

INSen GOP primary: Anything can happen

Huge pool of undecideds, Braun's inability to close the deal creates historic volatility

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

COLUMBUS – In a normal campaign, a trio of U.S. Senate candidates would spend the final week prior to the primary scrapping for that 2-5% sliver of remaining undecided voters. But Indiana's 2018 Republican U.S. Senate primary race is anything but normal.

Mike Braun, Luke Messer and Todd

Rokita head into these final days courting an estimated and unprecedented bulge of more than 30% undecided voters. Rokita told Howey Politics Indiana prior to the

final debate Monday night at WFYI-TV that the number of undecideds was in the 40% range. Messer said after the debate, "The leader of this race may be the undecideds. We've got the best grassroots campaign by a lot. We're



GOP Senate candidates Todd Rokita, Luke Messer and Mike Braun talk prior to Monday's final debate. Rokita and Messer say the undecideds lead their internal polling.

just trying to get this over the finish line."

In the nearly quarter century Howey Politics Indiana has been publishing, we've never seen a race this high up the food chain with such a massive number of voters

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Hall not taking chances

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND – Mel Hall, front-runner for the Democratic congressional nomination in Indiana's 2nd District, is taking no chances. He plans to continue an all-out campaign effort, including television appeals hitting the entire district, right up until the May 8 primary election.

Smart.

The former CEO of Press Ganey, South Bend-based collector of data on patient satisfaction for hospitals nationally, has five opponents for the nomination. Two wage determined campaigns.

Although Hall and his campaign strategists exude confidence of winning, they want



"A great friend of this president, a tireless champion of strong borders and the rule of law, Sheriff Joe Arpaio, I'm honored to have you here."

- Vice President Mike Pence in Arizona on Tuesday. Arpaio was convicted of a felony and pardoned.



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to take no chances that either Pat Hackett or Yatish Joshi, chief rivals for the nomination, could slip in front of the front-runner.

In old-school political theory, however, Hall would be viewed as making a costly mistake. Old-school traditionalists would question why Hall, if he really is a confident front-runner, is “wasting” so much money on the primary election. Why, when the race that counts is in the fall against Rep. Jackie Walorski, the Republican incumbent? After all, she has over a million dollars on hand already and will get a whole lot more.

Max Harris, Hall’s campaign manager, explains that the extensive television buys were made weeks ago to counter Walorski as well as to fend off primary challengers. When Walorski began sending out appeals for support that cited need to counter successful fundraising by “liberal” Mel Hall, Harris and Hall’s campaign consultant, Mike Schmuhl, knew it was time to define Hall as he wants to be defined, not as Walorski would define him as some kind of wild-eyed liberal.

Smart.

While the old-school view was to save up funding for a big push in mid-October, many elections now are already decided by then. If an opponent hammers away with messages sticking high negative ratings on a candidate – and the candidate delays an effective response – that candidate is likely to lose. If Hall held back with TV ads defining himself in a positive way, he could have saved money now. But he would have lost the opportunity to enhance name recognition and a positive image for the fall. He also has firmly established opposition to Affordable Care Act cuts and loss of coverage. That could be the No. 1 issue this fall.

Old-school politicians resented tough-campaigning primary election opponents “forcing” the front-runner to “waste” money. Most candidates want to run unopposed in the primary.

Hall, if nominated, ought to thank Hackett and Joshi. Without serious opposition, Hall wouldn’t be able to test his organization and issues in battle. Nor would he have all the name recognition from debates and news accounts about the primary race. Money that Hall is spending on mailings and TV, even on cable TV out of Chicago and Indianapolis to reach edges of the district, is an investment for the fall campaign.

All-out campaigning district-



twice is smart for another reason. Hall needs to win by more than just a smidgen. He needs momentum. He needs to convince the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee to target the district for national help.

In 2012, Brendan Mullen was the front-runner for the Democratic congressional nomination, regarded as much farther in front than Hall is now. He saved money for the fall race against Walorski. Didn’t “waste” it on primary campaign spending.

The alphabet nearly beat him. An opponent named Dan Morrison, though given no chance, defeated Mullen in nine of the 10 counties of the district that May. Mullen slipped through to the nomination by winning in St. Joseph County. Voters in most of the district didn’t know a Morrison from a Mullen. But Morrison, with a

nice-sounding name, was listed first. Mullen became an excellent candidate, coming close to defeating Walorski that fall. But he started with no momentum, didn't get help needed at the end from the DCCC and never quite caught up.

Hall wants to win most of the counties and get

an impressive percentage of the total vote. Hackett and Joshi? Either would have momentum with an upset win of any margin. ❖

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

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who have yet to make a decision.

It comes as a new mid-term report by Morning Consult released this morning puts President Trump's approval with Indiana Republicans at 69% while independents rate him at -14 and Democrats at -74. Democrats lead the U.S. generic ballot 40-35%, while in Indiana it is 39% Republican and 34% Democrat. Sen. Joe Donnelly's approval/disapproval is 41/34%.

Conventional wisdom would lead one to believe this is Braun's race to lose since he has loaned at least \$5.5 million, spent at least \$6 million and aired by far the most gross rating points. But the "Six Million Dollar Man" hasn't yet closed the deal. So, we head into Tuesday's election using the parlance of the pilot Rokita: This is visual flight rules; the gauges are haywire.

Who are all these undecided voters? One observer suggested to HPI that many are original Trump supporters who haven't determined who displays and will deliver the most fidelity to the president. Then there are voters from the Lugar/Daniels wing of the party that might incline toward Messer, but they have been underwhelmed by his campaign and mien.

With so many unknowns and no credible independent polling (HPI was unable to find a willing polling partner/underwriter for this primary), this race becomes one of the most mysterious and volatile of the television age in Indiana politics. We've had a number of upsets, such as Frank O'Bannon defeated Stephen Goldsmith in the 1996 governor's race, or in 2007 when Greg Ballard stunned Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, but there were plenty of precursors fueling the unrest and a much narrower swath of undecideds.

Next Tuesday night, May 8, the results could go any of three ways. It underscores the notion that no outcome will be considered an upset. It will be a reckoning.

Monday's debate found the trio rehashing familiar stances and slogans: Braun's "I'm an outsider businessman" who isn't from the feeder system and so will drain the swamp; Messer's "I am who I say I am"; and Rokita, who released what could be his [final TV ad](#) on Wednesday with an all-out attack on Special Counsel Robert Mueller: "Mueller. Pelosi. Donnelly. They're using fake news to destroy our president," the ad begins. "Who's tough enough to stop the witch hunt? Not Luke Messer. This Never Trumper supports amnesty for illegals. And Mike Braun? This Democrat raised our taxes 45 times."

Messer's final lunge via TV is to attacks Rokita as having run one of the most dishonest campaigns in modern times, then vows to emphatically support President Trump, who the Washington Post has documented as having uttered more than 3,000 lies, falsehoods and misrepresentations while in office. On Wednesday, Messer "formally" nominated President Trump for a Nobel Peace Prize even though there's been no big, beautiful deal on the Korean peninsula, only positioning.

In Braun's [final TV pitch](#), the Jasper businessman walks his company's floors and says into the camera, "Politics shouldn't be a career. We need folks with real world experience who get the job done and then come home. Together we'll build the wall, defend our values and end bad trade deals for American workers. The only person I'll owe anything to is you."

Media buys in final week

Braun has purchased 1,147 gross rating points in Indianapolis broadcast (\$151,766), 984 points in Evansville (\$29,878), 1,585 in Fort Wayne (\$60,160), 1,349 in South Bend/Elkhart (\$53,557) and 1,006 points in Terre Haute. So Braun has purchased more than 6,000 gross rating points for the final week thus far. He's spending another \$6,784 on Chicago cable and \$11,393 on Indianapolis cable. He's also purchased more than \$30,000 in radio.

Rokita has purchased 591 GPRs in Evansville at close to \$20,000, 1,700 points in Fort Wayne (\$66,000), 1,000 points in Indianapolis (\$140,000), close to 1,000 points in South Bend/Elkhart (\$38,000) and 1,000 points in Terre Haute at \$16,000. That's a little more than 9,200 GPRs, by far his biggest broadcast exposure. His cable buys are around \$50,000 through Election Day. Rokita has purchased a little more than \$2,500 total in radio in Evansville, Fort Wayne and South Bend.

Messer has purchased 1,802 GRPs this week, including 467 points in Fort Wayne at \$39,725, \$155,000 in Indy for 674 points, \$36,220 for 302 points in Louisville and 359 points in South Bend/Elkhart. Messer has purchased no radio and his cable buys are under \$10,000 for the final week.

Braun is wiping out his competition on talk radio and by evidence of his four mailers, may have a significant edge in direct mail.

Trump is dominates campaign

The overarching dynamic that has complicated

things for the three candidates is that President Trump not only dominates, he sucks the oxygen away from any other political figure. The three candidates crave not only his imprimatur, but the support of his hard-core followers. Another wild card is that nobody knows how many new Trump voters in 2016 are going to turn out on Tuesday.

Rokita is banking on Trump voters gravitating to his campaign because he has dispatched past conventions saying, "He is turning political correctness on its head and I think that's for a lot of folks, including me, that's refreshing."

That Braun hasn't closed the deal as of this writing may be an indicator that Messer and Rokita's attacks that he's been a "lifelong Democrat" might be finding traction. Even with that backlash, many voters remain torn between the two congressmen. If there are long lines on Tuesday in what is expected to be a light turnout election, it may be that Republicans will enter the voting booth not knowing for whom they are going to back.

Mark Souder, the former congressman and current HPI contributor, observed, "I assume, at this point, that the lines will be more clearly drawn between Braun and the two congressmen. If the people switching back from Braun split between the two (Messer and Rokita), he will still win, possibly comfortably."

Another wide perception is that while Braun is running a savvy air war, he has no ground game. On Wednesday, Messer's campaign announced its grassroots outreach has made 500,000 calls. It said there are more than 200 students on college campuses making calls on his behalf.

