



The triumph of inertia

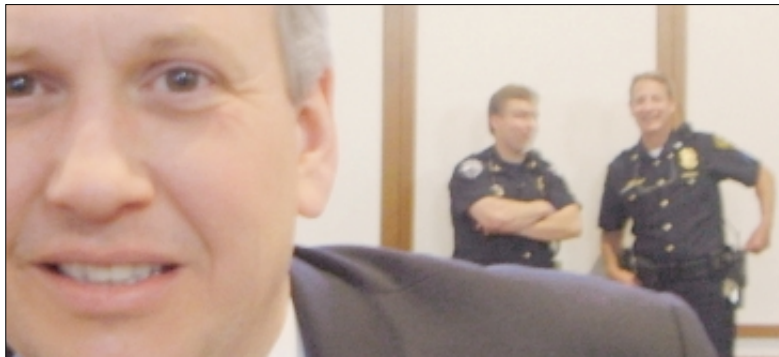
Split personality GOP defeating reforms

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

In his moment of victory over the police merger proposal Monday night, Indianapolis Fraternal Order of Police President Vince Huber said the union would not offer a counter-proposal. "We think it's pretty much dead," Huber said. "We don't think there'll be any more proposals. We don't think that consolidation right now as proposed is a good thing."

Read between the lines, and you could hear President John F. Kennedy talking about the "fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth."

Hours later, Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson wouldn't commit to laying off the 48 cops he threatened if the Indianapolis Police/Marion County Sheriff merger was defeated, but that remained a very real option. He was stinging from a 15-14 vote with the deciding vote cast by Democratic Councilor Sherron Franklin.



The sanguine Peterson surveyed what he said was a pending \$143 tax increase on a Marion County home valued at

Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's local government consolidation efforts have been defeated the the City-County Council and legislature on a Marion County without a single GOP vote of support. (HPR Photo)

\$100,000 ... just to pay for juvenile incarceration to the state, plus new child welfare rules. It wouldn't take into account all the other economic pressures facing the city: antiquated sewers, increasing crime in the townships, a stagnant old city tax base, public safety pension dilemmas.

His solution had been to merge the city and county police, and the city and township fire departments. In critical votes last winter in the Indiana General Assembly and this week in the City-County Council, Peterson couldn't get a single Republican vote. He acknowledged that perhaps he had failed to properly sell the



"As it's been pointed out to me on many occasions, reformers are burned at the stake and then statues are built to memorialize them later on."

— Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, to *HPR*

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plan, as his predecessor, Mayor Richard Lugar, did in 1970, criss-crossing the state to get IOUs that helped forge Unigov. Peterson may have made a similar mistake that his 1999 Republican opponent, Sue Anne Gilroy, did: making public safety a budgetary issue instead of stressing the personal security attributes in a city where crime is going up. Sheriff Anderson's support came late; the FOP never did buy into the proposals.

When Gov. Mitch Daniels introduced his "Major Moves" transportation plan last September, he noted, "Very little of this will happen on a business as usual basis. Without new approaches that stretch dollars and access new funding sources, only a fraction of these projects will happen within the next decade." Daniels said if opponents of the plan didn't like it, they owed it to the public to come up with alternatives.

The problem facing Mayor Peterson and Gov. Daniels is that entrenched special interests galvanizing around opposition parties are not only thwarting the "new approaches," but aren't offering any solutions in the vacuum of defeat.

Gov. Daniels told WTRV that he was "surprised and disappointed" at the police merger vote.

Thus far, only State Sens. Mike Young, R-Indianapolis, and Billie Breaux, D-Indianapolis, have entered the vacuum. Young's proposal would actually increase the township layer of government. It would establish a new policy putting restrictions on nepotism in township offices; reduce the township board members from seven to five; move code and parking violations to township courts; and create boards to increase collaboration between township fire departments. "It is important to keep government services close to the people who use them, and it's crucial that we find savings whenever possible," Young said in a statement.

The *Indianapolis Star* reported that Sen. Breaux's plan calls for merging the eight township and airport fire departments into the Indianapolis Fire Department. Her plan also would eliminate the positions of seven township trustees and boards.

Peterson told HPR on Tuesday, "As it's been pointed out to me on many occasions, reformers are burned at the stake and then statues are built to memorialize them later on."

Of Gov. Daniels, Peterson said, "I think in many ways both of us are going through some of the pain of trying to change and seeing how aggressively it is being resisted. Having said that, I was literally just in someone's office today and I saw a quote from Churchill: 'The definition of success is moving from failure to failure without ever losing your enthusiasm.' I thought that was pretty terrific. It is never going to be easy to make change. You have to believe in it, stick to it and ultimately change will come."

Week of the stasist

It was an unsettling week for reformers. There was the defeat of the Indianapolis police merger vote.

State Sen. Murray Clark, a progressive conservative who in 2002 threatened to challenge Senate President Robert D. Garton, abruptly resigned his seat.

In Evansville, opposition to the city's unification with Vanderburgh County began to form when 25 citizens met at a local church. "Bottom line: It's a solution in search of a problem," said Evansville resident Richard Clements (*Evansville Courier & Press*). "It's not going to solve any of the problems we have."

