

Holcomb defusing 2 issue hotspots

Governor adroitly moves on teacher pay and hate crimes with some opposition

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**
and **JACOB CURRY**

INDIANAPOLIS – If there is a ticking time bomb or two awaiting Gov. Eric Holcomb during this biennial budget session, it would be the teacher pay issue and his push for a hate crimes bill to land on his desk.



During his third State of the State address Tuesday, Holcomb fully enjoined both issues. On the

first, he won some praise from the super-minority Democrats for the administration's resourcefulness in finding funds for a proposed 4% raise over the biennium. On the second, the small social conservative wing of the GOP sat on their hands when Holcomb said he would push for a hate crimes law, while the wider chamber erupted in applause.

"It's time for us to move off that list," Holcomb



said of Indiana being one of only five states without such a law. "I look forward to working with the General Assembly to achieve this goal so that our state law reflects what's already in my administration's employment policy." The

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Profiles in discouragement

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – For two years, Republicans controlled the White House and both chambers in Congress. They wouldn't pass funding for a concrete or steel border wall.



In September 2017, USA Today asked every Republican whether they would fund what was then a \$1.6 billion appropriation for the wall. Fewer than 25% of House and Senate Republicans were willing to stand up for the legislation. It found only 69 of 292 Republicans on Capitol Hill said they would vote for the wall. The Wall Street Journal found a similar 25% when they polled members.



"We are bringing our troops home. The caliphate has crumbled and ISIS has been defeated."

- Vice President Mike Pence, speaking to the Global Chiefs of Mission conference. He made no mention of 4 Americans killed by ISIS in Syria just before he spoke.



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President Trump has now partially closed the federal government over the wall. The showdown began in mid-December, with Democrats poised to retake the House majority three weeks later. On Dec. 11 in a contentious Oval Office meeting with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, Trump said, "I am proud to shut down the government for border security." He vowed to "own the mantle" of such a shutdown.

On the day the shutdown began, Vice President Mike Pence met with Schumer, floating a compromise of \$2.5 billion in border security funding, including money for a border fence. Schumer had no relationship with Pence (who has no relationships with any Capitol Hill Democrat) and didn't trust that Pence was speaking for the president. It was canny sense, as Trump quickly cut Pence off at the knees. In the following weeks, that number was ratcheted up to \$5.7 billion.

When he addressed the nation from the Oval Office on Jan. 8, the Trump kaleidoscope was in full churn. Trump said, "The federal government remains shut down for one reason and one reason only: Because Democrats will not fund border security." When he met with Pelosi and Schumer the next day, he walked out of the meeting, calling it "a total waste of time."

A reporter asked President Trump on the South Lawn last Thursday as he headed to Marine One for a trip to the border, "Does the buck stop with you over this shutdown?" It was a notion ("The buck stops here") embraced by every president since Harry S. Truman. But not this president, who responded, "The buck stops with everybody."

As he headed to the Mexican border at McAllen, Texas, for a photo op he really didn't want to do, Trump

also disavowed saying that Mexico would pay for the wall: "Obviously, I never said this, and I never meant they're going to write out a check."

But Hoosiers know otherwise. At rallies from Indy, to Westfield, to Fort Wayne to Evansville, Trump repeatedly said he would build a wall and Mexico would pay for it. Hoosiers chanted along with him on the vow. I heard him say it; you heard him say it. According to the Washington Post, he's said it 212 times, even on his campaign website.

Accompanying Trump was U.S. Rep. Will Hurd, a Republican who represents a Texas border district. He's not a fan of the wall, either. "I voted against including border wall



funding into the recent appropriations package because I favor a border security solution based on improved technology and manpower," Hurd told USA TODAY in 2017. "I've made it clear time and time again that building a physical wall from sea to shining sea is the most expensive and least effective way to secure the border." The former CIA agent repeated that quote on CNN and MSNBC's Morning Joe again this past week.

On the 21st day of the shutdown, Vice President Pence met with unpaid federal workers. "Thank you for staying focused on this mission, even in trying times," Pence told them. "Focus on the mission. I want to assure you that we're going to figure this thing out."

But days before, Pence ruled out the most obvious deal where everyone could win: Border security funding for a Dreamer deal that would

impact some 10,000 Hoosier kids who face banishment after coming here with their parents, and more than a million nationally. "When we get the resources that we need to build a wall and secure our border, this is a president that also wants to ... fix our broken immigration system," Pence said. "We believe the opportunity after the Supreme Court case will be the time to do that."

Now, on Day 27 of the shutdown, after President Trump and Vice President Pence described a "crisis" on the southern border, after Trump threatened to declare a national emergency and before he abruptly changed course earlier this week, the very people charged with protecting the nation are without paychecks. This includes the Coast Guard, Secret Service, FBI, Border & Customs, TSA agents, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Homeland Security, and the Food & Drug Administration. All are charged with protecting U.S. security and American consumers and all are working without pay.

By early this week, the ripples were being felt across Indiana and the nation. FSSA announced it would make SNAP payments three days early. TSA lines at airports are growing as more unpaid workers are calling in sick, up from the normal 3.4% to more than 7% absenteeism and rising. Going on vacation soon? Expect long lines at the airport.

Hoosier Ag Today reported the grain markets are "stagnant" because the USDA's timely information flow on exports and production is missing. Jim Bower of Bower Trading in Lafayette told Hoosier Ag Today, "Right now things are in limbo ... and Spring is not that far away. Bankers are preparing their cash flow estimates and balance sheets, and they want some answers. Right now, the way things are, we just don't have them." A six-month shutdown would be "disastrous" for markets and producers, Bower said.

If you're looking for profiles in courage, don't waste your time foraging through the Indiana congressional delegation. Here we find reason to be discouraged.



Vice President Mike Pence tells federal employees last week, "We'll figure this out." But the government shutdown continued past 27 days.

The classic line here came from rookie U.S. Rep. Greg Pence, brother of the vice president, in a rare interview with the Columbus Republic. Pence, a multi-millionaire, announced he wouldn't take any of his \$174,000 annual salary during the shutdown. "My thinking is to share the pain. Now it is affecting me as well," Pence said by phone.

U.S. Sen. Todd Young appeared on Fox59 and blamed Democrats even after GOP majorities failed to pass wall funding. "I think the president rightly underscored in his national address this week, the importance of securing our border for the purposes of our domestic security and humanitarian purposes," said Young. "This has now become a moral issue for many Democrats. They are sort of opposed categorically to any border funding. It's obviously the legislative branch's prerogative to have control over the purse, but here and now what I'm focused on is what the president is focused on, that we secure the border and open the government as soon as possible."

How? Sen. Young couldn't answer.

Like Rep. Pence, U.S. Sen. Mike Braun has not served a single minute with the federal government open. "I'm hoping we reach that resolution as soon as possible but it's happening because we're not getting any serious attention to the issue of border security," said Braun, whose first bill would prevent any member from getting paid

during future shutdowns.

Many voters are not suckers. When Quinnipiac polled who's to blame, 56% said President Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress are responsible for the shutdown, while 36% blamed Democrats. And 55% are against the wall, compared to 43% who are for it. Recent CNN and ABC/Washington Post showed similar results.

All of this conjures the infamous October 2013 federal shutdown quote by then U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman, who told the Washington Examiner, "We're not going to be disrespected. We have to get something out of this. And I don't know what that even is."

We're not sure anybody in Washington really knows what they're doing. ❖

State of the State, from page 1

conservative wing of the GOP fears the elevation of LGBT protections in state code.

The teacher pay issue has surfaced in other red states such as West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Arizona. There was a strike in West Virginia lasting about two weeks involving 20,000 teachers and school employees last winter that impacted 250,000 students. That strike inspired teachers to take similar action with teachers in Kentucky and North Carolina orchestrating coordinated protests and walkouts.

The Holcomb administration was adroit enough to realize the potential strife and commenced talks last summer with the Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA). By the time Holcomb rolled out his agenda in December, ISTA President Theresa Meredith seemed to be on board, with Holcomb praising the organization for its willingness to come to the table. The two posed for pictures at Traders Point Creamery.

But what Holcomb described in early December was a two-biennial budget process. "Now we have to make sure the numbers work and the revenue is there," Holcomb explained. "We're being very not just methodical, but careful to get this right, and every time you move one piece of the puzzle it affects another."

Meredith pushed back on the governor's adjustment. "Teachers need to be valued, respected and paid as professionals," she said. "Elected leaders must do more to declare teacher compensation a priority in this session. This issue can't wait. We expect action in 2019. Many teachers have gone as many as 10 years without a meaningful pay increase, all while facing increased insurance costs, paying for their own classroom supplies and taking on second and third jobs just to make ends meet." She hinted at a potential job action if raises weren't in the works this session.

