



HOWEY

Political Report

V 12, No 22 *Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics*

Thursday, Jan. 26, 2006

Budak, Neese on the Major Moves hot seat

Politically vulnerable Republicans may hold the key

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

In the vortex of Major Moves, three House Republicans -- Timothy Neese of Elkhart, Mary Kay Budak of LaPorte and Jackie Walorski of Lakeville -- stand out.

With Republicans holding a mere 52-48 advantage, Gov. Mitch Daniels will need 49 votes to pass what he calls the "jobs bill of a generation" and his "Louisiana Purchase." Three defections from the GOP ranks could be lethal.

Rep. Budak is being challenged by LaPorte School Trustee Tom Dermody in an effort many believe has at least the tacit approval of the Daniels braintrust. To the point that Budak has the GOP establishment lining up against here (St. Joseph County Republican Chairman Chris Faulkner's firm is working for Dermody) Budak resisted an appeal to switch to the Democrats. And she told the *Michigan City News-Dispatch* on Monday, the day Gov. Daniels announced a \$3.8 billion lease bid for the Indiana Toll Road that cuts right through her district, "Today's announcement underlines the need for a full discussion of the proposal. The total dollar amount does not influence my decision; I want to hear from my constituents before voting." In today's *Post-Tribune* she said, "I don't think my people at home have been convinced of this idea. As it stands, I can't vote for it. I'm only doing what people have been telling me."

Democrats were more than willing to help show Budak which way the wind was blowing, producing a Garin-Hart-Yang Poll from last October in Budak's HD20



Gov. Daniels is making an impassioned - Democrats say threatening - plea for Major Moves. Shown with him is Kokomo Mayor Matt McKillip. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



"This isn't a plan. It's a joke."

— Budget Director

Chuck Schalliol, reacting to House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer's plan to raise highway money by bonding

The Howey Political Report is published by NewsLink Inc. It was founded in 1994.

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

Subscriptions:
\$350 annually HPR via e-mail;
\$550 annually HPR & HPR Daily Wire.
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.

©2006, The Howey Political Report. All rights reserved. Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, in whole or part, is a violation of federal law and is *strictly prohibited* without consent of the publisher.



Howey: mulling the toll road lease	p. 4
HPR Interview: Sheriff Ellsworth	p. 5
Columnists: Kovener, Tully	p. 6
The Burton Boys ride again	p. 7
Horse Race: Jischke for Governor?	p. 9
Ticker: Garton pans redistricting bill	p. 13



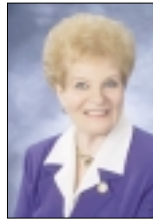
that showed 16 percent favoring a toll road lease and 79 percent opposed.

The Neese situation is equally interesting. Elkhart County Council President John Letherman, who is also president of the U.S. 31 Coalition, was poised to challenge Neese in the GOP primary. He backed off, though the *Elkhart Truth* had a hard time pinning him down, and Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman ended up doing a fundraiser for Neese recently.

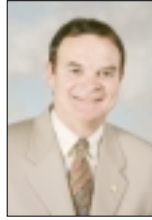
So where does Neese stand on Major Moves? Not where the governor wants him, that's for sure.

"The higher the (bid) figure the more potential exists that the tolls will have to be higher to pay that investment back," Neese told the *South Bend Tribune*. And the tolls could become an issue.

The *Times of Northwest Indiana* reported that tolls could increase 169 percent between Portage and the Illinois line. A year's worth of round trips would go from \$384 to \$840. Throw in the Chicago Skyway one-way toll of \$2.50, and the round-trip commute to the Loop will cost someone \$2,040 yearly.



Budak



Neese

A third Republican, State Rep. Jackie Walorski, is also wavering. She told the *South Bend Tribune* that promised distributions to toll road counties may sound big now but should be considered over the life of a 75-year lease. "I'm concerned about how much that's going to generate for our counties over seven and a half decades," Walorski said.



Walorski

Legislative Republican leadership was showing varying degrees of support. House Speaker Brian Bosma called it a "staggering opportunity," but Senate President Pro Tempore Robert Garton offered up a lukewarm comment, calling it in the *Indianapolis Star* a "very imaginative proposal."

It's this type of information that led State Rep. Dennis T. Avery, D-Evansville, to tell the *Indianapolis Star* that House Republicans are not united. "I would suspect few Democrats, if any, will vote for this so-called 'Major Moves' package," Avery said.

As House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer unveiled a proposal that would increase tolls and use 20-year bonds to raise \$1.6 billion on Wednesday, he was asked if House Democrats would be a solid no vote. "Well, we are now," Bauer responded. "We just have to help them avoid temptation."

The *Evansville Courier & Press's* lead in today's editions was: The outlook for bipartisan support of a bill that would allow a private company to lease the Indiana Toll Road looked grim Wednesday as Democrats unveiled a competing plan and Republicans turned up the rhetoric.

Budget Director Chuck Schalliol called the Bauer plan "a joke" and said it defied Accounting 101 principles. As for what would happen if Cintra went bankrupt (the Spanish portion has \$23 billion of debt), Schalliol explained, "If a foreign company defaults, we get to keep the money and we get the road back."

Waivering mayors

Other Republicans were expressing doubts. One of Gov. Daniels favorite mayors, LaPorte's Leigh Morris, who last Thursday saw Major Moves as a way to bring an end of "chaos," told the *Times*, "We still need more details. The fact it is \$3.8 billion as opposed to \$2 billion, is wonderful news. But what does it mean for northern Indiana?" Morris and others still remain concerned that northern Indiana's slice of the pie remains stuck at 34 percent, even if it is a \$3.85 billion pie.

The *Times* observed: Most leaders in northern Indiana seemed more concerned with where the other \$2.5 billion will go. And views were little changed from what they were before Daniels' announcement. Morris and four other LaPorte County officials last week sent a letter to their area legislators telling them most proceeds from the lease should stay in northern Indiana. Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott expressed similar sentiments Monday. "For the next 75 years, we and our children and our children's children will pay for tolls that go directly to southern Indiana," McDermott said.

Another Democrat friendly to the governor, Jeffersonville Mayor Rob Waiz, met briefly with Gov. Daniels at Clarksville on Tuesday and said he had just started reviewing the plan last weekend. He told the *News-Tribune* that he wanted to see "who would get the work," or how many of the jobs created by the plan would be filled by state residents.