When the Indiana Township Association convention convened on Wednesday, they did so under the theme: "We're still standing." Its members were openly defiant on the notion of reform.

House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer announced he would oppose Gov. Daniels' bid to lease the Indiana Toll Road, fearing that profits would be spread out across the rest of the state. "I think it's the wrong thing to do," Bauer told the *South Bend Tribune* as his reason for opposing the lease.

Throughout the past year, there has been a rapid-fire opposition to any kind of reform from those entrenched in city halls and the Statehouse.

Franklin defended the status quo

Peterson portrayed Democratic Councilor Sherron Franklin as being elusive in her intentions on the police merger vote.

"She had made the point of saying over the last couple weeks she had voted with the Democratic caucus on almost every vote that was a caucus vote; where there was a need to hold Democrats together," Peterson said during an HPR interview at Santorini's Tuesday afternoon just hours after he lost the police merger on a 15-14 vote. Peterson last talked with Franklin on Saturday. "She made it clear from the very beginning she was not going to tell me how she would vote," Peterson said when asked why he would even schedule the vote without having a successful outcome locked up.

"I walked away not sure, but hoping she was going to vote for it," the mayor said. "It was a surprise; it was not a shock. She had made a point of saying, very publicly, that she had voted with the caucus all but a couple times. She has said a lot of things over the course of the last few months about the ordinance. I was aware she believed that we should have the mayor in charge of the combined police department. I did not know nor did she say that it would be dispositive in her vote; that she would not vote for it unless it was that way. She had not been unequivocal on that point. I think she worked very hard to not reveal which way she was going to



vote.”

Her vote was stunning. Majority Leader Steve Talley, who deposed Rozelle Boyd when Franklin voted with the GOP minority, blinked in disbelief.

Franklin told WRTV, "Yeah, I felt the weight of the world, but I knew that I had to make a decision." The *Indianapolis Star* reported that the Peterson administration and the Democratic majority had to virtually coerce Franklin to even vote. She is a former FOP member and a current Indianapolis PD detective. Franklin's reasons for voting against the plan was that it ceded civilian control of the police from the mayor to the sheriff.

And while she voted no, Franklin understood the inertia she helped perpetuate. Of the FOP, Franklin said, "They were sitting there saying what was wrong, but they didn't offer anything better."

What she ended up doing was rebuking the two most powerful officeholders in Indianapolis, the mayor and sheriff, the latter reversing his public position last Friday.

Some Democrats have pledged to defeat Councilor Franklin in the primary and others have said she should become a Republican (*WRTV*). "Well, if that's the way they really feel about it, hey, they can tell me that," Franklin said. "And you know what? I'll weigh that option with God, and then me and God will consider, and that's something I'll cope with from there."

Peterson said the "string had played out" and that it was time for an up or down vote. "If it wasn't going to get 15 votes in favor last night, it was never going to get 15 votes in favor of it," Peterson said.

As for the fallout, Peterson explained, "What we have to do is accept that the merger I had proposed is not going to become law and go back and look at the range of options that are out there, all of which, in my view, are less attractive. It has to be done on a bipartisan basis. I'll have to sit down with the Republicans and find out what they can live with. I thought this was right down their alley, being smaller government and lower taxes."

Peterson added, "Maybe if there's anything positive that can come out of this it's that we've forced ourselves into a situation where nobody can disclaim any responsibility for the future. We all have to work together."

Peterson won't 'beat my head against the wall'

Going into the vote, Mayor Peterson had planned to take the Indianapolis Works proposals back to the Indiana General Assembly next winter. While the *Star* was reporting that he would pursue fire department mergers, the fact is that Peterson will face hostile township boards and a Republican-controlled legislature. He has yet to garner a single GOP vote in the legislature, City-County Council and Washington

Township Board for any of his merger proposals.

"I genuinely don't know," Peterson said. "I'm not interested in going over to the legislature and beating my head against the wall if there is no indication of Republican support for consolidation. I did that last time."

Peterson said that several Republican legislators told him privately they supported his reforms. "Ultimately none of them would come out publicly and put their name on it because they felt like they would be ostracized by their party," Peterson said. "Is there a future for Indianapolis Works in the legislature? If there isn't a break in this cycle of 'no, no, no,' then I think it would be foolish to pursue this unless there's a change in the composition of the legislature."

Bosma takes fire in Lafayette

Less than 24 hours after the Indianapolis vote, House Speaker Brian Bosma, who refused to endorse or reject the police merger in his hometown, was conducting a Republican town hall meeting in Lafayette. His House colleague, Marion County Republican Chairman Mike Murphy, was said to be instrumental in forging the GOP opposition wall to the police merger.

Bosma was reminded by Carl Covely Jr. of West Lafayette that three years ago the sales tax was increased to keep property taxes low. "The last time you raised the sales tax, you promised something you didn't deliver," Covely said (*Lafayette Journal & Courier*). Bosma said that Covely is neglecting the fact that local leaders could help keep property taxes low simply by foregoing increases in their budgets. "We asked schools, cities and towns to do what the state did, which is curtail your spending," he said. "We know that is a tough challenge for those who have not been asked to do that in the past."

