip, modern. But it is in its own way, a non-complacent way, and it generates a unique kind of civic pride. We are indie Indy, not Indianapolis. Home to Kurt Vonnegut and a big car race and, if not quite a metropolis, then the biggest small town in America. ❖

**Ruckelshaus is a Rhodes Scholar from Indianapolis and graduate student in politics at the University of Oxford. He studied political philosophy and history at Duke, where he graduated first in his class in 2016. Jay is interested in the role of ideas in democratic discourse and aspires to a career in which he can help reinvigorate the American public sphere.**

## Hanging with Miss Per Capita Income

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – My studies take me all over Indiana with frequent trips into the Data Dungeon. Today I saw Per Capita Personal Income (called PCPI by her friends) alone and sobbing. Passers-by don't recognize her despite her popularity and stunning figure.



"What's up, kid?" I said to the sad fraction with the growing numerator and the pleasing denominator.

"Politicians, economic developers and PR people keep talking about me and they don't have the faintest idea who I am," she said.

"You know the score," I told her. "People don't bother examining both numerators and denominators. In your case, they don't care how personal income grows in your upper parts as long as it does so faster than the population in lower reaches."

"All those eyes on me all the time." She was clearly disgusted. "Don't they care how and why I'm changing? All they want is my figure to look spiffy without recognizing what I go through."

"**Everywhere people** think your growth is a sign of well-being. They don't know it might be the result of declining population," I said. "Falling population helped 47 of Indiana's 92 counties to have growing PCPI between 2005 and 2015. Jay County, with a 2.2% decline in population, led the state with a 55% growth in PCPI."

She fought back the tears.

"They don't understand my expanding upper torso isn't a sign of health. It's occurring because Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps, unemployment compensations and other transfer payments by government accounted for 29% of the increase in Indiana's personal income over the past decade."

"**Right, I agreed.**" "And what are transfers except money to help people who are elderly, sick, disabled, poor, or out of work? That kind of growth is not a sign of a healthy economy."

"It's awful," she sighs. "We've had Hoosier governors tell us they will use me as a metric to assess the success of their programs. Counties make false claims about me. I'm going to have a reputation my family back at the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) will find shocking ... passed around from one ignorant booster to another..."

"Lots of data," I said, "good kids like you, want to tell an honest story, but are denied the opportunity because the national or state legislature won't allocate the money needed to let you do your job. You end up with imputations, numbers stuck onto you, adhering by only the skinniest assumptions."

"**I'd feel better," she said,** "if I could shake off \$20 billion imputed as income in rent and interest payments to Hoosiers. Imagine thinking the rental value of your home, or interest credited to some account in your name, are really income! It's phantom money that makes me feel unclean."

That's how it is, folks, down there in the Data Dungeon. ❖

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# Democracy rests with communication

By LEE HAMILTON

BLOOMINGTON – The heart of representative democracy rests in the communication between the electorate and elected officials. We should make this conversation more fruitful and effective. Do ordinary citizens still have a voice in Washington and in their state capitals? Despite the cynicism of these times, my answer is, yes, we do – but we have to exercise it.

I don't just mean going to a town hall meeting and yelling, or shooting off a letter or email. I mean making an appointment to sit down with your representative – in his or her office, at a cafe in the district, or wherever else you can meet – and holding a real conversation. We don't do this often enough, perhaps because most people think it's impossible to arrange. It's not, although it might take patience to get an appointment with a busy representative. And to my mind, it's the most effective way for citizens to communicate with their representatives.



This is important because the heart of a representative democracy does not lie in its electorate, or even its elected officials. It rests in the communication between them, in the give and take that allows each to understand the other. Over my years in office I noticed a few things about how to make this conversation more fruitful and effective, and, for what it's worth, I pass them along.

My guess is that in almost all cases, the representative will be gracious, attentive, and welcoming; he or she will see the meeting as a chance to reach out and perhaps win a constituent's support. What makes the difference in these meetings is the manner in which the voter approaches them.

