



Gov. Daniels on government reform: 'We need to discuss'

HPR subscribers, guests will lead the way

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

Gov. Mitch Daniels asked the question: "Do we need 292 school corporations in this state -- some serving less than 1,000 students?"

He was speaking before 200 community leaders in Lafayette earlier this week. He didn't answer the question per se, but he explained further, as reported by Max Showalter of the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*. "This is a matter we should begin discussing. I understand change is sometimes difficult."

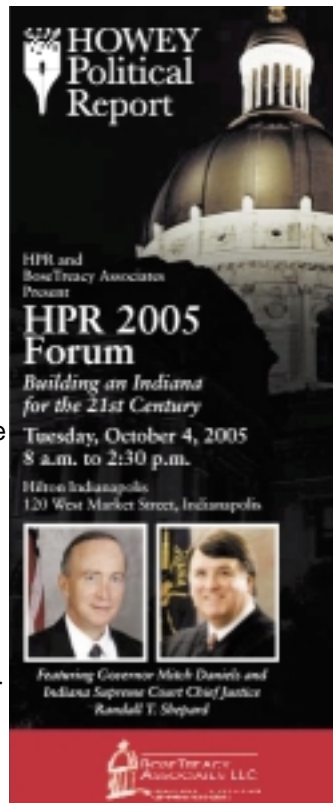
And then a second question from the governor: "Is this too much change too fast? This state has 'lost time' to make up for. We've stood still too long."

Beginning at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 4, subscribers and guests of *The Howey Political Report* will lead the way with a riveting HPR Forum -- *Building an Indiana for the 21st Century* -- that will include the leaders of all three branches of state government, including a historical perspective keynote address from Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard on Indiana's 1851 Constitution.

Leading municipal and county leaders, economic development officials such as the Chamber's Kevin Brinegar and Pat Kiely of the Indiana Manufacturer's Association, House Speaker Brian C. Bosma, Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, and Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard will discuss government reform. Former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis will give insights after her year-long research on state and local government reform as charged by then-Gov. Joseph Kernan. It will be an unprecedented concentration of key movers and shakers taking on tough issues.

Reservations for the event will close Friday, Sept. 30, and can be made by calling 317-254-0535 or e-mailing HPR at jackhowey@howeypolitics.com.

On the very day Gov. Daniels was making his remarks in Lafayette, the



"It reaffirmed the central holding in *Roe v. Wade*."

— Judge John G. Roberts, to the Senate Judiciary Committee, on the 1992 case *Planned Parenthood Vs. Casey*. If approved, Roberts will be the second Hoosier Supreme Court justice, and the first chief justice

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Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington Writer
Jack E. Howey, Editor

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Call 317-254-0535.

The Howey Political Report
PO Box 40265
Indianapolis, IN 46240-0265.

www.howeypolitics.com
BrianHowey@howeypolitics.com

Indianapolis Office: 317-506-0883.
Indianapolis Fax: 317-254-0535.
Washington, DC Office: 202-256-5822.
Business Office: 317-254-0535.

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Hoosier landscape was alive and crackling with what “candidate” Daniels described in 2004 as a “freight train of change.” At the Indiana Statehouse, Allen County and Fort Wayne officials took part in a legislative Government Efficiency Commission hearing on potential consolidation efforts there.

“For us to be progressive we ought to be able to take a look at the structure and ask, ‘is there a better way?’” Allen County Council President Darren Vogt, R-Fort Wayne, said (Kelly, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). State Sen. David Long, R-Fort Wayne, said, “We’re a county that needs to reinvent its local economy. We can’t allow the structure of local government to be an impediment to that change.”

Long noted that any attempt for charter government in the 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly will likely come from Evansville and Vanderburgh County, which would provide a pilot project for how restructuring could work.

On that very day, St. Joseph and Pike counties opted for Central time in response to the historic Daylight-saving time legislation passed last April. Significant change has come to Indiana’s bureaucratic alphabet soup: FSSA, BMV, to a new Department of Agriculture.

A Con-Con mockup

HPR has obtained a mock-up of a proposed Indiana General Assembly joint resolution calling for the creation of a Constitutional Convention.

Mark Shublak, a lawyer at IceMiller, told HPR, “Some of the board members for the Indiana Lawyer’s Chapter of the Federalist Society have been thinking about this matter. There is a way to conduct a convention that is limited in scope; one that would preserve the Supreme Court’s jurisprudence in the area of Indiana’s Bill of Rights, but also address critical concerns for the way the executive branch governs.”

The issues would include taxation, rural vs. urban flexibility, and true executive branches for state and county government where clerical positions would be eliminated and voters would elect those who make policy and levy taxes.

Shublak continued, “We need to get people thinking about the specifics as reasonable in terms of updating the way Indiana governs.”

In the mock-up, a “single public question” would be submitted to Hoosier voters in a general election authorizing the convening of a constitutional convention.