In essence, Bosma believes the locals should be doing what the state has been unable to do for much of the past decade: fund vital needs and cap spending. Local governments, faced with skyrocketing health and fuel costs, aging infrastructure and populations, the methamphetamine fallout, and huge unfunded pensions, are between a rock and a hard place.

Last week, the *Evansville Courier & Press* reported that State Rep. Phil Hinkle, the prime architect behind the defanging of Peterson's Indy Works proposals last winter, would be writing the new proposed law for government consolidation. Hinkle, presumably with a straight face, said that his bill would in "no way, shape or form be an attempt to derail (Vanderburgh County's consolidation) efforts."

The latest reaction, which we are seeing with increasing frequency, will likely come in State Rep. Woody Burton's district. Johnson County Council President Ron West is reportedly gearing up a Republican primary challenge. ❖



IACT announces 'Hometown Matters'

INDIANAPOLIS - The state's municipal officials will ask the 2006 Indiana General Assembly to consider a proposal called Hometown Matters. The proposal is a comprehensive plan to reduce reliance on property taxes, establish alternatives for financing local government, create efficient and effective local government, and assist the state in balancing its budget.

Here is what IACT's "fact sheet" says regarding the proposal:

IACT convened a group of municipal officials from all areas of the state, from communities of all sizes, and of all political affiliations to create the plan. An expert team of legal, fiscal and policy consultants was engaged to study the facts. Equally important, cities and towns from around the state took up the cause and embraced the idea of finding alternatives to the property tax to fund local government services.

The Hometown Matters plans are important to the citizens of Indiana. Basic services such as public safety, a clean and safe environment, good jobs and a strong economy, and sound infrastructure are all provided by municipal government. Hometown Matters is a plan to enable municipal officials to provide the best and most efficient municipal government possible to the citizens of Indiana.

Reduces Reliance on Property Taxes

By establishing revenue options, cities and towns can reduce property taxes. Hometown Matters:

Requires local governments to first use a portion of newly generated revenue to fund a Tax Stabilization Fund over three years as a safeguard against the volatility of non-property tax sources;

Specifies that a percentage of the remaining new revenue be used to reduce property taxes and to balance budget needs;

Property tax reduction may consist of reducing property tax rates; offsetting a property tax rate, and/or targeted tax relief to classes of taxpayers

After funding a Tax Stabilization Fund in an amount equal to at least one year's revenues, property taxes would be reduced based upon the per capita municipal tax rate according to the following schedule:

Per capita municipal property tax percentage of new revenue required for property tax reduction

More than \$450	75%
\$350-\$450	50%
\$250 - \$350	25%

Less than \$250 0%

Alternatives for Financing Local Government

One of the main premises of Hometown Matters is that one size doesn't fit all when it comes to local government. Under the proposal, local governments would have the option to establish revenue options to fund services through any combination of:

Local sales tax maximum of 1% rate in quarter-percent increments; supplemental income tax, with rate determined by adopting body; non-resident rate imposed upon finding of costs attributable to services demands from non-residents; local innkeeper's tax with rate determined by adopting body; transactions subject to taxation same as other innkeeper's tax statutes; local food and beverage tax, with rate determined by adopting body; transactions subject to taxation same as other food and beverage tax statutes

For each revenue option, the county would have a specified time in which to adopt the tax. If the county did not act within that time, municipalities within the county would have the option to enact. Geographic application of the tax would apply county-wide if adopted by the county, and municipality-wide if adopted by the municipality.

The revenues generated by the revenue options would be determined by the adopting body (county or municipality). If adopted by the county, the revenue could be distributed per capita; by location of collection; or any combination thereof (such as 50% per capita/50% location of collection) If adopted by a municipality, the revenue would stay within the municipality.

Hometown Matters also proposes to make changes to the wheel tax/motor vehicle excise surtax by amending existing statutes to add the option for municipal councils to adopt the tax in counties where they are not currently established. If a municipality adopts the tax, the revenue would be distributed to the municipality only. Hometown Matters also proposes that these tax rates be adjusted to index for inflation.

Creates Efficient and Effective Local Government

Encourage cooperation and regional efforts by authorizing sharing of fire chief, town marshal, police chief, planner, city engineer, other employees with proper documentation of hours worked for each agency; authorize municipal public safety agencies to conduct training for other agencies; permit local governments to share tax base, responsibility for service delivery (as currently available for fire protection) of other services; streamline interlocal cooperation agreement process and permit more flexible revenue commitments; provide for local responsibility for funds management; permit permanent transfers of property tax revenues between funds; eliminate



constraints on existing rainy day fund: any amount to be on deposit; deposits at any time; amend current fund statutes to clarify that funds may be used for purposes other than original purpose without finding of necessity; make identical the purposes for which Motor Vehicle Highway and Local Road and Street funds may be used and permit municipalities to combine into a single local fund; authorize use of Cumulative Capital Improvement Fund for any purpose, without prior transfer to general fund.

Streamline DLGF regulation: Eliminate approval of transfers between funds; eliminate approval of additional appropriations; require DLGF to provide templates for all reporting requirements for consistency and transparency; eliminate control board process for financings when no objection petition or request for petition/remonstrance is filed; limit review of budgets for which no objection has been filed to maximum levy determination and certification.