Race to the bottom

Lately, the national press has descended on this campaign with Politico likening it to a "circular firing squad." The Associated Press characterized it as the "nastiest" primary coming in Vice President Mike Pence's home state. Former Sen. Richard Lugar called the tone and tenor "very unfortunate" and Republican National Committeeman John Hammond III described it to AP as "Dante's Inferno" and a "race to the bottom."

WISH-TV reported that that early voting in Indianapolis was higher than the typical off-year election. We haven't seen a corresponding surge in early voting in other areas of the state. That may be good news for Messer, who is seen as potentially more palatable to moderate, establishment conservatives.

Braun has sent out at least four mailers in the final two weeks. The general perception is that Rokita's ground game is based on his old secretary of state era coalition, while Messer has his cadre of students and establishment backers who will be able to turn out the vote.

For the past two years, Donald Trump has turned American and Indiana politics on its head. Over the past two years, HPI's analyses have often ended with these words: "Anything can happen. Anything." In the Republican U.S. Senate primary, that remains true today.

Horse Race Status: Tossup. ❖

Mike Braun, Democrat from DuBois County

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – This week we received an oversized card from Mike Braun featuring this quote in bold letters: "I've Always Been A Lifelong Republican." His ubiquitous television ads make the same proud – but false – claim. If the TV show were still around, he'd be featured on this week's episode of "I've Got a Secret."



The Indianapolis Star reported back in December that DuBois County records show that at least since 1996 (their records only go back 25 years) and until 2012, Braun voted in Democrat primaries. There is a myth that Indiana has some variation of California's open primary system,

where voters can just vote in any primary they wish. In fact, while we don't register by political party, there are rules. Here is a clear summary of Indiana law from the website of "Open Primaries":

1. "Affiliation with a party is not required to vote in primaries. However, voters can only choose the primary ballot of the party who received a majority of their votes in the previous general election and voter records are kept as public information.

2. If a voter did not vote in the last general election, they must "intend to vote for the majority of the nominees on their desired party's ballot."

3. Voters can be challenged by another eligible voter on suspicion of perjury.

4. This system is an attempt to get voters to vote along party lines but is not easily enforceable."

In other words, if Mike Braun did not vote for a majority of Democrats in the fall elections from 1996 to 2012 – as he publicly claims – he could be sued for perjury. While that would be unwise, and because the difficulty of enforcement has resulted in it increasingly being ignored, it is odd to see a former state legislator touting perjurious behavior. Braun can holler all he wants about me or others being career politicians, but he is the politician boldly proclaiming that he broke the law.

Furthermore, there appears to be no record of Braun ever supporting Republicans. He has spent \$5 million or more on his own U.S. Senate campaign, but it has thus far proved elusive to find any donation to another Republican candidate by this self-proclaimed "lifelong Republican."

Braun seems to be claiming to have been a stealth lifelong Republican. There is no evidence of Republican yard signs, working for a Republican candidate or appear-

ances at Lincoln Day dinners. I understand that Democrats who become Republicans aren't necessarily expected to do any of these things, but he's touting that he was a "lifelong" Republican not a Democrat. He's not claiming to have switched parties. He's claiming to have been a closet Republican.

The reason, Braun repeatedly asserts, is that in order to have political impact in Dubois County, you needed to vote in Democrat primaries. This surprised me. When I came into politics as a kid, the legendary Allen County Republican Party boss Orvas Beers was furious with me. He was a family friend, and I had headed Youth for Adair for Congress in 1968. Then I committed his version of the unpardonable sin by siding with those Republicans south of U.S. 40.

You see, the funny thing is, Braun has it backwards. Less populous southern Indiana was long over-represented in the Republican Party. The more conservative faction had historically been anchored around U.S. Sen. Bill Jenner of Marengo, about 30 miles from Mike Braun's hometown of Jasper. Marengo was also the home of Seth Denbo, the legendary southern Indiana political boss. The conservative faction that Orvas was so furious that I had aligned with was led by Denbo and John K. Snyder of Washington, Ind., in Daviess County (which abuts Dubois). Beers had me removed as head of Youth for Adair and as the nearly unanimously elected Indiana College Republican chairman (my opponent voted for himself) because of my heresy of siding with southern (read: conservative) Indiana Republicans.

Later as an adult, I became a good friend of Connie Nass when she was the Republican mayor of Huntingburg. I supported her successful campaign to become state auditor. Huntingburg is famous for its historic ballpark, used in the movie, "A League of Their Own." Huntingburg, in case you aren't aware, is part of the Jasper metropolitan area in Dubois County. Somebody apparently forgot to give Connie the memo that there weren't any local Republicans worth voting for in Dubois County.

Furthermore, two of the current three Dubois County commissioners are Republican. So are five of the seven county councilmen. So are the county treasurer, surveyor, clerk and judge of the circuit court. No local Republicans to vote for? Nonsense. Not only are there Republicans in Dubois County, but having the best GOP candidates possible is important in the county because control is hotly contested: Democrats hold 10 county offices while Republicans hold 11. Dubois County is certainly no place to be a secret "lifelong" Republican; they needed overt, active ones.

Let me make this clear: I welcome Democrats who want to become Republicans or vote Republican. In my successful races, crossover Democrats repeatedly helped me survive erosion of Republicans who were angry with me for one thing or another. I've helped recruit multiple Democrats to the Republican Party. Two of the more unique examples were Democrat Congressman Rodney

Alexander of western Louisiana and Mayor Terry MacDonald of New Haven, Ind. While we were in Libya as part of the first congressional delegation to meet with Qaddafi, Rodney confided to me that he was thinking of switching to the Republican Party. His grandfather had been an official in FDR's administration and his family tradition was entirely within the Democrat Party. We became friends and I did what I could to assist his transition. Soon after his switch, I went to his district where we met with all the law enforcement officials in one part and then held a meth hearing in another.



One of many Democrats who became Republicans in my congressional district during my time in Congress was my good friend, Terry McDonald. He helped me organize New Haven for my 1994 campaign. He was motivated initially by the pro-life issue. After I won, I received a call from the multiple-term Republican Mayor Lynn Shaw, who was furious with me. Terry had filed as a Democrat to run against him and he blamed it on me. Terry won and kept winning (he's still the mayor). Only he switched to the Republican Party. I am a strong advocate of expanding the party and then fighting about any differences among ourselves.

But Congressman Alexander and my friend Nathan Deal (former congressman and now Republican governor of Georgia who became vice-chair of my subcommittee after he, too, switched parties), Mayor McDonald, Judge Michael Kramer of Noble County and the many other friends who've switched parties did not have the unmitigated gall to claim they had been "lifelong Republicans."

Mike Braun's earlier campaign ads were brilliant. Frankly, he is an impressive guy. As recently as two weeks ago, Diane and I were both leaning his direction. Then he began touting this blatant, easily verifiable lie about being a "lifelong Republican." I naively thought he had switched parties for reasons beyond political ambition. And then in defense of his being a lifelong Democrat, he trashed the very Republicans who have worked so hard in Dubois County and southern Indiana.

His \$5 million may get him the GOP nomination, but he sure won't get our votes. ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.

Hall, Braun, Pence and Watson favored in CD primaries

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – This is the “green wave” primary season with self-funders running in the open 4th and 6th CD Republican primaries while two Democrats have dueling checkbooks in the 2nd CD.

Of the competitive primaries, HPI expects Democrat Mel Hall to emerge to challenge U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski in the 2nd CD: Greg Pence to win the 6th CD Republican nomination; Steve Braun to win the Republican 4th CD primary; and Democrat Liz Watson to take the 9th CD Democratic primary.

Of Indiana’s nine CDs, all eyes will be on the 2nd and 9th CDs this fall, as Democrats have shown fundraising traction and could benefit if a wave emerges in their favor.

Republican Reps. Walorski and Trey Hollingsworth have been fully in with President Trump thus far, though Hollingsworth opposed the omnibus spending bill. Both face potential fallout if the Trump tariffs backfire and hit the Hoosier agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Walorski has been an active advocate on behalf of those sectors but could still be on the hook if the tariffs hit farm pocketbooks.

Both Hollingsworth and Walorski have trumpeted the tax reform pushed by Trump and passed by congressional leaders late last year, but emerging evidence suggests that middle class voters are awakening to the fact that more than 65% of the cuts go to the richest quintile while the nation faces daunting \$1.5 trillion annual deficits. And that’s with a good economy.

The Washington Post reported on Monday: “For most of the past decade, as the U.S. economy marched through the second-longest expansion in its history, Americans enjoyed a rare trifecta, soaring stock values, cheap loans and consumer prices that rarely rose. That favorable climate benefited everyone from people nearing retirement to those buying their first homes or just filling their gas tanks. But suddenly, the good fortune is melting away, imperiling the props that have supported American

economic confidence and incomes and intensifying pressure on President Trump to deliver the faster growth and higher wages he has promised.”

So, this is a potentially perilous scenario for Republicans. If President Trump gets a damning report from Special Counsel Robert Mueller, the tariffs backfire and the economy slows, a Democratic wave could turn into a historic tsunami. On the other hand, if President Trump forges a lasting peace and denuclearization deal with North Korea and gets China to back down on tariffs, those scenarios could give Republicans a bit of a tailwind.

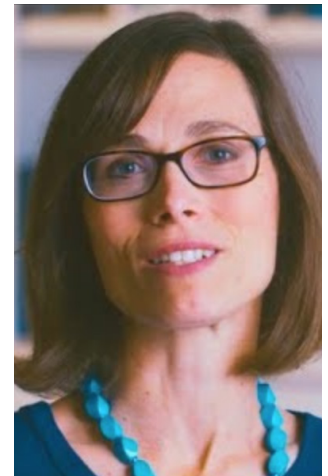
Here is HPI’s rundown of Indiana’s congressional races:

CD1: Visclosky will win

Democrat: U.S. Rep. Peter J. Visclosky, Larry Chubb, Antonio (Tony) Daggett Sr. Republican: Jeremy D. Belko, David Dopp, Roseann P. Ivanovich, Mark Leyva, John Meyer, Nicholas Pappas. Cook Partisan Index: +8 Democratic. **Analysis:** Rep. Visclosky will easily win a 15th term, no matter whom the Republicans nominate. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Visclosky; Republican Tossup.

