

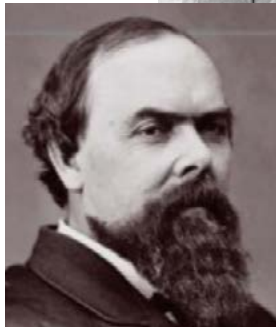
# Hoosiers & their profiles in courage

In today's uncertain times, a look back at what bold leadership in Indiana looks like

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The passing of U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh earlier this month has prompted wide scrutiny of his compelling General Assembly and congressional careers. The latter included controversial stances on several issues, prompting thoughts about political courage, which is in extremely short supply in Washington, D.C., these days.

There was a chapter in Bayh's career where he had to reverse course on the Vietnam War. Bayh had voted for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in 1964 that set the stage



U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh with Sen. Walter Mondale surveys the shooting scene at Jackson State University during the height of the Vietnam War unrest. Gov. Oliver P. Morton led Indiana during the Civil War.

for President Lyndon Johnson's combat buildup. In June of that year, Bayh had a phone call with President Johnson in

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## The Mueller report

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – President Trump hasn't read the report of Special Counsel Robert Mueller. Neither has Vice President Pence, U.S. Sen. Todd Young, nor anyone in the Indiana congressional delegation, or Congress for that matter.

No one on "Fox & Friends," "Morning Joe," Wolf Blitzer, Sean Hannity, the Wall Street Journal or the Washington Post or any member of the vast right/left wing conspiracies have read the report. And no one reading this has read it.

We don't know if Mueller's report is 50 pages or a thousand-plus (Judge Andrew Napolitano said on Fox News it's more



**"We have five weeks left to be persuasive about what we prefer. This is not a one-day scenario."**

*- Gov. Eric Holcomb, who signed off on SB198 that cleared the House, but says he will still seek a 'list' in a bias crime bill he would sign.*





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than 700 pages). We don't know the thrust of what Mueller gleaned from what Wired has reported included: A team of 19 lawyers; 40 FBI agents, analysts, forensic accountants, and other staff; more than 2,800 subpoenas; nearly 500 search warrants; 230 sets of communication records; details from nearly 50 pen registers used to track telephone calls; 13 requests of foreign governments and law enforcement agencies for additional evidence and interviews; along with around 500 witnesses.

**Beyond Mueller's** team and Attorney General Robert Barr, Deputy AG Rod Rosenstein and DOJ staffers, no one knows what's in the report, beyond Barr's four-page memo released on Sunday. The investigation took a little less than 22 months, and on Sunday all this was boiled down to four-pages.

What we do know is that Mueller determined that President Trump, his family and the Trump campaign did not collude with Russia to impact the 2016 presidential election. For this snippet of knowledge, all Americans should be grateful.

Had Mueller determined that the president was a knowing asset of any government, let alone the Russians, it would have been the crime of the century, if not the Millennium. The fact that anyone would ever have to entertain such a dire thought is a sad chapter in our republic's history.

**But declarations** of "exoneration" by President Trump and his team and supporters, and the hand-wringing of Trump enemies are all premature. The classic cliché here would be the notion that the "devil is in the details."

Barr's memo did touch on the obstruction issue, with Mueller saying his "report does not conclude that the President committed a crime" but that "it also does not exonerate him."

What does this mean? New York attorney George Conway III

(husband of presidential adviser Kellyanne Conway and a frequent Trump critic) notes in a Washington Post op-ed, "That's a stunning thing for a prosecutor to say. Mueller didn't have to say that. If his report doesn't exonerate the president, there must be something pretty damning in it about him, even if it might not suffice to prove a crime beyond a reasonable doubt." Once again, more speculation emanating from the tip of this legal iceberg.

"In the 700 page summary of the 2 million pages of raw evidence there is undoubtedly some evidence of a conspiracy and some evidence of obstruction of justice," Napolitano told Fox Business' Neil Cavuto. "Just not enough evidence."

**Here's what** we do know, which was succinctly stated by Columbia University Prof. David J. Rothkopf: "Trump publicly welcomed the support of an enemy, one with whom he had hidden financial ties, that enemy worked to help get him elected and he rewarded them with a defense of their



attacks on our democracy and with policy benefits no U.S. president had offered before."

Everything in that statement we know to be true, from nominee Trump's "Russia, are you listening?" press conference in Florida back in July 2016, to the determination of U.S. intelligence agencies that the Kremlin assaulted our election process, to Trump's assertions in Helsinki that he believed President Putin over authorities such as National Intelligence Director Dan Coats, the now-revealed Trump quest to build a tower in Moscow while seeking the presidency

which he had repeatedly denied during the campaign, to Trump's unprecedented antagonistic behavior toward NATO, the European Union and our traditional best friends, Germany and the United Kingdom, all beyond Vladimir Putin's wildest outcome dreams.

On Monday, Sen. Young released a statement saying, "I have always said that Robert Mueller's investigation should run its course. With the investigation now complete, it's time to accept his findings and move on." The problem there is we don't know what we are "moving on" from.

**Young adds, "There has** clearly been Russian interference in our democratic process, and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence will continue its work to better understand these threats." That sentence presents a vivid contrast with President Trump, who has downplayed Russian interference and has taken virtually no steps to

ensure that it doesn't happen again.

In an inert and gridlocked Washington, that really should be the top priority between now and November 2020.

**So Americans now** await the report, with DOJ and Attorney General Barr saying it will be submitted to Congress and the public within "weeks."

Every American patriot should yearn for this report to see the light of day. Like our understanding of the universe, God and the disappearance of Amelia Earhart, the facts and analysis of what we don't know are vastly greater than what we do know. Once we have a much greater understanding of what happened in 2016 and 2017, the better we will be prepared to act to ensure it doesn't repeat.

Simply "moving on" without much greater knowledge would be reckless and irresponsible. ❖

## Courage, from page 1

which Bayh asked whether getting the support of Indiana Gov. Roger Branigin would give LBJ some political cover. In Johnson's view, he wanted to wear down North Vietnam in order to bring them to the bargaining table. In those early days, few realized it would be a futile effort that would cost 58,000 American and millions of Vietnamese lives.

Three years later, Bayh visited the war zone and found U.S. generals unable to describe how a "victory" could be achieved, and Bayh reversed course, joining Oregon Sen. Wayne Morse and Indiana Sen. Vance Hartke in opposing the war. This was just before the 1968 Tet Offensive that invoked the word "quagmire."

"I came to think we should never have gotten involved in that war in the first place," Bayh told Politico in 2009, saying of Johnson and Defense Sec. Robert McNamara, "I'm not sure they fully comprehended the kind of struggle we faced in Vietnam. He did the best he knew how to do. He had no military experience himself and was relying on people on the ground. They gave him very bad information and he acted on it. But who do you turn to at that point?"

Bayh continued, "This was a colonialist empire that the French had been run out of. But McNamara's recommendations to the president to send all those combat troops in there prolonged it interminably. We were never going to win that battle at a price we were willing to pay."

It took courage to part with President Johnson, who during the previous three years had put into place his Great Society program that included Medicare and Medicaid, as well as the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In 1957, then U.S. Sen. John F. Kennedy wrote a

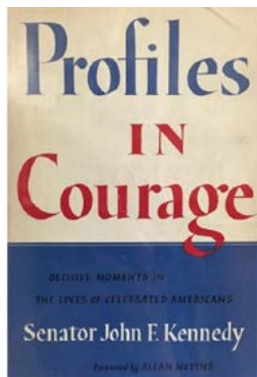
book with Ted Sorensen titled "Profiles In Courage" which won a Pulitzer Prize. It was about eight senators who made daring decisions, sometimes with an unpopular vote or a reversal of a stance or policy. It featured John Quincy Adams for breaking with the Federalist Party; Daniel Webster's endorsement of the Compromise of 1850; Missouri's Thomas Hart Benson for sticking with the Democratic Party despite his opposition to slavery; Sam Houston for speaking against the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854; Edmund G. Ross of Kansas for voting for the impeachment acquittal of President Andrew Johnson in 1865; Mississippi's Lucius Lamar for eulogizing abolitionist Charles Sumner; Nebraska's George Norris for challenging the power of autocratic Speaker Joseph Gurney Cannon; and Ohio's Robert A. Taft for criticizing the Nuremberg Trials and the use of ex post facto laws.

What would be Indiana examples of political courage? Here are a few raised by our contributors and readers:

**1. Gov. Oliver P. Morton** suspended the Indiana General Assembly in 1863 after Copperhead Democrats won control in the 1862

elections and were preparing to seize state government and secede from the Union in the critical early stages of the Civil War. Morton told Republican legislators to stay away from the Statehouse denying quorums, with most fleeing to Madison where they could make hasty retreats into Kentucky if pursued. He then defied the constitution, and by abolishing the legislature, established a state arsenal and financed the state's war effort with Wall Street banker Henry Lanier of Madison. Democrats called Gov. Morton a "dictator," but his efforts probably helped President Lincoln win the Civil War. Had the state pulled out of the Union, the northern effort might have collapsed.