Establish the State Commission on Responsibility and Efficiency (SCORE) and a voluntary information clearinghouse with its purpose to share information and best practices between municipalities across the state; report information biennially to the governor and the Legislative Council regarding property tax reductions, state PTRC savings and efficiency progress.

Assists the State in Balancing its Budget

Property Tax Replacement Credit (PTRC) is the state's second largest budget line item. PTRC was created in the 1970s by then-Gov. "Doc" Bowen. The Bowen tax package was designed to limit local government tax rates and levies, and provide a state tax credit to property owners equal to about half the local levy. As property taxes increase, the state's liability increases. Hometown Matters can help the state balance its budget by reducing property taxes. As property taxes are reduced, the state will pay less PTRC and have an easier time balancing its budget.

Hometown Matters would authorize revenue options that replace and reduce property taxes. Hometown Matters would put the responsibility on the shoulders of municipal officials for enacting and managing their communities. Hometown Matters seeks to create an environment for efficiency and cooperation among local governments and remove current roadblocks to cooperation. Hometown Matters would permit local governments to raise the additional revenues needed to fund increased economic development and service demands, while establishing reserves to account for the volatility of non-property tax revenues. ❖

Gov. Time Bandit

"Time, time, time is on my side, yes it is ..." - Rolling Stones

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Daniels won fame when he used the Rolling Stones' famous song, *"You Can't Always Get What You Want,"* as waiting music on the OMB phones.

So it was irresistible to go back to the Stones for this article. To many Hoosiers, Gov. Daniels has become the time bandit.

As the federal transportation hearings began this week in Logansport, Gov. Daniels was the bogeyman when the public whip came down (*no, there will be no restraint in this dispatch*). Hearing coverage included these observations:

"I voted for the governor but I won't anymore," Bernie Messmer said in Jasper (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). "We tried daylight time once back in the '60s and it didn't work. The governor should've kept ... out of it."

In the *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*, it was: "I really feel like this meeting is too late. It should have been put to a vote before [the General Assembly voted for Daylight-saving time earlier this year]" said Evelyn Ward of Vermillion County. "What happened in Indiana wasn't a democratic process," said Lillian Curry of Vigo County.

In the *Kokomo Tribune* and *Logansport Pharos-*

Tribune, it was ... "This is a Mitch Daniels problem and Mitch Daniels is going to have to solve it." Harry Dishon of Howard County said, "I am very strongly concerned that they have been misled. What happened last summer in the Indiana legislature was not good democracy."

But the Mother of All Federal Time Hearings are to take place his week in South Bend. St. Joseph and Elkhart officials have engaged in a verbal donnybrook. Elkhart County Commissioner Mike Yoder told the *South Bend Tribune*, "We've tried to remind them of their responsibility to the family. They have our airport, our passenger rail service and our TV stations." Yoder warned that 12,000 St. Joseph commuters may start moving to Elkhart County. To which St. Joseph Commissioner Steve Ross retorted, "We're called the Midwest, not the Mideast. If he wants to think Elkhart is the dog and we're the tail, he's welcome to that belief."

Gov. Daniels vowed to intervene, saying, "I plan to write a letter for the formal record to the U.S. Department of Transportation after the four hearings are over ... to state my own point of view about each of the requests that are still pending at that time."

As for the notion of gimme shelter, Democrats like to point out the first time change will come in April, just weeks before the primary election. That is an incumbent's nightmare.

War, it seems, is just a shot away. ❖



Coats cautions against Alito filibuster

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.
The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- WASHINGTON--Now that Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito Jr. has visited with nearly two-thirds of the Senate, the person sitting next to him in each of the meetings is optimistic that Alito will get an up-or-down vote on the floor in January.

Former Hoosier Sen. Dan Coats, who is guiding the Third Circuit Court of Appeals judge through the nomination process, said he has not detected movement toward a filibuster.

Coats points to the so-called Group of 14 senators who brokered a deal earlier this year to ensure that court nominees would not be blocked from a vote except under "extraordinary circumstances."

"No one has come out and said there are extraordinary circumstances that would warrant a breach of that agreement," Coats said in an HPR interview on his cell phone Tuesday, as he rushed between meetings. "Any attempt at a filibuster would be seen by the majority of the American people as very unfair."

But it only takes one senator to initiate a filibuster. If the Senate does not achieve 60 votes to end the debate, then a bill--or nomination--dies. Unlike Harriet Miers, whose nomination was withdrawn by the White House in late October, Alito has a wide and deep paper trail based on his 15-year record as a judge. There's plenty of fodder for criticism by his opponents.

Liberal groups have accused the conservative jurist of being insensitive to minorities and women in his rulings on discrimination cases. They also fear that he will seek to overturn abortion laws. Conservative groups, who derailed the Miers nomination over qualms about her experience and commitment to their issues, have come out enthusiastically in favor of Alito.

Coats also served as the sherpa for Miers' nomination, where the challenge for him and the White House was to quell a rebellion on the right. Ultimately, Miers gave up, citing the need to protect executive privilege and not release any papers related to her role as White House counsel.

Anticipated Political Battle Launched

With Alito, the political battle is occurring along the lines that everyone has been anticipating for years. Conservatives see the chance to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to move the court to the right. Liberals are digging in to protect what they see as a vital swing-vote seat.