**So my first comment** is that you want to keep the discussion respectful and polite. Incivility and confrontation are counter-productive. If you want to have an impact, do not be argumentative or confrontational. Explain how the issues affect you personally and make it clear that you're seeking to establish ongoing communication, not just a 'one and done' meeting.

If your representative comes to respect you because of your approach and your knowledge, that's an important step forward in expanding your influence. Don't forget that the reverse can also be true: You'll make it easy to ignore you by behaving ungraciously.

This next part may seem daunting, but it shouldn't be: Do your homework. It goes without saying that you should identify yourself and whoever else is with you, let

your representative know whom you're representing – don't exaggerate your numbers – and above all, make it very clear what you want him or her to do or not to do. And you'll be far more effective if you're well-informed about the core facts on the issues and about the person you're speaking to: His or her party, length of service, committees, interests, views, ratings and priorities.

**Understand that legislators** deal with many challenging relationships: Voters, donors, constituents, interest groups, party officials, congressional or legislative leadership, governors and presidents, and an array of others. So, listen carefully and ask a lot of questions, and get clarity about where your representative stands on your issues and why. Test his or her knowledge of the issues, and the depth of commitment to the views he or she takes. Be firm in insisting on direct answers, but don't be adamant or unreasonable. If you want to, record the session, but be sure to advise the representative you are doing so.

In short, having a productive conversation with elected representatives comes down to being informed, remaining courteous, being curious and open to dialogue yourself, and stating your views and understanding of the issues as clearly as possible.

**If you engage in** this fashion with your representatives on a regular basis, I think you'll have reason to be satisfied that you're stepping up to your responsibilities and raising your effectiveness as a citizen. And if conversations of this quality are multiplied across the country, it really will improve the quality of our representative democracy and contribute to the direction and success of our country. ❖

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## Hamilton raises war concerns

BLOOMINGTON – Former Indiana Congressman Lee Hamilton sees a war with North Korea fraught with danger (Indiana Public Media). "I think we're in a very dangerous moment because of the threat from North Korea," Hamilton said. "The provocative statements from the two leaders, North Korea and the United States, has fueled alarm across the world, and we could easily blunder into war. So, I think now is the time to ratchet down the rhetoric and the actions and try to calm things down and open up a political process with North Korea. I don't suggest that will be easy, but we must turn away from war because the consequences of even a quick, ugly war would be catastrophic in terms of casualties no matter who wins or how they win." ❖



# Trump could learn from Holcomb, Milo

By SHAW FRIEDMAN

LaPORTE – Governor Eric Holcomb’s recent appointment of LaPorte Mayor Blair Milo to a highly lucrative (\$172,000 a year) prestigious cabinet appointment in his Administration could teach a thing or two to our president regarding the twin goals of quality political hiring – rewarding loyalty, yet insisting on absolute competence.



First off, this president has shown that the loyalty he demands of subordinates is one-way and unrequited. Trump’s failure to reward two of his most loyal surrogates, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, is testament to how transitory and transactional he really is. Couple that with his inexplicable attacks this past week on the one Cabinet member, Attorney General Jeff

Sessions, most intent on carrying out the so-called Trump agenda – weakening voting rights, reduced civil rights enforcement – and you see a pattern developing that loyal service in support of The Donald’s agenda doesn’t carry with it any real rewards.

Contrast that with the loyalty shown by LaPorte’s energetic mayor who committed early and fervently to Eric Holcomb’s U.S. Senate campaign and agreed to serve as the co-chair of his campaign committee, when the outcome of that GOP Senate primary to fill Dan Coats’ impending open seat was very much in doubt. Holcomb never forgot that loyalty and commitment that Blair Milo had demonstrated to him.