“If the convention is authorized to propose statutory changes, any changes of the statutes recommended by the convention and approved by voters at that general election would thereafter be subject to amendment or repeal by the legislature and the governor.”

If approved by voters, “the people shall elect delegates to the convention who shall serve in the event that holding of the convention is authorized. Two delegates shall

be elected from each of the 50 Senate districts for a total of 100 elected delegates to the convention.” Delegates would run in a non-partisan election. Nomination petitions would be filed with the Indiana attorney general’s office, which would then forward the petitions to the 92 county clerks. In addition to the 100 delegates elected by voters, an additional 10 delegates would be appointed: two each by the governor, Senate president, Senate minority leader, House speaker and House minority leader.

The governor would open the convention and preside at its first session until permanent officers were selected. The Indiana chief justice would appoint a committee of three retired members of the judiciary, no more than two from any one political party, to review proposals prepared by the convention “and advise the convention whether such proposals are in compliance with the convention’s instructions as voted by the people.”

When the convention by a majority vote of its members agrees upon a proposal of amendments to the state constitution, the proposals would be submitted to the people in a general election for approval or disapproval. The attorney general would certify the results of the election to the governor, who would issue a proclamation setting forth the full text of the proposal adopted.

Other states ponder

The idea of a Con-Con and government reform isn’t new. Nearly a century ago, Gov. Thomas R. Marshall, who described himself as a “progressive with brakes on,” pushed for a Con-Con, in addition to establishing the State Board of Accounts, child labor and weekly wage laws, and voter registration. He offered up what is known as the “Marshall Constitution” in 1911, but the Indiana Supreme Court found it unconstitutional in 1912.

Just this year, a poll of New Jersey voters said they favored a constitutional convention there to address a familiar issue ... property taxes. In Florida, Senate President Tom Lee and Gov. Jeb Bush have advocated a Con-Con, saying that the current document has become clogged with initiatives. The Florida legislature has begun a two-year review.

Needed: Enlightened leadership

When Gov. Daniels spoke in Lafayette, it was in a community that has seen two of its school corporations publicly discuss a merger. “Lafayette is an especially meaningful place to come at this point in Indiana’s history,” Daniels said. “In so many ways, the better future that we dream of for ourselves is very visible in this community; a community of enlightened leadership and people who understand change.”

On Oct. 4, that opportunity to explore a 21st Century Indiana will come to the HPR Forum. ❖



Baron Hill to make 'competency' an issue; speculates on a draft

INDIANAPOLIS - Former U.S. Rep. Baron Hill sat down for this interview with HPR Publisher Brian A. Howey on Sept. 8 as he prepares for his third race against U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel.

HPR: What are people talking about as you prepare for 2006?

Baron Hill: I can tell you what I heard just 15 minutes ago. I heard conversation from people out on the street in Indianapolis. It was all what they were paying for gasoline in various locations around the city. I bet I heard about 20 people talking about the high price of gasoline. I hear disgruntled, kind of angry conversation, not only here in Indianapolis, but down in the 9th Congressional District. And I'm not talking about political events. I'm talking about at the grocery store. It's constant. Iraq is kind of on the back burner. I don't hear much about that anymore.

HPR: Charlie Cook said he believed Iraq was nearing the tipping point and then Hurricane Katrina came along. What I'm struck by is we don't have many margins left anymore on energy, troops available for deployment. What kind of themes will you be striking?

Hill: One will be competency. Have the Congress and administration been competent in fighting this war? The initial military action was hugely successful, but clearly the administration didn't plan for the aftermath. They were warned about it in advance. I call that incompetency. People like Colin Powell were telling the president, "If you attack, you own it." When the president ignores that, I call it incompetency.

HPR: When you were on the Armed Services Committee, were troop levels debated?

Hill: They were not. Several of us tried to bring it up, but when you're in the minority your voice doesn't carry very loud. The leadership chose to talk more about the battle itself.

HPR: The CNN Presents several weeks back made a case that the Bush administration cherry picked the intelligence used to make the case for the war in Iraq, particularly on weapons of mass destruction.

Hill: They lied, Brian. I was one of only 35 Democrats that voted for this based upon that evidence. When I saw the evidence, I voted for it. When I talked to Walter (Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C.), he told me, "Baron, we were deceived." When you have a very conservative Republican like Walter Jones say those kinds of things, and then you have my experience, the people are beginning to wake up and say, "Hey, was the president being straightforward with us on this war?" I think

people are beginning to scratch their heads.

HPR: I'm amazed that the reaction to this cherry picking hasn't had much of an impact.

Hill: I'll tell you why. When it's Democrats saying this administration lied, it's seen as political, and therefore it doesn't carry weight. I think most Democrats have been reluctant to come right out and say, "This president and this administration lied to the American people about WMD, about classified evidence they presented to Members of Congress. It sounds too political. Frankly, the national press hasn't focused on this. But more and more this is being heard and more and more the public is beginning to say, "Hmm. What happened here?"

