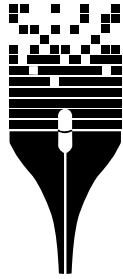


# The Howey Political Report



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## “QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“O’Bannon is not talking to us, and he is not talking to the leadership of the Senate...”

- State Sen. Allen Paul, R-Richmond, predicting tax restructuring won’t pass in the 2002 legislative session, to the Muncie Star Press

## Baron takes political risks on fast track

### Hill’s vote upsets labor, pleases ag

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**, *in Washington*

Democratic Rep. Baron Hill (9th CD) was the center of attention on Dec. 6 in the hours before the House vote on a bill that would give the president increased power to negotiate trade agreements.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick called Hill to lobby on behalf of the fast track bill. Hill also heard from the White House. Earlier in the day, he talked to House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, who wanted Hill to oppose fast track.

"It was as intense as anything I've ever seen on Capitol Hill," said Kent Yeager, director of government relations for the Indiana Farm Bureau. Yeager and bureau president Harry Pearson were in Hill's office moments before he went to the House floor to vote, urging him to support fast track.

**In the end, that's what Hill did** -- becoming one of 21 Democrats to vote "yes" on the measure, which passed 215-214. Hill made a tough political choice, which likely will have positive and negative consequences in 2002 -- harming his standing with labor but bolstering it with business and agriculture.

Generally speaking, on one side of the fast track fault line is labor, which opposes fast track because it fears that low-wage competition and low workplace standards in foreign countries will eliminate U.S. jobs. On the other side are businesses and agricultural interests, who are pushing to open international markets. Fast track authority allows Congress to approve or reject a trade agreement but not amend it. Fast track advocates say that foreign countries are

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# TICKER T A P E

**LTV TO SHUT DOWN TODAY BARRING MIRACLE:** After more than half a century in business, the LTV Corporation will soon shut its doors, barring a government-supplied miracle (New York Times). One of the nation's biggest steel makers, LTV put its mills earlier this month on what is called "hot idle," which would allow the company to restart them quickly if a government-backed loan comes through at the last minute. But if help does not arrive by today, the company will ask the bankruptcy judge to end its labor contract. A shutdown would leave about 70,000 retirees and recent employees with no or reduced pensions and health care benefits, and force the government to pick up at least some of the tab for what remains. The pension costs alone would be at least \$2 billion. In the steel industry alone, 12 companies have shut down since 1998, according to the United Steelworkers of America, and 17 more are now in bankruptcy. The steelworkers union is lobbying for government assistance — as are Bethlehem Steel, U.S. Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh, which want permission to consolidate in an effort to avoid LTV's fate.

**EDUCATION BILL PASSES SENATE:** Congress sent

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## Baron, *from page 1*

more likely to make gut-wrenching deals to lower trade barriers if they know that Congress won't rewrite the agreement. Opponents say labor and environmental standards would erode under fast track, which wouldn't allow Congress to step in and improve the agreements.

An Indiana labor leader was still seething over Hill's stance more than a week after the fast track vote. "We don't think it was necessary for him to vote like that," said Jerry Payne, treasurer of the Indiana AFL-CIO. "I've been flooded with messages, and they're not happy." At the AFL-CIO convention in Indianapolis this week, a resolution to support Hill in 2002 was not placed before the 300 members in attendance.

Hill has benefited from strong labor support since winning his seat in 1998. Unions have given Hill \$63,000 for the 2002 race. "Labor money was prepositioned for a lot of these people," Bernadette Budde, senior vice president of the Business Industry Political Action Committee, said in reference to Hill and the 20 other House Democratic fast track supporters.

But for now, at least, labor is steamed. "We never gave this to Bill Clinton, why the hell should we give it to George Bush, who is wrapping himself in the American flag while attacking the American working family on everything from civil liberties that have long been established to workplace safties," Payne said.

Support for Hill's vote from business and agriculture may provide a countervailing positive force to labor anger. "From the agriculture point of view, he deserves a lot of credit for stepping up and voting the right way, doing the right thing," said David Lyons, vice president for government relations at LouisDreyfus, a worldwide merchant of agricultural commodities.