In promoting Miers, Coats and the White House praised her background as a trial lawyer and her efforts to break down barriers for female attorneys in Texas as head of the Dallas and the state bar associations. Liberals assert that the White House caved to conservative opponents in ending the Miers nomination. Coats said that the Senate was looking for "judicial experience" in a nominee.

Alito fits that bill. "The focus is much more on his written opinions rather than basic questions of constitutional issues that went to Harriet Miers," Coats said.

It looks as if Alito, who is described as low-key and conservative by temperament rather than a firebrand ideologue, will start with solid backing on the Republican side of the aisle in the Senate. Republicans hold a 55-45 Senate majority.

Alito Visits Capitol Hill--But Not Bayh's Office

In meetings on Capitol Hill, most of which last 45 minutes to one hour, "his reception has been very good," said Coats. "He's been very candid about his background. He's earned the respect of Democratic senators."

But one of them he hasn't seen is Sen. Evan Bayh. Coats said Bayh has not requested a meeting. "We'd like to meet with him, but we don't force the judge on anyone who doesn't want to see him," said Coats. A Bayh spokeswoman said that the White House has not contacted Bayh about setting up a meeting.

A spokesman for Sen. Richard Lugar said that Lugar does plan to meet with Alito. Lugar has only opposed one Supreme Court nominee--Stephen Breyer in 1994 over what Lugar believed would have been an ongoing conflict of interest because of Breyer's association with the international insurer Lloyd's of London.

Even if Alito does sit down with Bayh, it may not result in a vote for his nomination. A likely candidate for president, Bayh's support of Alito would fly in the face of adamant



Sen. Coats



opposition by liberal groups that will be influential in choosing the Democratic presidential nominee.

In addition, Bayh was one of 22 Democrats who voted against John Roberts Jr. for chief justice earlier this fall. Roberts, who grew up in Northwest Indiana and had served two years as a circuit court judge, was confirmed to replace the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist. Bayh has not announced a position on Alito.

Coats would like to secure Bayh's backing for Alito but realizes the odds may be long. "It was somewhat of a mystery why John Roberts didn't get his vote," said Coats. Bayh argued at the time that he didn't have enough informa-

tion about Roberts, although he asserted that he was not opposed to him. A lack of background won't be the problem with Alito, who has a vast paper trail. Coats acknowledges that Alito is conservative, but said he hears cases and applies the law impartially.

"He sees a limited role for the court," said Coats. "He has a very good record of being fair, of being what a judge should be and not doing the job of the legislature. There's no basis to vote against him...unless it's a decision to vote against him on purely political grounds to placate outside groups or position yourself for a run for higher office." ❖

Bayh, Lugar advocate energy independence

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Both Hoosier senators advocated reducing U.S. dependence on foreign oil in events on Capitol Hill on Wednesday.

Sen. Evan Bayh joined a group of eight bipartisan Senators in introducing a bill designed to lower U.S. oil consumption by 7 million barrels per day by 2026. The legislation would set targets for auto manufacturers to build vehicles that operate on alternative fuels as well as gasoline-electric hybrids. Among other provisions, the bill also would create fuel economy standards for trucks and buses, provide tax incentives for the construction of alternative fuel pumps at gas stations, and increase the production of ethanol-based fuel.

"All of these things aren't tinkering at the margin," Bayh said at a Capitol Hill news conference. "They are dramatic steps."

The bill may bridge the political divide as Republicans and Democrats work together to address soaring energy prices. "It doesn't have to be endless polarization here in Washington," Bayh said.

Earlier in the day, Lugar conducted a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee focused on the

geopolitical implications of U.S. energy policy.

"In the short-run, our dependence on oil has created a drag on economic performance at home and troubling national security burdens overseas," Lugar said in his opening statement. "In the long-run, this dependence is pushing the United States toward an economic disaster that could

mean diminished living standards, increased risk of war, and accelerated environmental degradation."

Lugar argued that U.S. dependence on foreign oil empowers suppliers like Iran and Venezuela to pursue dangerous nuclear and political policies.

"Globally, critical international security goals, including countering nuclear weapons proliferation, supporting new democracies, and promoting sustainable development are at risk because of dependence on oil," Lugar said.

Last week, Lugar introduced a bill that would require manufacturers to install flexible fuel technology in new cars, allowing them to run on a mixture of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. Lugar's Fuel Security Act of 2005 would more than double the production and use of domestic renewable fuels, including ethanol, biodiesel, and fuels produced from cellulosic biomass. A version of the Lugar renewable fuels legislation was included in the Senate energy bill earlier this year.