Exercising message discipline, Meredith told WTHR-TV, "Their actual pay year-to-year has stayed the same or the pay increases have been very minimal and have been eaten up by costs for health care. All while paying for their classroom supplies and taking on second and third jobs just to make ends meet." She cited the teacher shortage, noting that a recent Indiana Department of Education survey found 35% of new teachers leave the profession within five years.



Gov. Holcomb with ISTA President Theresa Meredith during his agenda unveiling at Trader's Point Creamery in December. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

"ISTA's top priority this legislative session is improving teacher compensation and advancing the teaching profession," Meredith said. "We thank Gov. Holcomb for sharing this as a priority. Along with the governor, we urge the legislature to take action and provide funding that leads to competitive salaries for all Hoosier teachers. This issue is urgent as every child deserves to have a caring and qualified teacher in their classroom."

Holcomb expressed some surprise at the pushback, wondering why the ISTA rank and file wasn't on the same page with its leadership. But since the Dec. 14 budget forecast, the administration has worked to come up with more funding. During his State of the State address, Holcomb said, "One way to attract and retain more of those teachers is to make teacher pay more competitive. In my budget proposal last week, I requested K-12 education funding increases of 2% for the next two years. That's a 4% increase and equates to \$432 million more than today."

The governor vowed to send more than \$572 million new dollars to K-12 schools over

the biennium. How did he do it? It was more than Bullwinkle pulling Rocky out of his hat.

Holcomb said he would seek \$140 million to pay off teacher pension obligations. "Just like paying off your mortgage frees up money in your personal budget, this state investment will save all local schools \$140 million over the biennium with continued savings thereafter," Holcomb said in remarks released in advance of the speech, according to Tom Davies of the Associated Press. The extra money would amount to about 1% more funding to Indiana school districts, which are receiving an estimated \$7.16 billion in state funding this school year.

"I believe local school districts should allocate 100% of the \$140 million to increasing teacher pay-checks," Holcomb concluded.

Democrats had proposed tapping into the state's \$1.8 billion reserve. But with the potential for a recession, Holcomb and legislative fiscal leaders were extremely reluctant to go that route. The last thing any Republican wants to do is risk the state's AAA bond rating, which is a staple in any description of the "State That Works" via the "Party of Purpose," or find the need for a general tax hike.

It was a creative way to defuse a potential policy and political friction point.

House Minority Leader Phil GiaQuinta called Holcomb a "quick study" for finding a way to increase educa-

tors' salaries so shortly after his office had set out to research the issue. He added that it would ultimately fall upon the legislature to ensure that the \$140 million in school funds to be freed up under the pension funding plan will actually go to teacher pay as the governor hopes.

Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President Pro Tem Rod Bray were aligned with Holcomb's goals. Praising Holcomb, Bosma said, "He could've spent a lot more time talking about the great place that Indiana is in today – and he said a little bit of that – but most of his discussion was about aspirations." They both agreed that the agenda outlined by Holcomb was very much in line with the legislative plans established by their caucuses.

As for hate crimes, Holcomb made his case late in the speech. "Finally, we will not slow our efforts to modernize state government to better serve our citizens and businesses alike. But, truly serving all our citizens requires



more than increasing our efficiency. Indiana is one of five states that does not yet have a bias crimes law. It's time for us to move off that list."

Holcomb continued, "I look forward to working with the General Assembly to achieve this goal so that our state law reflects what's already in my administration's employment policy. Businesses interested in Indiana care about this issue, but it's not just about business. At its heart, this has to do with people's dignity and how we treat one another.

Standing strong against targeted violence motivated to instill fear against an entire group is the right thing to do. So, let's strengthen our state laws by ensuring judges can sentence more severely when a group is targeted, even though there may be only one actual victim. With your help, and only with your help, we can do this."

On areas where Republican members disagreeing

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CAREERS

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Trucking industry jobs
in Indiana (2017)



That's 1 in 14 jobs in the state



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with the governor is anticipated – with hate crime legislation being singled out – both Bray and Bosma said everyone’s focus is on compromise. “I didn’t hear a line being drawn,” Bosma said. “I didn’t hear him say ‘my way or the highway.’ That’s not his style. So, he’ll look to persuade and to convince, and we’ll respond to that.”

Bosma noted that there was room for members of his caucus to dissent over hate crime legislation, noting that 70% of that caucus is from “rural Indiana.” In 2014, it was rural legislators like Rep. Kevin Mahan and Tom Saunders who turned the tide against the House Joint Resolution that would have put the marriage constitutional amendment on the ballot that year. With a language change, the constitutional amendment was delayed prior to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that legalized such marriages across America.

The coming hate crimes debates could rekindle some of those social flashpoints within the sprawling majority caucuses, but Holcomb was working on consensus Tuesday night and he just might have the numbers to defuse the two biggest political problems he faces.

Full throttle up

Holcomb kicked off his third State of the State address Tuesday night with a statewide television audience, proclaiming “Indiana is on a roll” but to stay competitive, added, “we must throttle up.”

He pointed to a higher than national average labor participation rate, saying, “There are more Hoosiers working today than at any time in our state’s history.” He said the state has tripled foreign investment and added, “Statewide tourism is up, wages are up, in-migration is up, home sales are hot, building permits have surged, and our tech ecosystem is growing.

“Global connectivity, robotics, artificial intelligence, big data, machine learning and non-stop technological advances are permanent features of the future of work, workers and the workplace,” said Holcomb, who is grappling with the fact that 45% of the state’s workforce will be retiring in the next decade as the Baby Boom bulge moves through. “We simply cannot just maintain our course. Instead, we must throttle up. Two years ago, we burst off the starting line and kept the pedal to the metal ever since.”



Senate President Pro Tempore Rod Bray and Speaker Brian Bosma address the press after the speech. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

To that end, Holcomb said, “I will once again pursue exempting military pensions from our state income taxes so we can attract and retain talented patriotic veterans, who we know are some of the most experienced, focused and loyal workers anywhere.” He vowed to “expand our Workforce Ready Grant program to continue our push to get more adults to complete degrees or certificates in high-demand industries.” He added he is seeking to double the funding for the Employer Training Grant.

Holcomb vowed to expand broadband service to hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers without access to high-speed internet as part of his infrastructure package.

“We’re accelerating regional road projects like completing I-69 three years ahead of schedule. We’re pursuing transformational rail projects in northwest Indiana, a fourth water port in southeast Indiana, and we’re working to make Indianapolis the Midwest destination for nonstop international flights,” Holcomb said. “But we’re about more than ports, planes, trains and automobiles. The internet is just as essential to our prosperity today as highways were a century ago, and we have far too many Hoosiers without access to affordable high-speed broadband.

“When I was visiting one of our towns, someone said to me, ‘Eric, if you come by our Starbucks between 7 and 9 at night, you’ll see parents with their kids doing their homework, because they can’t get wi-fi at home,’” Holcomb explained. “Another Hoosier told me, ‘Kids in my town go to McDonald’s to go online.’ Nothing against large coffees and Big Macs. I’m a fan of both. But all students should be doing their homework at home. So, we’re making the largest single investment in broadband in our state ever.”

He is also investing in bike trails and other amenities to attract a vibrant workforce. “To help more people enjoy the diverse outdoor beauty of Indiana, we’re also making the single largest investment in our state’s history to expand our hiking, biking and riding trails,” he said of what he hopes to be a \$90 million initiative. “Because we all know that today, people often choose where to live before they choose where to work, and these amenities matter.”

As for the opioid crisis that resulted in 1,700 Hoosier overdose deaths in 2017, Holcomb said, “Our new 211 Open Beds program has made more than 4,000 referrals

for treatment services and support groups, connecting people quicker than ever, which can mean the difference between life and death.”

He said the number of opioid prescriptions is down, communities are forming their own systems of care, and, “We are getting drug data faster and more accurately than ever before. But better data means we have more information about the extent of the issue, and it shows we still have a long way to go. To get there, this year we’ll

improve access to quality treatment, expand recovery housing, and provide better services for pregnant women who are substance dependent. We will keep working 24-7-365 to get more of our Hoosier neighbors on the road to recovery.”

These and other issues await Indiana’s governor this legislative session as 2020 approaches. ❖

INDems mayoral bench uninterested in governor’s race

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — The bench strength of the Indiana Democratic Party — its mayors — seem to be passing on the 2020 gubernatorial race.

The latest was Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight, whose bombshell announcement Monday he would not seek a fourth term led to a rejection of a 2020 challenge

to Gov. Eric Holcomb. “I have no interest in running for governor,” Goodnight told HPI.