HPR: Rep. Pence says we're winning the war in Iraq. What is the solution for Iraq? It doesn't appear we can just leave.

Hill: Sen. Lugar is right. We need more troops over there to stabilize. Whether we have the will to do that is where the president is. That's what I'm talking about with this competency factor. There's a level of competency in Congress and the administration that people are seeing.

HPR: We're seeing some National Guard units coming on to their third tours. Are we looking at a draft?

Hill: When Charlie Rangel introduced that bill, nobody believed it would ever see the light of day. When I left Congress, the idea was, we'll probably not have draft. I don't know where Congress is right now, but when I heard Max Cleland talk last night that recruitment into the National Guard is down 46 percent, my immediate thought was, I wonder if we're going to move to a draft. I don't know. I don't have the raw data I used to have on the Armed Services Committee anymore. My guess is, if we're down that much on those recruitments, and you've got all these problems in the world, with Afghanistan and Iraq, or if we have another hurricane down south, it makes you wonder sometimes.

HPR: Many of the people you'll be seeking votes from next year support President Bush. I heard this over and over in 2004: I don't agree with him on every issue, but I like him and trust him.

Hill: I'll talk about it indirectly. But I prefer to talk about competency and whether the needs of the 9th District are being met and addressed.

HPR: What are those needs?

Hill: One of the things I prided myself on was constituent service, whether it was Social Security or Medicare, or the Greenway project in New Albany, Clarksville and



Former Rep. Hill



Jeffersonville. I instructed my staff that the most important thing is that people's needs are taken care of in the 9th District. All of our energy was focused on that first. I'm hearing an awful lot of complaints about constituent needs not being taken care of by this Member.

HPR: Anything specific about Rep. Sodrel that you will be pointing out?

Hill: The first vote he cast was the change in the rules relating to Tom DeLay. If that's going to be your first vote, that's going to be an issue as far as I'm concerned.

HPR: Your vote on the marriage issue was decisive in 2004 and I saw the billboard on State Road 7 between Madison and North Vernon that claimed you were against religion. Will marriage come up again?

Hill: It probably will come up. But I want people to know that I am not for gay marriage, like the billboards were saying. I was the co-author of the state bill that defined marriage between a man and a woman. But, yes, I'm going to get out there and talk to ministers and priests and set the record straight. Just because I opposed a constitutional amendment doesn't mean I'm for gay marriage.

HPR: I was writing last March that energy and health care were the two "crisis" issues facing the family, not gay marriage.

Hill: Well, I'll be talking about the energy bill. It was full of pork for oil companies and Mike Sodrel voted for it. To give huge tax breaks to oil companies right now when people are paying over \$3 a gallon of gas, people need to know that. One of the big differences this time from last is that he's got a record.

HPR: Is ethanol the answer to energy self-sufficiency?

Hill: It's part of the answer. There are cars in California that are testing with 85 percent ethanol. The answer is not additional drilling. It won't make any difference how much more drilling we do, it won't make us more energy independent from the rest of the world. It is important we come up with alternative forms on how we run our cars. I think we ought to have cabinet level people in Washington waking up every day thinking, "How can we wean ourselves off foreign oil?" The Democrats have to offer alternatives. We cannot just be silent about these issues. Over the next 14 months, I plan to offer alternatives.

HPR: How will you approach your Democratic base next time. Didn't you lose your home county?

Hill: I didn't lose my home county; I won it by 95 votes. I think it was the Bush factor. All the state candidates that year lost Jackson County by 3,000 votes. I won it by 95. You like to win your county by more than 95 votes. I want to reach out to the 2,000 people who voted for Evan Bayh but didn't vote for me last time. I want to say, Don't believe everything you hear. ❖



HPR 2005 Forum: "Building an Indiana for the 21st Century" *featuring*

Chief Justice Randall
Shepard
Gov. Mitch Daniels
Speaker Brian Bosma
Mayor Bart Peterson
Mayor Graham Richard
8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Oct. 4, 2005
Hilton Hotel, Indianapolis
5.5 Hours of CLE
Accreditation

For Reservations, contact
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Tickets are \$75 for HPR subscribers; \$100 for HPR subscriber/CLE;
\$100 for non-subscribers; \$150 for non-subscriber CLE

THE
HOWEY
POLITICAL
REPORT



The Weekly Briefing On Indiana Politics



Hostettler may weather Katrina *Supporters taken by surprise, but understand*

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.
The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON -- In a congressional career dotted with controversial votes and statements, Rep. John Hostettler has always counted on a group of staunchly conservative and fiercely loyal supporters to see him through rough patches and help him win six close elections.