"We're going to do everything we can to make sure our members understand what a difficult vote this was," said Yeager. "It's about opening up other markets. That's where our opportunity is, especially for agriculture in Indiana."

Payne, however, articulates the frustration of workers who feel left behind in the global economy. He denounced corporations that see their bottom lines flourish

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## Earnest, Kittle emerge as prime contenders

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

MARION, Ind. - John Earnest anticipated being Indiana Republican Chairman in 1993. "I thought I had it," Earnest said in his Aubucare offices in this Mississinewa River city now ensconced in Dan Burton country.

Rex Early won that election by a vote. The lesson here is that these types of elections involving a constituency of fewer than two dozen are tricky. The race to replace out-going Indiana Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel probably won't be settled until close to, if not on, Jan. 23.

"I feel good about my support and my position, but if someone else enters, it could sway opinions," Earnest said before articulating his theme: "I'm tired of having a governor from the other party."

His apparent primary challenger, businessman and Phoenix Group head Jim Kittle, also was optimistic. "Getting a lot of positive feedback," Kittle said in his happy warrior mode.

**Informed and reliable** sources friendly to both Earnest and Kittle don't believe either one has the chair locked down. Nor are they dousing the chances of a compromise candidate emerging if an impasse persists.

The "compromise" candidacies appear to include 6th CD chair Jean Ann Harcourt, former State Rep. Jeff Linder, and former Clerk of Courts John Okeson, with the possibility that other names could surface.

In essence, the situation is fluid. And potentially volatile. Earnest is seen by Phoenix supporters as part of an "old guard" that has allowed the party technology and position to erode. The rap on Kittle is that he hasn't paid his dues by coming up through the party structure and there are questions about his ability to communicate a message and organize a campaign.

Early has been openly critical of Kittle, questioning whether the Phoenix

Group was simply an organization of "rich white guys wanting to choose the party's candidates." Early said that when the GOP was in fiscal straits in 1993, Kittle did not ante up. There are rampant rumors that if Kittle does not prevail on Jan. 23, his checkbook might tighten.

**Kittle refuted** the rumors by telling *HPR*, "It's hard for me to remember the checks I wrote 10 years ago. I'm sure if he asked then I would have given. But I only have records of financial history back to '93 on computer here at the office. These are what my records reflect in contributions to the Indiana Republican State Party: 1993 - \$2,500; 1994- \$2,500; 1995- \$1,250; 1996- \$2,500; 1999- \$5,000; 2000 - \$4,750; 2001- \$1,250 personal plus nearly \$12,000 from the Phoenix Group PAC.

"As for my giving in question, I think it's fairly consistent. And I have given more this year than ever," Kittle said. "Additionally, I encouraged every Phoenix member to maintain their historical giving pattern to State Committee."

Earnest downplayed any volatility with Kittle. "If I'm chair, I think there will be ample agreement that we both have the same goals."

**Earnest said he** had three specific areas of emphasis: Winning back the governor's office, communicating the message and raising money. "I would be a full-time chairman and will be at the State Committee every day, or if not, out talking about our message around the state.

Earnest added that as far as the O'Bannon administration is concerned with state finances, "This particular group has squandered it away. If I'm state chairman, the whole state is going to know why. I'm not going to be nice about it."

As for the party's prospects, Earnest said he wanted to make sure "our candidates are in the middle" and added, "I don't think we're that far away from success." ❖

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President Bush legislation Tuesday that will sharply increase federal financial aid to schools with large numbers of poor students and require yearly math and reading tests for children in grades three through eight. "These historic reforms will improve our public schools by creating an environment where every child can learn through real accountability, unprecedented flexibility for states and school districts, greater local control, more options for parents and more funding for what works," Bush said.