**Many of us who have** watched this young mayor’s impressive rise on the state political scene fully expected Gov. Holcomb to reward her with one of his premiere cabinet positions in January and were surprised to see a cabinet rolled out with her name missing. Yet Gov. Holcomb was clearly biding his time to come up with just the right appointment for Milo. Speaking of loyalty, don’t think that Mayor Milo’s status as a Navy veteran hurt one bit in solidifying that alliance with Holcomb. He’s justifiably proud of his Navy service in his own right and clearly very loyal to that branch of the service.

Then we come to the competence quotient – i.e. trying to fit the right “loyalist” into a position that they are qualified for – again, an area that the president has abjectly failed in.

Whether it was appointing the eminently unqualified Betsy DeVos to head the Department Education or the uniquely unsuitable former governor of Texas, Rick Perry, to head Energy, this president has had a knack for putting the wrong people in the wrong positions. The piece de resistance has to be Trump’s appointment of his woefully under-qualified son-in-law Jared Kushner, whose life experience seems to have been renovating three story walkups in Manhattan for sale as good re-sale properties. Now he’s charged with a portfolio that runs the gamut from reforming the VA to bringing peace to the Mideast!

Compare that appointment to Blair Milo whose experiences as mayor have included stints working closely with Workforce Development and Ivy Tech on job training issues and skills development and developing competencies for the jobs of the future. Her work ethic and communication skills make her well suited to serve in a role that will have her actively interfacing with employers, attracting new developers to our state and dealing with various educational and job training facilities throughout the state.

**How intellectually curious** and exacting is Blair Milo? This is a woman who wrote detailed procurement manuals for the Pentagon. She’s got the smarts and savvy to do a solid job for the state in a position that is critical for the state’s future economic development prospects and job creation.

I’ve long joked with my friends on the other side of the aisle that we Democrats would trade for both Blair Milo and our highly popular Republican sheriff John Boyd and give the Republicans in return two future first-round draft picks and an undisclosed amount of cash! Unfortunately, I’ve had no takers.

With Blair Milo’s voice now in Indianapolis, I think it does bode well for Northwest Indiana which as a region has often suffered from being “out of sight, out of mind” under both former Govs. Pence and Daniels. On the political front, Democrats in LaPorte can now be pleased that we’ve at least now got a shot at regaining the mayor’s office in 2019, as Blair Milo would’ve been tough to beat, just as she was unopposed for reelection in 2015.

**Bottom line:** The governor’s pick of Mayor Blair Milo represents not only smart politics in rewarding a longtime friend and loyalist, but addresses that second key prong in any good political hire – unquestioned competence.

It’s a shame that our president can’t take a lesson or two from this governor on placing the right political appointees in the positions they’re really qualified for. ❖

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**Chris Cillizza, CNN:** The New York Times published a story over the weekend detailing the “shadow” campaign underway among ambitious Republicans to be prepared in the event that President Donald Trump doesn’t run for a second term in 2020. The story mentioned that Vice President Mike Pence’s “schedule is so full of political events that Republicans joke that he is acting more like a second-term vice president hoping to clear the field than a No. 2 sworn in a little over six months ago.” And that Pence -- via aides -- is making sure he’s first in line if Trump bows out; “multiple advisers to Mr. Pence have already intimated to party donors that he would plan to run if Mr. Trump did not,” wrote Timesmen Jonathan Martin and Alex Burns. In reaction to the story, Pence -- and this is no exaggeration -- went bananas. He released a statement through the vice president’s office insisting that the Times story was “disgraceful and offensive to me, my family, and our entire team.” He also called it “laughable and absurd” that he was doing anything in regard to 2020 other than working to ensure Trump wins a second term. Pence’s reaction was far more aggressive than the others -- Sens. Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Ben Sasse of Nebraska, as well as Ohio Gov. John Kasich -- mentioned in the story as laying the groundwork to be ready if Trump exits after a single term. (This may all be a moot conversation, given that Trump insists he is running in 2020 and has already raised about \$17 million for his re-election race.) Pence’s (over)reaction raises a simple question: Why? And the answer starts with “Donald” and ends with “Trump.” Pence’s political fortunes are 100% tied to Trump. They have been since the day the then-Indiana governor said “yes” to Trump’s offer to share the ticket. His path to become president is to be the Trump-endorsed candidate, the heir to the movement that Trump built during the 2016 campaign. And to do that, Pence absolutely must make sure there is never any distance between him and the president. It’s doubly important for no one to be able to slip a piece of paper between Pence and the president because the president is Donald Trump. The unforgivable sin in Trump’s world isn’t saying or doing impolitic things, it’s appearing to be something short of entirely loyal. ❖