CD2: A potential autumnal battleground

Republican: U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski,



Mark Summe. Democrat: Douglas Carpenter, Pat Hackett, Mel Hall, Yatish Joshi, Roland E. Leech, John H. Petroff. Cook Partisan Index: +11 Republican. **Analysis:** Hall and Joshi are part of the self-funding “green wave” that has hit Indiana this year. Hall has raised \$806,701 including a \$250,000 loan from himself, has spent \$569,956 and has \$236,745 cash on hand. Joshi loaned his campaign \$416,000, has spent \$321,463 and has \$88,327 cash, while Hackett has raised \$94,569 and has \$37,887 cash. Walorski has raised \$1,638,704, spent \$670,402 and has \$1,024,286 cash. Hall appears to be the establishment favorite and is expected to win the Democratic primary. In the fall, Walorski will benefit from her brand and name ID. Hall could take advantage of a Democratic wave, but

Walorski has been resilient. In the 2nd, it will be fascinating to see the tax reforms play out, as well as the coming immigration debate. Cook Political Report moved the November race from "Solid" to "Likely" Walorski; we agree with this assessment. Historically, the 2nd has been volatile, having changed since 1990 from Tim Roemer (D), to Chris Chocola (R), to Joe Donnelly (D) and now Walorski (R). Voters are willing to make a change here, even if the district distinctly skews Republican. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Walorski, Likely Hall.

CD3: Banks vs. Tritch this fall

Republican: U.S. Rep. Jim Banks. Democrat: John F. Roberson, Tommy A. Schrader, Courtney Tritch. Cook Partisan Index: +18 Republican. **Analysis:** Banks posted \$591,391, has spent \$312,836 and has \$422,814 cash. Tritch has raised \$325,300, spent \$121,488 and has \$203,812 cash on hand, all robust figures for a Democrat in this district. But she will face a daunting challenge against Banks this fall, needing a sizable Democratic wave to make this district competitive. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Banks; Safe Tritch.

CD4: Braun emerging as frontrunner

Republican: Jim Baird, Steve Braun, Kevin J. Grant, Diego Morales, James Nease, Tim Radice, Jared Guy Thomas. Democrat: Tobi Beck, Roger D. Day, Roland Ellis, Darin Patrick Griesey, Joseph W. Mackey, Veronikka M Ziol. Cook Partisan Index: +17 Republican. **Analysis:** Braun has raised \$932,620, spent \$919,494 and has \$13,126 cash. Braun, the former state representative and Indiana Workforce Development commissioner, loaned his campaign \$250,000. Morales has raised \$564,386, spent \$376,894 and has \$187,492 cash on hand, while Rep. Baird has loaned his campaign \$200,000 of the \$215,483 raised, has spent \$120,146 and has \$95,337 left. This race has turned ugly with mailers aimed at Morales using imagery suggesting he is an illegal immigrant, when he and his family legally came to the U.S. from Guatemala. While Morales has been a scrappy fundraiser and campaigner, Braun brings significant assets to this race and has emerged as the frontrunner. Democrat Beck has raised \$36,381 and has just \$7,844 cash on hand, suggesting this won't be a competitive race in the fall. None of the other Democrats have raised more than \$9,000. **Horse Race Status:** Republican Likely Braun; Democrat Tossup.

CD5: Brooks has huge money advantage

Republican: U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks. Democrat: Jennifer Christie, Dion Douglas, Sean

Dugdale, Eshel Faraggi, Kyle Brenden, Aaron Schaler, Dee Thornton. Cook Partisan Index: +9 Republican. **Analysis:** Brooks raised \$759,066, has spent \$527,184 and has \$1,579,773 cash on hand. Of her potential Democratic challengers, all have raised tiny amounts with Thornton posting just \$19,251 raised and \$7,753 cash on hand. Brooks should easily return for another term. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Brooks; Democrat Tossup.

CD6: The Pence brand takes hits

Republican: Mike Campbell, Thomas G. Ferkinhoff, Bill Frazier, Jonathan M. Lamb, Stephen M. MacKenzie, Greg Pence, Jeff Smith. Democrat: George T. Holland, Jeannine Lee Lake, K. (Jasen) Lave, Jim Pruett, Lane Siekman, Joshua Williamson. Cook Partisan Index: +18 Republican. **Analysis:** Pence raised \$1,189,282, spent \$990,093 and has \$199,189 cash on hand, compared to Lamb who has raised \$493,821, spent \$457,359 and has \$36,462 cash on hand. While we still see Pence as the man to beat in this primary, the Hoosier press is beginning to discover his troubled business record and government resume and his campaign air war sans debates, interviews and other normal campaign functions. Over the weekend, the Muncie Star Press centered its lead story on Pence being MIA from the campaign trail. Today, the Indy Star delves into his 10-week stint at the Indiana Department of Environmental Management after his company, Kiel Brothers, went bankrupt and his same-day resignation, in part due to a series of leaking gasoline storage tanks and other environmental violations. And there's this quote from self-funder Jonathan Lamb on the Pence MIA MO, observing, "How can we educate the voters on what the true issues are if the perceived heir-apparent to the seat won't talk and grant interviews? The voters aren't able to learn what Greg Pence is about, except for the millions of dollars that the PACs are dropping in to tell us he's a Marine vet." Lamb adds, "The concerning part about the vice president's brother is that he is unwilling to be transparent and upfront with the voters about his failure and share his business resume." **Horse Race Status:** Republican Likely Pence; Democrat Tossup.

CD7: Carson will prevail

Democrat: U.S. Rep. Andre Carson, Curtis D. Godfrey, Bob Kern, Pierre Quincy Pullins, Sue Spicer. Republican: John L. Couch, J. Jason Davis, Donald Eason Jr., Wayne "Gunny" Harmon, J.D. Miniear, Tony "Big Dog" Van Pelt. Cook Partisan Index: +11 Democrat. **Analysis:** Rep. Carson has raised \$606,448, spent \$478,987 and has a \$950,809 war chest. All of his primary and general election challengers have posted miniscule amounts, so Carson will easily return for another term in the House. **Horse Race Status:** Democrat Safe Carson; Republican: Tossup.

CD8: Bucshon will win nasty primary

Republican: U.S. Rep. Larry D. Bucshon, Rachael Covington, Richard Moss. Democrat: Ron Drake, James Johnson, William Tanoos. Cook Partisan Index: +15 Republican. **Analysis:** This has been an exceedingly nasty race between Bucshon and Moss, who entered this race with what appears to be a personal ax to grind. Bucshon

has raised \$558,788, spent \$479,353 and has \$392,296 cash on hand, far more than Moss, and the incumbent should easily prevail. Tanoos has raised just \$131,859, spent \$87,762 and has \$44,097 cash on hand. With totals like that, it's hard to see this district coming into play this fall, even with an emphatic Democratic wave. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Bucshon; Leans Tanoos.

CD9: Another potential fall battleground

Republican: U.S. Rep. Trey Hollingsworth, James Dean Alspach. Democrat: Dan Canon, Rob Chatlos, Liz Watson. Cook Partisan Index: +13 Republican. **Analysis:** Watson has raised \$585,706, spent \$287,752 and had \$297,954 cash on hand at first quarter's end. Canon has raised \$433,401, spent \$358,775 and had \$74,626 cash on hand. Rep. Hollingsworth has raised \$887,779, spent \$455,740 and has \$432,344 ready for the fall. Watson appears to have some momentum heading into the primary. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Hollingsworth; Leans Watson.



Caucus leaders should prevail; Delph, Zakas in tough showdowns

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – There are 23 General Assembly incumbents facing primary opponents next Tuesday. In the homestretch of the primary, Senate leaders appear to be fending off challengers while State Sen. Mike Delph is in a money war with challenger Corrie Meyer, who is seeing a surge of late cash.



Sen. Travis Holdman, a potential future

Senate president pro tempore, and Sen. Jim Merritt, who leads the GOP majority caucus, are both facing intense challenges from social conservatives. So is Democratic Minority Leader Tim Lanane, who has a comfortable money lead over Anderson Councilwoman Tamala Dixon-Tatum.

In addition to Delph, another endangered incumbent is Sen. Joe Zakas, who is attempting to fend off a challenge from businesswoman Linda Rogers. If Zakas wins reelection, he would be one of

the longest tenured state senators in Indiana history.

Here is HPI's final pre-primary financial update and forecast:

Indiana Senate Republican primaries

SD11: Sen. Joe Zakas, Linda Rogers. **Analysis:** With the help of a late \$10,000 contribution from Hoosiers for Quality Education, Rogers appears to be well-funded for the final days of her campaign to unseat Zakas. The largest chunk of the incumbent's funding (\$15,000) came from the Senate Majority Campaign Committee (SMCC). Zakas also received \$1,000 from Sen. Eric Bassler, a contribution with implications for the upcoming caucus for Senate President Pro Tem. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

SD19: State Sen. Travis Holdman, Eric Orr. **Analysis:** Holdman is far outpacing Orr on fundrais-

SENATE REPUBLICANS

District	Candidates	Cash on Hand April 13, 2018	Large Late Contributions	Total
SD 11	Linda Rogers	\$49,378	\$11,000	\$60,373
	Joe Zakas (I)	\$45,457	\$5,500	\$50,957
SD 19	Eric Orr	\$4,255	\$0	\$4,255
	Travis Holdman (I)	\$217,239	\$10,228	\$277,467
SD 26	Steffanie Owens	\$1,374	\$0	\$1,374
	Mike Gaskill	\$1,148	\$5,954	\$7,102
SD 29	Mike Delph (I)	\$249,713	\$0	\$249,713
	Corrie Meyer	\$107,207	\$100,500	\$207,707
SD 31	Jim Merritt (I)	\$44,152	\$13,749	\$57,901
	Crystal LaMotte	\$59,703	\$0	\$59,703

ing. Holdman received \$50,000 from SMCC and smaller contributions from Sens. Liz Brown and Jim Buck. Orr, an attorney from Berne, told the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette in May of 2017 that he would challenge Holdman, saying, "It seems that many of our legislators who campaigned on conservative principles have, upon stepping foot inside the Statehouse, forgotten those same principles. I think many voters are disappointed with the legislative priorities of the current assembly. Every election should present voters with more than one option, but far too often, we're only given the choice between 'R' and 'D.'" Orr is being backed by a coalition of "family values" (read: ultra-conservative) voters. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Holdman.