❖



Sens. Bayh (left) and Lugar have taken the lead on energy independence. (Photo courtesy of Baker & Daniels)



Matthew Tully, *Indianapolis Star* - Something has gone very wrong on the 25th floor of the City-County Building. There, in Bart Peterson's office and in just a matter of months, the one-time golden boy mayor has been transformed into the political loser of 2005. Where once everything seemed to so easily go so right for Peterson, he now appears to be stumbling from one embarrassing loss to another. The worst loss of all came Monday night, with the City-County Council's rejection of the mayor's police merger plan. The vote was a direct message to the mayor: When it comes to public safety, vague promises and fuzzy math won't do. On this issue, the mayor did not do his homework. Even though he had a year to do so, few believed Peterson had made an honest or convincing case for the savings he predicted a merger would bring. Without a detailed plan, he also failed to overcome fears that police patrols would suffer in some areas. But Peterson seemed to think the council and the Indianapolis public should just trust him, just take his word. He is, after all, Mr. Untouchable, the oh-so-likable and popular mayor who until this year had coasted through five easy years in office. Sorry, mayor, but this time the issue was about cops and criminals. The public and the council didn't want your word. They wanted proof. They didn't get it. ❖

Rich James, *Post-Tribune* - In case you haven't noticed, U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky is getting a little thin up top. No, it's not the challenges of raising two sons. It's also not the frustration of watching his beloved Notre Dame Fighting Irish struggle through mediocrity until the arrival of Charlie Weis this year. And, it's not the rigors of Congress. He's doing quite nicely there in terms of bringing money home to Northwest Indiana. No, life is basically good for the representative who loves his job and waits eagerly for the day Democrats win back the House. What's causing the receding hairline, I suspect, is dealing with the local members of the Democratic Party who continue to fight participation in his Good Government Initiative. Visclosky unveiled the initiative last winter in an effort to tell the voters that this is still a party of good people and ideals. After all, things couldn't have been much worse at the time for a couple reasons. The reassessment had people riled. And U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen was swarming all over Lake County, looking for corrupt Democrats. He hasn't found as many as were forecast, but he's made it clear that Washington, D.C., Republicans don't have a corner on corruption in this country. The bulk of the resistance to the initiative came from county government

officials, who came up with a bevy of lame excuses as to why they couldn't take part. Many of them don't understand that just because a government agency isn't corrupt, it isn't necessarily good, either. Now, almost 10 months later, county Democratic Chairman Rudy Clay, who also is a county commissioner, says they are willing to meet with Visclosky. "None of us is against the idea of good government," Clay said. "We just need to sit down and talk about what this study is all about." Hmm. Interesting that the mayors of Hobart, Gary, Hammond, Whiting and East Chicago — who are taking part in phase one — didn't need a pacifier. And Sheriff Roy Dominguez will be part of phase two.



❖ **Jack Colwell**, *South Bend Tribune* - If the majestic Air Force One swoops in for a landing once more in South Bend during the congressional campaign next year, Democrats could welcome the presidential arrival more than Republicans. In fact, some analysts of the elections last Tuesday, especially the election of a governor in Virginia, might forecast that President Bush would be asked by Congressman Chris Chocola, the Republican incumbent in Indiana's 2nd District, to fly elsewhere. Not so fast. Right now, the president is down in the polls, battered by everything from hurricanes and gasoline prices at home to continued Iraq violence and growing disdain for America abroad. That is now. What will be the national political climate as the nation focuses on electing members of Congress in the fall of '06? Presidents go up and down in the polls. And events, some beyond their control, affect their popularity. What happens in Iraq in the months before the next election here will have the most impact on presidential popularity -- indeed, on presidential legacy. What happens at home also will be important. What is ahead for gasoline prices, natural gas prices, the economy, White House handling of new crises and perceptions of scandals? ❖

Jerry Davich, *Times of Northwest Indiana* - I hate cigarette smoking. There, I said it. Earlier this week, I was reminded of my smoldering aggravation with smoking while dining in a local restaurant, one that cleverly separates its smoking and nonsmoking sections with an invisible wall. But this column isn't about environmental conundrums. It's about today's Great American Smokeout, the one day of the year when every on-edge, fed-up, nicotine-nagging nonsmoker can say, "Butt out!" to their smoker fiends, I mean friends, and not be choked to death. ❖



Bosma deflects intelligent design

TRENDLINE: Speaker Brian Bosma told a group of about 50 Lafayette-area citizens that intelligent design will not be part of the GOP legislative agenda in 2006, according to Scott Minier of the Indiana Department of Education. Bosma said the *Indianapolis Star* seems to have more interest in the issue—running four front-page stories and an editorial within nine days—than he or other lawmakers to whom he has spoken. He said only one legislator has mentioned introducing the legislation and then, only when pressed by a *Star* reporter. Bosma said, at present, he doubts intelligent design will be introduced, heard or passed. State Rep. Ed Mahern told the *Indianapolis Star* that he thinks this is the latest in a series of "wedge" issues Republicans have used to ignite their base. "This is their Pledge of Allegiance or Ten Commandments issue for 2006," he said.