At least two mayors who were included on Gov. Daniels' endorsement list -- Democratic New Albany Mayor James Garner and Columbus Mayor Fred Armstong -- have bolted. Armstrong thinks the \$3.85 billion would last only a few years (*Columbus Republic*). After that, the state would have new expenses and no toll road to help foot the bill for the rest of the time. "I can see going 20 years as the max," he said, "At 75 years, I think we're giving up the farm."

Daniels resorts to threats

The prospect of a major defeat had Daniels issuing threats as he made his way along the Ohio River on Tuesday. At Clarksville, he said, "If you vote against this plan, you've voted against those bridges, at least for many years to come." Daniels said (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). "I told the General



Assembly over the last 24 hours politics has its place," he said. "They can beat up on me on any other issue. But on this, with tens of thousands of jobs for our kids in our grasp, let's hold hands, let's everybody share in the credit, and let's get this done together."

At Evansville he openly criticized Democrats. "The people saying this had 16 years to get something done and left us with a \$3 billion deficit," Daniels said, referring to the \$2.8 billion funding shortfall in the 10-year state road construction plan (*Evansville Courier & Press*). "It is a new idea and we have had a lot of folks, some in the General Assembly, who don't always think in those terms." The governor also said private companies will be able to operate the toll road more efficiently. "The private sector is better at running things," he said. Daniels left with a unanimous endorsement from the Vanderburgh County Commissioners.

One lobbyist told HPR that the Daniels MO is a return to the kind of brass knuckled "vote with us or you'll never see a grader in your district" brand of politics practiced by the late Gov. Robert D. Orr.

"I'm interested in any piece of legislation that is openly debated," said Rep. Trent Van Haaften, D-Mount Vernon (*Evansville Courier & Press*). "But I have serious concerns about the governor's 'take it or leave it' attitude on this."

Democrats playing for time

State Sen. Karen Tallian, D-Portage, said she was alarmed at the proposal, telling the *Michigan City News-Dispatch*, "While the governor boasts that he has expedited this, concerned Hoosiers who have legitimate questions are being steamrolled. I believe the governor's 'my way or no highway' mentality is dangerous and will force lawmakers into making a hasty judgment without all the facts. Hoosiers need to look past the promises written in green dollar signs and pay attention to what the ... legislation actually does."

Democratic Floor Leader Russ Stilwell complained that while the administration had more than 100 days to develop the plan, Democrats were being forced to vote in three.

"This is a radical plan," State Sen. Vi Simpson told HPR. "It makes me feel like I'm a conservative." She complained that what the governor is saying, what's in the bill and what's in the lease are three different things.

And Democratic Chairman Dan Parker noted the irony in that House Republicans who wanted to "study" Mayor Bart Peterson's much less complicated Indy Works proposals for a year are now trying to railroad one of the most complex pieces of legislation "with no independent analysis."

"This is the same guy who said he was for Central Time," Parker said. "He's the same guy who said the IPALCO sale was a good deal. This is why the IPALCO issue was such a big issue during the campaign."

House snuffs out cig tax

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Mitch Daniels' bid for a substantial increase in the state's cigarette tax failed Wednesday when the House Public Health Committee voted the proposal down. The 6-2 vote means it is dead for the session, according to Rep. Tim Brown, R-Crawfordsville, who wrote the amendment authorizing the increase (Kelly, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*).

Brown said some Republicans were against the measure because they generally oppose increased state spending.

"The governor said from the very beginning that this is first, foremost and only a health-care issue," said John Okeson, Daniels' legislative director (*Muncie Star Press*). "We respectfully disagree that the health committee made it about more than that." ❖

"It's what Daniels did as budget director ... stealing from our kids and grandkids, mortgaging their future. 'This is the 21st Century version of the canals. If this goes through, you may get your Constitutional Convention.'"

Illinois and the big guns

Two other developments began to take shape this week. The *Times* reported that an Illinois Democrat is now ready to propose leasing there. "Indiana, this week, gave Illinois billions of good reasons to take a more aggressive look at the potential for such an arrangement on our side of the border," said state Sen. Jeff Schoenberg, D-Evanston.

Then there was Sen. Dick Lugar's endorsement. "For decades, the problem for Indiana transportation has been insufficient funds to maintain, upgrade and expand our highways," Lugar explained. "Gov. Daniels' announcement of the proposed Indiana Toll Road lease is the first innovative approach to highway funding to come along since the original construction of the Toll Road."

Lugar added, "Foreign investments coming to Indiana indicate our economic vitality and a bullish view of Indiana by those making the investment and for those we are competing to attract. Foreign-based firms are among the state's leading employers in steel and automobiles. They have stimulated new investment and more better paying jobs for Hoosiers. The same will be true of this new \$3.85 billion Toll Road lease. The money will be reinvested into the state, employing Hoosiers in construction jobs, resulting in a tremendous economic multiplying effect."

Whether the big guns and the governor's arm twisting will convince all Republicans or dislodge a Democrat is the \$64,000 question at the session's mid-point. ❖



Mullings on the toll road lease

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - How should Hoosiers, from lawmakers to the average Joe, digest another bold move by Gov. Mitch Daniels, the leasing of the Indiana Toll Road?

First, let's go back to the campaign of 2004. Daniels successfully made the case to voters that Indiana had fallen far behind economically at the very point in time when mega-financial powers in the making, China and India, were stirring.

Remember, this is a state that had lost 106,000 jobs in the proceeding four years; had led the nation in bankruptcies and mortgage foreclosures; had seen 100,000 college graduates leave the state in recent years, including three out of every five science and technology majors.



Some of you may have tucked away his "Aiming Higher" Roadmap where Daniels called for a "new direction," saying, "We must begin by reversing the state's economic decline, because all future success in every other area is dependent on it. We're proposing major initiatives and a host of practical ideas to get Indiana on the road to economic recovery."

Thus, we have perhaps the boldest idea before us: the leasing of the Indiana Toll Road for \$3.8 billion that will allow the state to accelerate such highway projects as the I-69 extension to Evansville; making U.S. 31 a freeway between South Bend and Carmel; finishing the Hoosier Heartland Corridor and the Fort-to-Port highway.