**2. Marion County Prosecutor Will Remy** was one of the few political figures beyond the control of Ku



Klux Klan Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson, who counted among his hooded brood Gov. Ed Jackson, most of the General Assembly, the mayor of Indianapolis and city halls across the state along with an estimated 250,000 Hoosiers in the ranks, or about 30% of the white population. But it would be Jackson's inauguration in 1925 that began Stephenson's downfall. He met a volunteer, a young Statehouse employee named Madge Oberholtzer, tried to date her, then coaxed her into a train trip to Chicago, where he violently sexually assaulted her. They ended up in Hammond, where she attempted suicide by downing mercury bichloride tablets. A panicked Stephenson had her dumped off at her Irvington home. She died a month later. Remy charged Stephenson, who had once declared, "I am the law in Indiana," with rape, kidnapping, conspiracy and second-degree murder. Gov. Jackson and other cronies abandoned Remy and the "Indiana Kourier" called him the "enemy of the order." In a dramatic trial in Noblesville with national coverage, Stephenson was convicted and sentenced to life in prison on Nov. 14, 1925. Remy left the Hamilton County courthouse alone during the post-verdict bedlam, with police quickly realizing he was in danger, catching up with him driving down Allisonville Road toward Indianapolis, followed by an armed carload of Kluxers. With Stephenson in prison, the KKK in Indiana collapsed, with membership in 1928 estimated to be a mere 4,000. Had Remy not stepped up, Stephenson had designs on the U.S. Senate and the White House.



**3. Deputy Attorney General William Ruckelshaus,**

a former Indiana state senator and U.S. Senate nominee, was ordered by President Nixon on Oct. 20, 1973, to fire Watergate Special Counsel Archibald Cox after Attorney General Eliot Richardson had refused to make the dismissal and resigned. It became known as the "Saturday Night Massacre." Vice President Spiro Agnew had resigned in disgrace a few weeks earlier and Richardson talked to Ruckelshaus and said, "We've got an even worse problem than the vice president." Told that Nixon was considering firing Cox, Ruckelshaus said, "Don't worry about it. They'll never do that. There would be too much of a public furor if they tried." When Nixon did and Richardson resigned, "He subsequently asked me, and I told him the same thing,

that I had been thinking about this all week," Ruckelshaus said. "I was aware the pressure was building, and I'd decided I didn't want to do it. In my judgment, Cox had done everything he was supposed to do as special prosecutor." It proved to be the beginning of the end for Nixon, who resigned in August 1974 after the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the release of the Watergate tapes, the nation learned that Nixon had lied, and his support in the Republican Party collapsed.

**4. House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck**

became a key player in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. President John F. Kennedy had proposed the legislation in 1963 and knew he would need support from both sides of the aisle. Halleck became one of the most important Republicans. After Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, President Lyndon Johnson picked up the



Marion County Prosecutor William Remy's conviction against D.C. Stephenson prompted the Ku Klux Klan collapse in Indiana in 1925, House Minority Leader Charlie Halleck (left in photo above) helped President Johnson pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and William Ruckelshaus defied President Nixon during the Saturday Night Massacre in the Watergate era and was fired.

mantle just five days after JFK's death. "We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights. We have talked for 100 years or more. It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law." It passed the House and after the Senate invoked closure, breaking a filibuster by West Virginia Sen. Robert Byrd, it had to be sent back to the House due to changes. President Johnson called Halleck and urged him to push the bill through. Johnson wanted the bill to be signed into law by July 4, leaving enough time for it to be enacted before the Republican National Convention that was scheduled for July 13. Halleck acquiesced, telling Johnson he would "give you

the right to sign that thing on July 1." Still, Halleck worried that Johnson was using the Fourth of July as a political tool. He told Johnson that "taking advantage of an Independence Day thing, that ain't right."

**5. U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar** heard an urgent request from Democrat U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn: He needed a respected Republican to partner with to contain the weapons of mass destruction from the collapsed Soviet Union. Nunn was literally in the Duma when the USSR folded. Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons were manufactured by the Soviets without inventory, some kept in chicken coops and behind chain-linked fences, while Soviet-era nuclear scientists were going without pay. It was a recipe for disaster with rogue terror groups dreaming of obtaining highly enriched uranium and chemicals like sarin gas and anthrax. Nunn and Lugar forged a two-decade-long relationship, overcoming skepticism in Congress and from President George H.W. Bush that helping a former enemy was the correct course. The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program was



responsible for the shipping of enriched uranium to Oak Ridge where it supplied 10% of U.S. electrical power for decades, as well as denuclearizing several post-Soviet states. The idea that someone like Osama bin Laden would seek highly enriched uranium or weaponized anthrax was the stuff of spy magazines. I asked Lugar in 2007, even when the U.S. became aware of the huge Soviet pathogen-production facilities, had there not been moments of alarm? "There should have been," Lugar said. "But this was seen as interesting, not life-threatening." The Sept. 11 terror attacks reinforced the notion that had the Soviet WMDs been on the black market, terrorism would have taken a more deadly turn.

**6. U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey** witnessed the genocide in Bosnia after discovering the Chetnik massacre of Vocin. McCloskey looked into the many faces of the 53 murdered there, then went to Zagreb, held a press conference and used the term "genocide" for the first time. From Zagreb, McCloskey went to Belgrade where it is reported he accused Yugoslav President Slobodan



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Milosevic of war crimes to his face. He then urged President Clinton to take action. There was the famed, White House Christmas receiving line where McCloskey greeted President Clinton and the First Lady Hillary Clinton, saying, "Mr. President, bomb the Serbs. You don't know how good it will make you feel." McCloskey went back to the end of the line and approached the Clintons for a second time, repeating what he had said just minutes before. McCloskey drew attention to the ethnic cleansing in the villages and towns of ex-Yugoslavia and brokered a broad coalition of Democrats and Republicans to back legislation – the McCloskey-Gilman amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995 – to lift the arms embargo first against Bosnia and then Croatia. The McCloskey-Gilman amendment passed the U.S. House 244-178 on June 9, 1994. After McCloskey was defeated by Republican John Hostettler in 1994, he convinced current State Rep. Ed DeLaney to go with him to Sarajevo. DeLaney said of McCloskey in 2003, "I went from being an establishment lawyer to within a year sharing a bombed-out apartment with him on a hill in Sarajevo." At one point DeLaney became fed up and told McCloskey, "Goddammit Frank, I can't live with a saint. Can't you just be a jerk?" President Clinton eventually launched a diplomatic initiative that would result in the Dayton Peace Accords. They were formally signed in Paris on Dec. 14, 1995, putting an end to the first phase of the genocidal conflict after three and a half years. It might never have happened without McCloskey.

**7. U.S. Rep. John Hostettler** was one of six House Republicans who voted against the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002 on Oct. 10 of that year. Hostettler believed that while "Iraq poses a threat, it does not pose an imminent threat that justifies a preemptive military strike at this time." It was a correct assessment as President George W. Bush's "Operation Iraqi Freedom" morphed from a "mission accomplished" liberation to a gruesome quagmire, killing more than 4,400 Americans with another 31,000 injured, not to mention hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. The 2003 invasion, which uncovered no weapons of mass destruction that was the pretext for the action, is now considered one of America's worst geopolitical blunders. In his 2007 book, "Nothing for the Nation," Hostettler explained, "How could this group of very smart people see the same intelligence members of Congress were considering and conclude such a program existed? If I had problems with the intelligence, I thought these 'analysts' in the Pentagon would be much more skeptical." Former House Majority Leader Dick Army explained, "Had we listened to Hostet-



ter at the time, we would not have done it. If we listen to him now, we might save ourselves the pain, regret, and shame from doing it again. For years I have known I was wrong. Now I know why I was wrong."

**8. L. Keith Bulen** went from the Marion County prosecutor's office to a seat in the Indiana House before he challenged and overthrew the county chairman Dale Brown in 1966. The revolt was consequential on an array of fronts. Bulen was a driving force behind the nomination of Richard Lugar as the Indianapolis Republican mayoral nominee in 1967. Once Lugar recaptured city hall, he worked with Bulen to forge Unigov, which began a generation of GOP domination in the state capital and the cornerstone of the Indiana GOP Machine. From there Bulen served as Richard Nixon's Indiana coordinator in 1968, was chairman of the board of Campaign Communicators (which hired a young Mitch Daniels) then joined Ronald Reagan's 1976 and 1980 presidential campaigns, becoming deputy chairman of the national "Reagan for President" Committee from 1979-80 and coordinating the 1980 presidential campaign in 17 eastern states. Reagan's staff paid tribute to Bulen's savvy with a sign at his 1980 victory party that



U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey (left) defined genocide in Bosnia, L. Keith Bulen's takeover of the Marion County GOP began an era of Republican dominance, and U.S. Rep. John Hostettler voted against the Iraq War.

read, "Will Rogers never met Keith Bulen." Had not Bulen taken his 1966 gamble, so much of Hoosier politics might never have happened.

**9. State Sen. Frank O'Bannon** was preparing to face rising star Secretary of State Evan Bayh in the 1988 gubernatorial race after the Indiana Democratic Party had wandered the political desert for a generation. With popular Lt. Gov. John Mutz stepping up to continue a 20-year GOP dynasty that began in the Bulen era, and a three-way gubernatorial primary that included Kokomo Mayor Steve Daily taking shape, many in the party were concerned that such a primary showdown could divide the party and sap its resources. Bayh emissaries approached O'Bannon

and wife **Judy O'Bannon** in January 1988 about forging a ticket, which the O'Bannons accepted. It produced a Bayh-O'Bannon victory over Mutz, even with U.S. Sen. Dan Quayle on the presidential ticket with George H.W. Bush, and it commenced a 16-year run of Democratic gubernatorial rule, which included O'Bannon's 1996 upset of Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, and then a reelection victory over U.S. Rep. David McIntosh.