SD26: Open (Sen. Doug Eckerty retiring). Mike Gaskill, Steffanie Owens. **Analysis:** This could be a real race. Madison County Councilman Mike Gaskill will face Madison County Commissioner Steffanie Owens. Gaskill is an ally of Sen. Eckerty and we'll be watching to see if he lands a late endorsement by the retiring senator. Gaskill has out-raised Owens \$7,102 to \$1,374. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

SD29: Republican: State Sen. Mike Delph, Corrie Meyer. **Analysis:** Delph entered 2018 with about \$200,000 in his campaign coffers. However, Meyer has raised three times more than Delph and more than \$100,000 of her money has been donated since April 14. Among her late donors were Mickey Maurer, Estridge Homes, Michael Browning and Doug Rose. She also received \$24,500 from Accelerate Indy and \$34,000 from the political action arm of the Indy Chamber. Her 2017 year-end report shows she had already received contributions from Maurer, Estridge, Browning, Rose, Angela Braly, Azher Khan, Deborah Daniels, and John Mutz. Meyer unveiled the endorsements of Zionsville Mayor Tim Haak, Carmel's Jim Brainard, Noblesville's John Ditslear, Fishers' Scott Fadness, and former mayors Greg Ballard of Indianapolis and Jane Reiman of Carmel. Delph has yet to receive any late, large contributions. Delph is running a TV ad calling Meyer a "liberal." Delph defeated Democrat J.D. Ford by about 2,400 votes in 2014. Ford is again seeking the Democratic nomination. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Delph.

SD31: State Sen. James W. Merritt Jr., Crystal D. LaMotte. **Analysis:** This is a rematch with Merritt easily defeating LaMotte with 74% of the vote in 2014. Merritt and LaMotte are neck-and-neck in fundraising, though LaMotte loaned her campaign \$50,000 in early April. Merritt received about \$10,000 in in-kind contributions from the GOP state committee and \$10,000 from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's political action committee. Merritt, who chairs the Marion County GOP and is a potential 2019 Republican Indianapolis mayoral candidate, is the slated

candidate. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Merritt.

Indiana Senate Democrat primaries

SD1: State Sen. Frank Mrvan Jr., Chris Kukuch, Mark T. Kurowski. **Analysis:** Sen. Mrvan is a stalwart of Lake County Democratic politics and should easily win reelection. He won reelection in 2014 by more than 2,500 votes over Ken Stevenson. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Mrvan.

SD25: State Sen. Tim Lanane, Tamala Dixon-Tatum. **Analysis:** Lanane is comfortably in front of Dixon-Tatum, whose pre-primary report shows her campaign is about \$1,000 in the hole. Lanane benefited from a \$20,000 contribution from the Indiana State Teachers Association PAC. Anderson City Councilman Ollie H. Dixon filed last month to oppose incumbent Democrat Sen. Lanane in the May 8 primary, but he stepped aside at filing deadline for his daughter. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Lanane.

SENATE DEMOCRATS				
District	Candidates	Cash on Hand April 13, 2018	Large Late Contributions	Total
SD 25	Tim Lanane (I)	\$72,792	\$24,500	\$97,292
	Tamie Dixon-Tatum	(\$978)	\$0	(\$978)
SD 26	David Cravins	\$49,462	\$0	\$49,462
	Dave Ring	\$1,686	\$0	\$1,686
SD 38	Chris Gambill	\$18,626	\$0	\$18,626
	Maria David	\$0	\$0	\$0
	David Fuchs II	\$0	\$0	\$0

SD26: Open (Sen. Doug Eckerty retiring). **Analysis:** Anderson Fire Department Chief Dave Cravens faces Muncie businessman Dave Ring and has out-raised him \$49,462 to \$1,686. We think Cravens has maintained an edge in this race. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Cravens.

SD38: Maria David, David Allan Fuchs II, Chris Gambill. **Analysis:** Gambill has decades of experience in law enforcement, as legal advisor to the Terre Haute Police Department, as a drug forfeiture attorney, and as a special trial deputy for the Clay County prosecutor. Gambill has posted \$18,626 while his two opponents have raised no money. The winner faces State Sen. Jon Ford. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Gambill.

Indiana House Republican primaries

HD17: Rep. Jack Jordan, Jesse Bohannon. **Analysis:** This is a rematch from 2016. Bohannon is a Bremen school board member and a social conservative. He lost to Jordan 55-44% last time. Jordan has a \$26,949 to \$2,167 fundraising edge. In a Facebook posting, Bohannon said, "This is the audacity of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce (the same lobbyists who managed and funded State Rep.

Jack Jordan). Every year they put out a 50-page book full of ways they want to run our lives, and the money they invest in influencing elections gives them the loudest voice in Indianapolis.”

Horse Race Status: Likely Jordan.

HD18: Rep. David A.

Wolkins, Russell Reahard. **Analysis:** Rep. Wolkins has out-raised Reahard \$15,565 to \$1,538. Reahard told the Wabash Plain-Dealer that his pro-life stance sets him apart from Wolkins. “I want to look at some of the root causes of our social problems,” Reahard said. “If we can solve them at the root cause it may save money, rather than treating the symptoms and having to build more prisons and more treatment centers for drug and alcohol addiction.” Improvements in Wolkins’ health and encouragement from his constituents led him to run for reelection. “I have gotten a clean bill of health every time I’ve been in,” Wolkins said. “I had a number of people say as long as your health is good, as long as you enjoy doing it and as long as you represent us, we would like to have you continue. That was the main reason.” The winner will face Democrat Dee Moore, who unsuccessfully challenged Rep. Wolkins in 2016.

Horse Race Status: Likely Wolkins.

HD22: State Rep. Curt

Nisly, Kimberly Cates. **Analysis:** Rep. Nisly faces a challenge from Kosciusko County Councilwoman Kimberly Cates of Syracuse. Nisly has a \$20,357 to \$1,666 money lead. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Nisly.

HD29: Open (Rep. Kathy Kreag Richardson

retiring). Brandon (Brad) Beaver, Garen T. Bragg, Chuck Goodrich, Noblesville Councilman Gregory P. O’Connor. **Analysis:** Perhaps the biggest fundraising surprise this year comes from Goodrich in the race to succeed retiring Rep. Kathy Richardson. Goodrich has raised an eye-popping \$186,000, half of it coming since April 14 and he is running TV ads on both broadcast and cable TV. That’s more than four times as much money as the combined totals of his three competitors. His single largest contributor was Hoosiers for Quality Education, which gave him \$40,000. Also weighing in heavily was Indiana Merit Construction PAC which gave \$25,000. A distant fundraising second in HD29 was Gregory O’Connor, who reports donations of about \$37,000. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Goodrich.

HD33: Open: (State Rep. Greg Beumer retiring).

HOUSE REPUBLICANS

District	Candidates	Cash on Hand April 13, 2018	Large Late Contributions	Total
HD 17	Jesse Bohannon	\$621	\$1,546	\$2,167
	Jack Jordan (I)	\$23,949	\$3,049	\$26,998
HD 18	David Wolkins (I)	\$13,565	\$2,000	\$15,565
	Russell Reahard	\$1,538	\$0	\$1,538
HD 22	Curt Nisly (I)	\$15,503	\$4,854	\$20,357
	Kimberly Cates	\$1,666	\$0	\$1,666
HD 29	Brad Beaver	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Garen Bragg	\$4,781	\$0	\$4,781
	Gregory O’Connor	\$33,841	\$3,500	\$37,341
	Chuck Goodrich	\$93,649	\$93,245	\$186,894
HD 39	Jerry Torr (I)	\$42,971	\$10,278	\$53,249
	Thomas Linkmeyer	\$1,022	\$0	\$1,022
HD 43	Eddie Felling	\$2,140	\$0	\$2,140
	Isaac Deal	\$136.48	\$0	\$136.48
HD 49	Christy Stutzman	\$13,593	\$3,600	\$17,193
	Kevin Gipson	\$0	\$32,995	\$32,995
HD 52	Ben Smaltz (I)	\$49,453	\$35,500	\$84,953
	William Carlin	\$7,076	\$3,500	\$10,576
HD 56	Cindy Ziemke (I)	\$31,955	\$0	\$31,955
	Mark Bacon	\$4,150	\$0	\$4,150
HD 59	Ryan Lauer	\$12,796	\$0	\$12,796
	Lew Wilson	\$5,432	\$0	\$5,432
	John Counciller	\$957	\$0	\$957
	JoAnne Flohr	\$7,472	\$12,838	\$20,310
	Benjamin Chastain	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Allen K. Smith	\$2,603	\$0	\$2,603
HD 64	Ken Beckerman	\$9,096	\$0	\$9
	Matt Hostettler	\$24,061	\$6,649	\$30,710
	Bruce Ungethiem	\$4,886	\$0	\$4,886
HD 69	Jim Lucas (I)	\$9,412	\$6,500	\$15,912
	Nancy Franke	\$766	\$0	\$766
HD 71	Charles Johnson	No file		
	Kevin Burke	\$6,775	\$0	\$6,775
	Matt Owen	\$11,894	\$24,000	\$35,894

Jenae Horn Blasdel, John (J.D.) Prescott. **Analysis:** Blasdel was a former campaign manager of Beumer and could have an edge if she gets the incumbent’s endorsement. Rep. Beumer gave her \$100. Prescott is a former campaign volunteer for Gov. Mike Pence. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Blasdel.

HD39: State Rep. Jerry Torr, Tom Linkmeyer.