The Senate voted 87-10 Tuesday on the final bill, which the House approved last week 381-41. Bush said he will sign the bill early next year. Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., said, "Both sides in this debate have been required to put aside long-entrenched ideological positions. There were too many on the one side who believed that the only thing wrong with our public education system was the need for more dollars. And there were too many on the other side who believed that improving the public education system was beyond all hope and that, instead, it should be abandoned in favor of private school vouchers" (Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). "Instead, we have forged a new way, a third way, a better way, that will

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insist upon change results, and accountability in our public school system."

**LUGAR PROVISIONS IN EDUCATION BILL:** The education bill that will be approved by Congress this week and sent to the President for his signature includes Sen. Dick Lugar's comprehensive school reform initiative. The provision, drafted by Lugar and Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), stresses the need for failing schools to consider reform options and boosts the funding for the Comprehensive School Reform Program. It authorizes a public-private entity to assess school reform programs and help states, local educational agencies and schools make informed decisions regarding the implementation of quality programs. "Expanding comprehensive school reform will help struggling schools adopt efforts that will dramatically reduce retention, special education, illiteracy, and the associated costs," Lugar said.

**BILL WOULD POST 'IN GOD WE TRUST':** Public schools would be required to display the motto "In God We Trust" in every classroom, auditorium and cafeteria under a bill that a Southern Indiana senator will push when the General Assembly reconvenes next month (Lesley Stedman, Louisville Courier-Journal). "I think we

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# Winston surveys Democrat Party

INDIANAPOLIS - As he did with out-going Republican Chair Mike McDaniel last week, HPR's Brian Howey had a conversation with former Indiana Democratic Chairman Robin Winston about the state of his party.

**HPR:** What kind of a party did you hand over to Peter Manous?

**Winston:** Peter Manous would agree that we left it in great shape. We left it with the last three years setting records for fund-raising each and every year compared to four years earlier. We left him with a substantial amount of money in the bank, the most they've ever had going into an election year; in a year when there were no elections. We have left a party organization intact that has learned to use technology. We left party rules that were revised and revamped for the first time in six years. The three areas I always concentrated on were fund-raising, organizational structure, and then constituency expansion. We have funded and have strong activities among a diverse group.

**HPR:** When I talked to Mike McDaniel about the governorship, he said that state committee doesn't run gubernatorial campaigns. But Indiana Democrats have had a coordinated campaign that included the governor's race along with legislative and CD races.

**Winston:** I disagree with Mike on that one. We were intimately involved. The gubernatorial campaign was housed in the same location as the state party. We saved the O'Bannon campaign lots of money because they didn't have to go out and lease space. We had staff - when you called the state Democratic Party's front desk, you were connected through to Tom New -- so they didn't have to hire a receptionist. They didn't buy a separate copier, separate fax, separate mail drop. This is something I really worked on. Remember in 1996, the O'Bannon campaign was in a different location -- same building; different offices. I told Tom we weren't going

to do that. We're going to put everybody together and the end result was we created a true coordinated effort. And I can tell you, there was a true synergy when our folks went out into the field. One would say, "Hey I'm going to LaPorte" and someone else would say, "Oh really, can you take this up to Shaw (Friedman) or Scott (Pelath) for us?" We also took state party money and paid for field staff in each Congressional District. They were paid very well and each was outfitted with laptops and CD ROMs. We provided infrastructure and networked office space.

**HPR:** So the coordinated concept very much included Congressional campaigns.

**Winston:** Oh, yes, we were all on the same floor.

**HPR:** How have things changed during your tenure as political director and chair?

**Winston:** They've all been incremental. You can look at the numbers; there's no way I can fudge them. Our J-J Dinner went from around 700 people to 900, to 1,600 and the last one was 1,500 and we had people eating in another room and that was for Pete Visclosky. So it's involvement. That's what I hear from young folks and people who have been involved in the party. The second area is we've preserved our past. We did the Conrad Quiz bridging our past to the future. We had Young Democrats at French Lick where they read the Conrad book. These people knew the answers; knew the individuals and they were 24- and 25-year-old YDs who weren't even born when Larry Conrad was first elected. We extended this party. It wasn't just rhetoric. I came in one Saturday and downstairs the Indiana Democratic African-American Caucus was meeting,

about 40 people from around the state. Upstairs the Hispanic Caucus was meeting; there were about 25 or 26. And on the same floor the Young Democrats were getting a mail piece out. This was on a Saturday in a non-election year. If there's anything I'm most proud about, it's the sheer involvement of the people in the party. When I became chairman, there were 38 members of the Gold Club - people who write \$5,000 checks annually. It's at 139 now.