2006 Congressional Races

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 down on his hands and knees in a yard in Newburgh picking up nails and shingles Friday morning. He told Chris Williams, morning anchor at WTVW-Fox7, he spent Friday going around to different houses with a group from the First Christian Church, clearing debris. "They weren't telling anybody," Williams said. "They had told (*Evansville Courier & Press*) they didn't want to be a bother." "I'm not looking to get any attention," Williams said Hostettler told him. "If you didn't want attention, you kind of came to the wrong house," Williams replied. "The congressman let out a laugh." Hostettler told 14WFIE-NBC he

came to Evansville on Friday for the Reserve Officers Association annual dinner for Veteran's Day. "I didn't have a plan to come down - I was invited to tour with some local law enforcement officials, so I did that." In his interview with WFIE, Hostettler indirectly criticized Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., who flew to Evansville to tour the damage Monday. "The governor came down to look at the damage, and he asked for a declaration of emergency, and that was done. And while some people turned it into a photo op, we tried to do what we could as fast as we could to turn around that declaration," he said. A Washington-based interest group called "American Family Voices" sent automated calls to 40 House districts around the country Monday, attacking incumbents for their ties to the oil industry (*Evansville Courier & Press*). Hostettler was one of them. The call opens by saying "This is an oil company profit alert," and mixes tidbits about oil company profits, campaign finance and a recent House vote with subsidies for the industry before closing with, "Tell him to stop helping his friends in the oil industry gouge working Americans." Karen Hammonds, Hostettler's sister and his campaign office manager, said calls like this are "totally understandable in an election year." But she added, "I agree with everybody else, this is way too far out." **Status: TOSS-UP**

Congressional District 9: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel. Democrat: Baron Hill, Gretchen Clearwater. **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:** Hill officially announced Tuesday that he will try to retake the 9th District congressional seat he lost to Republican Mike Sodrel in a tight and often bitter battle last year (*Weidenbener, Louisville Courier-Journal*). Hill said he and his family "talked and talked and talked and talked" around the kitchen table about whether it was worth running again, knowing another battle was possible if not probable. "But the call to public service is stronger than the politics of fear," Hill said. "I'm going to take back this seat in the 9th District." Democrat Gretchen Clearwater of Bloomington has also announced she will seek the seat. **Status: Toss-up.**



2006 State Races

Senate District 26: Republican: Andrew Phipps. Democrat: Lewis Colter, Muncie School Trustee Jennifer Abrell. **1998 Results:** Craycraft (D) 16,824, Wenger (R) 13,414. **2002 Democratic Primary Results:** Craycraft 9,653, Dixon 2,288. **2002 General Results:** Craycraft (D) 16,939, Phipps (R) 16,330. **2006 Forecast:** Former State Rep. Bruce Munson will not seek this seat. Muncie School Board member Abrell is seen as the leading Democratic contender ... and another local elected officials running for the legislature. **Status:** TOSSUP.

Senate District 29: Republican: Indianapolis Councilman Isaac Randolph, Mike Delph, Wayne Township Trustee Dan Gammon, Pat Downey. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Clark 19,657, Fleming (L) 1,706. **2006 Forecast:** Sen. Clark's resignation was a stunning development, catching most at the Statehouse off guard. Once a rising star in the Senate and the 2000 lieutenant governor nominee, Clark attempted a leadership challenge in 2002 against Senate President Robert Garton. Since then, Clark has been denied a committee chair (he is the Insurance Subcommittee chair as well as an interim study committee on education chair) as Garton's retribution. With Garton seeking re-election, that meant at least four more years in a stifling environment. His move to Baker & Daniels is interesting. B&D isn't getting the kind of state business that Barnes & Thornburg and IceMiller have been getting. As chair of Gov. Daniels' 2004 campaign, that appears to be a good move for B&D. But it also stations Clark at Mayor Bart Peterson's primary law firm, which would make a 2007 challenge of the mayor unlikely. The fact that a public steward such as Sen. Clark couldn't find a meaningful role in the General Assembly is a troubling sign. He would have been a credible gubernatorial and mayoral future aspirant. He was conservative, but put his energies into legislation that assisted families and young people without resorting to the wedge issues that now tend to define legislative Republicans. Indianapolis Councilman Isaac "Ike" Randolph announced his candidacy for the caucus and is an obvious frontrunner. Others expected to seek the post are Wayne Township Trustee Dan Gammon, insurance agent Pat Downey, and former secretary of state candidate Mike Delph. **Status:** LEANS RANDOLPH.

Senate District 39: Republican: Sen. John Waterman, Greene County Sheriff William Leon Allen. Democrat: Open. **2002 General Results:** Waterman 20,948, Croft (D) 11,922. **2006 Forecast:** Two-term Sheriff Allen, who is president of the Indiana Sheriff's Association, is reportedly weighing this Republican primary race against Sen. Waterman, potentially continuing a trend of local elected officials taking aim at sitting legislators. **Status:** TOSSUP.

House District 20: Republican: State Rep. Mary Kay Budak, LaPorte School Trustee Tom Dermody. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Budak 12,551, Gillon (L) 2,540. **2004 Results:** Budak 12,944, Spevak (D) 10,013, Schadowsky (L) 1,038. **2006 Forecast:** Legislation would have to be introduced in the General Assembly session starting in early January for LaPorte County to get in on the RDAs first projects, according to Budak (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). After that, there would be at least a one-year wait. The offer to hitch a ride met a reception somewhere between chilly and lukewarm from the 24 business and political leaders at the session. "To be very frank, the number of people who have run up to me and said get me in the RDA is zero," said state Rep. Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City. Michigan City Mayor Chuck Oberlie pointed out LaPorte County was basically excluded from the Marquette Greenway Plan, a project the RDA is specifically authorized to participate in. LaPorte County Council member Mark Yagelski pointed out Lake County and Porter County had the benefit of being united by the greenway plan, and the commuter rail plan that would link Valparaiso to the South Shore railroad. **Primary Status:** Tossup