He follows South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who announced he wouldn’t seek a third term and appears poised for a

long-shot presidential run. Buttigieg will release his new book on Feb. 10. Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott is seeking another term, and told HPI he’s only focused on a “normal municipal reelection.”

Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett is seeking a second term and has told people he won’t run in 2020. Other prominent mayors such as Lafayette’s Tony Roswarski, Bloomington’s John Hamilton and Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry are concentrating on reelection.

Former congressman Baron Hill told HPI on Wednesday that his focus is on “reaching out” to potential candidates. “I have been reaching out to people to see if we can find a young, new, fresh rising star in our party to run for governor,” Hill said. “I believe we need to focus on a vibrant new name.” One name that came up was former Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel.

Hill is not having much success, stoking concerns that Indiana may be destined to becoming a one-party state. “It’s not good,” he said. “I’m concerned about it. How

you fix it is a mystery to me. We’ll see what happens over the next few months. Maybe someone will emerge.”

Hill said he talked to former senator Joe Donnelly over the holidays and doesn’t think he is interested after his bruising reelection battle in 2018. “I didn’t get an indication he is ready to jump into another race. The subject of governor did come up but it was quickly dismissed.”

Hill said he talked to 2012 and 2016 nominee John Gregg at former state representative Bill Cochran’s funeral last week. The concerns with Gregg are the “retread” aspect even after he ran a well-funded, well-themed race in 2016 that was overwhelmed by the Trump/Pence ticket. Hill said that some Democrats are encouraging Gregg to go a third time. Others don’t believe that’s a good course to take.

The most obvious “fresh face” is 2016 lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale. While she told HPI she is keeping her options open for 2020, she has long expressed more interest in running in 2024 after a second theoretical Holcomb term.

The dilemma facing Democrats is that without a credible gubernatorial contender in 2020, the reapportionment maps in 2021 could usher in a decade of monolithic GOP rule in the state.

Mayors

Kokomo Mayor Goodnight retiring

Kokomo Mayor Goodnight gathered his supporters on Monday for what many believed would be a campaign kickoff. Instead they got a bombshell, with Goodnight saying he wouldn’t run while castigating Republican Tyler Moore and Democrat Kevin Summers who had already declared. “We have all seen politicians hang around too long and become stale,” said Goodnight, who was vague about his future but clear that he will not work for the city of Kokomo in any capacity. (Myers, Kokomo Tribune) “Often, important issues become more about personality conflicts. That is never good for a community.” Goodnight told the Tribune he had been mulling his future. Asked who knew, Goodnight said,



"A few people, not very many." Kokomo Deputy Mayor David Tharp will not run for mayor, he told the Tribune minutes after Goodnight's bombshell speech. "I'll give you the same answer I've given you for years — I'm not running," said Tharp. The Kokomo Common Council has two members who have run for mayor, president Bob Hayes in 2007 and vice president Mike Kennedy in 1995 and 1999, and a first-term councilman who found the spotlight during his early months on the council. Elected in November 2015, Democrat Steve Whitehart revealed in January 2016 that he was working on legislation to amend the city's human rights municipal code to include LGBT protections. By March 2016, that legislation, sponsored by Whitehart, had been approved by the council and signed by Goodnight. When asked Monday night whether he will run for mayor, Whitehart said: "Everything is on the table. There's a lot for my family to discuss. We still have 25 days [until the Feb. 8 filing deadline]." Hayes gave a similar, but less clear response in a text message: "Everything on the table???" He did not respond to requests for additional comment. Kennedy said he will not run for mayor; instead, he will file reelection paperwork for his at-large council seat Thursday.

Moore reacts to Goodnight decision

Howard County Commissioner Tyler Moore, the only Republican mayoral candidate to emerge so far, was hit Monday night with personal insults and professional accusations during Goodnight's speech (Kokomo Tribune). The sitting mayor said Moore's "decade of elected office amounts to little more than a cynical joke, played at taxpayer expense." He also asked Moore to disclose "how much county taxpayer money gets funneled to" the family-owned Moore Title & Escrow. Moore, who rebuffed Goodnight's call for him to step out of the race, responded in a statement sent to local media Tuesday morning. "Like most of our community, I was surprised by Mayor Goodnight's announcement that he is choosing not to run for another term of office," said Moore. "Although we have not agreed politically on many of the pressing issues here in Kokomo, I was looking forward to a fair and respectful yet spirited debate with him on the concerns facing our citizens. On behalf of my family, I want to thank Mayor Goodnight for his hard work and dedication to our great

city. We wish Mayor Goodnight and his family only the very best in their future endeavors."

Tyler won't run in Muncie

Muncie Mayor Dennis Tyler announced he won't seek another term. The 76-year-old Democrat becomes the first of his party in 106 years not to seek reelection.



Muncie Councilman Dan Ridenour files his candidacy for mayor after incumbent Democrat Dennis Tyler announced he was retiring.

Republican Muncie Councilman Dan Ridenour is running for mayor. Ridenour has a 34 plus years of management and finance experience including being an officer with three different publicly traded companies. He is currently an AVP, Regional Retail Lending

Manager at Muncie-based Mutual Bank. His duties include directing the lending activities of the Central Region which includes 13 financial centers in five counties. Outside of work, Dan enjoys spending time with his family. Dan and his wife, Sherry, have four children and three grandchildren. Republican Nate Jones is Delaware County's veterans affairs officer and Democrat Andrew Dale is a design and construction management consultant whose great-grandfather and great-uncle were both Muncie mayors.

Hogsett posts \$3.2 million cash

The Hogsett for Indianapolis campaign committee announced its 2018 annual fundraising filing Wednesday, reporting more than \$1.1 million raised during the year with more than \$3.2 million cash-on-hand ahead of the 2019 campaign cycle. The figures for last year continue a string of strong fundraising periods for Mayor Joe Hogsett's



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reelection effort, and include contributions from more than 400 individual supporters and hundreds of low-dollar donors. For the period from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2018, the Hogsett for Indianapolis campaign raised \$1,105,529.68. At the close of the reporting period, cash-on-hand totaled \$3,226,413.50. "While we are heartened at the continued level of direct support for Mayor Joe Hogsett's reelection, it has been even more exciting to watch as grassroots energy builds behind this campaign," said Heather K. Sager, campaign spokesperson. "From the beginning, Mayor Hogsett has run on his vision of a city that works for all of our residents. This report shows that hundreds of Indianapolis working families are stepping forward to say, 'We need Joe.'"

Merritt seeks to challenge Hogsett

Voters in the state capital will likely find a competitive mayoral race after State Sen. Jim Merritt announced his candidacy on Thursday. Should he defeat Jose Evans, Christopher Moore and John Schmitz in the Republican primary, he would face Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett as he seeks a second term. "Our city is going in the wrong direction and we can't afford four more years of Joe Hogsett," Merritt said. "Our murder rate continues to skyrocket. Our showcase downtown has grown more dangerous. And, we all know Mayor Joe Hogsett struggled with a sluggish, lethargic response to last winter's destruction of our streets. I want to get back to solving crimes and data collections and monthly meetings out in the townships and talking to people at the drop of a hat rather than having everything set up. I want to be a very accessible mayor."

Republicans took a pass on the race in 2015, nominating obscure businessman Chuck Brewer, who lost to Hogsett by more than 35,000 votes. But there are a number of Hoosier cities where mayors are nominated by minority parties, including Democrat Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry, Republican Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett, Democrat Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight and Republican Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke. All of those mayors have been reelected in their cities. Hogsett is just the second Democratic mayor after Unigov was passed almost half a century ago. But after Democrat Mayor Bart Peterson's two terms, Republican Gregg Ballard, who is chairing the Merritt campaign, held the office for two terms before Hogsett won.

Merritt had a tough reelection battle for the Senate last November, defeating Democrat Derek Camp 51.4% to 48.6%, or by less than 2,000 votes. He has served in the Senate since 1990. He then stepped down

as Marion County Republican chairman after spending most of last year branding Hogsett "Pothole Joe" after city streets deteriorated. Hogsett has also presided over a city that has set record homicide rates during his term after he ran in 2015 as a law-and-order candidate. "Hogsett promised to be a public safety mayor, but look at where we are in just three short years and we all feel a little less safe," Merritt said. "These three years, taken together, give Joe the dubious distinction of presiding over a historic level of deadly violence. Our problems have gotten significantly worse under the current administration." Hogsett reacted to the Merritt candidacy, saying, "This November, Indianapolis voters will have the opportunity to make their voices heard. Should Sen. Merritt win his party's nomination, I look forward to a spirited conversation." Democratic Chairman Kate Sweeney Bell added, "Indianapolis voters have rejected Sen. Merritt's extremist views in the past, and we are confident they will do it again this year."