**HPR:** Where is your technology now?

**Winston:** It has vastly improved. I can take the data from Fred Yang, look at it and say, we're trailing with women under 50. I can say, "Why don't you get me precincts 40 to 60 percent female, D-performance, 50 years old who voted in '98. I can get that data within about an hour. That's how good our technology is.

**HPR:** What was your mantra?

**Winston:** My theme throughout my chairmanship was "Peace in the Valley." When someone would come to me and say "so and so doesn't like so and so," I'd say, "the reality is we all have to work together here." The tone that we've set was literally on my door: "The politics of exclusion leads to the politics of defeat." I really do believe that. If you exclude people, you end up losing. We don't have the ability to exclude people. You look at the guys on the other side of the aisle and they've already got in-fighting for the next chairman. You've got in-fighting about their gubernatorial candidates. They are excluding people.

**HPR:** The Democrats have had what I call a continuity of leadership, not only on the gubernatorial level, but also as chair.

**Winston:** It makes a big difference. Remember I inherited the seat from a guy who got lots of kudos and went on to become national chairman. We always tried to respect Joe and he did the same for us. Peter was a guy I talked to five days a week. He has been loyal and very

supportive. I'm sure he'll carry on the tradition. What I'm most proud of is we institutionalized things that will lead to continued success for the party. For example, in January there will be a Bob Pastrick reception to honor local elected officials. We made that resolution and its hanging on the wall at State Party. State chairs in the future will have to have a Bob Pastrick Reception. In April we do something every year to make a capital improvement in the King-Kennedy Park here in Indianapolis in conjunction with the Young Democrats and the African-American Caucus. In August we do the Conrad Awards, Camp O'Bannon and Evan Bayh Storytelling. We have institutionalized success.

**HPR:** McDaniel and Republicans say it's a lot easier being a party chair when you have the governor behind you. What are the prospects for 2004?

**Winston:** It means a lot. People want to be part of success with a winning party. That's why people show up to events. Victory begets success. Success begets support. Support begets victory. It's the domino effect. But it also depends on how you frame up your goals. We did not win the attorney general race. On election night, I didn't hear them touting that they really did win it. They focused their efforts on governor and they lost. In 2000, they won a U.S. Senate race, they won the state and they won attorney general. You have to focus on what's important. We think in 2004 winning Evan Bayh and the governor's race is absolutely crucial to our party's future.

**HPR:** What are the party's prospects in the Indiana House and Congress?

**Winston:** We're losing Mellinger, Dvorak and Bodiker. It's going to be tough. Paying good salaries, having good staff gives us continuity for the future. What I tell staff is don't become jaded, let people get involved because everyone has a constituency. ❖

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ought to be doing all we can to teach our younger generations about high morals," said Sen. Johnny Nugent, R-Lawrenceburg. Nugent modeled his Senate Bill 89 on a Mississippi law that took effect July 1.

**DOBIS CHALLENGES O'BANNON-KERNAN, INDIANA NEWS MEDIA OVER TAXES:** State Rep. Chet Dobis repeatedly tendered challenges to the administration and the media to educate the public on the triple conundrum facing the state: the results of the general property tax reassessment mandated by the state Supreme Court in 1998, the tax restructuring plan and the budget deficit plan during a meeting involving nine legislators and the Times of Northwest Indiana. "We need a marketing plan," Dobis said about the issues confronting taxpayers. "Joe Six-Pack doesn't understand it. Until they see (the bottom line), they can't understand it. I would sooner get beat for doing something positive (for the long term) than putting on a Band-Aid." Sen. William Alexa, D-Valparaiso, raised concerns about the central piece of the tax plan. "The problem with the plan is the shelter allowance," Alexa said. Said State Rep. Bob Kuzman, a close confidant of House Speaker John Gregg, "It needs to be done this session. We are losing

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business every day. We need to keep business coming in."