"We cannot achieve a top-tier economy without a top-tier transportation system," Daniels said last September. "To make sure that no Hoosier community is left behind, and that Indiana maximizes its opportunity to become the nation's logistics and distribution capital, we must make major moves and bring into being a system of roads, bridges, rail lines, ports and airports second to none. The more creative and aggressive we are, the more we can build and the sooner we can begin reaping the benefits in jobs and dollars that our major moves will trigger. Very little of this will happen on a business as usual basis."

You've heard the term "location, location, location." Other than the people, it's Indiana's greatest asset.

The access to \$3.8 billion will jump start the Hoosier economy by providing thousands of construction jobs over the next 20 years. More importantly, it establishes a highway infrastructure across the state that will attract business and

industry which will provide good paying jobs, rising personal income, and, subsequently, more corporate and personal income taxes.

Gov. Daniels unveiled his Major Moves proposals last September.

My concern with legislative Democrats is that there was a literal knee-jerk reaction against the proposals, without any corresponding analysis or counter-proposals that would achieve the same goals.

As a citizen, I needed time to study, gather facts, and listen to the debate. The true legislative stewards in our midst would not have simply taken sides, but would have studied this complex matter with an open mind.

We didn't get an alternative plan from House Democrats until Wednesday -- some four months later -- when Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer called for raising tolls and floating 20-year bonds that would create \$1.6 billion for road projects. Bauer also said that Cintra-Macquarie would recoup its \$3.8 billion in 18 years, followed by more than 50 years of profit.

But state Budget Director Chuck Schalliol said that Bauer's analysis didn't include year-to-year maintenance and debt obligation. The carrot for the consortium is tax write-offs and depreciation, not available to Indiana because it doesn't pay corporate taxes.

As this debate has proceeded in the Indiana House, several things jump out at me:

1. "Foreigners" are leasing the toll road. *Please*. In a global economy, we want foreign investment. America is running a staggering trade deficit. A British firm runs the Indianapolis airport. A French firm runs the Indianapolis Water Co. "Foreigners" already buy all sorts of municipal bonds.

2. We are "selling" our assets. No, we are leasing them. Big difference.

3. Northern Indiana money will go to other parts of the state. Let's see, when I used to live in Elkhart and Fort Wayne, I drove to Indianapolis and points south all the time. Better highways in the south means ... safer roads, more jobs, more taxpayers, more stability for all of us.

The payoff for Hoosiers is the front-loading of jobs resulting in an infrastructure that will bring many new companies to the state. Think about when that new company came to town, bringing with it new people, new energy, new ideas. If you can't recall such a thing happening in your town, that kind of underscores the point.

Or, let me put it like this. I have two teenage sons who will soon go to college. I might have to take out a second mortgage to help pay for their education. In doing so, I'm creating highly educated sons, more productive, and, perhaps, one of them will help cure cancer. ❖

(This is Howey's weekly newspaper column this week)



Ellsworth surveys the landscape

INDIANAPOLIS - HPR Publisher Brian A. Howey had this phone conversation with Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth on Wednesday.

Last week, U.S. Rep. John Hostettler formally filed for a 7th term, setting up what many people believe will be one of the most competitive races in the nation:

HPR: Give me a status report on where you think your campaign is at this point.

Ellsworth: At this point, not being a political expert, I couldn't be more pleased. The reception we're getting across the district and the openness to my campaign both in the party faithful and with independents and some Republicans.

HPR: What is the mood of the electorate? Is there an anti-incumbency thing building?

Ellsworth: It seems like everywhere I go, people say it's time for a change. It's probably the most common thing I hear other than good luck.

HPR: You've run in a couple of other election cycles as sheriff. Is there a discernible difference between the mood of the people this time around and in your two races for sheriff?

Ellsworth: You do get that feeling of when people are encouraged and trust you and they get more comfortable with you. I'm getting that feeling.

Granted I've been in Vanderburgh County for 24 years, but as I get to know these people in the northern part of the district, you begin to get that feel that they know you, they know they can talk to you. They know you've got an ear and you'll listen to them. I keep getting that as I drive up and down the district.

HPR: What are the issues you think folks will be concentrating on this summer when they begin to formulate decisions on how to vote?

Ellsworth: The war, pensions and jobs and the deficit. The big issues that seem like they're not to be overcome but with hard work. I'm not sure they will vote just on those things. They want to vote for someone they can trust; somebody who listens to them; someone who they can look in the eye and say, "I trust this guy to be my mouthpiece and to be honest. They want you to be honest, fairminded and fight for a fair shake for them. If they trust you, they'll trust you on the issues.



Ellsworth

HPR: What's the general take on the war in Iraq?

Ellsworth: People are really confused. I don't think they favor a fast pullout. I know people don't want that, you know, let's go bomb the place and then walk out of there and let it go. They want to support the troops and I believe that 100 percent to allow them to get this job done. But they need to know what is a done job? What is a success? Nobody's told us that. At what point can we begin to pull back? We've got to come up with some type of support or a plan to win.

HPR: What about the gas prices and energy issues? Will people make decisions based on them?

Ellsworth: I do. People are very worried about and cannot find the explanation for the rising gas costs. When it costs you \$40 at the pump as opposed to \$20, that cuts into a budget. When you're talking about a rise of a dollar, that's not easily absorbed. They want to know why there are record profits in the oil industry when they are paying a dollar more at the pump than they were a year ago. They want those questions answered.

HPR: Do Hoosiers care about the ethics controversies with the Abramoff scandal?

Ellsworth: They do. It goes to show you can have good and bad everywhere. When an official raises his right hand and takes an oath, they swear to uphold the laws of the country and the Constitution and they go to Washington and it becomes all about them and what they can grab and not doing the work of the people. That's when it's time for a change.

HPR: Will 2006 be a referendum not only on the Bush presidency, but Gov. Daniels as well?

Ellsworth: I'm probably not the one to call that. I'm a sheriff, not a political analyst. I'm probably the worst one to try and call that. I'm just going out and trying to meet as many people as I can.

HPR: Congressman Hostettler has officially filed. What kind of campaign do you expect from him?