Merritt blasts Hogsett over homicides

State Sen. Jim Merritt is calling for new leadership in the wake of an out-of-control homicide rate. He released the following comments: "We're just over two weeks into the new year and Indianapolis is already losing the battle again. For each of the past three years, through Mayor Hogsett's entire term, the annual homicide rate in our great city has reached record highs. Here we go again.

Yesterday, we had another homicide happen in broad daylight right in front of our local federal office building. This wasn't in some back alley or hidden away from view. It happened in the middle of our vibrant downtown, where tens of thousands live, work and relax. According to CBS News, in 2017, Indianapolis ranked 16th in the nation in per capita homicides. That was worse than Washington, D.C.; Oakland, Ca.; and Atlanta, Ga. We can't let this continue to happen. Our reputation as a city is one of friendliness and safety, and yet the statistics seem to show otherwise. Mayor Hogsett campaigned as a 'public safety' mayor, but has failed to increase manpower at IMPD as he had promised. As mayor, I will make police recruitment a top priority. We need new leadership in Indianapolis."



Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett (left) and State Sen. Jim Merritt, who entered the mayoral race

2 file in South Bend

The scramble to replace Pete Buttigieg as mayor intensified on Friday, with a second candidate officially announcing a run and three others taking big steps toward joining the race (Parrott, South Bend Tribune). Oliver Davis, the South Bend Common Council vice president, on Friday morning filed the paperwork at the county clerk's office making him an official Democratic candidate for the May primary. Davis said his campaign will focus on helping the city's neighborhoods and also on building business "not

only downtown but throughout the city of South Bend." He said he would work to assure city residents have better access to department heads and the mayor's office. Davis is the second Democratic candidate to file for the mayoral race. Earlier this week, Shane Inez, 19, a cellphone store owner, was the first Democratic candidate to file. Also on Friday, another Common Council member, Regina Williams-Preston, D-District 2, announced she was forming a committee to explore a possible run for the mayor's office. She is a South Bend native and a South Bend public school teacher.

Roberson running in Elkhart

Rod Roberson, a former sports star and city councilman, announced Wednesday he is running for mayor of Elkhart, making him the first candidate to publicly begin his campaign since incumbent Mayor Tim Neese ended his bid for a second term (South Bend Tribune). Roberson, a Democrat, served on the Elkhart Common Council from 2000 through 2015, when he decided not to seek a fifth term. A city native, Roberson was an all-state basketball and football player at Elkhart Central High School and later played both sports at Northwestern University, where he graduated with an economics degree. After a career in the private sector, Roberson served as executive director of Church Community Services, an Elkhart nonprofit focused on poverty, and has most recently been director of co-curricular programming for Elkhart Community Schools.



Seabrook running in New Albany

Mark Seabrook has announced he will run for the Republican New Albany mayor nomination (News & Tribune). "We will listen," Seabrook said of his plans to take on Democrat New Albany Mayor Jeff Gahan. Seabrook has served three terms on the New Albany Council.

Winnecke posts \$614,000

With no Democrat challenger in the wings, Republican Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke posted \$614,000 in campaign funds as he seeks a third term.

Galligan running in Jeffersonville again

Former Jeffersonville Mayor Tom Galligan will seek the office he had for 12 years (News & Tribune). He lost to current Republican Mayor Mike Moore in 2011. "I have been watching how everything has been going and I don't think they're going in the right direction," said Galligan.

FOP endorses Jensen in Noblesville

The Noblesville Fraternal Order of Police Officers Lodge #198 announced their endorsement of Chris Jensen

for mayor of Noblesville. "Lodge #198, after careful and deliberate consideration, officially announces its support and endorsement of Noblesville mayoral candidate Chris Jensen," the FOP said in their statement.

Nappanee's Jenkins seeks reelection

Nappanee Mayor Phil Jenkins announced this week that he will seek reelection this coming election season (Elkhart Truth). In a press release, he stated that, "Over the past three years, I have been honored and humbled to serve the great citizens of Nappanee."

Nation

Buttigieg announcement in 2 weeks

Mayor Pete Buttigieg is soon releasing the type of book that presidential candidates write, but he still won't say whether he'll run. He says he could announce his plans within the next two weeks (Parrott, South Bend Tribune). "For anybody who isn't already very famous, you really don't have long, past the end of this month, to make some kind of move," Buttigieg said. Increasingly garnering national press coverage, Buttigieg will attract more attention with the release of the book, "Shortest Way Home: One Mayor's Challenge and a Model for America's Future." He'll give the South Bend area a "sneak peek" of the book at a Feb. 10 signing event at Century Center, two days before the book goes on sale nationally. He's also planning a book tour in February. "I can't do a traditional author's book tour where you just go on the road for a month," he said, referring to his job as mayor.

57% oppose Trump reelection

With the 2020 presidential election already underway, 57% of registered voters said they would definitely vote against President Donald Trump, according to the latest poll from the PBS NewsHour, NPR and Marist. Another 30% of voters said they would cast their ballot to support Trump, and an additional 13% said they had no idea who would get their vote.

Giuliani confirms campaign collusion

President Trump's personal attorney, Rudolph Giuliani, claimed Wednesday night that he "never said there was no collusion" between members of President Trump's 2016 presidential campaign and Russian officials -- but he did say that Trump himself never colluded with Russian officials (Fox News). The former New York City mayor also said on CNN's "Cuomo Prime Time" that "if the collusion happened, it happened a long time ago. It's either provable or it's not. It is not provable because it never happened ... I'm telling you there's no chance it happened." Trump previously denied any member of his campaign conspired with Russian officials. In May 2017, Trump flatly stated: "There is no collusion, certainly myself and my campaign." ❖

Why there is alarm with Trump & Putin

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — Let me tell you why this past week has been so jarring and so alarming when it comes to Presidents Trump and Vladimir Putin.

But first, some context. I'm a Russophile. I majored in history at IU Bloomington and studied in the Russian East European Institute. When reporting for the Elkhart Truth, I covered a small Russian dissident community there with Georgi Vins. I still have the waterproof Bible he gave me (they used to tuck them into snow drifts when KGB agents appeared). In the mid-1980s, I attended a number of IU and Purdue seminars on the Soviet



Union, and virtually no one was predicting the USSR's collapse, which occurred in 1990. I've read most of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's books on the Soviets and their brutal gulags.

I traveled to Moscow, Siberia and the Urals with Sen. Richard Lugar. I had my Moscow Grand Marriott hotel room ransacked by FSB agents while I attended the Moscow Carnegie seminar. I attended a face-to-face meeting between Lugar, Sam Nunn and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the Foreign Ministry. I had a private dinner with Sam Nunn at the Yekaterinburg World Trade Center where he picked my brain about a potential 2008 presidential run. As we prepared to depart the city where the Bolsheviks murdered the czar and his family, my passport came up missing at the airport. They found it, and once on the flight, I turned to Kenny Meyers of the Pentagon and said, "What the f— was that about?" He responded, "They didn't know you. They just wanted to take one more look at you."

I'm so interested in all things Russian that in the typical parlor game (name the five people in history you'd most like to have dinner with...) my answer has long been Jesus, Jefferson, Lincoln, Churchill and Stalin. I watched in fascination the Sochi Olympics' opening and closing ceremonies that presented Putin's take on

Soviet and Russian history, and then days later saw him occupy and annex the Crimea and launch a low-grade war with Ukraine that continues to this day. We learn that citizen militias in the Baltics spend their weekends practicing guerrilla warfare tactics out of future Putin incursions.

Why am I so jarred and alarmed these days?

Because of reporting by the New York Times that the FBI commenced a counterintelligence investigation in the days following Trump's firing of James Comey. Trump fueled the concern with his Oval Office meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Ambassador Kislyak the following day as they had a good laugh over Comey's dismissal with only Russian press present. Another subsequent NYT report says that Trump has repeatedly told senior aides he wants the withdraw the U.S. from NATO, which is an astoundingly bad idea. And another NYT report that Trump has met with Putin alone, without senior administration officials from State or the intelligence community, five times and there is no record of what they discussed. At one meeting in Hamburg, there wasn't even a U.S. interpreter present.

The Washington Post has reported that Trump has taken measures to keep the content of these private talks with Putin private, in one case confiscating the notes of the American interpreter. At Helsinki, Trump and Putin met alone for two hours. David Frum, a former speechwriter for President George W. Bush, writes in *The Atlantic*: "Concern focuses most on Trump's meetings with Putin at the Helsinki summit in July 2018. The Russian president, and the American president helped into office by the Russian president, met for two hours with no aides. No agenda was published before the meeting, no communiqué issued afterward. The Russian side later claimed that a number of agreements had been reached at the summit. Nobody on the American side seemed to know whether this was true. At a press conference four days after the meeting, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats said, 'I'm not in a position to either understand fully or talk about what happened in Helsinki.'"