Analysis: This is a 2016 primary rematch between the veteran Carmel legislator and Linkmeyer, the assistant principal at Mary Castle Elementary School. Torr has a commanding money advantage, \$53,249 to \$1,022 for the challenger. Torr defeated Linkmeyer with 52% of the vote, 7,896 to 7,111. This could be another competitive primary for Torr. He’s raised over \$53,000 with about \$10,000 of that coming in late contributions. Among his late contributors were NRA Political Victory Fund (\$1,000), the Indy Chamber’s PAC (\$5,000) and David Long for State Senate (\$1,000). Linkmeyer reported about \$1,000 in cash on hand and no late contributions. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Torr.

HD43: Open (State Rep. Clyde Kersey retiring) Isaac Deal, Darrell (Eddie) Felling. **Analysis:** Both candidates have raised less than \$2,000. Felling is Terre Haute's city attorney. "I am very excited and honored to announce my intention of candidacy," Felling said in a news release. "As a Terre Haute native with longstanding family roots in Vigo County, I understand the challenges we face not only in our community, but also throughout our great state." Not much information was available on Deal. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Felling.

HD44: Open (Rep. Jim Baird running for Congress). Beau Baird, Jess L. Norton. **Analysis:** Beau Baird is the son of the retiring legislator who is seeking the 4th CD. We give the younger Baird an edge in this primary. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Baird.

HD47: State Rep. John T. Young, Scott Horvath. **Analysis:** Young won a hard-fought primary against Matt Prince by just under 1,000 votes in 2016, then defeated Democrat Mike Reddick in November. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Young.

HD49: Open (Rep. Wes Culver retiring). Kevin Gipson, Christy Stutzman. **Analysis:** The wife of former congressman Marlin Stutzman has long been seen as ambitious and this will be her first try for public office following her husband's U.S. Senate primary defeat by Todd Young in May 2016. This race is also a bit of a surprise.

Early favorite Christy Stutzman reports raising just over \$17,000, all but \$3,600 coming before April 14. Meanwhile her opponent, Kevin Gipson, reported raising nothing by April 14. Since then, Gipson received nearly \$33,000 in late contributions, all of it from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's PAC. Draw your own conclusions. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD52: State Rep. Ben Smaltz, William Carlin. **Analysis:** Smaltz is being challenged by Garrett social conservative Carlin. But Smaltz received the endorsement of Indiana Right to Life and appears to be in a good position to fend off Carlin, who is being backed by the Hoosiers4Life organization. In what has turned into a rancorous contest, Smaltz reports raising about \$49,000, about two-thirds coming in late contributions mostly from House Speaker Brian Bosma (\$27,000) and Senate President Pro Tem David Long (\$3,500). Carlin has raised about \$10,500, all but \$3,500 of it coming before April 14. Of note, Carlin received \$1,500 from the National Association for Gun Rights, among the most harshly vocal of such groups. Smaltz's SEA80, which has crimped domestic meth production across the state and in this district, will be an issue on which he he will be able to campaign. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Smaltz.

HD54: State Rep. Thomas E. (Tom) Saunders,

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Jeffrey D. Embry. **Analysis:** We could find little information or a campaign website for Embry. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Saunders.

HD55: State Rep. Cindy Meyer Ziemke, Mark Bacon. **Analysis:** Rep. Ziemke has raised \$31,955 to \$4,150 for Bacon, who was the Indiana Farm Bureau's District 8 director. He told Hoosier Ag Today, "Now would be the best time to seek the next chapter in my life. I've gone to the Statehouse and Washington, D.C., and lobbied for 30 years, now being involved in Farm Bureau and maybe it's time to be on the other side and see what I can do for the membership and for the citizens of District 55 and my rural area." **Horse Race Status:** Leans Ziemke.

HD56: State Rep. Dick Hamm, Bradford J. Barrett. **Analysis:** We could not find a campaign website or information on Barrett. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Hamm.

HD57: State Rep. Sean Eberhart, Luke Campbell. **Analysis:** Campbell, a self-employed insurance adjuster who also serves as a chaplain at Major Hospital in Shelbyville, said he is running to represent the constituents he feels are not being represented (Columbus Republic). While he has no experience running for political office, he said his experience as a husband, U.S. Army soldier and Christian give him the qualities he needs to serve the people of the district. Campbell's faith was a strong factor in his decision to run and will be his priority if he wins the primary in May and is ultimately successful in November, he said. He blames many of the current problems the state is facing on a failure to love God and love neighbors, which has led to sin and a perversion of justice, he said. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Eberhart.

HD59: Open (State Rep. Milo Smith retiring). Benjamin C. Chastain, John D. Counciller, JoAnne Flohr, Ryan Lauer, Allen K. Smith II, Bartholomew County Assessor Lew Wilson. **Analysis:** Thanks to a late influx of funds from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce PAC (\$12,383), JoAnne Flohr has taken a sizeable fundraising lead in the race to succeed retiring Rep. Milo Smith. Ryan Lauer reports raising more than \$12,000, none of it in late money. The other four candidates reported raising much smaller amounts. Wilson, a two-term county assessor, and Lauer, a former county council president, both challenged Milo Smith in the 2016 GOP primary. Garnering 47% of the votes, Smith won over Lauer's 39% and Wilson's 14% (Columbus Republic). Six months later, Smith won 61% of the vote over Democrat Bob Pitman to earn his sixth consecutive term. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Tossup.

HD64: Open (Rep. Thomas Washburne (R) is retiring). Ken A. Beckerman, Matt Hostettler, Vanderburgh County Commissioner Bruce W. Ungetheim. **Analysis:** Mark Hostettler, son of former congressman John Hostettler, has raised more than \$30,000 in this race to succeed Rep. Washburne. The bulk of Hostettler's money comes from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce PAC, which gave him \$32,700 earlier this year and another \$5,649 in late contributions. Ken Beckerman reported raising about

\$9,000 and Bruce Ungetheim reported raising almost \$5,000. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD66: Mike Bowling, Joseph Van Wye Sr. **Analysis:** Van Wye ran in the 2014 primary and garnered only 200 votes. The winner takes on House Minority Leader Terry Goodin. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD69: State Rep. Jim Lucas, Nancy L. Franke, Charles Johnson. **Analysis:** This is a rematch with Lucas defeating Franke, a teacher, 7,705 to 4,044 two years ago. Lucas has a \$15,912 to \$766 money lead over Franke. Lucas continues to generate headlines, becoming the chief advocate for medicinal marijuana and also for eliminating gun licensing. Johnson lives in Columbus. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Lucas.

HD71: Open (State Rep. Steve Stemler is retiring). Kevin R. Burke, Jeffersonville Councilman Matt Owen. **Analysis:** The House Republican Campaign Committee is betting heavily on Matt Owen to win the GOP primary, contributing nearly \$25,000 to him. His fundraising well outpaces that of his opponent by a \$35,894 to \$6,775 margin with Kevin Burke largely self-funding. Indiana Republican chairman Kyle Hupfer believes the GOP can pick up this Republican-trending seat. Burke is Clark County's former health commissioner, having filed for candidacy last week. Owen was inspired to run by his seven years working in emergency medical services. "I think that I would have a perspective up there [in the Indiana General Assembly]; a first responder dealing with these opioid issues is going to be an asset to the legislature," he said. Owen often responds to overdoses in his role as a captain at New Chapel EMS. Both Burke and Owen place a heavy emphasis on addressing the opioid crisis. Burke, who helped establish Clark County's syringe exchange program, thinks that prevention is key, and one of his main ideas is to develop educational, anti-drug programs for children. Owen talked about a "multi-faceted" approach that included increasing access to treatment, perhaps allowing Jeffersonville residents on Medicaid to cross the state border for help. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Owen.

HD73: State Rep. Steve Davisson, Buford L. Dewitt. **Analysis:** Dewitt hails from Paoli, while Davisson is a well-known pharmacist from Salem. Though diminutive in physical stature, Davisson is the political giant in this race. **Horse Race State:** Safe Davisson.

House Democrat primaries

HD2: State Rep. Earl L. Harris Jr., Jayson H. Reeves, Rosa Maria Rodriguez. **Analysis:** Rep. Harris won a three-way primary in 2016 with 3,882 votes, over Rodriguez (3,187), Tammi Davis (3,056) and Drake Morris (1,177). This could be close between Harris and Rodriguez. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Harris.

HD3: Open (State Rep. Charlie Brown retiring). Ragen H. Hatcher, Jessica Renslow. **Analysis:** Gary Councilwoman Regan Hatcher is the daughter of former

Gary Mayor Richard G. Hatcher. She has the endorsement of Rep. Brown and that makes her the favorite. Renslow is a local activist who has raised over \$9,000. Hatcher has yet to file a pre-primary report. **HPI Horse Race Status:** Safe Hatcher.

HD9: Open (State Rep. Scott Pelath retiring). Michigan City Councilwoman Patricia Boy, Sean Fitzpatrick. **Analysis:** In the race to succeed retiring House Minority Leader Scott Pelath, Boy has raised about \$2,500. Her opponent, Sean Fitzpatrick, reports raising about \$1,500, almost all of it from local Democratic mainstay Shaw Friedman. Boy declared in December, saying, "It's a new challenge for me... and it's time to try to make a bigger difference. Having served on the Common Council, I can see areas where state law and administration unnecessarily limit cities and towns, and I would like to help change some of that." Fitzpatrick withdrew from a LaPorte County Council race on Feb. 7 to enter this race. He serves as treasurer for the LaPorte County Democrats. He cited "politics as usual" in Indianapolis, saying legislators spent "an absurd amount of time debating Sunday alcohol sales when we have an opioid epidemic ravaging our cities and towns." He also cited a bill that would allow "loan sharks at payday lenders to triple interest rates." **Horse Race Status:** Leans Fitzpatrick.

HD12: State Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, Pamela R. Eanes. **Analysis:** Reardon was unopposed in the 2016 primary on her way to reclaiming the seat from Republican Bill Fine, who upset her in 2014. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Reardon.