**10. Gov. Robert D. Orr** took seriously a landmark 1983 study called "A Nation at Risk." After a narrow 1984 reelection win, he formulated the A-Plus plan in 1986 that extended the school year, created the ISTEP testing program and established a new accreditation regime, ramming it through the 1987 General Assembly session on narrow votes. It was the second time Orr pushed for tax increases, the first coming in late 1982 as a crippling recession gutted state finances. Orr prepared Indiana for the new, global economy by actively pursuing Asian trade missions during an era of nativist suspicions. "His influence will certainly live beyond his life and it's really a lasting legacy to leadership," former Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton observed.

**11. Gov. Mitch Daniels** saw decades of backlogged road projects and formulated his "Major Moves" program while **State Rep. Jackie Walorski** represented an Indiana toll road district. She became a decisive vote in passing the Daniels program. Major Moves leased the toll road for 75 years and a launched a torrent of criticism, particularly in northern Indiana. It drew former Mishawaka Mayor Bob Kovach into the race against Walorski, saying, "Republicans, strong Republicans, people I never would have thought would oppose a Republican governor or General Assembly, are saying that the deal is absolutely wrong." But having voted for the bill, Walorski defeated Kovach and then won the 2nd CD in 2012. Daniels saw his political approval drop below 40%, but two years later won reelection with 58% of the vote. Major Moves unleashed nearly \$4 billion of construction, including I-69 to Evansville and the evolving U.S. 31 freeway.

**12. State Rep. Suzanne Crouch** and **Gov. Daniels** ended up on a collision course with the IBM deal involving the Families Social Services Administration and its welfare clients. Crouch and **Rep. Sue Ellspermann** began hearing stories of how people unable to navigate the new system via computers were falling through the cracks, some with lethal results. "There have been many problems with the new system," said Rep. Crouch. "We have had this new system for over a year and, in my judgment, IBM has not delivered. IBM needs to be held accountable if it does not honor its contract with the state." It was a gutsy call. Daniels initially resisted the criticism, then reversed course. When he pulled the plug in 2010, he said, "They did try hard. If resources would have fixed the problem,

we wouldn't be making this announcement. It wasn't resources. It wasn't effort. It was a flawed concept that simply did not work out in practice." Crouch, now Indiana lieutenant governor, said it takes "a lot of political courage for the governor to say, 'you know, this is what we thought would work, and it's not working.' The biggest mistake would have been if he'd continued down the road of defending a system that wasn't delivering the services it should." So Crouch and Ellspermann get credit for flagging the problem, and Daniels for making the changes with the subsequent "hybrid" system, now nearing a decade of respectable performance.

**13. House Speaker Brian Bosma** had vowed to address Indiana's methamphetamine crisis which had the state leading in clandestine meth production for several consecutive years with as many as 1,800 labs interdicted. Hundreds of children were caught up in this web, public safety officials were facing injury, and cities and counties faced thousands of contaminated homes and hotel rooms. Mayors like Warsaw's **Joe Thallemer** and Columbia City's **Ryan Daniel**, along with prosecutors like **Mike Steiner** of Martin County and **Nicholas Hermann** of Vanderburgh, pressed the General Assembly for action. But legislation authored by **State Rep. Ben Smaltz** and **Sen. Randy Head** became bottled up in the House Public



Gov. Mitch Daniels devised his Major Moves program and got a key vote from State Rep. Jackie Walorski despite facing a tough reelection. At top is State Rep. Suzanne Crouch, who flagged problems with the IBM/FSSA welfare program. And in the lower photo, State Rep. Ben Smaltz made a dramatic presentation to restrict the sale of PSEs, the key ingredient for meth making.

Health Committee where it wasn't scheduled for a hearing. Bosma quietly intervened, the legislation was heard, passing with bipartisan support after a dramatic House floor presentation by Smaltz. Gov. Mike Pence signed it into law in March 2016. The results are dramatic, with only 186 meth labs interdicted in 2018, according to Indiana State Police, which was a 20-year low.

**14. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly** could see the Tea Party rising in early 2010 and figured he would face a tough reelection challenge from State Rep. Walorski. He was also facing a critical and controversial vote on the Affordable Care Act proposed by President Obama. So formidable were these political obstacles that U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh abruptly decided in February not to seek reelection. Donnelly not only voted for what became known as "Obamacare," but he narrowly defeated Walorski that November, then beat Republican U.S. Senate nominee Richard Mourdock in 2012 despite the Indiana treasurer's

cornerstone campaign theme being Donnelly's vote for the ACA. While Obamacare was never popular in Indiana (though it covered more than 400,000 lower income Hoosiers via the Health Indiana Plan 2.0), Donnelly won two tough elections after the vote. When he was finally defeated last November, it wasn't because of Obamacare.

**15. Speaker John Gregg** was under intense pressure. Gov. Frank O'Bannon had vetoed a bill in 2000 that would have prevented government emails from the public domain as the Internet became a key source of communication. Had Gregg called it up for an override, it would have easily passed. Many members of his caucus urged him to allow the override, but Gregg refused to call the bill up for override, keeping a vital communication link within the public purview. He later called that decision one of the best of his speakership. ❖

## Losing the structural aspects of community

By **JOSHUA CLAYBOURN**

EVANSVILLE — Think about democratic and liberal society in America as it was in the distant past, nearly obscured in the mists of time, for example 1980. Or 1970. Or 1940. Or 1900. An imperfect construct, of course, but for the majority characterized by a voluntary principle: Nearly all social interaction was undertaken within the bounds of mutual benefit and mutual agreeability.



You interacted with family; you exchanged goods and services; you joined benevolent societies; you worshiped in community; you attended political clubs. The entire web of liberal interaction as described by de Tocqueville was vibrant and pervasive. The important point is this: You interacted with others on a generally positive basis.

**Underlying every association** was some agreement or shared experience, and so we generally believed most of society agreed on most of the important things. As a consequence, we were more optimistic and pacific, and therefore in turn generous.

In antagonistic or hostile interactions, there were mutually agreed rules and resolutions to them, the political process, the judicial process, or old-fashioned geographic separation. One might not always win, but one generally felt that things were fair. As important, one believed there

were defined ends and terminations to those conflicts.

There are two significant differences between then and now. The first is that more and more factions within society seek to definitively impose themselves upon the others. There are structural reasons for this — the administrative state, the supremacy of the judiciary, the collapse of federalism — and they are well known. Few genuinely wish to contend with the structural issues since those that control the relevant structures benefit from them so much.

**The other significant difference** is the rise of social media, which is vastly more destructive and poisonous to a democratic and liberal society than is commonly understood. Continual and unhindered sentiment-sharing reverses the normal process for human relations.

Before, we typically chose our interactions with fellow citizens and peers, largely on the basis of mutual agreement. I borrow tools from my neighbor because we both have an interest in good relations and a good neighborhood. Now, that channel of communication is continuous, and generally exposes you and me and everyone else to the disagreeable sides of one's neighbors.

Suddenly, the friend since high school with whom you share so many good memories becomes intolerable because of constantly expressed political disagreements — disagreements that were previously irrelevant, but now may not be ignored. Suddenly, you are aware that your neighbor who loaned you tools has voted for a different candidate, on grounds you find abhorrent, and so a neighborly relationship that might have lasted a lifetime is sundered. In place of cooperation is friction, and worse, friction without resolution: Continual, constant, and cumulatively distressing.

**By knowing more** about one another we vastly increase alienation from one another. The effect of greater familiarity is greater contempt. The aggregate societal reaction to this, to discovering that the rest of society is



alarmingly worse than we ever suspected, is to seek out others whose views and premises correspond most closely with our own across the spectrum.

**A feedback loop results**, rendering factions more distinct and more emphatic. Our normal signals that informed the heuristics enabling democratic liberality become overwhelmed by the noise of a thousand social-media feeds. Your uncle reads InfoWars. Your aunt reads Salon. You learn about it and a family grows a little less close. A holiday grows a little less joyous. A society grows a little less harmonious.

The fathers of liberal democracy in the modern era

assumed that a prerequisite for their society was individual virtue married to information accessibility. Now we find that you can have too much of the latter; knowledge may be indispensable, but too much too often can be problematic when it comes to one another.

Perhaps an essential trait of the democratic citizen is the ability, and the willingness, to mind your own business. And we find that we cannot. ❖

**Joshua Claybourn is an attorney and author in Evansville.**

## Mueller report and tribal bias

By CAMERON CARTER

INDIANAPOLIS — The political tribes have succumbed to confirmation bias and the illusory truth effect in the wake of Robert Mueller’s conclusion that there is no evidence of a conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia during the 2016 election.



Given his character and background, as well as the importance of the assignment and resources committed to its pursuit, if Mueller could have brought a criminal case against Donald Trump or anyone else in his orbit, then he would have done so.

Those doubting this conclusion reject both facts and logic. Like a

Japanese soldier stranded on a Pacific island who refuses to stop fighting after the surrender, anti-Trump partisans cling to Trump-appointed Attorney General Barr’s brief summation of Mueller’s key findings rather than the likely voluminous report itself.

“We need to see the report!”

Agreed. The American public should see the report for the health of our body politic, but partisans are not seeking Mueller’s full report to understand the truth of the matter; they are seeking a new beachhead from which to assail a duly elected president. They seek the potter’s clay of impeachment.