**Richard Cohen, Washington Post:** Mike Pence is denying reports that he is positioning himself to run for president in 2020 if, for some reason, Donald Trump falls by the wayside or decides that one term is enough. The vice president’s denial was so over-the-top — “disgraceful and offensive,” he called the New York Times article — that had he been on a polygraph, he would have frizzled the wires and blown the circuits. The only thing wrong about the article was its timing. Pence’s presidential ambitions are nothing new. He’s been running his entire life. Pence is the very personification of the career politician. With the exception of a few years doing talk radio and

television shows, he has done nothing but run for office, winning all but the first two times. Pence is not a man to look a gift horse in the mouth. He’s got his eye on 2020. ❖

**Michael Warren, Weekly Standard:** Whatever strategic planning the Trump administration has for a North Korea with nuclear weapons capabilities, there was no preparing for the president’s comments on Tuesday. The White House, including the national-security team, was unaware President Trump was preparing to speak publicly about North Korea when he did so Tuesday at his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey. “North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States,” said Trump, his arms crossed. “They will be met with the fire and the fury like the world has never seen.” Trump said North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been “very threatening beyond a normal state.” Trump’s aides and staff will now be forced to fit their messaging and agenda to the president’s words. ❖

**Frank Bruni, New York Times:** The other day, from the Naval Observatory in Washington, you heard a howl of such volume and anguish that it cracked mirrors and sent small forest animals scurrying for cover. Vice President Mike Pence was furious. He was offended. Someone — namely, my Times colleagues Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns — had dared to call him out on the fact that he seemed to be laying the groundwork for a presidential bid. Problem No. 1: His president is still in the first year of his first term. Problem No. 2: That president is Donald Trump, who doesn’t take kindly to any glimmer that people in his employ are putting their vanity or agenda before his. Just ask Steve Bannon. Or Anthony Scaramucci. They were too big for their britches, and Trump snatched their britches away. The Times report put Pence in similar peril, so he pushed back with an operatic outrage that showed just how close to the bone it had cut. When a story’s actually wrong, you eviscerate it, exposing its erroneous assertions without ever breaking a sweat. When it’s a stink bomb at odds with your plotting, you set your jaw, redden your face and proclaim it “disgraceful,” never detailing precisely how. That was Pence’s route. And his rancor, I suspect, reflects more than the inconvenient truths that Martin and Burns told. It’s overarching. It’s existential. On some level, he must realize that he’s in a no-win situation. Without Trump he’s nothing. With Trump he’s on a runaway train that he can’t steer or brake. If it doesn’t crash, Trump can scream down the tracks straight through 2020. If it does, Pence will be one of the casualties. So why has Pence formed a political action committee, the only sitting vice president ever to do so? Why is he taking all these meetings, building all these bridges? I guess there could be some imaginable future in which Trump falls and Pence is left standing strong enough to soldier on. But mostly he’s in denial, and he’s living very dangerously. ❖

## Young, Rokita back ‘fire and fury’

FORT WAYNE — Two federal lawmakers from Indiana expressed support Wednesday for President Donald Trump’s vow to answer threats from North Korea “with fire and fury like the world has never seen.” (Francisco, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). In separate visits to Fort Wayne, Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind., and Rep. Todd Rokita, R-4th, said Trump’s statement Tuesday was appropriate in the wake of reports that North Korea has the capability to put nuclear warheads on intercontinental ballistic missiles. “To the extent that the president’s remarks were calculated to create a measure of uncertainty among our enemies, then I think that can be a good thing. We want to keep our enemies off balance,” Young said at a meeting with The Journal Gazette editorial board. During a stop at Allen County Republican Party Headquarters to announce his candidacy for Indiana’s other Senate seat, Rokita said about Trump’s comments: “I think it’s showing strong leadership. There are parts of the world that don’t respect anything but strong leadership power, and I think the president exhibited that.”