Last week, Hostettler stunned even his own partisans by being one of 11 House members to oppose \$51.8 billion in federal relief for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Although the 8th CD is buzzing about Hostettler's decision in the face of an outpouring of national sympathy for the Gulf Coast, it is too early to tell whether his vote will cause a breach of his political levee and wash him away in an election 14 months down the road.

Brent Grafton, Vanderburgh County GOP chairman, said he was shocked at first. "We were all surprised," he said. "John has a way of doing that."

But he said that Hostettler's base has been swayed by his argument that approving the \$51.8 billion recovery measure, along with a separate \$10 billion package, so quickly invites fraud and abuse.

Grafton cited one angry local Republican who was mollified by Hostettler's explanation for his vote, which he has articulated in one television interview while avoiding any other public statement.

"After about three hours of looking at it closer, (the Republican) decided John Hostettler was right," said Grafton. "What John has said is I want to be helpful but I want to be helpful in the right way. That has brought us all back to our senses."

Another conservative in the Hoosier congressional delegation, Rep. Mike Pence (6th CD), expressed concern about the high cost of hurricane relief before supporting Katrina relief. He also backed legislation that established an independent inspector to monitor hurricane funding.

Katrina Lacks Cultural Conservative Element

But Hostettler used less finesse and opposed relief outright. Contrary to past Hostettler dust ups -- like being arrested for carrying a loaded gun into the Louisville airport and offending a group of local breast cancer survivors by linking the disease to abortion -- the anti-Katrina-aid vote

lacked a culturally conservative component, said Robert Dion, assistant professor of American politics at the University of Evansville.

"This is a compassion issue," said Dion. "He stuck himself way out on a limb."

And the push back is harder than anything Hostettler's seen before, partly because Evansville, like many Hoosier communities, has reached out to Katrina victims. "It's way beyond the norm," said Dion. "It's the only thing on people's minds."

Hostettler's probable Democratic opponent, Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth, is attacking Hostettler on his Katrina vote. "We're going to hold John Hostettler accountable for not listening to the concerns of Hoosiers," said Ellsworth campaign manager Jay Howser. "We're going to remind folks that in a time when Hoosiers were coming together, bucking up, doing what's right for their neighbors, John Hostettler dismissed it with a wave of his hand."



Ellsworth

Democrats Contrast Katrina, Tsunami Aid

Both the Ellsworth campaign and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee are contrasting Hostettler's opposition to Katrina funding with his vote in favor of nearly \$1 billion in aid to South Asia following December's massive tsunami.

"Here's a man who voted for tsunami aid but couldn't find it within himself to vote for aid for (hurricane) victims here at home," said Sarah Feinberg, a DCCC spokeswoman. "It raises the question of how he would vote, God forbid, if a disaster were to hit Indiana."

Hostettler's office would not respond directly to the tsunami attack. Hostettler aide Kate Stusrud faxed a one-sentence statement from her boss that was dated Sept. 8: "Within seven weeks after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, federal taxpayers will have spent 50 percent more than the combined annual budgets of the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama."

Washington Republicans have a sanguine attitude about the political storm swirling around Hostettler. "Everyone knows that Mr. Hostettler is a fiscal conservative," said Carl Forti, a spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee. "He's been that way since (voters) elected him to Congress. They keep electing him, so I assume they support his values and ideals."

Hostettler can tend to give the NRCC heartburn because he has won with more than 53 percent of the vote only once and serves an area that is majority Democratic. He also traditionally lags behind his opponents in fundraising. As



of June 30, Ellsworth had \$135,847 on hand and Hostettler had \$994 in the bank, according to Federal Election Commission filings.

"This is no different than any other cycle," said Forti. "Mr. Hostettler raises all of his money late. He was outraged in the last cycle."

Forti said Democrats are attacking Hostettler on Katrina aid to mask their own deficiencies. "Right now, they don't have a top-tier candidate," he said. "They tried to get a better one and they couldn't. That's their biggest problem."

Feinberg asserted that the 8th CD is near the top of the DCCC agenda. "It's clear how out of touch John Hostettler is with the district--and what a good candidate Sheriff Ellsworth is," she said.

Despite the electoral risks, a former longtime Hoosier GOP congressman, who used to represent part of Hostettler's district, said his anti-Katrina vote was cast more with conviction than calculation. "Knowing John, he's not worrying about the politics, I'm sure," said retired Rep. John Myers. "He did what he thought was right." ❖

A Hoosier boy on the beach, Judge John G. Roberts

At the Pigeon Creek settlement, while the structure of his bones, the build and hang of his torso and limbs, took shape, other elements, invisible yet permanent, traced their lines in the tissues of his head and heart.

- Carl Sandburg, "Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years and the War Years"

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

This was one of my favorite Sandburg passages, describing a young Abraham Lincoln, who grew up in Indiana, arriving, literally, within hours of our Statehood and finally leaving as a strapping young man in 1829.