**HAMILTON SEEKS DISTRICT 56 HOUSE SEAT:** When incumbent Richard Boddiker announced he would not seek re-election to the Indiana House's newly drawn District 56 seat next year, New Castle resident Donnie Hamilton decided to seek the Democratic nomination (Darrel Radford, *New Castle Courier-Times*). Hamilton lost to State Rep. Tom Saunders three years ago. Hamilton is a Chrysler High School social science teacher.

**POLL SAYS DOCKSIDE OKAY:** Hoosiers don't oppose dockside gambling because they don't see it as an expansion of gambling. So says a poll taken by the Indiana Casino Association. They also favor the additional \$131 million a year in state revenue the change could produce (Steve Walsh, *Gary Post-Tribune*). A bill that had something for nearly every gambling interest was heard in the House this year, but languished in the Senate. Sen. Earline Rogers, D-Gary, and Sen. Johnny Nugent, R-Lawrenceburg, are drafting a bill for the Senate in 2002 that would lift the requirement that gambling boats cruise but would not include casino barges. It also would include a type of

## Aguilera warns Democrats on Latino vote

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

State Rep. Louis Mahern decided to hang around the Bulen Symposium after the panel reviewing his method of redrawing Indiana House maps was over.

Asked if he was interested in what fellow Democrat State Rep. John Aguilera, who was featured on a subsequent panel, had to say, Mahern simply muttered, "That asshole."

What followed was an emotional presentation by the East Chicago legislator, who saw his district shift from Whiting, Hammond, Gary, Griffith, Schererville and East Chicago toward more suburban, wealthier Republican areas of Highland, Munster and Dyer. He ended up with only a third of East Chicago and only 10 percent of his old district.

"I had a 30 percent Hispanic district," said the second-term Aguilera, who counts his ancestry as Mexican, Puerto Rican and Irish. "I did not vote for the map. I was hoping to see significantly more of the community stay intact, particularly for Hispanics. It was a grab for incumbencies."

The word circulating through the Statehouse late last April was that Aguilera might not only vote against the maps -- which he did -- but that he might challenge them in the courts.

He told the *Times of Northwest Indiana* last July that, "It is the Hispanics of Indiana whose interests and desires to have a voice in state government are being shunted aside in favor of partisan politics."

Aguilera was warned that a challenge to the maps would be dangerous. "John will find out relatively quickly that he didn't just shoot himself in the foot, he shot himself in the head. This is suicide," said State Rep. Chet Dobis, D-Merrillville.

There was some speculation that Aguilera might be positioning himself to

succeed East Chicago Mayor Bob Pastrick in 2003 by making the maps a populist issue with city Latinos.

At the Bulen Symposium at IUPUI, Aguilera said it was the Republicans who "tried to put a 45 percent Hispanic district together" for the East Chicago-Whiting-Hammond area, but it was the House Democrats who dropped it. "That was unfortunate," Aguilera said.

"The Democratic Party is taking it for granted that this community will vote one way. It just doesn't happen any more. If you could not see how obvious it was, look at George Bush and the Republicans in 2000 and it showed in the numbers. Take a look at New York City and you'll see the Hispanic vote was 52 percent for Bloomberg."

Prof. Steven Voss of the University of Kentucky Department of Political Science noted that Latinos backed Bush with 31 percent of their vote, but added that a significant percentage of that came from the large Cuban community in South Florida as a reaction to the Elian Gonzalez case.

Voss added that creating minority-specific districts tends to polarize legislatures because it brings in candidates outside mainstream politics.

"It's a new day. You can't put them in one category," Aguilera said. "What's unfortunate is the Democrats are going to try and take me out. I really felt like it was done to save the incumbents."