In fact, according to former Sen.

Joe Donnelly, who served on the Senate Armed Services Committee, Coats does not have a readout of any of these conversations. What Coats knows comes from U.S. intelligence information gleaned from Russian diplomatic and intel channels. The Russians know exactly what was said in these five meetings, while Coats and the Americans are trying to piece them together through clandestine sources.

Politico reported in July 2018: "Coats ... revealed last week that he does not have full visibility into what was discussed, and that there's a 'risk' Putin had secretly recorded the meeting. A DNI spokesperson said Monday that Coats has



HELSINKI 2018

said nothing publicly to indicate that his position has changed."

"What's disconcerting is the desire to hide information from your own team," Andrew S. Weiss, who was a Russia adviser to President Bill Clinton, told the New York Times. "The fact that Trump didn't want the State Department or members of the White House team to know what he was talking with Putin about suggests it was not about advancing our country's national interest but something more problematic."

"If any president would have wanted witnesses and protection, it ought to have been Donald Trump," said Richard N. Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations and adviser to four presidents to the NYT. "And yet he chose not to, and that adds fuel to the fire that something here is not right."

Frum, who authored the book "Trumpocracy," shares my alarm, writing in The Atlantic, "We are facing very possibly the worst scandal in the history of the U.S. government. Previous high-profile cases of disloyalty to the United States – Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's betrayal of atomic secrets to the USSR; Secretary of War John B. Floyd's allowing federal arsenals to fall into secessionist hands in 1861 – did not involve presidents. Previous presidential scandals did not involve allegations of disloyalty. Is the president of the United States a Russian asset? Is he subject to Russian blackmail? Is he at this hour conniving with the Russian president against the interests of the United States? These are haunting questions, and Trump's own determination to defy normal presidential operating procedures to keep secret his private conversations with Putin only lends credibility to the worst suspicions."

The norms in dealing with the Russians and Soviets have long been that an American president has State, national security and intel officials with him. They are the extra eyes and ears, they are the notetakers. They meticulously document every word of every conversation so what has transpired can be communicated through the various channels of the U.S. government: State Department, FBI and CIA, the Pentagon, the atomic agencies, Treasury.



Sen. Lugar and former Sen. Sam Nunn meet with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in Moscow in August 2007. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

The Soviets and Russians were – and are – American enemies. Putin's goal has been to restore his demographically declining country, a petro-kleptocracy, into out-sized political and geographic glory. He considers the Soviet collapse a geopolitical disaster when we saw it as an affirmation of American Manifest Destiny.

Putin wants nothing more than the disruption of the post-World War II Western alliance, whether it is the breakup of the European Union through Brexit, or a defanging and collapse of NATO. Trump has defiled all of these institutions and alliances.

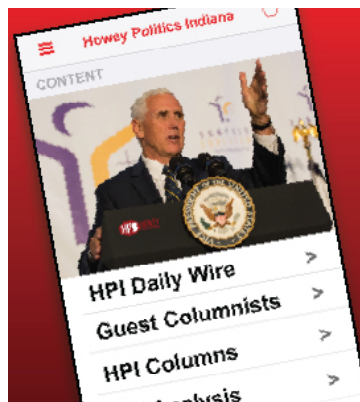
Remember Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's characterization of President Trump as a "f---ing moron"? That came after an hour-long Pentagon briefing in July 2017 when Defense Sec. Jim Mattis and others explained with slides and charts how NATO has been the underpinning of Western democracy. Trump sat silently and then said, "That's exactly what I don't want."

Last year at the chaotic G-7 summit, Trump told startled allied leaders, "NATO is as bad as NAFTA. It's much too costly for the U.S."

What we're seeing with this president is so historically abnormal as to defy imagination. On Monday, we watched President Trump have one of those Nixon at Disney moments ("I am not a crook"). Asked by the press as he headed to New Orleans to address the American Farm Bureau Federation's convention if he had ever "worked for Russia," Trump responded, "I never worked for Russia. And you know that answer better than anybody. I think it's a disgrace you even asked that question. It's just a big fat hoax."

The fact that anyone had to ask whether the president of the United State is a Russian asset is simply mind-blowing.

We earnestly await the report of Special Counsel Robert Mueller. ❖



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Impeachment is a dirty word

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Impeachment is a dirty word.

Not in the sense of coarse words in the way President Trump talks and in the way a new Democratic congresswoman talked about him, but in the sense of a word that many people don't want to hear spoken in public.



And for two entirely different reasons.

President Trump and members of his unwavering base don't want to hear impeachment spoken about in any serious way in Congress. Actually, the president uses the word himself in a scoffing way, belittling the possibility of impeachment as he rallies his base. It could become a new mantra. Like his: "No collusion. No collusion. No col-

lusion." A new presidential chant of choice could be: "No impeachment. No impeachment. No impeachment."

Impeachment also is a dirty word that Democratic leaders in the House don't want to hear mentioned in public by their members. Not now. Not yet. Maybe not at all as President Trump completes what they hope will be his only term.

They regard it as a word to be avoided for an entirely different reason than that of Trump supporters. Trumpsters no doubt would like to respond to those feisty Democratic House freshmen who shout for impeachment by forcefully washing their mouths out with soap. Democratic leaders just want those freshmen to shut up.

Those leaders know first of all that impeachment now is impossible. Even if the House voted for impeachment – and there's no way it would right now – the Republican-controlled Senate wouldn't come anywhere close to the two-thirds vote needed for conviction and removal of the president.

Yes, there are newspaper columns and TV commentaries arguing that Trump has committed impeachable offenses, obstruction of justice and multiple violations of law. These are persuasive for progressives who loathe and fear Trump and want to see him gone from the White House as soon as possible. These presentations, however, are in newspapers and on cable news channels seldom read or viewed by most of the voters who sent Trump to the White House. If they do look at such impeachment arguments, most Trump voters would just reject it all as "fake news" or nonsense or both.

So, Democratic leaders, looking ahead to what they see as likely to be a tough presidential race in 2020, don't want their House members or their party to be viewed by Trump loyalists and others in Republican and independent ranks who elected Trump as obsessed with quickly overturning the 2016 election. They don't want a premature and failing impeachment attempt to create sympathy for the president. They don't want a Democratic House to ignore key issues that helped win in 2018, health care and pocketbook concerns, while embroiled in a lengthy and divisive impeachment battle.

After the Mueller report?

Maybe. Depends on what's in it. Progressives assume it will be devastating to Trump. Maybe. But we don't know. It could be highly critical of some of the Trump associates already charged but stop short of linking the president directly to clear violations that would widely be regarded as impeachable offenses.

More than a smoking gun would be needed. The report would have to show that the gun, while still smoking, was in the president's hand. And that he loaded it, pointed it and pulled the trigger. It would take that type of proof to get the two-thirds vote required for conviction in the Senate.

While progressives would jump at any indications of an impeachable offense, the Trump base wouldn't, believing instead that it probably was Hillary Clinton who fired the gun.

Coarse language by the president and his detractors may not be disturbing in Washington. Impeachment? Well, that is a dirty word, disturbing for both sides for very different reasons. ❖

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

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

Feeding and leading during the shutdown

By **RENEE WILMETH**

INDIANAPOLIS — As of midnight on Tuesday, the Federal government failed to submit payroll meaning no pay checks will be issued on Friday. Gone will be the “partial” shutdown as funding expires for many agencies and more than 20,000 federal employees in Indiana go unpaid leaving many racing down the road to an actual crisis, not the manufactured one coming from the White House.



To add insult to injury, federal employees deemed “essential” such as TSA agents and air traffic controllers will continue working without pay for the duration of the stoppage. The failure of leadership on every level during this shutdown hasn’t been the surprise. The surprise has been the incredible lack of

empathy from many business leaders, as if getting a paycheck from the U.S. Federal Government is something one should consider an honor or a lucky experience when it happens. It’s as if, somehow, smart, savvy businesspeople have abandoned all common sense when it comes to a political personality they support.

If a person could see past political ideology and talk radio rhetoric to their local community neighbors, they’d see a different sort of reality. One where households with one or even two government workers will be struggling to pay next month’s rent. A reality where parents are picking up part-time jobs and asking friends and family for child care support. A reality where otherwise financially stable families need a food bank. One where morale is sinking and once the kids go to bed, parents have tough conversations about the coming weeks if the stalemate in Washington, D.C. continues.