HD16: Joshua Bolen, Christina L. Zacny. **Analysis:** The winner will take on the charmingly cantankerous State Rep. Doug Gutwein. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD25: Maurice Oakel Fuller, Justin P. Notoras. **Analysis:** This is a primary rematch from 2016 with Fuller defeating Notoras 2,153 to 1,605. The winner faces State Rep. Don Lehe. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Fuller.

HD33: Open (State Rep. Greg Beumer retiring). Cheryl Ashley-Robbins, Winchester Mayor Shon Byrum. **Analysis:** Mayor Byrum is seen as a potential rising star by the Democratic Party with a shot at picking up this seat. Beumer defeated Byrum in 2016. Byrum's earned kudos for his efforts to combat the heroin crisis by setting up a treatment center in Winchester and earning the praise of Gov. Eric Holcomb. Byrum has raised \$5,066 while his opponent did not file a report. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Byrum.

HD 34: State Rep. Sue Errington, Jim Hiatt. **Analysis:** Rep. Errington fended off Joe Shank in the 2016 primary by over 3,000 votes. We see her fending off this

primary challenge, as well. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Errington.

HD36: State Rep. Terri Jo Austin, Anderson Councilwoman Rebecca Crumes. **Analysis:** House Minority Whip Austin holds a huge fundraising lead over challenger Crumes, who reports raising only a few hundred dollars. Austin reports raising more than \$72,000 since the first of the year, \$10,000 of that coming in late contributions. Her largest late contributor was the Indiana State Teachers Association PAC, which gave her \$5,000. There had been reports that the Legislative Black Caucus was helping

HOUSE DEMOCRATS				
District	Candidates	Cash on Hand April 13, 2018	Large Late Contributions	Total
HD 3	Ragan Hatcher	No File		
	Jessica Renslow	\$9,447	\$0	\$9,447
HD 9	Patricia Boy	\$2,676	\$0	\$2,676
	Sean Fitzpatrick	\$1,515	\$0	\$1,515
HD 33	Cheryl Ashley-Robbins	No File		
	Shon Byrum	\$5,066	\$0	\$5,066
HD 36	Terri Austin	\$62,462	\$10,000	\$72,462
	Rebecca Crumes	\$630	\$0	\$630
HD 43	Mark Bird	\$1,987	0	\$1,987
	Tonya Pfaff	\$13,960	0	\$13,960
	Norm Loudermilk	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Chad Overton	\$344	\$25,000	\$25,344
	Sylvester Edwards	No File		
HD 59	Dale Nowlin	\$8,334	\$0	\$8,334
	Mary Kohen	(\$2,065)	\$0	
HD 71	Rita Fleming	\$4,934	\$1,000	\$5,934
	Jason Schlatter	\$255	0	\$255
HD 72	Sam Charbonneau	\$1,783	\$0	\$1,783
	Christopher FitzGerald	\$1,782	\$0	\$1,782

Crumes, but State Sen. Greg Taylor tells HPI that the caucus is supporting Rep. Austin. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Austin.

HD43: Open (State Rep. Clyde Kersey retiring). Mark Bird, Sylvester "Coach" Edwards, Norman E. (Norm) Loudermilk II. Chad Overton. Tonya Pfaff. **Analysis:** Overton loaned his campaign \$25,000 and is the fundraising leader to succeed retiring Rep. Kersey. Next comes Tonya Pfaff, daughter of Fred Nation, a longtime aide-de-camp to former Gov. Evan Bayh. The connection shows on Pfaff's report: She received donations from former Democratic State Chair Ann DeLaney and former Indiana Supreme Court Justice Frank Sullivan, both of whom also worked for Bayh. Pfaff also benefitted from nearly \$9,000 in contributions from the liberal activist group Act Blue. Bird, the brother of basketball legend Larry Bird, served 12 years on the Vigo County Council and lost to Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett in 2015. Bird was battling cancer during that race. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD59: Open (State Rep. Milo Smith retiring). Mary Kohen, Dale Nowlin. **Analysis:** Nowlin is a Columbus

North HS educator; Kohen is a community activist, according to the Columbus Republic. Nowlin has raised \$8,334 to Kohen's \$2,065. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD63: Joseph Lannan, Dennis Tedrow. **Analysis:** Little information was available on the two Democrats seeking the seat of former Rep. Mike Braun, who is now running for the U.S. Senate. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD71: Open (State Rep. Steve Stemler (D) is retiring). Rita A. Fleming, Jason Schlatter. **Analysis:** Dr. Fleming practices in Clark County and Schlatter is considered a political newcomer. Fleming has raised \$5,934 while Schlatter posted just \$255. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Fleming.

HD72: Sam Charbonneau, Christopher Fitzgerald. **Analysis:** The winner will challenge State Rep. Ed Clere. There is little information on either Democrat. Both candidates reported raising \$1,780. **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

HD80: State Rep. Phil GiaQuinta, Linda Brooks, Nick Brown. **Analysis:** No information is available on either of GiaQuinta's primary challengers and we see his Statehouse service continuing. **Horse Race Status:** Safe GiaQuinta.

HD98: State Rep. Robin Shackelford, Nichole M. Thomas. **Analysis:** No information on Thomas was available to HPI. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Shackelford. ❖

High eviction rates reveal housing issues

By ERIN MACEY

INDIANAPOLIS – In April, we learned that three Indiana localities have the dubious distinction of being in the top 20 U.S. cities with the highest eviction rates. The newly established Eviction Lab, spearheaded by “Evicted” author and researcher Matthew Desmond, tells us that Fort Wayne (13th), Indianapolis (14th) and South Bend (18th) see people pushed out of housing at higher rates than most cities.



In Indianapolis, that equates to more than 30 households evicted per day. These statistics shine a spotlight on Indiana's housing crisis and bust the myth of the Midwest's affordability, at least for low-income families.

Forty-two percent of renter households in Indiana are cost-burdened, defined as spending 30% or more of gross income on rent and utilities. Rent-burdened households are more likely to be evicted, have less to spend on other basic needs like food and medical care, and more frequently must rely on food assistance and other safety net programs. On the flip side, stable housing has a host of benefits, especially for children, who are less likely to be placed in foster care and switch schools less often.

Figuring out how to make housing affordable for more families is an ongoing challenge, particularly in light of stagnant wage growth and limited rental housing stock. And while the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides rental assistance and subsidized housing to nearly 90,000 Hoosier families each year, this

aid serves far fewer households than qualify. Only one in four eligible households receives the support they need. These tend to be the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and families with children.

Unfortunately, on April 2, HUD Secretary Ben Carson proposed changes to rental assistance programs that would do little to improve the program and may actually undermine current benefits:

- Families are currently expected to pay 30% of their adjusted income in rent. With the proposed changes, medical expenses and childcare costs would no longer be deducted, and rents will be calculated at 35% of gross income for families with a non-disabled, non-elderly adult.

- Currently, housing agencies may charge the poorest families \$50 per month even if that amount exceeds 30 percent of the family's adjusted income. The HUD proposal triples this floor to \$150 per month. This would affect about 15% of individuals receiving housing subsidies, mainly single mothers.

- Housing authorities would be allowed to impose (paper)work requirements, even though nine in ten households receiving assistance are elderly, disabled, receiving TANF (and already subject to work requirements), or already working.

Estimates suggest HUD's changes will result in an average increase of \$760 per year per household. This comes on the heels of tax cuts that disproportionately favor higher earners and corporations, leaving the bottom 20% of earners with an extra \$100/year on average, barely a dent in the new rent bill.

To prevent evictions from further destabilizing Indiana families and their communities, policymakers should oppose these HUD changes and take a hard look at current landlord-tenant laws and other policies that affect housing stability and affordability for low-income families.

❖

Erin Macey, Ph.D., is a policy analyst for the Indiana Institute of Working Families

What's it take for a single parent to raise two kids?

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – It's one thing to have a job and another to make a living. What does it take for a single parent to support a family with two children? How old are those children? Do they own or rent their home? Do they have a car or depend on public transportation? Do they have any savings in the event of an emergency?



It's certainly more than the federal minimum hourly wage of \$7.25 which has prevailed since July 2009. Many state and local governments have decided that \$15 per hour is more appropriate. (If we assume 40 hours per week and 52 weeks a year, then \$7.25 per hour = \$15,080 per year and \$15 = \$31,200.)

How much do Hoosiers make in "A State That Works," a state that boasts of its friendliness to business? Back in 2007, in Indiana the average hourly wage was \$19.93 or 99¢ less than the national average. If you prefer, we were worth 4.7% less than the average worker in the United States.

Sadly, that was our highest position relative to the nation in the subsequent decade. In 2017, our state-wide average hourly wage was \$24.45, up by \$4.52 over 2007, an average annual pay raise of 2.1%. That growth exceeded the rise in consumer prices of 1.7%. Hence the real hourly increase, after inflation, totaled 89¢ per hour after 10 years, far less than the nominal or apparent figure of \$4.52.

After 10 years, where did we stand compared with the nation? Instead of being 99¢ behind the U.S. average hourly pay, by 2017, Hoosier workers were \$1.87 short. They went from being 4.7% below the national average to down 7.1%.

But the full story of Indiana includes our various labor markets. In 2007, the Kokomo market led all 13 Hoosier metropolitan areas with a \$27.99 hourly wage. By 2017, Columbus was the leader at \$29.86 per hour. At the bottom of the pay range in 2007 was South Bend at \$17.56; that changed to Muncie at \$19.53 in 2017. Columbus in 2017 not only enjoyed the highest average hourly earnings, but also had the leading increase (\$10.71) of our metro areas during the decade.

Today, the big story is the "shortage of qualified workers" as told with fervor and dramatic effect by em-

ployers. But they don't mention average hourly earnings fell between 2007 and 2017 in Muncie, Michigan City, and Kokomo and the increases in Bloomington, Indianapolis and Elkhart failed to match the rate of inflation.

Maybe someday employers will understand if they want qualified workers, they will have to assume responsibility for training and retaining employees by paying better wages. That would involve not expecting government to fill employment potholes caused by economic storms. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist. His views can be followed on a [weekly podcast](#) or reached at Whogetswhat4@gmail.com

The sheriff doesn't need to be a cop

By **RICH JAMES**

INDIANAPOLIS – There was a time in Lake County when it was understood that the sheriff was an administrator and didn't need to be a cop.