Mahern defended his role in the map-making, saying he asked Aguilera and Reps. Earl Harris, D-East Chicago, and Charlie Brown, D-Gary, to work it out among themselves. "I told them, 'Redraw it any way you want,' and he wouldn't do it. It's more Hispanic now that it was."

As for Aguilera's perceived political troubles, Mahern said, "That's what happens when you tick off both Pastrick and Stiglich."

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## Mahern's overall analysis

Mahern said that he and Sen. Patricia Miller, the Indianapolis Republican who drew the Senate maps, "got along famously" because they decided not to "get involved in each others business. Had we not had that agreement, we'd probably still be there."

Mahern said, "There were a number of Republicans who came up to me who acknowledged they ended up with better districts who voted against the maps and there were Democrats who ended up with districts who came up to me and called me an SOB who voted for the maps."

In the end, Mahern said he created 42 Democratic districts, compared to 39 Democratic districts in 1991. He said that in the 1991 maps, there are 14 Democrats occupying so-called Republican seats,

and not a single Republican holding a Democratic district. "The big key for Democrats is going to be whether these eight incumbents run for re-election," he said.

Out-going Indiana Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel told the Symposium that he "applauded Mahern" for the job he did. "He served his party well," McDaniel said. "In the Senate we could have drawn two or three more Republican districts, but leadership was worried about communities of interests."

Former Indiana Democratic Chairman Robin Winston chided McDaniel on the Senate maps, saying, "Well, if I had 32 seats, I'd be benevolent, too."

"You would not," McDaniel responded.

"I would, too," Winston emphasized.



## Indiana 2002 Racing Form

**Secretary of State 2002:** Republican: Kent Benson, Mike Delph, Deputy Secretary of State Todd Rokita, Richard Mourdock, Dr. John McGoff. **Democrat:** Bloomington Mayor John Fernandez. **Libertarian:** Paul Hager. **1994 Results:** Gilroy (R) 902,100, Jeffers (D) 542,539, Dillon (L) 32,483, Knight (A) 13,948. **1998 Results:** Gilroy 828,557, Little (D) 652,565, Dillon (L) 51,775. **2002 Forecast:** Here's the dilemma for Indiana Republicans, many (including party leaders) appear to be starstruck with the idea of former basketball star Kent Benson heading the 2002 ticket. Filing bankruptcy, going through a messy divorce, having a DUI or losing an election don't automatically exclude someone from office. History is replete of examples of people

bouncing back. Usually there is the factor of time (i.e. time heals all wounds) and that's what makes Benson's past financial problems unusual. He has been involved in three bankruptcies between 1991 and 1999, as detailed in a story last weekend by Susan Taylor of the *Evansville Courier & Press*. There is also a 1998 tax warrant out of Lawrence County totalling \$6,500. Benson said he believes the people of Indiana will understand his difficulties and not hold them against him. Court records filed in U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Indiana show the Benson-Egan dealership had 209 creditors; assets of about \$48,000; and liabilities of about \$765,000. That bankruptcy case was closed in July 1995. Bankruptcy records show Benson also filed bankruptcy personally as well as for businesses he owned: K & M Benson Associates and All American Estate Planning. All three bankruptcies were filed under one case number Dec. 4, 1998, and closed out March 30, 1999, totalling 14 creditors; about \$379,000 in assets, and about \$516,000 in liabilities. "It is more important the way I handled it and took full responsibility," Benson said. The critical question for Indiana Republicans is this: Has there been enough time between Benson's financial troubles and his ability to lead the state ticket in 2002? Democrats we've talked to are saying things like, "We should be so lucky...." **Status:** *Tossup.*

- Brian A. Howey ❖

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slot machine at horse racing tracks. Such a bill's fate in the Senate is uncertain at best and even if it got through the legislature, it would face a governor who sees dockside as an expansion of gambling.