House District 58: Republican: State Rep. Woody Burton, Johnson County Council President Ron West. **2002 Results:** Burton 9,917, Montgomery (D) 3,453, Miller (L) 437. **2004 Results:** Burton 18,766, Turley (D) 7,420. **2006 Forecast:** For the second consecutive election cycle, a president of the Johnson County Council will challenge an entrenched legislator. Informed and reliable sources tell HPR that Councilman Ron West is weighing a challenge Rep. Burton in the May 2006 Republican primary. In 2004, Brent Waltz used the same council leadership position to challenge then Senate finance chairman Larry Borst, pulling off one of the most stunning upsets in Indiana General Assembly history. West owns several golf courses. It continues a trend of local elected officials challenging legislative incumbents in primaries. Is Burton vulnerable? Our answer would be that at this point, he would be as vulnerable as Sen. Larry Borst was this time in 2003. As with Waltz, West would have assets that, if used properly, could position him for an upset: personal wealth, a political base, and party alliances upset by the pass-the-buck mentality emanating from the legislature. But Woody Burton would have some extremely powerful resources, including Congressman Dan Burton's million dollar war chest and incumbency. But incumbency heading into 2006 could be a double-edged sword. Keep a watch on this one. **Status:** LEANS BURTON. ❖



Daniels tours storm damage in Southern Indiana

WASHINGTON, Ind. - Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels traveled through Southwestern Indiana on Wednesday to make some official announcements. But what he seemed to want to do most was to talk to people (*Evansville Courier & Press*). Later in the day, Daniels flew into the Washington, Ind., airport on a state plane in order to switch to a helicopter to survey damage from another tornado, which struck Tuesday afternoon. From overhead, he could see the trail of debris flung everywhere - snapped trees, houses ripped open and a grain elevator completely flattened.



Foodstamp rate surges by 74 percent

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's sluggish economy is exacting a toll on working families, according to a new report. Among the findings: Food stamp enrollment jumped 74 percent, and the number of students eligible for free school lunches grew by 30 percent from 2000 to 2004 (*Indianapolis Star*). While the state's poverty rate remained steady during that period, the "Kids Count in Indiana 2005" data book reveals a boom in the ranks of working poor seeking help in Indiana. The report is being released today by the Indiana Youth Institute, an agency that provides research, training and resource services to groups in the youth development field. The report also says the number of students in the state eligible for a free lunch has increased by 25 percent from the 1999-2000 school year to 2003-04 (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*).

French Lick Springs to close; IDEA will seek alternate site

FRENCH LICK - The French Lick Springs Resort hotel will shut down for a year beginning Sunday to speed construction of the state's newest casino (*Associated Press*). The southern Indiana resort will reopen with 440 rooms in December 2006. *Crothersville Times* Editor Curt Kovener said, "IDEA celebrated its 125th convention last August and except for a couple of years in the early 1990's have been meeting at the French Lick Springs since the early 1900's. IDEA will be holding its convention somewhere in Indiana in late August."

Bayer closes Elkhart plant

ELKHART - Where once the Elkhart facilities of Bayer Corp. boasted 2,000 workers and made \$900 million in products annually, including Alka-Seltzer, Flintstones vitamins, One-A-Day vitamins, Bactine and a variety of glucose-monitoring items, the north campus will be empty by the end of 2006 (*Elkhart Truth*). Bayer officials announced Wednesday the Diabetes Care headquarters is moving from Elkhart to Tarrytown, N.Y. Of the 160 positions, 100 will be moved to New York while 60 will be eliminated.

LaPorte County could join RDA

MICHIGAN CITY - LaPorte County will have a fleeting chance to join the Regional Development Authority in the next two months. After that, the price of the ticket will go up (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). RDA Chairman John Clark and state legislators laid out a road map for how LaPorte County could become the third county to join the RDA at a "fire-side chat" at Purdue North Central on Wednesday afternoon.

"I see this as a unique, and in the end, pay-to-play partnership between cities, counties and the state; unique in the state and maybe the nation," Clark told two dozen political and business leaders settled in easy chairs at the Library-Faculty-Student Building. The price of LaPorte County's ride would be \$3.5 million per year, which it could raise from casino revenues or other sources, Clark said. The RDA chief said St. Joseph County also could benefit from joining the RDA. State Rep. Chet Dobis, D-Merrillville, pointed out that LaPorte County could be charged \$3.5 million for every year it delays, essentially back dues, if it chooses to join the RDA at a later date. "The longer you wait, the more it's going to cost," Dobis said.

Daniels bans smoking at Indiana Government Center

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Mitch Daniels announced today that the Indiana Government Center Complex in Indianapolis will become smoke free effective January 1, 2006. The governor directed the Indiana Department of Administration, which operates the capitol and state office buildings, to change the current policy to one that bans smoking on the grounds of the complex, including common areas, parking lots and garages. "Indiana has the seventh highest smoking rate in the country. I want Hoosiers to live healthier and better lives, so one of our goals for INShape Indiana is to reduce the number of Hoosier smokers by 10 percent. State employees deserve a healthy work atmosphere and so do the citizens who visit our facilities," said Daniels. "We have some catching up to do with some other states, municipalities and companies that already have a similar policy." ❖