I thought of this passage as I watched Judge John G. Roberts brilliantly pass muster during three days of Senate Judiciary Committee hearings. Roberts is poised to be the next great Hoosier; our second Supreme Court justice (Sherman Minton was the first), and our first Chief Justice.



Roberts grew up in Long Beach, Ind., just a few miles away from where I was raised in next door Michigan City. We are virtually the same age, though I never knew him. But our paths certainly must have crossed during our idyllic boyhoods, at Washington Park, at the dunes, at Scholl's Dairy, watching a Red Devils football game at Ames Field, or the summer festival parade marching down Franklin Street.

Judge Roberts has been known to talk about his Indiana roots, including the day he introduced himself to the nation. "Senators Lugar and Bayh talked of my boyhood back home in Indiana," Roberts began. "I think all of us retain from the days of our youth certain enduring images. For me, those images are of the endless fields of Indiana, stretching to the horizon, punctuated only by an isolated silo or a barn. And as

I grew older, those endless fields came to represent for me the limitless possibilities of our great land. Growing up, I never imagined I would be here in this historic room, nominated to be the chief justice. But now that I am here, I recall those endless fields, with their promise of infinite possibilities, and that memory inspires in me a very profound commitment. If I am confirmed ... I will work to ensure that (the Supreme Court) upholds the rule of law and safeguards those liberties that make this land one of endless possibilities for all Americans."

This was been a proud moment for all Hoosiers.

The future Chief Justice came of age with us. He studied with us, had his first date in our midst; sweated in our steel mills. The lines within his head and heart took shape.

U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar observed, "Simply put, John Roberts is a brilliant lawyer and jurist with an extraordinary record of accomplishment and public service. In my judgment, he is supremely qualified to carry forward the tradition of fair, principled and collegial leadership" that Chief Justice Rehnquist fostered.

U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, in his introduction, noted, "John Roberts grew up in Northwest Indiana and still has family living in our state. He is the proud father of two lovely children Jack and Josie and husband of Jane. At only 50, Judge Roberts has had a distinguished legal career that would make most lawyers envious. He has argued 39 cases before the Supreme Court and won 25 of them, most lawyers are lucky to argue and win one case before our nation's highest Court. There is no question that John Roberts has achieved much through hard work and great ability to reach the pinnacle of the legal profession. If confirmed as Chief Justice to the Supreme Court, Judge Roberts could serve for thirty or more years. As a fellow Hoosier, I am proud that someone from our state would be so talented and so successful to be considered for a position on the highest court in the land."

Bayh is still undecided how he will vote, but Democratic U.S. Sen. Joe Biden was overheard saying that Roberts' committee performance was the best he'd ever seen. And, perhaps, one of the best we've ever seen on the Hoosier prairie. ❖



2006 a 'golden opportunity' for Democrats says Rothenberg

TRENDLINE: The *Rothenberg Political Report's* "2006 House Outlook" released on Sept. 9 observed, "With President Bush's job ratings battered by the war in Iraq, high gas prices and public dissatisfaction with the state of the economy, 2006 looks to be a golden opportunity for House Democrats. Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flood of New Orleans will put pressure on the budget and make it difficult for the President and his party to build support for a Republican agenda over the next few months. That should help Democrats. Americans tell pollsters they are dissatisfied with the direction of the country, and they give Congress -- both Republicans and Democrats -- low marks. Republicans have few Democratic targets next year, and GOP insiders acknowledge that for them 2006 will largely be a test of whether they can hold what they've already won. Democrats have recruited more top tier challengers than the Republicans, but they don't now have enough opportunities to net 15 seats and control of the House. Still, atmospheric conditions could give Democrats a significant boost next year, handing the party a few seats that they would not win in a neutral political environment. For that reason, we would expect modest but not insignificant Democratic gains in the order of 4-6 seats, or possibly even a bit higher. Democrats would need a major wave to exceed those levels."



Indiana 2006 Congressional

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. Democrat: Ed Cohen, Joe Donnelly.
Geography: South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income \$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 53%, Gore 44%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+5; **2002 Result:** Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%); **2004 Result:** Chocola 140,496 (54%) Donnelly (D) 115,513 (45%) **2006 Forecast:**