The chief of police ran the department and reported to the sheriff. Those were different times. Crime was different and so too were criminals.

Times have changed since Leslie O. Pruitt, who wasn't a law enforcement officer, was sheriff in the 1970s. Most thought Pruitt was a darn good sheriff.

The sheriff today needs to be an administrator and a law enforcement officer. The sheriff runs the largest department in the county and administers its largest payroll.

While fiscal mismanagement seems to be a way of life in Washington, D.C., it isn't acceptable on the local level. And that's why former Schererville Police Chief David Dowling is the most qualified to become sheriff.

Schererville with more than 30,000 residents is a fairly large community by Hoosier standards. For 10 years, Chief Dowling managed the department well – without a hint of impropriety – and engineered the construction of a new law enforcement facility. Dowling also took the department to a new level as it achieved CALEA accreditation, just one of two departments in Northwest Indiana to receive such high honors. (CALEA is an acronym for Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies).

While Dowling has experience as a street cop and an administrator, the same can't be said for any of his opponents, particularly Sheriff Oscar Martinez. Martinez

lacked administrative experience when he was picked last fall in a precinct caucus to replace Sheriff John Buncich. That became clear when Martinez removed qualified police officers from their command positions.

A testament to Dowling's character came when he retired as police chief to campaign on a full-time basis.

Lake County sorely needs the level of integrity that Dowling would bring to the department. ❖

Rich James has been writing about politics and government for almost 40 years. He is retired from the Post-Tribune, a newspaper born in Gary.

Messer leads charge for Trump Nobel Prize

Howey Politics Indiana

WASHINGTON – Five incumbent House Republicans running for Senate have co-signed a letter nominating President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize ([Roll Call](#)). It's a move that could curry favor with the president and his supporters just a week before pivotal primaries in states such as West Virginia and Indiana, two Trump states where GOP candidates are trying to align themselves with the White House.



A total of 18 House members, all Republicans, signed the nomination letter to the Norwegian Nobel Committee, citing the president's work to "end the Korean War, denuclearize the Korean peninsula, and bring peace to the region."

Rep. Luke Messer, who is locked in a contentious three-way primary battle with fellow Rep. Todd Rokita and businessman Mike Braun for the GOP Senate nod in Indiana, led the charge for Trump's nomination. "The President's strong leadership is the only reason North Korea is now coming to the table and he deserves recognition for this unprecedented progress toward peace," Messer said in a statement Wednesday. "This is more progress in North Korea than we saw during the entire Obama administration."

Rokita faults 'elites' in Goshen

Republican U.S. Senate candidate Todd Rokita stopped in Goshen Tuesday to tell his supporters he is the best man for the job (Schneider, [Goshen News](#)). He ran off a list of the "elites" he said he is running against, including the "fake news media," but paused to give a shout out to the Fox News crew videoing his event and called for applause for them. He said 90 percent of the news stories "Are against this president, who in many respects is getting more done than Ronald Reagan." He cited deregulation and the tax cuts as examples of Trump's accomplishments. He said the "deep state bureaucrats" held over from the Obama administration and before, as well as the "Republican establishment" and Democrats are still opposed to Trump's presidency. "Those are the elites," he said. "The elites think they know how to run our lives bet-

ter than we do. So we need a real solid, pro-Trump, conservative fighter in the Senate." On other issues, Rokita said he is pro life and pro-gun. Rokita is undertaking his "Defeat the Elite" campaign tour and will speak tonight at the St. Joseph County Lincoln Day Dinner.

Messer outreach at 500,000

In an email to media, the Luke Messer for U.S. Senate campaign reported it has reached half a million Hoosier voters through grassroots outreach, making 500,000 calls ahead of the Primary election on May 8th (Howey Politics Indiana). The Messer campaign stated it has hundreds of grassroots volunteers statewide, including more than 200 students on college campuses, making calls and working to get out the vote.

Braun, Rokita stump down south

Two of the three Republican candidates vying for a chance to unseat Democrat U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly in the fall made their way through Southern Indiana on Wednesday, talking with voters in the final days before the primary (Rickert, [News & Tribune](#)). Mike Braun, a businessman and former Indiana state representative, and U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita, share some commonalities — all have gone on record supporting a Southern border wall, the Second Amendment, and each says he is the right one to support President Donald Trump in the Senate. A third Republican candidate, U.S. Rep. Luke Messer, also shares those views. At a meet and greet at Mark's Feed Store in New Albany, Rokita talked about his track record as Indiana Secretary of State, where he served from

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2003 to 2010. At a meeting in Louisville Wednesday with newsgathering partner WAVE 3 News, candidate Braun talked about his experience with business, not as a career politician — and why that’s needed in the Senate seat. He likened his background to Trump’s.

Abortion main topic in 2 House races

Two area House members face primary challenges Tuesday, and the issue of life is playing a big role in both races (Kelly, [Fort Wayne Journal Gazette](#)). First up, Rep. Curt Nisly, R-Goshen, faces Syracuse Republican Kimberly Cates, who is pro-life but believes Nisly has taken his efforts on abortion too far. Nisly has represented House District 22 since 2014 and is seeking a third term. The district covers parts of Kosciusko and Elkhart counties. Then there is veteran Rep. David Wolkins, R-Warsaw, vs. North Manchester GOP challenger Russ Reahard, who focuses on morality. Wolkins has served House District 18 for 30 years. It covers Wabash County and parts of Kosciusko, Grant and Miami counties. The winner faces Democrat Dee Moore in the fall.

Election complaint in Jackson County

The Jackson County Election Board plans to investigate two complaints that named three candidates for Jackson County sheriff alleging campaign violations

(Richart, [Seymour Tribune](#)). The complaints were filed Thursday by Mike Cox of Medora and former resident Mike Moore, who now lives in Idaho. The two suggest Republican candidates Rick Meyer and Charlie Murphy and Democratic candidate Jeff Walters have violated the law by appearing in campaign advertisements, photographs and social media posts while in uniform. All three work for the Jackson County Sheriff’s Department. The investigation is set to begin following Tuesday’s primary election, as election board members voted to send the complaints to the candidates, who will have two weeks to respond. The statute may seem clear, but it provides what is referred to as a safe harbor for candidates that appear in campaign material in uniform, said Dale Simmons, who serves as the Republican general co-counsel at the Indiana Election Commission.

Tax records come up in Tippecanoe County

Is a candidate’s tax record relevant when it comes to being a prosecutor? (park, [Lafayette Journal & Courier](#)). Incumbent Pat Harrington thinks so. “If you can’t financially handle your own money, how can you handle taxpayers’ money?” Harrington said. Challenger Earl McCoy, a local attorney, says no. “Who takes care of taxes? Assessors. Auditors and treasurers,” McCoy said. ❖



Young supports funding for international affairs

Howey Politics Indiana

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Todd Young (R-Ind.) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) led a bipartisan letter—signed by 42 senators—to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Richard Shelby and Ranking Member Patrick Leahy this week calling for robust funding for the Fiscal Year 2019 International Affairs Budget, a news release stated (Howey Politics Indiana). “This budget funds strategic tools that are essential to protecting our national security, building economic prosperity, alleviating humanitarian crises, supporting democratic principles, and demonstrating American values,” the Senators wrote. “At a time when we face multiple national security challenges around the world, we continue to believe that deep cuts to the International Affairs Budget would be misguided and even dangerous.” The Senators continued, “The diplomatic and development capabilities funded through the International Affairs Budget can help avert conflict, shorten its duration, and prevent its return. Fewer and shorter conflicts mean fewer American servicemembers in harm’s way and greater security for the American people.”

Young hosts FCC commissioner

U.S. Senator Todd Young (R-Ind.) reported that he hosted Commissioner Brendan Carr of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Indiana for several events focused on rural broadband and the state’s tech economy (Howey Politics Indiana). “I’m grateful Commissioner Carr joined me in Indiana today to get a first-hand look at our growing tech sector,” said Senator Young. “Today’s visit underscored the importance of continued investment in our broadband and technology infrastructure, and the need to ensure our workforce is prepared to fill the jobs that come with a changing technological environment.” Senator Young and Commissioner Carr visited three locations in Hancock County this morning that demonstrate the importance of broadband access in rural communities. They visited the Hancock Wellness Center, a fiber construction site, and the family farm of Bruce and Linda Muegge. Senator Young also hosted a roundtable discussion at Infosys in Indianapolis regarding the future of the technology workforce, where he was joined by Commissioner Carr, state and tech lead-

ers, and students from Ivy Tech. Lastly, Senator Young and Commissioner Carr visited Purdue University’s Indiana Corn and Soybean Innovation Center in Lafayette to get a first-hand look at how rural broadband has enabled critical research and data collection that will help increase crop yields and improve sustainability.

Young to highlight tax reforms

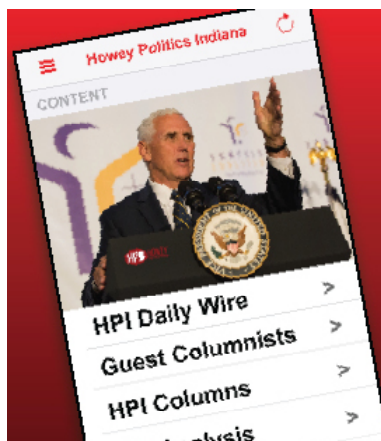
U.S. Senator Todd Young (R-Ind.) will make stops in Elkhart and Kokomo today where he will highlight tax reform success stories during National Small Business Week, according to a news release (Howey Politics Indiana). At approximately 7:50 a.m., Senator Young will speak at the 6th Annual RV Industry Power Breakfast at the Northern Indiana Event Center in Elkhart where he will highlight tax reform. At 1:30 p.m., he will visit AndyMark, Inc., a mechanical and electrical parts supplier in Kokomo that is hiring more employees as a result of tax reform.

Banks supports Macedonia in NATO

Jim Banks (R-IN) led a group of House colleagues in sending a bipartisan letter to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg expressing support for Macedonia’s admission to NATO, according to a news release.