**PORTER COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS CUT THEIR PAY:** The County Council on Monday asked all department heads to look at cutting 10 percent from their 2002 budgets to solve the county's short-term cash crunch, even as council members began advocating for a local income tax to provide a long-term fix (Robin Beisen, *Times of Northwest Indiana*). And, they started with themselves. Council members voted to reduce their individual salaries by 10 percent -- about \$1,000 less per council member per year, beginning next year.

**INDIANA FINANCE BOARD APPROVES PORTER COUNTY LOANS:** A nearly \$10 million infusion of state cash is on its way to financially strapped Porter County, which stands to lose millions of dollars in tax revenues from bankrupt Bethlehem Steel (Terry Burns, *Times of Northwest Indiana*). The State Board of Finance on Monday unanimously approved a \$3 million loan package for the county and other struggling local governments. The three-member

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board also endorsed a plan that provides the Duneland schools with \$6.3 million in advance tuition payments.

**McKINLEY ASSASSIN PHOTO HEADED TO PRESIDENTIAL MUSEUM:** A mug shot of President William McKinley's assassin found at the Hannah Lindahl Children's Museum will be given to McKinley's presidential library (Bryan Coppens, *South Bend Tribune*). The photograph of Leon F. Czolgosz turned up unexpectedly last year amid a pile of memorabilia from the Mishawaka High School Class of 1894. A note on the envelope in which the photograph was found indicates that it was one of five prints made at police headquarters in Buffalo, N.Y., on Sept. 6, 1901, the day McKinley was shot. The children's museum's board opted to send it to the McKinley Memorial Library in Niles, Ohio, which agreed to put it on permanent display.

**TOUGH DECISIONS FOR NEW ALBANY MAYOR:** New Albany Mayor Regina Overton's second year in office began with a bang Jan. 2 when police contract negotiators angrily rejected a city wage offer. The next day unhappy residents of a rural area north of Indiana University Southeast protested Overton-supported plans to construct a road through their neighborhood to link two industrial parks. A few days later the Overton administration announced

# COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

**Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune*** -

Not often do people plead for a tax increase. But six speakers did just that at the hearing on taxes conducted in South Bend by the Indiana House Ways and Means Committee. They backed the proposed 50-cent-a-pack increase in the state's currently low cigarette tax. Heck, most of them actually would like an even larger increase. After all, they aren't looking at this as increasing a tax but providing the closest thing to a cure for cancer now available. Indiana, with a 15.5-cent tax, ranks 44th among the states, lower than just about every place but in the big tobacco states. You can't help but think that the cheap smokes are one of the reasons why Indiana was found to have the fourth highest adult smoking rate in the nation. Why the percentage of high school students smoking is higher than the national average. Why the percentage of Hoosier women smoking during pregnancy is fourth highest in the nation. And why 10,300 Hoosiers die each year from tobacco-related illnesses. Don't get the idea the plea for a cigarette tax hike was unanimous. Seven people representing the views of cigarette retailers spoke in opposition to the increase proposed by Gov. Frank O'Bannon. The extra 50 cents a pack in Indiana would -- cigarette retailers fear and those concerned with health hope -- curtail sales, especially among the kids. And that could cost a few clerk jobs in places where cigarette sales are a major part of the business. Arguing that this is wrong and smokes should remain cheap to keep the jobs is kind of like claiming that nothing should be done to lower the crime rate because that could cost some jobs among prison guards. Let's think of the priorities. ❖

**Susan Taylor, *Evansville Courier & Press*** - Here are some presents that will probably not be under any Christmas

tree in Vanderburgh County this season. To the 8th District Democrats from the 8th District Republicans: a candidate who can give GOP 8th District Congressman John Hostettler a run in 2002. Earlier this year, the state Democratic legislators redrew the district, adding Terre Haute, where Democrats are strong. The problem is that Democrats have not been able to find a strong candidate to take on Hostettler. Political newcomer Brian Hartke of Newburgh, the nephew of former Evansville mayor and U.S. Sen. Vance Hartke, looks like the likely person to take on Hostettler, but Vanderburgh County Democratic officeholders gave Hartke their support by only one vote. ❖

**Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*** - The flip-flop is a campaign media consultant's slam dunk. When the opponent voted first one way, then another, or said yes then voted no: Flip-flop. The TV commercials just write themselves. Rep. Mark Souder hasn't just tiptoed into this political minefield, he belly flopped. All year long, Souder has been saying he wouldn't support an education bill with mandatory testing for public school children. He not only opposed federal legislation that included the required tests, he was adamantly, emphatically, unalterably opposed to the concept -- even when President Bush, the leader of his party, said the tests were necessary. A few comments from Souder in May: "Hey, I'll take Bush any day over Gore, but it doesn't mean I have to agree with him every time and say 'yes sir' and salute." Souder voted against the bill in the Education Committee. He voted "no" when it initially came to the House floor. Then, last week, after the House and Senate versions had been reconciled, a final vote was held. Souder voted "yes." Is this the classic flip-flop? Perhaps, although I have yet to hear a peep of criticism. ❖



## Baron Hill, *from page 2*

ish after they fire workers to cut costs and become more competitive. "What we need is a revolt in the streets, and this country isn't too far from it," Payne said. "Workers are asking, 'Why is it that we give everything to the corporations? What about me?' The global economy starts at home."

Hill's support for fast track put him at odds with almost every traditional Democratic constituency. "The 21 Democrats who vote for TPA (Trade Promotion Authority, another name for fast track) were very brave," said Budde. "That vote was based simply on what they believed was good or not good for their districts and their understanding of what the new issue paradigm is. They were saying, 'We are who we are.'"

**But what a New Democrat** is on trade remains a question. Hill and Rep. Tim Roemer (D-3rd CD) are both New Democrats. But Roemer, who supported Permanent Normal Trade Relations for China (PNTR) and other trade measures over the years, voted against fast track. "Our trade philosophy should include worker training and assistance as a priority, rather than a last-minute bargaining concession," Roemer said in a statement after the vote. "Again, this fast track proposal fails to establish that priority."

In his statement after the vote, Hill said: "I understand that many Hoosier workers fear that the global economy and international trade threaten their jobs. I share their concern that new trade agree-

ments can sometimes cause casualties in the American workforce. New opportunities in international trade will also be a powerful job creation force. Exports support nearly 250,000 Indiana jobs already, even though some businesses cannot sell their products in certain markets."

### **On the Republican side, Reps.**

Mark Souder (4th CD) and Steve Buyer (5th CD) voted in favor of fast track after opposing it in 1998. Souder told the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette that he switched his vote because of deals the administration offered to protect textiles, agricultural products, and steel. Buyer told the newspaper he switched his vote because he trusts President Bush more than he trusted President Clinton.

Now the focus turns to the Senate, where another New Democrat, Evan Bayh, is undecided on the issue. A fast track bill that differs from the House version has emerged from committee, but the Senate will probably not address fast track until next year. If the House and Senate versions of the bill differ, it would trigger a dicey conference committee.

Bayh, who voted in favor of China PNTR, said he would look carefully at how the fast track bill addresses the environment and labor. "These are much more complicated deals than they used to be," he said. Saying it is important to increase trade, he added that it is imperative to "prepare Americans to meet the challenges of trade and the global economy."



## TICKER T A P E

its plans for stricter regulation and inspection of rental apartments and houses, igniting a series of protests by many of the city's landlords. And that was all in January (Ben Z. Hershberg, Louisville Courier Journal). "We had some tough decisions to make," Overton said in an interview, acknowledging that her second year in office was a contentious one. But, she said, it also was a year of important achievements under difficult circumstances. And she thinks many of the tough decisions will lead to a better future for New Albany. Others have a different view of the Republican mayor's second year. "We feel some of the missteps she made were political suicide," said Dow O'Neal, president of the police union. ❖

**The  
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**Thank You, readers and sources,  
for making 2001 of *The Howey Political Report*  
the best year yet (with many more to come!)**

**Happy Holidays**

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