## Manafort’s home raided by FBI

WASHINGTON — Federal agents working with Special Counsel Robert Mueller raided the Virginia home of Paul Manafort, President Donald Trump’s former campaign chairman, to obtain documents and other material last month, according to people familiar with the matter. Related “FBI agents executed a search warrant at one of Mr. Manafort’s residences,” Jason Maloni, a spokesman for Mr. Manafort, confirmed in a statement. “Mr. Manafort has consistently cooperated with law enforcement and other serious inquiries and did so on

this occasion as well.” The raid occurred July 26 at Mr. Manafort’s home in Alexandria, a suburb of Washington, D.C. Federal Bureau of Investigation agents executed the search warrant a day after Mr. Manafort met with the staff of the Senate Intelligence Committee. The Washington Post reported earlier Wednesday the execution of the search warrant.

## Jurors see tape of Buncich, bribe cash

HAMMOND — Federal jurors saw a video tape Wednesday of Lake County Sheriff John Buncich handling \$7,500 in what the government claims is bribe money (Dolan, NWI Times). In the tape, Buncich is seen putting the money in his desk drawer. Government prosecutors in U.S. District Court presented more than seven hours of surveillance recordings to bolster their corruption case against Buncich during the third day of the trial. Bryan C. Truitt, of the sheriff’s defense team, told U.S. District Court Judge James T. Moody he wants the judge to instruct jurors that they could decide the money was legitimate political fundraising.

## Madison Co. ends needle exchange

ANDERSON — The Madison County Council voted 5-2 Tuesday to effectively end the needle exchange program by adopting an ordinance that prohibits funding for an employee to oversee the operation of the program (Anderson Herald-Bulletin). The ordinance prohibits the use of county funds or donations and gifts to purchase the needles and the necessary supplies. The council listened to almost two hours of comments for and against the needle exchange program. The program was started in 2015 after the Madison County commissioners declared a public health emergency over concerns about the potential spread of hepatitis C and HIV.

## Young says tax reform has a chance

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Todd Young (R-Ind.) says he’ll join fellow Republicans in Congress to make tax reform his priority this fall (Ropeik, Indiana Public Media). “Tax reform is probably the best bang we can get for our policy buck,” Young says. Young mentioned untaxed, offshore assets and tax barriers for small businesses as key issues for him. But he says he knows major reforms are a lofty goal. “We need to make a very strong run at it,” he says. “I think we have more than a fighting chance to get it done.”

## IDEA to honor Judy O’Bannon

NEW ALBANY — Former First Lady Judy O’Bannon will receive the Lee Hamilton Public Service Award at the Hamilton Dinner at the 137th Indiana Democratic Editorial Association (I.D.E.A.) convention, at 6 p.m. Aug. 26 at the French Lick Springs Resort Hotel.

## Hill to replicate Ten Point Coalition

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill wants to replicate the work of an Indianapolis anti-violence program in other communities around the state. Hill plans to set aside money from his office to spread the Ten Point Coalition model. Hill says it’s effective at reducing violence and homicides. “There are pockets of violent areas all over the state that can benefit from this type of neighborhood, community, one-house-at-a-time engagement,” Hill says. Hill is setting aside \$500,000 from his office’s Consumer Protection Fund to use as what he calls “seed money” to replicate Ten Point’s work in five or six other communities. “What we’re looking at is to provide seed merely,” Hill says. “Ultimately, these programs have to be supported within the community.”