That’s where a few Indianapolis restaurant owners have become excellent examples of community engagement in the past two weeks, showing us how our next generation of business leaders are willing to step up and do what they can to make a difference, in this case for furloughed government workers.

Neal Brown, owner of the Indianapolis-based Piz-zology chain as well as Ukiyo and the Libertine, began offering meals for free to unpaid government workers nearly as quickly as the shutdown began. (The offer isn’t valid at Libertine since they don’t serve much food.) Government employees with a notice of furlough or government ID can feed their families for free, although, as Brown notes, many wage-earners who are working but not being paid

have received shockingly little information. The response has been strong.

Other restaurants, including Scarlet Lane Brewery and the new Greek’s Pizza on 16th Street in Indianapolis, have also offered to feed government employees until the lights come back on. And Invoke Yoga has offered free classes to unpaid workers which could presumably come in handy for those with rising blood pressure over this mess.

A group of restaurateurs including Craig Mar-utto of Shoefly Public House and Brown are organizing and delivering meals for air traffic controllers at Indianapo-lis International Airport, support that becomes especially important as one can only imagine how much worse the airport situation will be in coming days.

While one would wonder why more companies haven’t gone public about offering assistance, one hopes that gone are the days of business owners who suspi-ciously feel this sort of offer will be abused. Here to stay, one also hopes, is the community-based leadership where a small-business owner who cares about supporting the world around him or her can create grass-roots efforts to offer real help to those in need.

Brown and others are quick to say donating goods and services is a personal decision and that not all busi-ness owners feel the same, and that’s OK. “It’s a personal decision first and a business decision second and that calculus isn’t the same for everyone,” Brown says. He also notes the Indianapolis hospitality community is incredibly engaged and supports everything from not-for-profit fund-raisers to in-house programs that don’t get much press.

It will be impossible for us to see the ways com-panies may be supporting federal workers in the com-ing days. Some may be making food bank donations or creating employee assistance programs for workers whose families are unable to pay major bills. But it’s hard to ignore the absence of many major businesses in the city in the public conversation about supporting those hurt by the shutdown.

Regardless of where you fall in the debate about Trump’s wall, it’s time for more business owners to step up and help until the shutdown is over.

Don’t want to offer free service? That’s OK. Sup-port an organization that’s helping in other ways. Brown notes that many people have called to offer donations, which are appreciated as the meals are having an impact on his bottom line.

This new generation of leaders in Indiana will cre-ate change. And as our world becomes increasingly uncer-tain, it’s time to decide if you will be a part of that change. It will be good for us all. ❖

Wilmeth is a publishing business consultant and Indianapolis-based writer, editor, and food lover. She writes on food, wine, leadership and communi-cation.

Why serving, funding First Steps is important

By **STEVE COOK**

INDIANAPOLIS — First Steps is Indiana’s early intervention program under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The program serves young children, birth to age three, with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. As a federal entitlement program, First Steps serves families at all income levels; however, more than half of the families served fall below 250% of poverty.



The program serves over 26,000 children and delivers critical services, including developmental, physical, occupational, and speech therapy. It is important to note that data from the National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS) shows 46% of children who received early intervention services did not need special education services in kindergarten.

According to a recent white paper submitted by Family Social Services Administration as part of the 1102 Task Force for Assessment of Services and Supports for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities created by the Indiana legislature through HEA 1102-2017, supporting early intervention has a significant return on investment for these families and the state. Citing new research from James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics, the report indicates “a 13% return on investment for birth to five programming compared to the 7 to 10% return established for preschool investments alone.”

Research indicates that if we invest early by investing in First Steps, we can improve numerous outcomes relating to health, crime, education, and income. Investing in early childhood development is more effective and less costly than addressing problems at a later age. Hoosiers need to recognize that the First Steps program is the starting point for early childhood education. Early childhood is the basis for all community and economic development, as children will become tomorrow’s workforce and form the basis of a thriving and sustainable society.

In spite of this overwhelming and compelling economic, social, and developmental argument to support early childhood education through the First Steps early intervention program, Indiana has been on a different path. In 2002, 2006, and again in 2010, rates paid to the providers in the First Steps program have been reduced. Unlike other areas where rate restoration has been achieved, no rate restoration has occurred in the past two decades for the First Steps program.

Recently the 1102 Task Force mentioned above, including FSSA staff members participating in the task force, recognized this and made the following recommendation:

“The First Steps program invest in its workforce to keep pace with demand by increasing the number of service coordinators and providers, and paying service coordinators and providers at a rate that is competitive and supports effective recruitment and retention. This action will also assist in broadening the network of specific services needed in the early intervention system to appropriately serve families and children.”

It should come as no surprise that the workforce issues faced by First Steps providers who are operating at reimbursement levels from the early 2000’s results in the inability to recruit and retain therapy staff, and this impacts children in need in the following ways:

1. Children are not receiving therapy;
2. Children receive less therapy than they need;
3. Children receive developmental therapy when;

their needs dictate other therapies such as speech, occupational, or physical therapy

In 2018, the Indiana General Assembly directed FSSA to conduct a comprehensive rate study for the First Steps program and to report their findings to the State Budget Committee through HEA1317. FSSA contracted with a national firm to complete the study and the study recommended rate increases of approximately 55%.

The First Steps program has expenditures of approximately \$40 million each year. These expenditures fund the single points of entry programs, where intake and ongoing service coordination occurs, as well as payments to providers who provide the earlier described therapy services. Roughly 70% of the \$40 million comes from federal programs including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the Federal Part C grant, the Social Services Block grant, and the federal match received for Medicaid funded services. Unfortunately, federal funding sources are capped and fixed, so the burden of increasing much needed financial support falls primarily on state revenue sources.

As we begin the 2019 legislative session, the FSSA budget presented to the State Budget Committee failed to address the recommendations from the rate study required by the legislature.

Similarly, the rate study also estimated projected growth in the demand for First Steps services to grow by 7% in 2020 and an additional 7% in 2021. First Step providers have experienced an increase in referrals in some regions up to 45%, primarily believed to be associated with the opioid crisis and more mothers with addiction diagnosis exposing their babies to toxic drugs. Again, the FSSA budget failed to address the obvious growth in the need for First Steps service due to the known addiction crisis. A significant number of kids served in the First Steps program are part of families served by the Department of Child Services. While the state has recognized and increased funding to DCS, they have failed to recognize the connection between the DCS crisis and the First Steps crisis.

The needs of thousands of Hoosier kids now rest

with 150 legislators. They are faced with research clearly demonstrating that investment in early intervention through First Steps helps save the state money over time and has a very healthy return on investment. The First Steps program is statewide serving all 92 counties and as such demonstrates the state's commitment to early childhood intervention on a statewide basis.

If the fiscal and workforce issues of the First Steps program are not addressed, a giant step backward

will also occur for early childhood education. This will simply increase the number of three-year-old kids who will now need services from their local school system because they were unable to receive the early intervention services needed from their birth to three years. ❖

Steve Cook is the executive director of the Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.

Factory jobs are changing fast

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

MUNCIE – Manufacturing employment has enjoyed a long recovery since the darkest days of the Great Recession. As of late last year, we have a full 108,000 more factory jobs than in summer 2009, which marked the trough

of the business cycle. This recovery eased some of the deep impacts of automation and trade that cost the United States and Indiana about one third of all factory jobs.

Here in Indiana, from January 2000 through the start of the Great Recession, factory employment dropped some 126,600 workers. From the December 2007 through the end of the Great Recession in July 2009, factories shed a further 119,700 jobs. This employment loss

was a full 36.8% of all factory jobs in Indiana.

There is an interesting debate among economists about just what caused those factory job losses. The consensus appears that the majority of job losses in factories were due to productivity gains. However, much of the observed increase in productivity likely came from businesses responding to significant threat from foreign competition. It's not clear how those job losses should be accounted for, but there are a few facts that bear on the discussion.

First, growth in transportation and logistics jobs has more than offset the losses in manufacturing, and so has growth in other sectors. International trade doesn't cause a net loss of jobs, but changes the skills and location of jobs. Second, trade deficits and deals are not correlated with large factory job losses. The last two lengthy periods of factory job growth occurred in the years after NAFTA and following the Great Recession. These were two periods of growing trade deficits. However, the big factory job losses of the early 2000s occurred at a time of both rapid growth in our trade deficit and very rapid growth of factory productivity.