The *Rothenberg Political Report* observed that "Chocola appears to be solidifying his hold on this marginal district." *Golf Digest* has finally answered a question that's vexed the congressional-lobbying complex for years: Who's the best golfer in Congress? Turns out it's Rep. Chris Chocola (R-Ind.). The second-term lawmaker sports a tidy 0.5 handicap. Chocola says modestly, "I play boring golf. I don't hit it far, but I hit it straight. I just plod along." **Status:** *Leans Chocola*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. Democrat: Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **People:** Urban/rural 58/42%; median income \$36,732; poverty 10.7%; race white 93.7%, black 3.7%, Hispanic .9%; blue/white collar: 32/52%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2002 Results:** Hostettler 98,952 (51%), Hartke 88,763 (46%), **2004 Results:** Hostettler 145,576, Jennings (D) 121,522, Garvin (Green) 5,680. **2006 Forecast:** Hostettler was one of only 11 Members to vote against the \$51.8 billion hurricane relief package on Sept. 8, igniting a firestorm in his district. "Within seven weeks after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast," Hostettler said in a statement, "federal taxpayers will have spent 50 percent more than the combined annual budgets of the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama." Fewer than 25 constituents had called Hostettler about the government's response to Katrina before the vote, according to his congressional staff. Kate Stusrud, Hostettler's acting press secretary, said the office has gotten a dozen phone calls and a dozen e-mails, mostly last week. Ellsworth responded, "I can't understand it. I bet I'm not alone. I think he needs to explain to us. That's a lot of money, no question about it. These are Americans on our soil that are dying. You buck up and do what you have to do. I can guarantee you there are more than 25 concerned citizens." The DCCC called Hostettler's vote a "stunning abandonment of his fellow Americans. Indiana families sent John Hostettler to Washington to represent their values and compassion in Congress," said Bill Burton. "Today, he has shown that he represents neither." It wasn't until last Monday that Hostettler made a full explanation, telling *WEHT-News25* that he voted against the hurricane relief package because he believed it was a staggering amount of money to spend at one time without more accountability for how it would be used. He noted that the nearly \$52



billion appropriation followed by just one week a \$10.6 billion appropriation. "We actually got an 8½ by 11 sheet of paper, members of Congress did, as to what this money was going to be spent on," Hostettler said. "So, within seven weeks of Hurricane Katrina coming to shore, we are going to spend, the federal U.S. taxpayers are going to spend, 50 percent more than the combined annual budgets of the states of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi, and we're going to spend it that quickly," he said. "... (Congress knows) that government can't spend this money this quickly without a lot of waste and fraud going on." That explanation did not satisfy Ellsworth, who directed withering fire at Hostettler for waiting several days to make a full explanation (*Evansville Courier & Press*). Standing alongside U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., Ellsworth said Hostettler initially responded to inquiries about his vote by releasing a one-sentence written statement citing the cost of the aid package. "He cast a vote and went into hiding, and had a staff member put this out," Ellsworth said. Asked what he thinks of Hostettler's alternative of smaller aid packages with greater accountability, Ellsworth said it could have merit. "If that (money) gets down there and helps save those people in amounts big enough, I'm fine with it," he said. "Come up with a plan. (Hostettler's original one-sentence statement) did not show me a plan or any reasoning. I think that's irresponsible, I think it's ducking the issue." Ellsworth refused to assign a dollar figure to how much he would be willing to spend to help Hurricane Katrina's victims. "I don't put a dollar amount on human life and human suffering," he said. **Status:** *TOSSUP*

Congressional District 9: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel. Democrat: Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville (11%), Indianapolis (23%), Louisville (55%), Dayton, Cincinnati (10 percent). **People:** urban/rural 52/48%, median income \$39,011; race white 94%, 2.3% black, 1.5% Hispanic; blue/white collar: 34/50%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2004 Presidential:** Bush 59%, Kerry 40%. **2002 Results:** Hill 96,654 (51%), Sodrel 87,169 (46%). **2002 Money:** Hill \$1.144m, Sodrel \$1.62m. **2004 Results:** Sodrel 142,197, Hill 140,772, Cox (L) 4,541. **2006 Forecast:** The Rothenberg Political report observed that this rematch "guarantees a great, close race. The district leans Republican, but the race is a toss-up." We agree. **Status:** *Toss-up*.

2006 State Races

House District 64: Republican: State Rep. Troy

Woodruff. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Frenz 10,516, Davis (R) 8,774. **2004 Results:** Woodruff 12,698, Frenz 12,507. **2006 Forecast:** Despite a gentle admonishment from Gov. Daniels last spring not to be so defensive about his Daylight-saving time vote, Rep. Woodruff was making more public apologies this week. The Knox County commissioners plan to petition the U.S. Department of Transportation to move the county into the Central time zone next year (Robbins, *Vincennes Sun-Commercial*). Rep. Troy Woodruff, whose 11th-hour vote in the General Assembly this year started the clock ticking toward Indiana changing time, attended Monday morning's commission meeting and spoke in favor of applying to be moved to the Central time zone. Woodruff said the move would align the county with the growing economy of the Evansville area. It would also put the county on the same time all year with Gibson County, home of the Toyota manufacturing plant. Rep. Woodruff apologized to the commissioners for their having to take up the issue. He explained that the original legislation which he supported called for the governor's office to make a decision, not the county commissioners. Woodruff had stated right up until the last minute that he wouldn't support legislation on changing Indiana's time zone unless it called for putting all the state's 92 counties on the same time. But as the clock wound down on the legislative session he switched his position, voting in favor of the bill which would call for some counties, including Knox, to begin observing Eastern Daylight Time next year. Woodruff told the commissioners that both the governor's office and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce could provide information needed to prepare the county's application to switch to the Central time zone. **Status:** *Tossup*.