Ellsworth: I will welcome any debate. He's got better name recognition than I do. It's a challenge for me and I welcome any chance to get my name and my views out there side-by-side so people can make that choice. I don't know what to expect out of him. I'm going to run a smart campaign and we'll let the people decide.

HPR: Hostettler has always won by those narrow 3 to 5 percent margins. How can you flip that?

Ellsworth: I'm going to go out, travel the district and meet as many people as I can. For those I can't meet, I hope they get my message. If my message comes through, they will have to make that choice. ❖



Curt Kovener, *Crothersville Times* - Two things to remember as you digest this opinion: This column will not endear me to some elected and appointed officials. We all pay too much in taxes and everybody else doesn't pay enough. With the Governor and some state legislators looking at and encouraging revamping and consolidating government, I thought I would weigh in with some ideas of my own. It has been my long held belief that our state lawmakers paint with too broad a brush. What will work for Crown Point probably won't for Crothersville. However, could some government consolidation be applicable in our own backyard? Gov. Mitch Daniels wants to remove assessing responsibilities from township trustee-assessors and place it with the county assessor. It seems some folks feel they pay too much in property taxes and often erroneously feel that if their tax bill is too high, their assessment must be wrong. To get accurate market-based assessments is difficult because currently government tells property owners what the property is worth. And since most folks believe higher assessments equate to higher taxes they claim their home isn't worth that much - until they have a prospective buyer. Having assessments keep pace with property market values is an impossible dream. But if we must pursue the impossible dream, what better group of professionals to give us accurate, up-to-date market values than those folks who keep telling the governor and the legislature how screwed up the assessment system is: Indiana Realtors. But real estate agents - whose careers and financial well-being depend on coming up with listings and sales - rapidly run the other way if asked to become a part of the solution of getting accurate property assessments. If ABC Realty is tied in anyway to your property tax bill, their firm risks losing your future home listing. Why should we have just one person doing the assessing? When government wants to buy property, when a marriage is being dissolved and there is a property value dispute, when easements are being acquired for highways, what occurs? Two and sometimes three appraisals are obtained to seek a fair price. Maybe we need two or three full-time, real estate savvy appraisers do our assessing. They'll be more accurate. And it will certainly cost more to have them do those accurate assessments/appraisals. And we will still argue with the value of our property. Putting real estate assessing responsibilities on the desk of the county assessor, as the Governor wants, wouldn't change too much of how business is done in Jackson County. All townships already contract with a professional real estate appraisal firm to collect data on new construction. Assessing has always been a function of county government. That's why township assessors must get their

budget approved by the county council. ❖

Matthew Tully, *Indianapolis Star* - Sometimes a position is so ridiculous and so utterly indefensible that I almost feel sorry for the politician defending it. Almost. Take Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton, who this week dodged and double-talked and did everything he could to defend the legislature's ridiculously generous Taj Mahal of an insurance program. "This was not my issue," the Columbus Republican said at a news conference Wednesday. Oh, but it was. He was among the leaders who in 2001 and 2002 backed laws giving new low-cost but wonderful health-care benefits to current and former state lawmakers -- and their families. For life. Long after they've left the legislature. Mostly at the expense of taxpayers, of course. How generous is it? According to a report in *The Indianapolis Star* this week, the plan covers "legislators, his or her spouse, surviving spouse, divorced spouse and any dependent children." Boy, let's give our self-serving legislators a hand for stopping with their ex-wives and ex-husbands. I mean, what about their mothers-in-law? Or their college roommates? Their cats? Or the estimated 561,000 Hoosiers without health insurance? House Speaker Brian Bosma did the politically sensible thing Tuesday when he canceled the perk for House members. He had no other choice. This is an election year, and the health-care giveaway was threatening to be an issue in the fall elections. With his decision, Bosma essentially cleaned up his own house, turned to Sen. Garton, and said, "Your move, Bob." So far, Garton has punted, promising vague changes but keeping the taxpayer-funded charity for senators in place. He punted at Wednesday's news conference, when he brought along Sen. David Long, R-Fort Wayne, to take the lead. Long grumpily said the health plan was "under review" and that the Senate has hired an actuary to study the issue. What's to study? This boondoggle is another example of politicians taking care of themselves and their pals. The Senate should kill it. Now. Don't count on that. Because Garton clearly doesn't get it. Instead of killing the program, he talked gently about Senate staffers covered by it. Then he admitted that the program covers only one Senate staffer. I asked Garton if he regretted letting the health plan become law. He dodged the question. So I asked again: Do you regret supporting the plan? This time, Long jumped in, saving Garton from the question and acting like a mother bear protecting her cub. "I think times change," Long said. "This was five years ago." Fine, I said. But I was really asking Garton the question. "I think I just answered it," Long said. ❖





The Burton Boys ride again

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - It was a bit of a homecoming for U.S. Rep. Dan Burton on Tuesday. He returned to the Indiana Statehouse to file for another term. He did so with his brother, State Rep. Woody Burton, who is facing a primary challenge from Johnson County Council President Ron West.

And then, a trip back to his old haunts, the Indiana Senate, where he served until 1982, when as a darkhorse candidate he upset Republican State Chairman Bruce Melchert for his seat in Congress.

But this would be no ordinary trip back the scene where his political career began. Congressman Burton was there to shore up Woody Burton's flanks. That meant a conversation with freshman State Sen. Brent Waltz.

Like Ron West, Waltz was president of the Johnson County Council when he decided to challenge powerful Senate Finance Chairman Larry Borst in 2003. For that reason alone, the Burton brothers have been suspicious of Waltz, figuring he would be supporting West.

And while Waltz says he plans to vote for West, he and his uncle, Greenwood Mayor Charlie Henderson, are not planning to "get involved."

In a conversation with State Sen. Mike Delph, who served as Congressman Burton's district director, it was suggested that a Waltz protrusion into the Brothers Burton turf might be seen as inflammatory.

Waltz agreed, but advised Delph: "Keep in mind, the Burton family has lobbed a lot of grenades at my family."

In 2002, Woody Burton appeared at a Greenwood Meet the Candidates event wearing a "Steve Malone for Mayor" t-shirt. At the time, Malone was planning to challenge Mayor Henderson in the 2003 Republican primary. Malone ended up dropping out of that race and Mayor Henderson was easily re-elected.