**Anti-Trump partisans** – Democrats, “Never Trump” GOPers and, sadly, the national news media writ large – now have to defy facts, logic, and the here-

tofore irreproachable Robert Mueller to find a crime here. Shocked by the 2016 election outcome, they pushed all their chips into the middle of the table with this investigation. And lost.

“Trust Mueller!” “Wait for Mueller to finish his work...” and other variations on this laudable theme are now rejected because the hero came up with zero. Facts and logic cannot overcome partisanship and the investment – emotional, political and financial – that these groups have made in the collusion narrative these past two years. It is a narrative that has been omnipresent in the media since the 2016 election; it was, and is, a falsity told over, and over, and over, and over again.

**“Collusion” has been** the media’s watchword in the very public, nonstop discussion of the Mueller investigation, but it is nowhere to be found in the law books. “Conspiracy” is a legal term and a crime, but Mueller, after nearly two years of discovery representing thousands of man-hours, hundreds of depositions, and numerous subpoenas and grand jury deliberations (please note the underreported importance of grand juries comprising everyday U.S. citizens throughout this process), has concluded the evidence doesn’t support it. He can’t make the case.



He’s come up with a handful of indictments or pleas and, a la Ken Starr in the Whitewater investigation, found other process crimes and made referrals of potential, non-germane criminal matters to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. (This is THE remaining legal threat to Donald Trump, his family and perhaps his presidency.)

The only meaningful indictments for

criminal interference in the 2016 election have been of Russian state actors that are beyond the reach of our legal system (unless Putin turns them over, but since he sanctioned this attack on our country and denies it ever happened, he won't). Mueller submitting his final report sans any further indictments means he sees his work as done. He has investigated Russian interference, indicted those he could for what he could, and taken things as far as possible within the limits of the law.

**Beyond Mueller and his report**, the rest is politics. Impeachment is ultimately a political process and decision. Much will be said in the coming days/weeks/months ahead about "prosecutorial discretion" and "evidentiary standards," and much will be made about AG Barr and the Justice Department deciding not to pursue obstruction of justice charges against (presumably) the president and others close to him. The arguments will sound familiar because they are the same legal parsing and speculation about Hillary Clinton's emails only with the team jerseys exchanged. The hypocrites will have their heyday.

Who won the 2016 election? Arguably, the Russians. Their disinformation and psy-ops campaign against the United States has worked marvelously well to sow so-

cial discord and do violence to our politics, undermining trust in governmental institutions and each other. Those of us who attempt to discuss the facts or opine on these matters are immediately rewarded with a maelstrom of attacks on our views by one side or the other (in my case, both), stifling comity and preventing us from colluding with ourselves to form a more perfect union.

At some point, this madness must stop, and objective facts be agreed upon. But the fissures which the 2016 election exposed, and partisans on both sides exploited for both political and pecuniary gain, run deep. "No surrender" is an American cultural credo; it serves us well against enemies foreign, but not domestic.

**After this exhaustive two-year** investigation, we need to get back to a politics where we understand that we have no domestic enemies – at least not the one so many imagined – only temporary adversaries with which we disagree. ❖

**Carter is president of Content By Carter, a strategic business and communications consulting firm.**

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# Mayor Pete's best case campaign scenarios are actually happening

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. — Imagine finding Mayor Pete Buttigieg, his husband Chasten, and future campaign manager Mike Schmuhl huddled around a table at Fiddler's Hearth Pub last fall gaming out what a presidential race might look like.

Imagine them describing a "best case scenario" by April 2019, the month that if all went nominally well, he would kick off his longshot campaign in South Bend.



They might have hoped that he would get cable TV exposure and do several Sunday morning talk shows, and, perhaps, "The View." They would have hoped that the hosts would either figure out how to pronounce his

last name, and if that was unsuccessful, at least call him "Mayor Pete." Perhaps, they thought, maybe he could do a CNN town hall.

They wondered if he could get more of the same type of column coverage that the NYT's Frank Bruni afforded him in 2017. And while the mayor would be the only openly gay candidate, perhaps his sexuality, youthful status and skin color would take a back seat to the content of his character and his ability to explain issues that don't alienate friend or foe.

Perhaps, they thought, those commentators might be impressed by Buttigieg's policy chops, that he doesn't slip into Pence-like rote talking points, but instead discusses issues reasonably and in centrist fashion even with more liberal stances on issues of the day like Medicare, Obamacare, artificial intelligence and climate change.

**They might have dreamed** that his book, "Shortest Way Home," would show up on the New York Times best seller list. They might have pondered his ability to draw big crowds in the early caucus and primary states of Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina that would create sizzle and buzz.

They pondered the idea that his policy pronunciations might spur a growing donor base, enough for him to cross the 65,000 threshold that would qualify him for the 12 Democrat debates that begin in June.

They might have hoped that Buttigieg would begin to show up in the polls, maybe somewhere in the 1 to 3%

range.

They might have hoped that the so-called "front-runners" might stumble, you know, Joe Biden misspeaks and floats strange trial balloons, Beto O'Rourke seems weird, Elizabeth Warren gets tripped up by the whole "Pocahontas" thing, while the other senators seem stuck in a pack defined by Beltway sclerosis.

In their wildest dream scenario, Mayor Pete might emerge from the pack, maybe hit double digits in the polls, and he would become JFK's torch bearer of a new generation, trailing only septuagenarians Biden and Bernie. They might have dreamed an Obama-type crowd, maybe in the 25,000 range, turning out for his South Bend campaign kickoff.

**Today, Mayor Pete appears** to have achieved almost all of those crazy notions. The biggest breakthrough seems to be the Emerson College Poll from Iowa showing him at 11%, trailing only Biden at 25% and Sanders at 24%. Emerson pollster Spencer Kimball explained, "The biggest surprise in this poll is Mayor Pete. Last week we saw him inching up in our national poll, and now he's in double digits in Iowa. America is going to be asking who is 'Mayor Pete'? If Buttigieg is able to maintain his momentum, his candidacy appears to be pulling from the same demographic of young voters as Sanders, and that could become a problem for Sanders."

There's good news in the Emerson poll on that front, with Buttigieg placing second in the 18-to-29-year-



old demographic, with 22%, trailing only Sanders at 44%. If Buttigieg can cut into that demographic, entering the frontrunner zone may not be that big a leap. There is also talk that Buttigieg "may be cutting into Beto's lane," according to Basil Smikle, the former executive director of the New York Democratic Party, "because he impressed a lot of people during his run ... where he began developing

a relationship with party insiders from every state." That's where his unsuccessful 2017 run for Democratic National Committee chairman is really beginning to pay off.

"A couple of weeks ago I wasn't giving him any attention at all, in part because I didn't think he had a chance, but I am getting more and more intrigued," Democratic strategist Jim Manley told The Hill. "The Buttigieg Boomlet is real," added Democratic strategist Christy Setzer. "He's everywhere, he's authentic and he's interesting and counterintuitive in his message — all of which makes him both a media darling and a serious source of intrigue for primary voters."

"This is something real, this is not flash," former Iowa Democratic Party chair Sue Dvorsky told AFP, as she highlighted his mayoral successes and his astute discussion of issues. "Every single thing about him is in diametric opposition" to the president, she said.

As for the momentum he now has, Buttigieg told the Associated Press in South Carolina, "It's wonderful. The buzz helps. But you want to make sure that you have enough substance and enough organization that any kind of flavor-of-the-month period is something you can out-live."

Buttigieg is now staffing up, preparing to double the 20 people on the campaign. He has been looking for office space in downtown South Bend where his presidential campaign will be headquartered, joining Indianapolis (Benjamin Harrison, Richard Lugar and Birch Bayh) and Rushville (Wendell Willkie) as Hoosier cities where such campaigns were run.

Then there's a potential showdown with President Trump and the contrasts are compelling and vivid: Young, Rhodes Scholar, progressive, Midwestern, middle class, gay, Afghan war veteran vs. Trump: Big Apple, billionaire, bone spur Vietnam deferments, hidden academic records, and an M.O. of winging it as opposed to being a student of policy.

"Our whole message was 'Don't vote for him, because he's terrible.' And even though he is, that's not a message," warned Buttigieg on "The Breakfast Club" radio show in New York, adding that Democrats must reengage voters in the Midwest. "I hate to say it, but he could absolutely win again if we aren't smart about this."

When it comes to the Mueller report, Buttigieg has side-stepped the impeachment rhetoric. "The American people deserve to see the report itself, not simply the attorney general's summary of it," he said. "As was said in the summary, the president's not being indicted at the moment, but he's also not being exonerated at the moment. From the political perspective, I think this is further evidence that it would be a mistake for Democrats to think that the way for the Trump presidency to end is by way of

investigation." Buttigieg says that needs to happen "at the ballot box."

As for other polling this past week, a Quinnipiac University poll released today shows Joe Biden at 29%, Bernie Sanders at 19%, Beto O'Rourke at 12%, Sen. Kamala Harris at 8% and Buttigieg and Warren tied with 4%. Morning Consult/Politico (March 26) had the national race as Biden 35%, Sanders 25, Harris 8, O'Rourke 8, Warren 7, Booker 4, Klobuchar 2, Buttigieg 2, Castro 1, Gillibrand 1, Inslee 1, Hickenlooper 1. Fox News (March 24) had it Biden 31, Sanders 23, Harris 8, O'Rourke 8, Warren 4, Booker 4, Klobuchar 1, Buttigieg 1, Castro 1, Gillibrand 2, Inslee 1, Hickenlooper 0. Emerson's national poll (March 20) had it Biden 26%, Sanders 26, Harris 12, O'Rourke 11, Warren 8, Booker 3, Buttigieg 3, Klobuchar 1, Castro 1, Gillibrand 0, Inslee 1, Hickenlooper 1.