House District 78: Republican: Warrick County Commissioner Carl Conner; Vanderburgh County Commissioners President Suzanne Crouch; Alcoa mechanical engineer Jonathan Fulton; Don Mattingly; Evansville Chamber of Commerce lobbyist Steve Schaefer; and Evansville attorney Les Shively. Democrat: Open. **2004 General Results:** Becker (R) 28,261. 2005 Primary Results: Becker 3,429, Jonathan A. (Jon) Fulton 1,708. **2006 Forecast:** With a history of being about a 60 percent Republican district, will Democrats really target the HD77 seat about to be vacated by State Rep. Vaneta Becker, in the 2006 race? Becker said she thinks it is a strong possibility, despite the district's fairly strong Republican leaning. In the 2004 election, 61 percent of the district's voters backed George W. Bush for president. Of the much smaller number of voters who opted for a straight party ticket, 67 percent voted Republican (*Evansville Courier & Press*). "It's a very independent-thinking district," Becker said, adding that the mix of coal miners and aluminum workers keeps the district grounded on labor issues. Indiana Democratic Party officials said they still are reviewing the dis-



trict's statistics. "It's clearly going to be an uphill battle for a Democratic candidate in that district, however, we obviously want to have competitive candidates across the board," party spokesman Mike Edmondson said. Rep. Russ Stilwell, D-Boonville, represents the neighboring House district and knows the political terrain well. He said how much weight the state party throws into the race would depend on which Democrat would step up to run. "We'll keep an eye on any open district," Stilwell said. "That's probably in the basic top ten rules of politics." But Mike Gentry, executive director of

the Indiana Republican House Campaign Committee, said that if he were in the Democrats' shoes, he wouldn't waste resources going after House District 78. He said that considering the 60 percent or above Republican vote in the 2004 race, "we consider it a safe seat." "Obviously there are exceptions but I don't see this as one that can reasonably be targeted by the Democrats," Gentry said. "Let's put it this way. I won't be going at a whole lot of their (seats) that run 60 percent the other way." **Precinct Status: Toss-up.** ❖

Bernie Schmidt, *Vincennes Sun-Commercial* -

There's an interesting story on *GovExec.com* which has Mike Parker, former head of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the federal government agency that maintains much of this nation's flood control systems), complaining that former White House Budget Director Mitch Daniels, now our governor, did not see the need to improve the levee system in New Orleans and did not want to increase the budget for the Corps of Engineers. The following is from the piece by writers Jason Vest and Justin Rood: "One time I took two pieces of steel into Mitch Daniels' office," Parker recalled. "They were exactly the same pieces of steel, except one had been under water in a Mississippi lock for 30 years, and the other was new. The first piece was completely corroded and falling apart because of a lack of funding. I said, 'Mitch, it doesn't matter if a terrorist blows the lock up or if it falls down because it disintegrates - either way it's the same effect, and if we let it fall down, we have only ourselves to blame.' It made no impact on him whatsoever." Daniels was one of Bush's men. He quit the job to run for governor of Indiana. Should Hoosiers be worried? Is this how our federal government is today? Is this why there wasn't a better emergency response? Does our current government care more about Iraq than its own people? Someone dropped the ball, folks, and in the days to come we may find out why. I'm afraid there will be an awful lot of finger-pointing until then. ❖

Amos Brown, *Indianapolis Recorder* - The Bush

administration was built on compassionate conservatism. But, the actions of insensitive, inept, incompetent officials badly bungled the administration's response to Hurricane Katrina, the worst natural disaster in American history. Thirty-nine million African Americans are livid and enraged at how their nearly 600,000 Black brothers and sisters in New Orleans, southern Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi were grievously mistreated by government inaction and indifference. When

the death toll is finally tallied, Hurricane Katrina may claim more lives than 9-11, and perhaps more than any American natural disaster since the 1900 Galveston hurricane. And, Katrina is the worst disaster to befall African Americans since slavery. There's red-hot rage, not just in our community, but also among all Americans, at the slothful federal response to the disaster. Many Blacks believe that if Katrina had struck the ritzy areas of our nation, the response would've been faster and more comprehensive. The president, who stood strong on 9-11, promised to make America better prepared for the next terrorist attack. However, Katrina shows this president, this emperor, has no clothes. President Bush didn't directly cause people to die in New Orleans' streets, exhibit halls and stadiums; but his government's bureaucrats did. For years, Federal officials knew that New Orleans would suffer grievously if hit directly by a hurricane. *GovExec.com*, the Web site of Government Executive magazine, reported last week that Mike Parker, former head of the Army Corps of Engineers, which supervises New Orleans' levee and river control system, told a Senate committee in 2002 that a Bush administration plan to cut \$2 billion from the corps' budget would have a "negative impact." Parker couldn't get the funds that could've saved New Orleans, because of opposition from a powerful federal official - Mitch Daniels. ❖