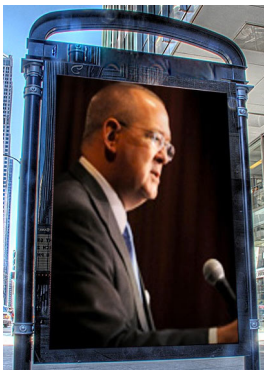
From 1990 through 2007, productivity grew by 4% each year. At that rate of growth, by 2017 51 workers could make what took 100 workers to produce in 1990. Even allowing for measurement error, this alone can account for most of the factory job losses. And in that fact lies a warning for today. Since the beginning of the recession, factory productivity has grown at less than 1% per year. More worrisome, since 2010, factory productivity has averaged -0.1%. So, the average factory worker produces less in inflation-adjusted terms today than they did in 2011.

The declining productivity since the end of the Great Recession has caused firms to hire more workers to meet the demand for their products. Now, it may be that US factories grew so quickly in the 2000s that the current productivity slump is related simply to a period of catching up. Such periods of fast and slow productivity growth are common. But, it also means that if productivity growth again picks up, U.S. factories will return to their four-decade-old trend of shedding jobs.

One way to gauge business expectations about productivity is to examine the composition of jobs. If there has been a shift in the types of factory workers, this might hint at the type of productivity gains factories anticipate in the future. If there is a big shift in the education composition of employees, firms are likely expecting future productivity growth. If factories are hiring the same types of workers, we should expect much fewer future productivity changes.

The most recent data we have suggests we are in the midst of a significant shift in the labor force composition within manufacturing firms. From 1998 to the end of the Great Recession, we lost 11,600 factory workers with a college degree, 24,300 with some college-level training and a whopping 62,000 who have not been to college. This last category includes non-high school graduates and those with post-secondary certifications not received in a college setting.

Since the end of the recession, through early 2018, we've gained back many of these jobs. We've made up 68% of the college graduate jobs, 56% of the jobs requiring some college, and 59% of the non-college jobs. But, this last category is deceiving. As it turns out, we've actually created more jobs for workers without a high school diploma than we have for those who graduated.



This includes workers with postsecondary training outside a traditional college. This is worth restating. During this lengthy period of factory job growth, the one set of workers who have not enjoyed a resurgence of hiring are those with a high school degree, including those with certificates, but have not been to college.

It is not hard to draw some conclusions from this. Since 1998 factory production in Indiana has risen 13%, while employment declined by more than 18%. Within Indiana factories, productivity growth stalled after the Great Recession, so firms had to hire more workers to meet growing demand for goods. These new workers are disproportionately high-skilled and low-skilled workers. The mid-skilled workers, including those who avail themselves of non-college training, are a rapidly declining share of the factory labor force.

The policy lessons should be obvious. Future

productivity growth will likely prove a panacea to the better skilled workers. However, that very same productivity growth will make redundant low- and middle-skilled factory workers. This is the message of three decades of factory employment changes.

In a better world, these facts and conclusions would inform the flow of dollars we invest in children and workers. We'd be wise to spend more on developing those skills that ready more children for advanced post-secondary education. ❖

Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University.

Climate change is an unavoidable issue

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Looking back at 2018's weather-related news, it seems clear that this was the year climate change became unavoidable. I don't mean that the fires in California, coastal flooding in the Carolinas,



and drought throughout the West were new evidence of climate change. Rather, they shifted the national mindset. They made climate change a political issue that cannot be avoided.

The Earth's climate changes all the time. But what we're seeing today is different, the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather. Wet places are becoming wetter; dry places are growing dryer; where

it was hot a generation ago, it's hotter now; where it's historically been cool, it's growing warmer. The global impact of human activity — specifically, the burning of hydrocarbons — is shuffling the deck. And we're only beginning to grasp the impact on our political and economic systems.

Warmer overall temperatures, for instance, have lengthened the growing season across the U.S. by about two weeks compared to a century ago. But the impact on fruit and grain production isn't just about the growing season. Plant diseases are more prevalent, and the insects that are vital to healthy agricultural systems are struggling. Insects that spread human diseases, like

mosquitoes and ticks, are flourishing.

Precipitation is also changing. There will be more droughts and more heat waves, which will become especially severe in the South and West and in cities. This is troubling news. Extreme heat, according to the Centers for Disease Control, "often results in the highest number of annual deaths among all weather-related hazards." In other words, it kills more people than other weather-related disasters. The human cost and strain on public resources of prolonged heat waves will be extensive.

The rise in sea levels will be even more disruptive. Sea levels have been increasing since we began burning fossil fuels in the 1880s, but the rise is occurring at a faster rate now, something like six to eight inches over the past century, compared to almost nothing during the previous two millennia. This already poses a threat to densely populated coastal areas, in the U.S., about 40% of the population, or some 120 million people, lives directly on the shoreline.

And that's without the very real potential of melting glacial and polar ice, with calamitous results. It's not just that this would affect coastal cities, it would also scramble the geopolitical order as nations like the U.S., Canada, and Russia vie for control over the sea lanes and newly exposed natural resources.

I'm not mentioning all this to be alarmist. My point is that dealing with climate change constitutes a huge, looming challenge to government. And because Americans are fairly divided in their beliefs about climate change — a division reflected in sharp partisan disagreements — policymakers struggle to come up with politically viable approaches. This makes the adverse impacts of climate change potentially much worse, since doing nothing is clearly a recipe for greater disaster.

The problem is that politicians in Washington like to talk about climate change in general, yet we haven't

seen any concerted consensus-building effort to deal with it. Occasionally you'll see bills being considered in Congress to study it more, but unless we get real, this will dramatically change our way of life.

And despite the growing impact of extreme weather, the opposition's point — that policies to fight climate change will impose hardship on working people, especially in manufacturing states — still has some merit and political legs. In response to inaction in Congress and the administration, some states have taken important steps to address climate change, even though it's best dealt with on the federal level.

Still, newer members of Congress appear to have more of an interest in addressing climate change than

older, senior members. And the issue holds particular resonance for younger millennial voters, whose political influence will only grow over coming elections.

Only recently have thoughtful politicians I talk to begun to ask whether the political system can deal with the challenges posed by climate change before its impact becomes unstoppable. The one thing we agree on is that climate change and how to deal with it will place real stress on the system in the years ahead.

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About that supposed 'no-call' list

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS — He was very pale and dressed in shades of gray. His business card read A.G. Bell. No address or contact information. Only the name. His Scottish accent was filtered through a generous white beard.

"Youngster," he said. "I be disturbed by excessive ringing in me ears."

"Tinnitus," I was quick to diagnose. "I have it. It's a continuous hissing sound that's always in the background. Comes with age."

"I not be thinking that," Mr. Bell said. "It's truly ringing of me telephone. Not continuous, but frequent and excessive."

"Your popularity?" I offered. "So many folks wanting to talk with you. It's a good thing you don't put your phone

number on your business card. Nonetheless our numbers do get out. And they do get used by all sorts of people."

"Six times in a single hour!" he roared. "Not one of them a call from someone I knew or even one who knew me. All of them trying to get into me purse for things or purposes."

"Ah, yes," I said knowing the correct diagnosis now. "Unsolicited solicitations. Folks trying to sign you up for more comprehensive health insurance, advanced home safety systems, better credit cards, and exceptional good causes."

"It's an abomination," He cried. "An instrument laboriously invented for communication being used as an

intrusive commercial bludgeon! The sanctity of the home invaded by automatons, minor minions, and morons!"

"You can sign up electronically with the attorney general's office to stop the calls," I suggested to calm him.

"Useless bureaucratic buffoonery proven by experience to be ineffective, offering a gullible citizenry protection and failing to deliver even a modicum of serenity," was his evaluation.

"What could we do?" I asked.

"Ah, it's not we, but they," he replied. "It is not for consumers to protect themselves, but for the providers of communication services to weed out the invasive callers."

"**It need be treated as one** would a public health matter," he continued. "Producers and distributors of milk are required to provide the consumer with a safe product. Government regulation establishes standards with input from medical and industry representatives."

"So too the phone be meant for communication, not exploitation. Whether a phone be in your home or on your person, as be the case today, 'tis a private resource."

"That fits," I said, "with the news AT&T and Verizon will stop selling real-time customer location data to third parties."

"A fine promise," Mr. Bell said, "but what about putting an end to commercial, political and even philanthropic robo-calls? I don't mind legitimate surveys conducted by licensed polling entities. We need to gather information. But selling or hounding contributors and debtors by phone verges on the immoral in my view."