In 2004, Woody Burton was actively engaged in Borst's re-election campaign. Waltz said that Woody Burton worked a polling site for Borst and went door-to-door with the embattled chairman, telling Dr. Thomas Eads at one point that "Brent Waltz couldn't be trusted."

When Dr. Eads pressed Woody Burton on the "untrustworthy" sentiment, he said that the legislator could provide no specifics.

Now, with West challenging Woody Burton, speculation has been that Waltz and Henderson would be active in their support. Sen. Waltz said he has made it clear to West, Rep. Burton and Speaker Brian Bosma that there would be no "active role" in the West campaign.

Waltz said he had expressed similar sentiments to Sen. Delph, who in return provided Waltz with the Congressman's cell phone number.

On Tuesday, with Congressman Burton headed toward the Senate, Delph asked Waltz if he could talk.

He agreed, and the two met in the hallway just outside the Senate chambers.

Sen. Waltz related the following conversation:

"The Congressman said that he was very close to

Woody, that they grew up together in trying circumstances, that they shared a bed together for six years as boys, and that he was very protective of his younger brother."

Waltz told the Congressman that "I respect that and that neither Charlie nor I have any desire to get involved."

Sen. Waltz continued, noting that 10 or 15 people were milling around the hallway, and Congressman Burton raised his voice. "I have a lot of money, great name recognition and influence,

and anyone who messes with my brother, I will destroy."

Waltz responded by saying, "Congressman, I'm sure we're all very impressed with your money, influence and name recognition."

Congressman Burton then said, "If you do anything, I will use every dollar I have and I will get Woody to run against you next time you're up and we'll beat you."

To which Waltz responded, "The last person who threatened me like that no longer works here." He said he reminded Congressman Burton that he won Woody Burton's House district with 57 percent of the vote in the 2004 primary.

With that, Congressman Burton stormed away, with Delph following.

Later that afternoon, Delph would tell Waltz, "Well, that didn't go as I had planned."

Waltz responded, "Well, at least he didn't wake me up at 2 in the morning," a reference to a stormy phone call Congressman Burton made to Gov. Mitch Daniels from Paris just prior to the caucus where Delph was elected to the Senate. Daniels had been supporting Isaac Randolph.

Waltz called the confrontation with Congressman



U.S. Rep. Dan Burton (left) files with his brother, State Rep. Woody Burton (second from right) and State Sen. Mike Delph. (Photo Courtesy of Rep. Burton)



Burton “very disrespectful and very public.”

In the dozen years that HPR has been publishing, the past six months or so have seen several Hoosier members of Congress delve into local political issues.

U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky initiated the “Good Government Initiative” in Lake County, creating considerable controversy within the Democratic machine there.

Last summer, after the Indianapolis City-County Council rejected a non-discrimination ordinance with the votes from a handful of Democrats, U.S. Rep. Julia Carson rebuked those who voted against the measure.

That very public dressing down paved the way for then-Council President Steve Talley to revive the ordinance in December, where it won passage. Talley changed his vote for passage on the second time around.

Last fall, U.S. Rep. Mark Souder weighed in on the Daylight saving time issue, advocating that Elkhart and St. Joseph counties be kept in the same time zone.

And U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar advocated on behalf of Democratic Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson’s Indy Works plan, as well as Gov. Mitch Daniels’ Major Moves initiative this past week.

Members of Congress taking stances on controversial local issues is nothing new. Most times, it happens behind the scenes.

But the new trend is a more conspicuous display of power. ❖

Contested Legislative Primaries

Democratic

HD 1: State Rep. Linda Lawson vs. Lake County Councilman Ron Tabacynski.

HD 2: State Rep. Earl Harris vs. Drake Morris.

HD 71: State Rep. Carlene Botorff vs. Steven Stemler.

Republican

HD 20: State Rep. Mary Kay Budak vs. LaPorte School Trustee Tom Dermody.

HD24: State Rep. Rich McClain vs. Cass County Commissioner Rick Eller.

HD40: State Rep. Matt Whetstone vs. Jon Marquess.

HD55: Union County Councilman Tom Knollman vs. T. Scott Bevington.

HD57: Shelbyville Councilman Rob Nolley vs. Shelby County Councilman Sean Eberhart

HD58: State Rep. Woody Burton vs. Johnson County Council President Ron West.

HD69: State Rep. Billy Bright vs. Brent Mullikin.

HD89: State Rep. Larry Buell vs. Michael Batz

SD27: State Sen. Allen Paul vs. Richmond City Council President Bruce Wissel

General Election Races with local elected officials

HD 31: State Rep. Tim Harris (R) vs. Blackford County Commissioner Larry Hile (D)

HD63: State Rep. Dave Crooks (D) vs. Washington School Trustee Ron Arnold (R).

SD39: State Sen. John Waterman (R) vs. Vincennes Councilman Steve Thais (D).

Incumbent House members who have filed

Republican

HD16 Eric Gutwein; HD20 Mary Kay Budak; HD24 Rich McClain; HD28 Jeffrey Thompson; HD29 Kathy Kreig Richardson; HD31 Tim Harris; HD 32 Eric Turner; HD39 Gerald Torr; HD40 Matthew Whetstone; HD44 Andrew Thomas; HD45 Bruce Borders; HD47 Ralph Foley; HD49 John Ulmer; HD51 Dick Dodge; HD58 Woody Burton; HD78 Suzanne Crouch; HD85 Phyllis Pond; HD89 Larry Buell; HD92 Phil Hinkle; HD93 Dave Frizzell

Democrats

HD1 Linda Lawson; HD5 Craig Fry; HD6 B. Patrick Bauer, HD7 Tom Kromkowski; HD13 Chet Dobis; HD19 Bob Kuzman; HD25 Jeb Bardon; HD34 Dennis Tyler; HD43 Clyde Kersey; HD56 Phil Pflum; HD70 Paul Robertson; HD73 Dennie Oxley; HD74 Russ Stilwell; HD77 Phil Hoy; HD81 Winfield Moses Jr.; HD94 Carolene Mays; HD95 Mae Dickinson; HD96 Gregory Porter; HD99 Vanessa Summers

Retirement Watch List (Unfiled House incumbents)