Of course, as we stated many times in 2016, it's the state-specific polls that are more important to the race than the national surveys.

## Coming up: New Hampshire and Broadway

Buttigieg heads back to New Hampshire for a third time this weekend with a stop in Manchester on Friday and Concord on Saturday.



CNBC is reporting that Buttigieg is making inroads into the New York donor circuit as he prepares to attend a campaign fundraiser hosted by Broadway executive Jordan Roth. Roth, and his husband, Richie Jackson, who is a movie producer, will be holding a reception for Buttigieg with suggested contributions from \$250 to \$2,800, according to an invite first obtained by CNBC. Roth is the president and majority owner of Jujacmyn Theaters, which has presented a litany of award-winning Broadway shows including "The Book of Mormon" and

"Springsteen on Broadway." He's also the son of billionaire and real estate titan Steven Roth, who, according Forbes, has a net-worth of \$1.1 billion. The elder Roth, however, is a staunch supporter of Republican causes. He recently invested \$100,000 into President Donald Trump's joint fundraising committee, Trump Victory, and the same amount toward former House Speaker Paul Ryan's organization, Team Ryan. The fundraiser represents a sign that he is making traction with donors and voters alike.

## A Chick-fil-A bridge

Speaking on the "Breakfast Club" radio show in New York, Buttigieg offered a "peace deal" between the LGBT community and Chick-fil-A, the fast-food chain which courted controversy over its conservative leanings. "I do not approve of their politics, but I kind of approve of their chicken," Buttigieg quipped. "Maybe, if nothing else, I can build that bridge." ❖

# Buttigieg addresses 'flyover country'

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – They call it “flyover country.” It’s where the 2020 Democratic presidential nominee needs a safe landing if he or she is to stave off the reelection of President Donald Trump for four additional years.

“Flyover country” is where Trump won key electoral votes for victory in 2016 and where he could win again.



It includes states in the Midwest that were crucial. Trump pulled upsets in Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa and won battleground Ohio, obtaining needed electoral votes to win the presidency, even as he trailed nationally by 2.8 million in the popular vote.

The “flyover” description comes from the way presidential candidates, especially Democratic nominees, so often fly over Middle America as they travel from one coast

to the other for major campaign and fundraising events and national media attention.

The name also refers to the perceived attitude of some nominees, especially Hillary Clinton, who was viewed in key Midwest states where she lost as flying above the concerns of voters in the middle of the country, the concerns of those in the middle of the political spectrum, the concerns of the middle class.

**South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg** came to national political attention after the 2016 Democratic election disaster when he wrote “A Letter from Flyover Country,” in which he warned that those concerns had better be addressed by Democrats if they want to win in the future.

Buttigieg continues that warning now in seeking the Democratic presidential nomination: Pay attention to middle class folks so dissatisfied with governmental disfunction, inequities in the economy and employment and obstacles to health and happiness that they “voted to burn the house down.”

Many of them are not thrilled now with Trump (although his base is) but they won’t automatically turn to a Democratic alternative if that nominee appears again

to be flying above their concerns and talking the language of avid Democrats on the coasts. Amassing again big wins in New York and California and in the popular vote nationally won’t guarantee a presidential victory if the Democratic nominee doesn’t fly in with a compelling message in Middle America, winning back key states lost in 2016.

Rhetoric as much as actual policies will be important. Democrats will be offering proposals to do more about the environment, economic inequality, affordability and availability of health care and basic freedoms. Their proposals could be popular. Or not. Not if they go too far, not talking realistically about what is possible and affordable. Not if promising impossibilities, like Trump’s claim that Mexico would pay for his wall. That worked for Trump in appeals to angry voters ready to burn the house down. It won’t work for a Democratic nominee needing to assure voters that Democrats now are competent to put out the disastrous fire.

**If they fall into the trap** already set by Trump of using rhetoric that will sound to Middle America like wild-eyed socialist stuff, Trump could win four more years. This doesn’t mean they have to pretend like Trump to be conservative or decline to propose anything that fits a liberal agenda. They need, however, an approach with reasoned rhetoric that is understood in “flyover country.”

Buttigieg still has little chance of winning the nomination. As he gains more and more national attention, however, he has a strong chance to guide the party in the campaign and in the debates, for which he has qualified, along a more reasoned path, a path to victory in Middle America.

Liberal views can be presented in an appealing rather than frightening way to a skeptical middle class in the middle of the country.

What does it profit a party to gain landslide wins on the coasts and lose the presidency by failing to make a safe landing in “flyover country,” where the chance to win was lost last time? ❖

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



**CONTENT BY CARTER**  
strategic content creation and deployment

# Barge suspends her Bloomington campaign

**BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – There are big Democratic primary races in South Bend, Gary, Muncie, and a Republican showdown in Fort Wayne, but these races aren't generating a lot of media coverage.

The big news this past week was Monroe County Commissioner Amanda Barge suspending her challenge to Bloomington Mayor John Hamilton after sexual harassment allegations were reported by the Indiana Daily Student (IDS). The article details the allegations from Brandon Drake with copies of emails, text messages, and recorded conversations between the two. Drake told the IDS that

Barge became angry and shut him out professionally when he refused to date her. In a statement issued several hours after publication Tuesday, Barge "vehemently" denied engaging in sexual harassment. "I recognize that my actions have caused pain to my family and others," the statement says. "I also do not want to distract our community from the very important issues we face. For that reason, I am suspending my campaign, and I wish John Hamilton all the best in his candidacy for mayor." Barge said she won't resign from the commission.



## South Bend: Critchlow lands endorsements

Democrat Jason Critchlow's mayoral campaign in South Bend announced it has been endorsed by more than 20 elected officials, former elected officials and community leaders, including two former mayors of South Bend and two former speakers of the Indiana House of Representatives. "I will vote for Jason because he is a leader who will not be afraid to make the difficult decisions required to move our city forward. It's not just about economic development to which all mayors are dedicated. It's about a strong program of neighborhood revitalization and basic city services such as first class streets for all South Bend," said former mayor Roger Parent. State Reps. Ryan Dvorak and Pat Bauer also endorsed Critchlow."

## Madison: Courtney takes on blight

Former Jefferson County Republican Party chairman Bob Courtney will seek to end blight in Madison with his Republican mayoral campaign. "I have taken stances against blight in our community, lack of zoning enforcement that allows slum lords to control our town, poorly structured economic development deals, and lack of a comprehensive economic development plan for the northern part of our city," Courtney said.

## Fort Wayne: Crawford will give up salary

If elected mayor, Fort Wayne City Councilman John Crawford will give \$40,000 of his annual salary to help fund the fight against the city's opioid crisis (Gong, [Fort Wayne Journal Gazette](#)). Crawford, a practicing physician, already gives his \$22,290 City Council salary to Questa, a local education foundation. The mayor's salary is \$128,593. Crawford is still pledging to give the same amount to Questa if elected mayor. "So the total of what I will pledge is one-half of the mayor's salary to help the citizens of Fort Wayne," Crawford said. "I'm going to give the citizens 110 percent of my effort for one-half the price." In an interview Wednesday, Tim Smith, Crawford's 2019 primary opponent, said he would look to the private and nonprofit sectors to "cure our social ills." Smith said he's concerned with all drug abuse – including alcohol – not just opioids. "I believe the government has proven since the Great Society that it is ill-equipped to solve our social ills," Smith said. "On the other hand, I believe nonprofits, because they're staffed by people with big hearts, are perfectly positioned for it."

## Anderson: Smith wants to resume projects

During his final year in office as mayor in 2015, Republican Kevin Smith announced "Operation Downtown." Now he is running again to complete the project (de la Bastide, Anderson Herald-Bulletin). Smith is facing Madison County Auditor Rick Gardner and JoAnna Collette, director of JobSource, in the May 7 primary. The winner of that race will run against either incumbent Democrat Thomas Broderick Jr. or Terry May in the general election in November. His slogan for the campaign is "Bring Back Smith." Smith said, "It takes more than four years to accomplish anything," Smith said. "Continuity is important for downtown."

## Statewides

## Rokita approached about Hill challenge

Former congressman Todd Rokita issued a "no comment" after we asked if he would challenge Attorney General Curtis Hill at the June 2020 Republican Convention. Sources tell HPI that Rokita has been approached by Republicans inside and outside of Indianapolis about challenging Hill, who is facing an Indiana Supreme Court disciplinary action over allegations of sexual harassment from four women. Since those allegations, Gov. Holcomb and the GOP hierarchy have called for him to resign. Rokita won a four-way convention floor fight for secretary of state in 2002. Republicans are concerned that a vulnerable Hill could provide an opening for Democrats. When Rokita was nominated in 2002, Democrats held the governor's office and the House. John Westercamp, an attorney with Bose McKinney, is also weighing a GOP convention challenge to Hill. We're hearing that Democrats would like Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. to seek their nomination. ❖

# Team Luidhardt takes a lucky break into a digital revolution

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — On the fifth floor of the ISTA Building sits the Prosper Group, which is the immediate past, present and future of the ever-evolving social media era in American politics.