As he offered these last thoughts, he was fading, not just in voice, but disappearing before my eyes. And then he was gone. ❖

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Mike Allen, Axios: One of the hardest things about reporting on President Trump is his tendency to propose wild ideas out loud and then repeat them before coming to his senses or getting talked off the ledge, Axios' Jonathan Swan and Jim VandeHei point out. So the media, us very much included, break news on controversial ideas that never happen, leaving all of us to wonder: Was this a real idea killed by exposing it, or a POTUS brain blip? It's the virtual reality dimension of this presidency. An off-the-top-of-our head list: Leaving NATO. Bombing Iran. Death penalty for drug dealers. Birthright citizenship. Firing staff. Firing Mueller. Leaving the World Trade Organization. Blowing up Iranian fast boats in the Persian Gulf. Withdrawing troops and family dependents from South Korea. Nationalizing 5G. In some cases, Trump follows through, or at least comes very close: Trump signed off on an order to evacuate families of service members from South Korea. Allies would have viewed that as a prelude to war, and former White House chief of staff John Kelly and former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis managed to stop it. But the order was drafted, per sources who were there at the time. The U.S. won't leave the WTO, in all likelihood. But the administration drafted legislation, as scooped by Swan, that would effectively blow up the nation's WTO commitments. Remember: Trump has already withdrawn the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris climate agreement, and done what no president dared: move the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. The president has been so globally disruptive that you can't ignore his private venting — even stuff that sounds unlikely. He has begun withdrawing from Syria. Is anyone willing to bet against him doing the same in Afghanistan? And even though he never withdrew from KORUS (the US-Korea Free Trade Agreement) — which aides viewed as potentially calamitous — an order was drafted, as Bob Woodward recounts in "Fear." Be smart: Trump blurts out most ideas that roll through his mind. The most frustrating part for top officials is they must quickly move the machinery of government to conform to — or more often to terminate — the suggestions. P.S. ... Trump has suggested the shutdown could drag on as long as a year. It sounds unthinkable and absurd. But so did the travel ban. ❖



William Galston, Wall Street Journal: If President Trump hoped that shutting down the government would rally public support for a wall along the southern border, he must be disappointed. The Washington Post found that Americans continue to oppose the wall, 54% to 42%. Quinnipiac found a similar result, 55% to 43%, virtually unchanged from the pre-shutdown figure. By a 2-to-1 margin, Quinnipiac reports, Americans reject the tactic of closing the government to force Congress to approve funding for the wall. This is bad news for the president, because Americans overwhelmingly hold him, rather than congressional Democrats, responsible for the shutdown.

The White House's ultimate weapon—a formal presidential address from the Oval Office—did nothing to shift public sentiment about the wall. Forty-nine percent said Mr. Trump's speech was "mostly misleading," compared with 32% who thought it was "mostly accurate." Only 2% said the speech had changed their minds. Just 43% said that the wall would make us safer, while 55% said it wouldn't.

Only 43% thought the wall would be an effective way of protecting the border. Even fewer—40%—thought it was essential for that purpose, and 59% said it would be a poor use of taxpayer dollars. Forty-one percent believed a wall would be "consistent. And strikingly, most Americans reject outright

This helps explain why, despite the heated rhetoric of the past decade, 73% of Americans continue to believe that immigration is good for the country. The fate of Mr. Trump's gamble on the wall is a microcosm of a larger strategic failure of his presidency — his inability to expand his support beyond the base that brought him victory in 2016 with only 46% of the popular vote. By themselves, Republicans are not close to a majority of the electorate, and neither are conservatives. But opposition to the wall goes well beyond the president's liberal and Democratic adversaries: 55% of independents disapprove of it, as do 59% of moderates. Surely the White House is aware of these findings. ❖

Jeff Parrott, South Bend Tribune: In winning his first mayoral race in November 2011, South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg not only had to beat candidates with solid résumés who had been building a network of supporters — he also had to do it without the Democratic Party's support. In the Democratic primary, he defeated Barrett Berry; state Rep. Ryan Dvorak, the son of former St. Joseph County Prosecutor and state Rep. Michael Dvorak; and Mike Hamann, who had been a Republican county commissioner before switching parties. Buttigieg lacked the support of then-party chair Butch Morgan, who told him, among other things, that at age 29, he was too young. Buttigieg had told Morgan that he had a shot at earning the backing of longtime civic leader Karl King, whom Buttigieg viewed as a mentor. When Buttigieg visited Morgan at his party headquarters office, Morgan called King on speakerphone, with Buttigieg sitting there, and got King to make it clear he was backing Hamann, while Buttigieg "looked on awkwardly." "Not that I had expected Butch to weigh in for me — I had gone to see him more as a courtesy than as an attempt to win his support — but it was clear as I left headquarters that we would have to outmaneuver the party in order to win." Morgan later was sent to prison after a jury found him guilty of four felonies. Those charges stemmed from an investigation by The Tribune and Howey Politics Indiana into forged signatures on petitions to gain ballot access for Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. ❖

Pence proclaims ISIS defeat after U.S. killings Syria

WASHINGTON — Vice President Pence told U.S. diplomats Wednesday that the Islamic State caliphate has collapsed in Syria, but made no mention of the four U.S. military personnel confirmed killed in the country shortly before he spoke ([Washington Post](#)). In remarks filled with praise for the leadership of President Trump, Pence told the Global Chiefs of Mission conference at the State Department that some of the most heinous enemies of the United States are in retreat. "Thanks to the leadership of this commander in chief and the courage and sacrifice of our armed forces, we are now actually able to begin to hand off the fight against ISIS in Syria to our coalition partners," he said, using a common acronym for the Islamic State, prompting applause from the 184 diplomats in the audience. "And we are bringing our troops home. The caliphate has crumbled, and ISIS has been defeated." Last month, Trump also claimed the military group has been defeated, leading him to announce the withdrawal of about 2,000 U.S. troops there, though the timeline has wavered. At about the same time as Pence arrived on the stage in an auditorium at the State Department to military marching music, his press secretary tweeted that Pence had been notified of the troops' deaths earlier Wednesday. The Islamic State claimed credit for the suicide bombing that took their lives. "@VP has been briefed on the situation in Syria. He and @POTUS are monitoring the situation. Our hearts go out to the loved ones of the fallen," tweeted Alyssa Farah. An hour later, the vice president's office issued a statement acknowledging the American fatalities and expressing sympathy to the service members' families. "President Trump and I condemn the terrorist



attack in Syria that claimed American lives and our hearts are with the loved ones of the fallen. We honor their memory and we will never forget their service and sacrifice," it says.

Bonaventura named Hill's chief of staff

INDIANAPOLIS — Former Lake County Judge Mary Beth Bonaventura was named chief of staff Wednesday for Indiana Attorney General Curtis Hill Jr. In her new role, Bonaventura will run the law firm that essentially is the attorney general's office, including managing its 334 employees and nearly \$30 million annual budget ([NWI Times](#)). "She is uniquely qualified to oversee the multiple functions of our office as we continue to work hard every day serving the people of Indiana," Hill said. Bonaventura succeeds Joan Blackwell.

McRobbie urges hate crime law

BLOOMINGTON — Indiana University has endorsed Gov. Eric Holcomb's push for the creation of a hate crimes law in Indiana. "Indiana University applauds and fully supports Governor Holcomb's approach in seeking to advance hate crimes legislation in the state of Indiana, and the university stands firmly behind his consistently expressed position that a new law is both the right course of action for our legislators and long overdue," IU President Michael McRobbie said.

House panel passes appointed supt. bill

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana's last chance to elect its superintendent of public instruction may disappear, thanks to a bill passed by the House Education Committee Wednesday morning ([Statehouse File](#)). House Bill 1005, authored by House Speaker

Brian Bosma, R-Indianapolis, would authorize the governor to appoint the next superintendent in January 2021 instead of the original date, January 2025, that was determined in a 2017 compromise among lawmakers. "Indiana is one of only nine states that engage in a partisan election, Republican versus Democrat, for this critical position," Bosma said. "It's appropriate that we have the flexibility to select the right person for this job under the governor's discretion." Although the committee approved HB 1005 in a 10-1 vote—Rep. Tonya Pfaff, D-Terre Haute, a math teacher at West Vigo High School, voted no.

Pence says NKorea not complying

WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence told American ambassadors on Wednesday that North Korea has failed to take any substantive steps to give up its nuclear weapons, even as President Trump is moving toward a second meeting with Kim Jong-un, the North Korean leader ([New York Times](#)). "While the president has started a promising dialogue with Chairman Kim," Mr. Pence told the gathering at the State Department, "we still await concrete steps by North Korea to dismantle the nuclear weapons that threaten our people and our allies in the region."

Pelosi tells Trump to delay speech

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi urged President Trump to delay his State of the Union address, or deliver it in writing, saying unfunded security agencies weren't equipped to protect the speech during a government shutdown, a concern that administration officials dismissed ([Wall Street Journal](#)). Pelosi's request, made in a letter sent to the president, could prevent Mr. Trump from delivering a traditional prime-time speech to a joint session of Congress in which he is expected to admonish lawmakers over the shutdown.