Aguilera, Avery, Ayres, Bischoff, Charlie Brown, Buck, Cheney, Cherry, Cochran, Crawford, Crooks, Day, Denbo, Duncan, Espich, Friend, GiaQuinta, Grubb, Jack Lutz, Klinker, Koch, Mahern, Murphy, Ripley, Ruppel, Saunders, Stevenson, V. Smith, Stutzman, Tincher, VanHaften, Welch, Wolkins, Yount. ❖



Congressional outlook favors Ds; Daniels fav/unfavs at 42/49%

TRENDLINE No. 1: The *Rothenberg Political Report* observes: "While President Bush's poll numbers have inched up recently and voters seem more upbeat about the economy, the overall national landscape still benefits Democrats. Voters remain dissatisfied with the direction of the country (therefore likely to respond favorably to arguments about change and new leadership) and Republicans are vulnerable on ethics, an issue that is unlikely to disappear over the next few months. Unless and until Democratic members of Congress receive the same media attention for alleged illegalities and unethical behavior, Abramoff remains an albatross about the GOP's neck. Republicans still don't have a compelling Capitol Hill agenda for 2006, which makes it difficult for the party to dictate the public agenda. Democrats still don't have as many top tier candidates as they need to make major gains. That means that their ability to pick up the 15 seats that they need for a majority depends on the size of the mid-term wave. Democrats still have the potential for major gains (even taking the House), but their current prospects are somewhat lower. As we begin 2006, we are increasing our estimate of likely Democratic gains from 4-6 seats to 5-8."



Trendline 2: A *Survey USA Poll* (Jan. 13-15, 600 likely, +/-4.1%) has Gov. Mitch Daniels' fav/unfav at 42/49 percent. A couple of things stood out. Hispanics are polled at 53/39 percent fav/unfav. Blacks are at 31/66 percent. Conservatives are at 57/38 percent and moderates are at 35/55 percent. By region, the fav/unfavs are 37/55 for Northern Indiana; 47/49 for Central Indiana; 45/46 in Indianapolis; and 44/46 percent in Southern Indiana.

Trendline 3: Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker says less than half of his House challengers have surfaced. "There are going to be some real surprises," Parker said.

Trendline 4: Jischke for Governor in '08? Some prominent, way-up-the-foodchain Democrats are whispering the name of Purdue University President Martin Jischke as a potential challenger to Gov. Mitch Daniels.

2006 Congressional Races

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 Fort Wayne News-Sentinel reported President Bush is planning to visit Mishawaka next month to speak at a campaign fundraising luncheon for Republican Rep. Chris Chocola. Neither the Chocola campaign nor the White House confirmed the report, but President Bush has made five previous stops in the district, including past campaign stops for second-term Chocola, whose IN2 district includes South Bend and the University of Notre Dame. President Bush's most recent visit came last March, with a stop to promote his plan for revamping Social Security. He's also given a commencement speech at Notre Dame. *Rothenberg Report* notes that a Cooper & Secrest poll had Chocola up only 6 percent and his fav/unfavs were 45/51 percent. **Status:** *Leans Chocola*



Congressional District 3: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. Democrat: Fort Wayne Councilman Thomas Hayhurst, Kevin Boyd, Edward W. Smith. **Geography:** Fort Wayne, Goshen; Kosciusko, Whitley, LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb and parts of Elkhart and Allen counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Fort Wayne. **People:** Urban/rural 65/35%; median income \$44,013; Race: 87% white, 6% black, 4.5% Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 36/52% **2000 Presidential:** Bush 66%, Gore 33%. Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+17. **2002 results:** Souder 92,566 (63%), Rigdon 50,509 (34%). **2004 Results:** Souder, Parra **2004 Results:** Souder 171,389 (69%), Parra 76,232 (31%). **2006 Forecast:** Fort Status: *Likely Souder*

Congressional District 7: Republican: Ron Franklin, Eric Dickerson. Democrat: U.S. Rep. Julia Carson, Bob Hidalgo. **Geography:** Indianapolis. Media Market: Indianapolis. **People:** Urban 99.7%; median income \$36,522; poverty 13.5%; race white 63, black 29.4%, Hispanic 4.4%, Asian 1.3%; blue/white collar 26/58%; **2000 Presidential:** Gore 55%, Bush 43%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** D+6.



2002 Results: Carson 77,478 (53%), McVey 64,379 (44%).
2004 Results: Carson 121,303, Horning (R) 97,491, Campbell (L) 4,381.
2006 Forecast: Carson officially kicked off her sixth campaign for Congress on Wednesday. "I am excited about the opportunity that lies before me," Carson said. "I am very proud of my accomplishments in the past session and have many ideas for the next session. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee I was able to bring 50 million dollars to Indianapolis to help our city improve downtown roads, funding for the Indygo bus facility and added funding for the convention center." Ms. Carson continued, "We also must remember that November is not only the month in which we choose our elected officials but also the month in which we remember our veterans. I promise that I will always put the needs and concerns of our active and veterans of the military first be it in VA hospitals or supplying them with body armor. I will always work to make sure those who protect us have everything we can provide them." Last Saturday, Marion County Republicans officially slated former Indianapolis Councilor Ron Franklin, who left office several years ago after facing criminal and ethical problems. Buick dealer Eric Dickerson (not the former NFL runningback) is also planning to run and did not take part in the GOP slating convention. **General Status:** *SAFE CARSON.*



Rep. Carson talks with Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson. (HPR Photo)

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 has officially filed

his candidacy. The *Rothenberg Political Report* notes that "Democratic insiders are excited about Ellsworth" and adds, "definitely worth watching." Ellsworth wants to listen to the people of the 8th District and discuss the issues directly with them, he said Tuesday (Cooper, *Vincennes Sun-Commercial*). "I don't believe that Washington is listening," Ellsworth said to the Vincennes Rotary Club at Vincennes University. "They've had this "one size fits all" attitude for too long. They need to talk to us and listen to what we have to say." Ellsworth, currently the sheriff of Vanderburgh County, announced his intention last year that he will seek the Democrat nomination for the 8th District congressional seat, currently held by U.S. Rep. John Hostettler, R-Blairsville. Ellsworth said he will be responsive to all constituents rather than rely on focus groups. "Hostettler avoids facing those who might not agree with him," Ellsworth said. "There's a lot of calls I'd rather not pick up on a daily basis, but I do because I'm a public servant." Ellsworth said he would bring his 24 years of experience as a law enforcement official and seven years as sheriff to the table. "I will do things the same way I do as sheriff," Ellsworth said. "I'll listen to people and their stories they have to tell, investigate the issue, gather information, and put it all together to make an informed decision," he said. "I'm not an expert in all areas, and anyone that tells you that they are is lying. The real experts are the ones working 18 hours a day, and they are the ones we have to speak with in order to come up with an answer to our problems." **Status:** *TOSS-UP*