It features Kristen and Kurt Luidhardt, the husband and wife team who met in the Wesleyan University College Republicans in Marion, began working for campaigns, ended up on the House Republican Campaign Committee and became intrigued by, of all people, Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean in 2004. He launched one of the first digital media campaigns before his candidacy collapsed shortly after his Des Moines primal scream.

The campaign model up to that point had been direct mail guys like Karl Rove or the TV vendors that attach to the congressional and national campaigns. Most yearning entrepreneurs follow the Rove model. But Kristen Luidhardt explained, "That was not for us. In 2004, we saw Howard Dean and his campaign and the rise up through the grassroots through digital means and all these different tools through meet-ups and that was really exciting. It was a new vertical for campaigning. We thought, 'We're young, we know more about this than most people in the business.'"

Thus began the Prosper Group, which concentrated on Indiana campaigns that included U.S. Rep. Dan Burton and Marion Mayor Wayne Seybold. Then came 2009, the one year in the cycle with no elections in Indiana. So the Luidhardts hit the road, sometimes sleeping in their car, and found themselves in states with elections that year, Virginia and New Jersey, where they did digital media for Republican gubernatorial candidates Bob McDonnell and Chris Christie.

"We call ourselves a digital-first marketing agency, which means we touch anything that might be happening online," Kristen explained. "It's website developing, email

marketing, online fundraising, online ads, a lot of text messaging."

As is the case with many business success stories, it was that one phone call, that one favor that gave them more than a foothold. "A friend of ours called from Massachusetts, saying, 'Gosh, guys, I need a favor. I've got this little-known state senator named Scott Brown. He needs a website, can you do it for next to nothing?'" Kristen explained. "We thought, well, we've got nothing else to do."

U.S. Sen. Ted Kennedy had died, the nascent Tea Party movement began and Brown became the movement darling, upsetting Democratic Lt. Gov. Martha Coakley 51.9% to 47.1% in a special election for a seat that had been in the Kennedy family for more than a half-century. "That really put us on the map," Kristen said. "It was all because we were forced to travel outside of Indiana. From there, we just grew."

**The "map" has included** the Pence and Holcomb gubernatorial campaigns in Indiana, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz in his reelection defeat of Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Rep. Will Hurd and Martha McSally in Arizona, Brian Kemp in Georgia last year, along with accounts in 44 states. But the real big one was the 2016 Donald Trump presidential campaign, and then the Republican National Committee, where they worked with Brad Parscale on what became a revolutionary digital campaign. While Hillary Clinton outspent Trump \$150 million to zero in TV ads at one point in the fall of 2016, the Manhattan billionaire was dominating social media, and he pulled off the biggest presidential upset in U.S. history. The Luidhardts went from traveling



by interstate and sleeping in cars and Airbnbs to helping forge a digital political revolution. They employ 36 people around the country, including the 18 or so looking down at the Indiana Statehouse.

HPI sat down with the Luidhardts in the "Pence Room," seated around a virgin conference table and chairs earlier this month to survey the "what's next" in political campaigns.

**HPI:** You mentioned the Howard Dean campaign. It's like the technology cascades from cycle to cycle; it

keeps getting better. President Bush's reelection in 2004 was considered a tech marvel, then you had Barack Obama in 2008 and during the primary race with Hillary I think I had five of six touches at my home. And then his 2012 campaign was one he should have lost if you based it on the economy, but Obama digital fundraising and messaging dominated. Finally, you had Brad Parscale's work with Donald Trump in 2016 which was very effective. The digital aspect of politics seems to have evolved with you.

**Kurt:** I feel like being out of power tends to create an environment where people are willing to try new things. Incumbent reelections always have more money and Obama's reelection campaign was really sophisticated. Having two lost (presidential) elections had the Republicans, particularly with a candidate who wasn't part of the establishment, saying, "We're willing to toss out the playbook and try new things. Same with Obama in '08, Howard Dean in '04. It's really evolved from where we first got involved, digital marketing was almost entirely for online fundraising and to a lesser extent organizing your volunteers and getting them to do stuff for you. That's all anybody wanted to talk about: Can you raise us money online? That's where all the hype was. John McCain was the first one to raise a couple of million dollars between Iowa and New Hampshire against George W. Bush in 2000. Howard Dean raised a lot of money online and of course Barack Obama raised a ton.

**HPI:** The thrust of Obama's fundraising was, going into the 2012 cycle, digital, right?

**Kurt:** Right. That was a significant departure. By the time Obama was coming into his reelection, it's now clear that if you are unable to raise more than half of your money online, then you lack the support to be there. That's why I think the Democrats are smart right now, for putting a threshold for the debates based on online donors. That's a smart move, because that's a more accurate representation of your popularity than say, Jeb Bush's ability to raise \$120 million from major donors. That was the first big thrust. In 2014 and 2016, there was much more emphasis for using digital for persuasion – you know, running digital advertising, whether it was digital video, pre-roll video, YouTube advertising, Google. People began saying, "Hey, this isn't just about fundraising, this is more about getting people out (to vote) who aren't watching television anymore."

**Kristen:** The data we have now is so much better, too. The ability to target is so much better now.

**Kurt:** The Obama campaign in 2012 ... if you were

to say, "What was the biggest thing they did differently?" it was probably their sophisticated modeling of data for the purpose of advertising. You found out later on that Mitt Romney was paying top rate to buy ads in a very old-fashioned method while Barack Obama was using data to find which stations he should run on and where he could get the best rates. So persuasion became a thing, then data has some capabilities of direct mail, so that it can be individually targeted on some level to voters. Then Trump really proved the power of social media. We had been using it, Facebook advertising, etc., but the ability to use it to marshal and generate a movement while using social media, spending so much money on Facebook was a massive change.

**HPI:** President Trump's campaign has a massive digital lead right now heading into the 2020 cycle.

**Kurt:** Yeah. They were using it because their big difference between their campaign and everybody else was every presidential campaign in recent years was largely run by TV vendors. Rick Santorum, Mitt Romney, their campaigns were all run by TV guys. George W. Bush didn't because Karl Rove was a direct mail guy. They were saying, "We've got to reserve 60 to 70% for TV advertising" and that was not Trump's attitude at all. In fact, it took some

convincing to have him spend any money on TV at all. He could see the metrics on a digital advertising campaign: Here's how much money we're raising, here's how many people ... that was a big thing for them. They didn't feel any pressure to spend money on TV. I think Hillary Clinton had spent \$150 million on TV before Donald Trump had spent a penny.

**HPI:** I remember that. That's why everybody thought that because Hillary had such a huge TV spending advantage, "She's gonna win."

**Kurt:** That world is coming to an end. The Democrats who are leading now have learned that lesson. Beto O'Rourke spent a lot of money in that Ted Cruz election on Facebook, talking to supporters and raising money ...

**Kristen:** And collecting email addresses. That's the lesson they've learned. Republicans haven't learned from Donald Trump at all. The rest of the Republican campaigns are largely TV-centric, which is still sad, but over time that's gonna get fixed. We're just too focused on the notion, "We've got to spend 80% of our budget on broadcast television." And when these super PACs get into the race, they've got to pay these top rates.

**HPI:** We just went through this \$110 million Senate race and it was wall-to-wall TV ads. Is that going to





be one of the last times we'll see that type of campaign?

**Kristen:** No, I don't think so. It would be nice, but I don't think so.

**Kurt:** There's so much money that it has to go somewhere. The way a lot of these campaigns are run ... Mike Braun's chief strategist was a TV vendor. He made some brilliant TV ads. That's not a criticism. If you're Mike Braun, when you go to your TV vendor and say, "I've dropped 5 points in the polls, what's the solution?" their answer is going to be more television. There are some innovations happening that will start to change that over time. There's a big move into consolidation on the Republican side of the aisle. These campaigns have gotten infinitely more complex because of data, they're using more paid door-walkers, there's phone calls, there's television, there's digital, there's text messaging. You get on these campaign conference calls and there's 15 vendors. They weren't coordinating effectively. A number of the bigger firms on the GOP side have decided "We're going to be your one-stop shop. Hire us and we'll do all of it for you in-house." The advantages are it reduces the complexity, but it also allows them to make decisions based on not what they sell – because they



sell everything – but what will help a client win. That's why we did our deal a year ago with Axiom Strategies. They're the largest Republican political consulting firm in the country. We formed a strategic partnership with them and they sent all their digital to us. It helps their clients. We know what we're supposed to do. We're working off the same data set and playbook. That's a trend I think will help with this problem. If you hire a one-stop shop, they have a \$5 million pool and they can make decisions like, "Can we most effectively reach this voter with mail or digital or television?" and they're not just there to sell their wares.

**HPI:** My sense is the technology is evolving at breakneck speed. Here we are on the second day of Spring 2019. Could there be two or three "Aha!" moments between now and the Iowa caucus?

**Kurt:** Yes. There's a lot of things coming. Text messaging made a big wave during the last campaign. In the next two or three years we're going to see messaging applications become a much bigger target for campaigners. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and some of these apps where you communicate with your friends, they are going to become a much bigger deal. They are already in other parts of the world. Americans haven't adapted to some of these as fast as Europeans have. That's started to change. Facebook just announced they're going to put a big empha-

sis behind their messaging platform. Some candidate will come out and find a unique way to use that.

**Kristen:** We were just finalists for a Read Award because of work we did on Facebook Messenger for the Cruz campaign. Depending on what privacy regulations come down in state legislatures, it will impact a lot of how we serve from a digital perspective because it will impact how we can target you as a voter.