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Osama bin

Laden, that murdering jihadist who wishes ill for all of us, must be a very happy guy on this fourth anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on our nation. If he feared that our expenditures and planning for homeland security would lessen the impact of the next terrorist strike, he must have exchanged high-fives, or engaged in whatever jihadists do to celebrate, as he and his buddies watched the impact of Hurricane Katrina. New Orleans destroyed. Bin Laden has dreamed of destroying an American city. How bin Laden must laugh, contemplating how our best and brightest to react to new terror includes the Arabian Horse Association guy who heads FEMA. ❖





Jobless claims, energy prices soar

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A total of 68,000 Americans lost their jobs due to Hurricane Katrina and filed for unemployment benefits last week, pushing these applications up by the largest amount in nearly a decade (Associated Press). The Labor Department reported that claims for benefits rose by 71,000 last week, with 68,000 of that total attributed to layoffs due to Katrina, which devastated New Orleans and other areas along the Gulf Coast. That figure exceeded the claims filed in the weeks following the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks, and analysts predicted that it would be revised even higher once states catch up with processing a flood of claims. Meanwhile, consumer inflation surged by 0.5 percent in August as energy prices shot up by the largest amount in more than two years, even before Katrina hit at the end of the month. The hurricane caused a further spike in energy prices due to widespread shutdowns of oil and natural gas facilities in the Gulf Coast region.



Martin County goes Central; Orange stays Eastern

INDIANAPOLIS - Martin County Commissioners voted Tuesday to petition for a switch to Central time. The 2-to-1 vote for Central boosts the total number of counties petitioning to 15 (*Evansville Courier & Press*). But commissioners in neighboring Orange County decided Wednesday to stick with Eastern time. The last vote in Southwestern Indiana is scheduled for today when Perry County Commissioners will review a finalized petition for Central time.

Tondu vote postponed until Sept. 22

SOUTH BEND - The people opposed to a proposed coal gasification plant near New Carlisle were almost like people waiting for a punch line (*South Bend Tribune*). And when Joe Tondu, president of Tondu Corp., asked the St. Joseph County Council for a special permit for the facility Tuesday night, they seemed to think some of what he said was a joke and not a very good one. The council voted 6 to 3 in favor of postponing a decision on whether to allow a special permit for the plant. They agreed about midnight to hold a special meeting to vote on the issue on Sept. 22 to give the council more time to review the project and to allow Tondu Corp. officials to put into writing their commitments regarding the plant. They laughed when a council member questioned Thomas Easterly, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, about IDEM essentially being a rubber stamp for such projects. Easterly denied that the agency would be a rubber stamp. He insisted the company would have to meet strict rules regarding environmental effects. John Clark, a former energy industry executive. Clark said the governor would like the council to approve the measure so the project could begin the "rigorous permitting process." He said the hope is that Tondu would be able to complete the process because Indiana "needs more power." Indiana House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend, lined up with about 25 other people to speak on the opposition side of the debate, urging the council to be cautious and "watch those weasel words" within the proposal. "If it hurts the people, then not one job, not 10,000 jobs, are worth it," Bauer said.

Ethanol plant planned

HARTFORD CITY - A Chicago-area company has filed for an air pollu-

tion control permit to build a \$150 million ethanol plant in the city's industrial park on the west side of town (*Muncie Star Press*). Mayor Dennis Whitesell said the possibility of a plant being erected in the city has nothing to do with the proposed Delaware County agricultural park that hopes to attract an ethanol plant. That project is not moving to Hartford City. Plans for three other ethanol plants in East Central Indiana have been announced.

Vanderburgh County trims \$7 million from budget

EVANSVILLE - The Vanderburgh County Council passed a 2006 budget Wednesday that trims \$7 million from departmental funding requests to meet a state-imposed spending limit while also giving the county's 600-plus employees a 3 percent raise (*Martin, Evansville Courier & Press*). The final budget of slightly less than \$55 million was trimmed from \$62 million in funding requests. The council managed the feat by rejecting \$5.75 million in requests for funding and by dropping \$1.2 million that had been used to fund Evansville Levee Authority operations. The reduction to \$55 million was necessary because state law sets the maximum levy increase at 5 percent.

Carter letter for Roberts raises ethics question

INDIANAPOLIS - Questions were raised Wednesday about whether a Republican state officeholder had gone too far in urging supporters to push for the confirmation of Judge John Roberts to the U.S. Supreme Court (*Indianapolis Star*). Attorney General Steve Carter issued a news release on Wednesday endorsing Roberts for chief justice. The message was produced at taxpayer expense. ❖