2006 State Races

Senate District 22: Republican: State Sen. Ron Altling. Democrat: David C. Vorbeck. **2002 Results:** Altling 15,902, Sanders (D) 8,087. **2006 Forecast:** Lafayette business owner Dave Vorbeck will announce his candidacy on Saturday. He will be joined by local mayors and lawmakers.. **Status:** *LEANS ALTING.*

Senate District 29: Republican: State Sen. Mike Delph. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Clark 19,657, Fleming (L) 1,706. **2006 Forecast:** Delph was officially slated by the Marion County Republican Party at last Saturday's convention. **General Status:** *SAFE DELPH*

Senate District 31: Republican: State Sen. James Merritt. Democrat: Russell Brown. **2002 Results:** Merritt (R) 17,154, Sloan (L) 1,387. **2006 Forecast:** Brown launched his campaign at the Peace Learning Center in the city of Lawrence. Brown is a long-time public servant, who has served under both the O'Bannon and Kernan administrations. He is currently pursuing his law degree at Indiana



University in Indianapolis and is employed by Fillenwarth Dennerline Groth & Towe. Brown lives in the city of Lawrence with his wife of seven years, Emily, an English teacher at Warren Central High School. For more information, see www.russellbrownforstatesenate.com. **General Status:** *LEANS MERRITT*

Senate District 39: Republican: Sen. John Waterman. Democrat: Vincennes City Councilman Steve Thais. **2002 General Results:** Waterman 20,948, Croft (D) 11,922. **2006 Forecast:** Apparently Greene County Sheriff William Allen is passing on a primary challenge. But Democratic Vincennes City Councilman Steve Thais is expected to file. **Status:** *TOSSUP*.

House District 1: Republican: Open. Democrat: State Rep. Linda Lawson, Lake County Councilman Ron Tabacynski. **2002 Results:** Lawson 5,867, Myra Rosenbloom (R) 3,012. **2004 Democratic Primary:** Lawson 2,963, Pucaliki 2,684. **2004 Results:** Lawson, 11,926, Baffa (R) 7,820. **2006 Forecast:** Tabacynski has yet to file for the primary. **Status:** *Leans D.*

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:** Budak, already on the hot seat with the Major Moves bill, dodged the vote on the cigarette tax increase Wednesday in the House Public Health Committee. She was absent. **Primary Status:** *LEANS DERMODY*

House District 30: Republican: State Rep. John Smith. Democrat: Ron Herrell. **2002 Results:** Herrell (D) 9,017, Rudolph (R) 6,966, Fridholm (L) 379. **2004 Results:** Smith 12,398, Herrell (D) 11,279. **2006 Forecast:** Citing state job losses, school funding cuts and property tax increases, Herrell Wednesday announced his candidacy (*Kokomo Tribune*). "The people living in House District 30 always knew they could count on me to make the right decision each time they sent me to Indianapolis. Every day I served in the legislature, I drove to and from home," he said. "My neighbors in this district have always known I was one of them and had their best interests at heart. If they ever doubted any decision of mine or had a question, they knew where to find me, and my door was open to them and their concerns." Herrell, a Kokomo Democrat, served in the House from 1998 to 2004. "The future can be great if we get to work now and start committing to policies that bring jobs and investments to education," Herrell said. "We need hard work to bring down property taxes and provide real reform to the system. I think my experience and record will enable us to answer these challenges with positive results." He cited continued job losses as a source of problems for families. "It's a simple fact: Quality-

paying jobs sustain families, build communities and allow cities and towns to thrive and grow in the areas we all agree are beneficial." He also criticized the biennial budget the Republican-led legislature passed in 2005. "They voted to put our children dead last as a priority," Herrell said. "This budget will bring severe property tax increases for this area in the name of a balanced state budget. "In all my time in the legislature, I would never have dreamed of committing to such bad public policy and am very surprised they support such harmful cuts." **Status:** *TOSSUP*.

House District 33: Republican: State Rep. Bill Davis. Democrat: Ron Liggett. **2002 Results:** Liggett (D) 9,143, Thornburg (R) 6,895. **2004 Results:** Davis 13,330, Liggett 10,924. **2006 Forecast:** Despite considerable speculation that Liggett might not file because he could lose his health care for life if he wins, he has officially filed. **Status:** *Tossup*.

House District 48: Republican: State Rep. Timothy Neese. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Neese (R) 10,251, Carter (D) 5,248. **2004 Results:** Neese (R) 18,241. **2006 Forecast:** Elkhart County Council President John Letherman will not challenge Neese, whose candidacy was bolstered by a recent fundraising appearance by Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman. But the *Elkhart Truth* had trouble pinning Letherman down on a decision. **Status:** *SAFE R.*

House District 55: Republican: Union County Councilman Tom Knollman, Scott Bevington. Democrat: Dale Lanning. **2004 Results:** Hoffman 17,410, McGlothen (D) 6,864, Marcum (L) 800. **2006 Forecast:** Former Connersville City Council President Scott Bevington announced his candidacy (HPR). "I am excited to have the opportunity to seek to represent the citizens of House District 55 and I hope to be able to use my knowledge and experience in economic development to bring much-needed jobs to this area of the state," Bevington said. State Rep. Bob Hoffman endorsed Bevington to replace him in the Indiana General Assembly. "I have known and worked with Scott for years and he has the leadership abilities we need in the Indiana House of Representatives," Hoffman said. "I am proud to offer him my support." Bevington, a 1987 graduate of Connersville High School and a 1991 graduate of Ball State University, has worked for the Indiana Department of Commerce and served as Executive Director of the Fayette County Industrial Development Corporation - now known as the Economic Development Group. During his tenure on the Connersville City Council, he pressed for the creation of the Cumulative Capital Development Fund to set aside money to fund the city's economic development efforts and worked to hold the line on pay increases for elected officials. Scott is also dedicated to improving the quality of life for area residents and he worked hard to ensure the Miller Community Center in