**HPI:** NBC had a story where 911 can actually find the GPS on your phone, activate your phone's camera and so these dispatchers can then have eyes and ears on the scene of an accident or crime or finding a missing kid. Won't there be a political application for that? Maybe not turning on a supporter's phone, but monitoring him or her going to the polling station. By Todd Young's reelection in 2022, you might be able to do that.

**Kristen:** It comes down to the differences between what's technologically possible and what's legally allowed. You've got California where they are getting close to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and those things will make items like that a little more difficult to do. I think people can rest easy that we won't be turning on anybody's mic or camera.

**Kurt:** Right now, we have in Indiana where we can run advertisements that only show up if you're in a polling location. We know you're there. I can't say that I want this ad to show up when Brian Howey is in a polling location, but I can say (if) anybody's cellphone is pinging from a courthouse, (then) we'd want them to see this ad. We did that for the Indiana GOP this past cycle. That's possible. We can pick a location and we can tell you who's been there. We can do things like, we know this person is a church attendee because he's been to church twice in the last month, so that allows us to get a message there.

**Kristen:** Or schools. We can get a message out to parents. You can make an assumption that you're at a place frequently, (then) you're dropping off your kids or you're a teacher there. You can pinpoint locations and get a message there.

**HPI:** So you can learn who's voted in real time?

**Kristen:** Facebook has this "I have voted" and that would be a way to cross-off your targeted voter rolls. That way you don't have to phone them anymore.

**HPI:** What other innovations or impacts are campaigns and voters going to see between now and November 2020?

**Kurt:** They're going to see more texting, more activity from candidates on their messenger apps. Those are going to be two big ones.

**Kristen:** The third related to that will be the type of content you're going to see. We're going to shift a little bit. What we tested with the Trump campaign ... was the traditional TV advertising against something the digital team made in-house, which was short, pithy and had a lot of animation. Those performed better than a slick, produced TV ad. So, this whole concept of digital-first media is going to allow you to rethink, "How am I going to stop the scroll? What's going to get your attention in six or 15 seconds?" The type of ads will shift due to attention spans and what people are consuming. They are streaming. They are on a smaller portable device. They're not always on a big television.

**HPI:** What might happen by 2022 or 2024? What's the next Twitter or Instagram that hasn't even been invented yet?

**Kurt:** That's a good question. There's going to be a response to new data regulations. So, California has thrown down the gauntlet passing their version of GDPR. The California law has the ability to shut down a lot of political targeting all together. There's no exemption for political candidates. It would highly regulate what local parties can have on you. It would affect corporate marketing as well. So, the marketing would become a lot less personalized. The principle those regulations rely on is you've given personal and expressed permission to use your data. In the U.S., we're OK with implied consent. In the E.U., it's expressed consent. The E.U. would prevent me from having a voter file. They have some exemptions for candidates, so even if someone said, "I support you Donald Trump" then they remove the ability to target them. Those are the kind of things that can affect 2022. We could be walking back to the way we did political targeting 10 years ago.

**HPI:** So, you may have a "back to the drawing board" sequence coming up.

**Kurt:** I think that's conceivable. California has passed a regulation that doesn't come into effect until next year. In the meantime, social media firms headquartered in California are trying to fix the legislation. They're such a big part of the market that if it's not resolved it will impact the entire country. You ask what will impact 2022 or 2024, it will be an overreaction.

**HPI:** In the 2016 campaign, there was a lot of attention on where people get their political news. A lot of people aren't getting their political news from WISH-TV, but from Facebook. Will political news consumers change from Twitter and Facebook to something else?

**Kurt:** It's not that people get it from Facebook,

they're getting it from their friends. So, it used to be I would subscribe to the newspaper and get my news from that news outlet. Now, I don't subscribe to the newspaper, but I go to Facebook for other reasons and read what my friends and family post. That's how I get my news. I don't think that's going to change. It may not happen on Facebook, but it will happen with us communicating with each other. In India, it isn't Facebook, it's what people are sharing on WhatsApp. It gets created by a friend and they share it. A lot of those news sources are increasingly partisan. Everybody has a partisan bent these days. It's on both sides. I can see from people's feeds what's the big crazy story on each side. We all do it.

**HPI:** There are fewer local news sources. So where will these news sources be?

**Kurt:** We may see a wild swing. I'm only 40, but I've seen multiple times how Americans go from one extreme to the other. We go from Barack Obama to Donald Trump. We may go from Donald Trump to Elizabeth Warren. It may go from Facebook to something where they're seeing both sides. I don't know where that will go. I think the market will respond in some fashion and it may be with a new business model. It's more important for all of us to understand the idea that we ought to have very vigorous debate on issues. We ought to have a lot of different views in politics. We need to have more respect for the fact that we're all trying to get done what we think is right.

**Kristen:** Civil discourse.

**Kurt:** We should improve that and encourage that, as opposed to calling into question everybody's motives, calling everybody an extremist.

**HPI:** That's a beautiful way to put it.

**Kurt:** It's a skill we've somehow ...

**Kristen:** ... Lost.

**Kurt:** That needs to come roaring back. People are recognizing, "Yeah, I don't like Donald Trump," but I'm going to have civil discourse with his supporters. We're not going to call everybody crazy and yell and scream. But we're not there right now. Everybody is the "other." That's what needs to change.

**Kristen:** I do think a lot of people are in the silent majority who are upset by this and the nature of the conversation. I think there's a hunger for change in that area.


**HPI:** It's going to be damn interesting.

**Kurt:** I agree. Maybe you can figure out a way to usher in a news business model on that.

**HPI:** I'm working on that. ❖

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

# Dispatching Modern Monetary Theory

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – A recent survey of economists posed two questions about the recently popular Modern Monetary Theory (MMT). The results were clear. Three out of four economists strongly disagreed with its central premises, and one out of four merely disagreed. Precisely zero survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the fundamental predictions of the theory. This was wholly unsurprising, as MMT is nonsense, but it caused me to think about the way economists discuss ideas that are politically popular yet have been



proven false. The most obvious example of that, other than MMT, is modern supply-side economics. Indulge me in some musing on how these two ideas continue to have legs after being rejected by careful research using abundant data.

MMT concludes that government debt does not matter and, as long as government can print money, it need not collect taxes. This would be a political panacea, of course. We could finance the building of the interstate highway system, World War II and the modern welfare state simply by printing money. It is absurd.

Modern supply-side economics argues that large tax cuts, like the recent Tax Cuts and Jobs Act would actually generate more tax revenues because they would lead to higher economic growth. This would be a political panacea as well. We could finance the building of the interstate highway system, World II and the modern welfare state simply by cutting taxes. It is just as absurd.

I'll scare many a reader by noting that both MMT and modern supply-side economics have people in Congress who believe them, some even from Indiana. But before I recount the wrongness of both ideas, it is good to expose the hint of truth that allows folks to tout ideas that are demonstrably false.

**It is true that sovereign** nations controlling their own currency can sustain large debts for decades. This is especially true if the debt is in their own currency. The U.S. cannot go bankrupt while we have a printing press with which to pay off our debts. All of these truths are used to justify MMT, but a partial truth is not sufficient for a theory to hold (after all, the earth looks flat), and that brings us to supply-side tax cuts.

Tax cuts spur economic activity by allowing households and firms to buy more goods and invest in more new business. When marginal tax rates are very high, say over 60 or 80%, a tax cut may cause more new economic

growth than the revenues lost by the rate reduction. That is the Laffer curve. The problem is that there are no taxes at that rate anywhere in the world, much less the US. The recent Tax Cut and Jobs Act reduced corporate tax rates from 35% to 21%. That is much too low to be as "revenue neutral" as far too many in Congress claimed.

**It turns out that wild** claims like the MMT and supply-side tax cuts have, like conspiracy theories and cults, just a tad bit of truth to them. Unlike conspiracy theories and cults, there is an enormous treasure trove of data from which to calculate their actual effects. Data on national and sub-national tax rates and economic performance exist for most of the world for 50 years. Some nations, like Great Britain, have some of this data back a millennium. This allows us to test the effect of MMT and tax cuts on literally tens of thousands of observations.

MMT is harder to wholly reject as a theory since only a few hundred national or sub-national governments have been willing to wreck themselves with debt. But, the capacity of a nation to self-finance a debt without taxation, a hallmark of MMT has yet to occur.

The supply-side argument of a revenue-neutral tax cut has yet to occur in tax rates beneath the high double digits. We've seen high taxes and big tax cuts, but a revenue-neutral tax cut is as common as a unicorn.

This prompts me to ask why these ideas remain popular and hold currency in the political debate. I cannot be certain, but nearly 35 years of public policy leads me to believe that most political leaders stop asking questions as soon as they hear the answer they like. This absence of curiosity is deadly to good government, but it is the rule rather than the exception. It is also the sign of deeply unserious men and women.

**It is also difficult to rule** out pure duplicity. Like politicians, voters ask too few questions, and the promise of costless public policies is seductive. As economists are fond of noting, there is no free lunch. We cannot get something for nothing. Let me conclude with something that is both true and unpopular with the unicorn watchers from both the Left and the Right. The politicians who proclaim MMT is a magic bullet that will allow for the funding of a Green New Deal are misleading you. In exactly the same way, the politicians who told you the Tax Cuts and Job Acts would pay for itself through new tax revenue are untruthful.