Close vote expected for CIA director

The White House is bracing for a heated fight over deputy CIA director Gina Haspel’s nomination to lead the agency, as she prepares to head to Capitol Hill next week ([The Hill](#)). “I think that unfortunately in this environment we accept that every vote is close. ...It’s just the dynamic we face,” Marc Short, the director of legislative affairs, told reporters during a conference call. He added that he hoped some Democrats would be “courageous enough” to support Haspel despite engrained opposition from progressives and allied outside groups. Haspel is poised to appear before the Senate Intelligence Committee next week to testify as part of the confirmation process. She is expected to be grilled over her past involvement with enhanced interrogation techniques, among other things. ❖



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Matt Tully, IndyStar: Indiana's Republican Senate candidates are starting to sound like Oprah Winfrey. Yes, Oprah! Remember the talk-show queen's 2004 episode, the one that was arguably her most famous? In it, every member of the audience won a new Pontiac. Its catch phrase lives on like the chorus to a classic song. "You get a car. You get a car. You get a car," Oprah announced, as nearly 300 audience members erupted in cheers and tears. "Everybody gets a car!" As TV moments go, this was a big one. But how does it remind me of Mike Braun, Luke Messer and Todd Rokita, the three Republican candidates facing off in next week's Senate primary? Well, with a few minor changes you have a new catch phrase, as each of the three conservative, pro-Trump Republican politicians has labeled just about everyone who isn't him, including their Republican rivals, a liberal. "You're a liberal. You're a liberal. You're a liberal," they essentially shout in their commercials and in what have been some of the most vacuous and downright silly debates our state has ever seen. "Everybody is a liberal!" ❖



Erich Reimer, American Spectator: As the recent Adm. Ronny Jackson saga reminds us, politics can sink to the personal and rumors very fast. It is up to us to raise the culture and norms. Indiana's primary day is May 8. In Indiana's 4th Congressional District there is a hard fought race between two former Pence administration officials, Diego Morales and Steve Braun. Recently PAC flyers have flooded the district, with several engaging in vicious attacks on Diego, a U.S. Army veteran and legal immigrant who served as a senior advisor to Gov. Mike Pence. The flyers are clearly some of the worst of the worst we see in politics, engaging in everything from disrespectful mockery, calling Morales "Leggo Diego!" to the downright despicable, outright attacking Morales' character and integrity. I had the chance to chat with Morales personally several months ago, hearing about his story as one that shows a Republican Party that remains vibrant, growing, and optimistic. Morales immigrated to the United States, legally, from Guatemala in 1999 as a young man. Morales, now 39 years old, became an American citizen and served our country with distinction in the U.S. Army as an infantryman. He also earned an MBA from Purdue University, has been a small business owner and college instructor, held various positions in government, and even rose to serve Gov. Mike Pence as a senior advisor in his cabinet. We have seen with the recent fiasco around Admiral Ronny Jackson, which both Adm. Jackson and President Trump have maintained as completely false allegations, and which the Secret Service is day by day showing the rumors as increasingly untrue, that the power of rumors and distortion to mar without evidence the character of persons is powerful. While many Republicans and Democrats are used to our politics having decayed to a level where both sides unfortunately engage in the worst vitriol against each

other, it seems that Republicans are throwing one another to the pits as well in a way that helps neither the party nor country.

I've been around politics for quite a while throughout the years and know the realities can easily sink into nastiness, almost as if it were like the law of gravity. However norms can and do exist that create a culture around which our level of discourse is raised for the benefit of all. If candidates with strong and inspiring personal stories like Morales', who came to this country and lived a compelling version of the American Dream, are attacked viciously like this then our country is heading toward a worrying place. Not only does it hurt the Republican Party at this particular time, but hurts our country and governing process as a whole. ❖

Brian Klaas, Washington Post: In "1984," George Orwell spoke of the government's ability to degrade the truth: "The past was alterable. The past never had been altered," he wrote. Tuesday afternoon, Vice President Pence yet again disgraced the White House by saying he was "honored" to be joined by former Maricopa County, Ariz., sheriff Joe Arpaio, because Arpaio is a "champion" of "the rule of law." As in Orwell's dystopia, it wasn't just misleading, and it wasn't just a lie. It was a complete inversion of the truth, turning reality upside down. In late July 2017, Arpaio was found guilty of criminal contempt after a federal judge ruled that he had deliberately ignored a court order to cease and desist his racial profiling of people who appeared to be Latino. Arpaio's brutality in abusing the rule of law is widely known: The sheriff himself often boasted that prisoners in his draconian "Tent City" jail would be exposed to temperatures of up to 142 degrees. He referred to his compound as "a concentration camp." Lawsuits mounted against Arpaio – and, again and again, he lost in court. Judges ruled that his treatment of prisoners was abusive, inhumane or unconstitutional, or all of the above. Twice, a federal judge ruled that the lack of medical care in Tent City was so awful that it was an unconstitutional violation of prisoners' basic rights. One-hundred fifty-seven deaths of prisoners occurred on his watch, some of them allegedly attributable to negligence, according to investigations by the Phoenix New Times. Vice President Pence: Joe Arpaio is the exact opposite of a "champion" of the rule of law, and you're embarrassing yourself and your office in claiming otherwise. He ignored judicial orders, abused the constitutional rights of prisoners and used his law enforcement powers as a racialized weapon that made a mockery of the notion that justice is blind. Yet Arpaio was pardoned last year by the president of the United States. Why? Because Arpaio was a political ally of President Trump. Arpaio mirrors Trump's bigotry toward Hispanics. And even in 2018, Arpaio continues to spread the despicable and debunked lie that President Barack Obama was born in Kenya. Two bigoted conspiracy theorist peas in a pod. ❖

China stops buying U.S. soybeans

WASHINGTON – The world’s biggest oilseed processor just confirmed one of the soybean market’s biggest fears: China has essentially stopped buying U.S. supplies amid the brewing trade war (Bloomberg). “Whatever they’re buying is non-U.S.,” Bunge Ltd. Chief Executive Officer Soren Schroder said in a telephone interview Wednesday. “They’re buying beans in Canada, in Brazil, mostly Brazil, but very deliberately not buying anything from the U.S.” In a move that caught many in U.S. agriculture by surprise, China last month announced planned tariffs on American shipments of soybeans. As the market waited for the measure to take effect, there was some hope among traders and shippers alike that relations between the nations could ease in the meantime and the trade flow would continue. But that doesn’t seem to be the case, at least for now, according to Bunge. It’s “very clear” that the trade tensions have already stopped China from buying U.S. supplies, Schroder said. “How long that will last, who knows? But so long as there is this big cloud of uncertainty, that’s likely to continue



Brazil accuses Trump of nixing tariff talks

WASHINGTON – From the perspective of the White House, the United States had negotiated a preliminary deal with Brazil, as well as Argentina and Australia, to exempt the countries from punitive steel and aluminum tariffs (New York Times). From the perspective of Brazil, it was issued an ultimatum. Brazil accused the Trump administration on Wednesday of breaking off negotiations over the tariffs last week and issuing a take-it-or-leave-it offer. According to the Brazilian authorities, the United States said the country’s steel and aluminum industries could opt for tariffs or quotas. That account appears to contradict the White House’s version of the events. On Monday, White House officials said they

had reached agreements in principle with Argentina, Australia and Brazil with regard to steel and aluminum, saying the details would “be finalized shortly.” The disconnect between the United States and Brazil echoes the broader state of the trade negotiations, which have been clouded by confusion, miscommunication and a general state of uncertainty over the rules of engagement.

Cobb exits Trump legal team

WASHINGTON – White House lawyer Ty Cobb is leaving President Trump’s legal team, officials said Wednesday, as Trump jousts with special counsel Robert Mueller over the Russia investigation ([Washington Post](#)). “For several weeks, Ty Cobb has been discussing his retirement, and last week, he let Chief of Staff (John) Kelly know he would retire at the end of this month,” White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said. Cobb, who is leaving less than a year after his appointment.

Giuliani says Trump paid Stormy

WASHINGTON – Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former New York mayor and a recent addition to President Trump’s legal team, said Wednesday night that Trump made a series of payments reimbursing his lawyer, Michael Cohen, for a \$130,000 settlement with an adult film actress — appearing to contradict Trump’s assertion last month that he was unaware of the payment ([Washington Post](#)). “The president repaid it,” Giuliani told Fox News Channel’s Sean Hannity. Trump, Giuliani said, “didn’t know about the specifics of it, as far as I know. But he did know the general arrangement, that Michael would take care of things like this, like I take care of things like this with my clients.” Giuliani argued that the payment to actress Stormy Daniels could not have

violated campaign finance laws, because no campaign money was involved. But his statement raised a different set of questions — including whether Trump misrepresented his knowledge of the arrangement. Last month, a reporter on Air Force One pressed Trump about the payment, asking him: “Did you know about the \$130,000 payment to Stormy Daniels?” Trump responded: “No.” The reporter then asked: “Then why did Michael Cohen make [the payment], if there was no truth to her allegations?” “You’ll have to ask Michael Cohen,” Trump said. “Michael’s my attorney, and you’ll have to ask Michael.” Another reporter asked the president: “Do you know where he got the money to make that payment?” “No,” Trump said. “I don’t know.” On Wednesday night, Giuliani said Trump repaid Cohen through a series of payments, but didn’t specify when they occurred.

Rep. Abbott sworn in

INDIANAPOLIS – New State Rep. David Abbott took the oath of office Wednesday after winning a caucus last week to fill the House District 82 vacancy (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). “I’m excited. I can’t wait to get started,” he said. “It’s kind of like drinking from a fire hose right now.” That’s because May 14 is a one-day special session where lawmakers will vote on five bills that died unexpectedly in March when time ran out in the regular session. Abbott said the special session will be a good warm-up for next year. He still has to be elected in November, when he faces Democrat Mike Wilber. Abbott is unopposed in next week’s primary election. House District 82 covers Noble County and parts of LaGrange, Whitley and Allen counties.