I don't have windows into the souls of these politicians. I don't know if they are simply uncurious and are able to wish away unhappy facts like a child, or if they think voters are uncurious and childlike. But, that'd be a great question to ask for the next election. ❖

**Michael J. 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.**

**John Krull, Statehouse File:** The surviving old lions paid tribute to the fallen one. Just hours after former U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh, D-Indiana, died, I chatted by phone with his onetime opponent and colleague, former U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Indiana. Lugar talked about Bayh's friendliness and approachability. He said Bayh had made a great contribution to the state and country as the author of two amendments to the U.S. Constitution – "that has never occurred for any (other) public servant in the history of our country," Lugar said. He also said Bayh would be remembered as a champion of civil rights and the rights of humanity. Then, as now, it was a contentious time in America's history. Political battles over Watergate, civil rights and the last days of the Vietnam War threatened to tear the country apart. Lugar said he didn't want to run against Bayh. But the Republican Party had been so wounded by Watergate and the eventual resignation of President Richard Nixon, Lugar found himself "almost drafted" by the GOP to run. Lugar considered Bayh a formidable figure, one who would be tough to beat under any circumstances. Bayh was, Lugar said, "a great shoe-leather politician" – one who knew how to connect with people at a human level. It was that quality of Bayh's, former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Indiana, told me over the air a little later that made the senator so effective. Hamilton said he would bring people who were opposed to Bayh's politics in to meet him. Inevitably, Hamilton said, they would leave the meeting saying they still didn't agree with Bayh, but that they really liked him. "He was the best retail politician in Indiana history," Hamilton said. Hamilton said Bayh revolutionized Indiana politics. Prior to Bayh's emergence as a force, Hamilton explained, Hoosier political candidates tended to run "front-porch campaigns," where they presented themselves for office and waited for the voters to come to them. He went to the voters with an energy never seen before in Indiana. An old lion named Birch Bayh died a few days ago, and other old lions paid tribute to him. In the process, they remind us that, somewhere along the way, we've lost much more than a solitary man. Much, much more. ❖



**Rich James, Howey Politics Indiana:** I'm not sure about the definition of a Hoosier, but if you checked the dictionary you'd find a picture of Birch Bayh. The three-term Democratic U.S. senator died last week at the age of 91. Bayh was known nationally for his role in crafting legislation, including the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Title IX Amendment to the Education Act of 1972, which barred education institutions from discrimination based on gender. Few recalled – including newspapers in Northwest Indiana – that Bayh was a pioneer in pushing for the elimination of the Electoral College. The move is now being embraced by several Democratic candidates for president. Bayh was the only lawmaker to draft two constitutional amendments. Despite sponsoring far-reaching legislation, Bayh was a down-to-earth guy who loved Northwest

Indiana and visited often. He was particularly close to the late Robert Pastrick, the long-time East Chicago mayor. I recall Bayh coming to an editorial board meeting at the Post-Tribune in Gary. I plucked a political button out of my collection and wore it when Bayh arrived. The button was simple, saying only "I.W.T." and listed a date in late 1975. It stood for "I Was There" for Bayh's announcement for his run for president. Bayh saw the button on my lapel and laughed and said, "That was the biggest mistake of my life." I also recall a time in 1979 or 1980 when Bayh was slated to speak to a throng of farmers at a convention hall in Indianapolis. The farmers were angry with Bayh for having voted for a grain embargo that was hurting the farmers financially. The farmers were ready for bear when Bayh entered the hall in a dark blue suit and red tie. Within minutes, Bayh had shed the coat and rolled up his sleeves. It didn't take long and Bayh had the crowd on his side, cheering him on for his stance on the embargo and a host of other issues. Bayh lost his bid for a fourth term in 1980 during the Reagan landslide that helped take out several liberal senators. Sadly, he lost to Dan Quayle, who was told during a vice presidential debate that he was no "Jack Kennedy." He was no Birch Bayh either. ❖

**Tiana Lowe, Washington Examiner:** One of them is a Rhodes scholar and former Navy lieutenant who served in Afghanistan, graduated magna cum laude from Harvard, speaks eight languages, and references Faulkner offhand with as much ease as he does Eminem. The other is an unemployed trust fund baby whose billionaire father-in-law bankrolled his onion-thin congressional career, culminating in a public mid-life crisis. Yet somehow the media can't stop likening the likeable and experienced South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg to the aggressively mediocre Beto O'Rourke in the same breath. Sure, on paper they're both longshot candidates for the presidency. But the former possesses actual charisma, qualifications, and momentum, whereas the latter's credentials are as lacquered as the glossy magazine covers the press insists on gifting him. The media's been blowing hot air into the Beto balloon for the entirety of the past year, first during his semi-serious bid to unseat Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and now during his cathartic release masquerading as a presidential campaign. Beto, Vanity Fair says, has a "preternatural ease," an "aura," and a "gift." But as it turns out, the public doesn't care for the media's masturbatory Beto fantasies. No matter how hard the press tries to make Beto happen, the public simply isn't buying the notion that a privileged, pompous white guy who thinks that standing on tables and talking about rock makes him relatable is the next Obama. Buttigieg hasn't had even a hint of the media-inflation that Beto has received, yet his actual progressive credentials, combined with his tempered Midwestern demeanor, has helped a mayor from the 299th largest city in the country catapult to third place in Iowa. ❖

## Casino bill changed by House panel

INDIANAPOLIS — Legislation that would allow a casino to move to Vigo County passed an Indiana House committee on Wednesday by a unanimous vote — but not without sweeping changes (Modisitt, [Terre Haute Tribune-Star](#)). One of the most striking changes to Senate Bill 552 made in the House Public Policy Committee is a \$100 million fee that would be mandated if Spectacle Entertainment LLC wants to move one of its two Gary casino licenses inland from a harbor on Lake Michigan. In addition to the fee, Spectacle — which recently acquired the two Majestic Star licenses — would have to surrender its second license to the Indiana Gaming Commission. The gaming commission would then host a competitive bidding process to determine who would operate a casino in Vigo County. There was talk in the meeting of assessing a \$50 million fee to move the license to Vigo County, but lawmakers said they'd leave that to the next House panel to take up the bill, the Ways and Means Committee. The same amendment — Amendment 60 — also reintroduces language for a referendum by Vigo County voters.

The amendment requires a question, "Shall inland casino gambling be permitted in Vigo County," to be added to the ballot for the 2019 general election. Additionally, the amendment strikes all language regarding mobile sports wagering, another part of the bill authored by Sen. Jon Ford of Terre Haute and Sen. Mark Messmer of Jasper, both Republicans. For all of the changes, Ford said, getting the bill passed in the Public Policy Committee is a positive. "The positive takeaway is that Terre Haute is once again in the bill and that we continue to move ahead to another day," Ford said. The Public Policy Committee was likely the legislation's biggest hurdle, Ford said, and he added he is glad it cleared.



"The committee makeup is very interesting, and this is where you would do the amending of the structure of the legislation," he said. "And, in that, they could have taken Terre Haute out very easily."

## BMV gender bill is shelved

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana lawmakers have shelved a bill that would've made it more difficult for residents to change their gender on driver's licenses or state identification cards (Indiana Public Media). The bill was removed from the Indiana House's calendar Tuesday. It would've required an amended birth certificate to complete a gender identity change on credentials issued by the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles. The bureau currently accepts certified doctor's notes when processing gender changes. The bill came after the BMV announced it was offering the third gender identifier "X" for transgender residents or nonbinary residents who don't identify as male or female. House Speaker Brian Bosma says lawmakers decided to hold off following concerns about birth certificate inconsistencies. He says a special task force or study committee may need to study the issue.

## Braun files health pricing bill

FORT WAYNE — Freshman U.S. Sen. Mike Braun has introduced legislation that would require health insurance providers to disclose to their customers the prices of all covered medical procedures (Francisco, [Fort Wayne Journal Gazette](#)). Braun, R-Ind., announced Wednesday the filing of the True Price Act to Bring Transparency to Healthcare Costs. The bill would have insurers tell enrollees the negotiated price for each medical service covered by the plan, including the amounts paid by the plan and any cost-sharing amounts charged to enrollees. The bill would require that the information be posted on the insurer's website and made available in paper

version upon request. "Transparency is the key to holding healthcare providers accountable and empowers consumers to get the best healthcare possible for the lowest price," Braun said in a statement.

## King blasts DeVos on Special Olympics

EVANSVILLE — As usual, Lilly King wasn't shy. The Evansville native and newly professional swimmer hopped on Twitter Tuesday night to criticize the latest dumb move by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos (Langhorne, [Evansville Courier & Press](#)). DeVos, who haunts public school teachers' dreams like an affluent Freddy Krueger, recently proposed slicing \$18 million in federal assistance from the Special Olympics. It's part of a proposed \$7 billion machete hack to the DOE budget overall. "We are not doing our children any favors when we borrow from their future in order to invest in systems and policies that are not yielding better results," DeVos is quoted as saying in a prepared statement released before a House subcommittee hearing. King took exception to that. "What is wrong with you?????" the two-time Olympic gold medalist and world-record holder tweeted. "Like actually Betsy DeVos, what's your deal?"

## Muncie official 'double dipping'

MUNCIE — Doug Marshall, current president of the Muncie City Council, might have to choose between his job with the city sanitary district and his office as an elected official ([Muncie Star Press](#)). He could also be faced with paying back the sanitary district nearly \$200,000. That's because of a letter from the Indiana State Board of Accounts audit that says he's being examined for a violation of what's commonly referred to as the "double dipping" law. "I was shocked," Marshall said of receiving the letter in February.