Roberts Park became a reality. "For years I have lived and worked in this area, striving to improve the lives of local residents," Bevington said. "We need to create and sustain economic growth to ensure that our hard-working citizens have good-paying jobs and communities that offer an excellent quality of life and educational opportunities for our children." Democrat Dale E. Lanning of Connersville announced for the seat. Union County Democrat Chairman Dennis Spaeth said Lanning comes highly recommended. Good Democrat candidates for House seats are critical this year, as the Democrats hope to retake control of the House, Spaeth said. "It's been long overdue that we have a Democrat run for that office," he said. "I'm very hopeful. I think we've got a legitimate shot at winning it." Lanning, 65, said he decided to run because eastern Indiana needs attention. Lanning, who is retired, said he has the time now to devote to the Legislature. "This part of the state has not gotten any consideration for a long time," he said. "Our area has the highest unemployment, our state parks are being allowed to run down. It's like we don't exist." Lanning's also concerned about the Republican governor and the decisions being made in Indianapolis that are raising local property taxes. "The people of Indiana do not want many of the things that are being forced upon us," Lanning said. "If the state continues to take money away from our school corporations, where will the funding come from? There is only one place to turn -- the pocket of the property owner. Daniels cannot be allowed to balance the state budget at the expense of education, and he must be stopped from shifting more of the responsibility to the property owner." **Primary Status:** *LEANS BEVINGTON.*

House District 56: Republican: Open. Democrat: Rep. Phil Pflum. **2002 Results:** Pflum 6,511, Hamm (R) 6,096. **2004 Results:** Pflum 10,645, Yanos 9,382, Bell (L) 661. **2006 Forecast:** Pflum, who battled cancer earlier this term, has filed for re-election. **Status:** *Likely D.*

House District 64: Republican: State Rep. Troy Woodruff. Democrat: Greg Battles. **2002 Results:** Frenz 10,516, Davis (R) 8,774. **2004 Results:** Woodruff 12,698, Frenz 12,507. **2006 Forecast:** State Rep. Troy Woodruff, who used the health care for life issue against incumbent John Frenz in his narrow 2004 upset, told the *Evansville Courier & Press*, "When I tell people about it, they can't believe it." **Status:** *LEANS D*

House District 69: Republican: Billy Bright, Brent Mullikin. Democrat: Dave Cheatham. **2002 Results:** Lytle 9,777, Newell 7,678. **2004 Results:** Bright 12,639, Lytle 11,018. **2006 Forecast:** Bright had good news to share with the audience at the Third House meeting at the Jennings County Library. He said Gov. Mitch Daniels is receptive to expediting a U.S. 50 expansion, which is slated to begin in 2014. The expansion would widen the highway connecting

North Vernon to Interstate 65 by two lanes, which Bright said is vital with the development of Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. "We're doing all we can to move this to the front burner," he said. **Status:** *Leans R.*

House District 86: Republican: Kathryn Densborn. Democrat: State Rep. David Orentlicher. **2002 Results:** Orentlicher 9,909, Atterholt (R) 9,872. **2004 Results:** Orentlicher 15,178, Large (R) 13,261, Goldstein (L) 585. **2006 Forecast:** Densborn was endorsed at the Marion County Republican slating convention last Saturday. **Status:** *LEANS D.*

House District 89: Republican: State Rep. Larry Buell. Democrat: Indianapolis Councilwoman Mary Moriarty Adams. **2004 Results:** Buell 15,391. **2006 Forecast:** Batz entered the Republican primary. Buell was endorsed last weekend at the Marion County Republican slating. **Status:** *TOSSUP.*

House District 92: Republican: State Rep. Phil Hinkle. Democrat: Robin Olds. **2002 Results:** Hinkle (R) 10,935, Kirkpatrick (L) 888. **2004 Results:** Hinkle (R) 16,158, Swinford (D) 9,488. **2006 Forecast:** Hinkle was endorsed at the Marion County Republican slating. Olds has filed for the challenge. **Caucus Status:** *LEANS HINKLE*

House District 97: Republican: Jon Elrod. Democrat: State Rep. Ed Mahern. **2002 Results:** Mahern (D) 5,016, Klopfenstein (L) 534. **2004 Results:** Mahern (D) 7,705, Butler (R) 6,646. **2006 Forecast:** Jon Elrod was endorsed by the Marion County Republican slating convention last Saturday. Elrod is a partner in the law firm, Elrod & Mascher, P.C. He received his law degree with honors from Indiana University School of Law- Bloomington, and was on the editorial staff of the *Indiana Law Journal*. Prior to law school, he graduated magna cum laude from Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. Jon is currently an advisory board member in Center Township District 7. **Status:** *LIKELY MAHERN ❖*



Rep. Mahern (left) with Senate President Bob Garton at Franklin College. Garton came out against a bill that would create an independent commission to draw legislative maps. The current maps were drawn by Mahern. Garton noted that there are competitive races in the House. (HPR Photo)



Garton pans redistricting bill

INDIANAPOLIS - Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton said yesterday that he's not keen on a proposal that would turn legislative redistricting duties over to a bipartisan commission (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). Garton, R-Columbus, said the current system — in which members of the General Assembly draw district maps for their respective chambers — works well and has produced competitive races, especially in the House where Democrats and Republicans have repeatedly traded the majority. "I'm not enthused about" the bill, Garton said. "Regardless, that's five years away -- when the next redistricting will take place." Garton said yesterday that it's "somewhat absurd" to think the commission would be non-political. "Politics are still going to play a part no matter what kind of commission you appoint," he said.



Lugar, Visclosky endorse Lehe biofuels bill

INDIANAPOLIS - U.S. Senator Dick Lugar (R-IN) and Congressman Pete Visclosky (D-1st CD) have endorsed an Indiana House bill to facilitate the use of more renewable energy resources to generate electricity in Indiana. House Bill 1379 was introduced by Rep. Don Lehe (R-Brookston). "We strongly believe that Indiana's economic future is based on the aggressive pursuit and development of new and clean energy resources, and especially those resources that can be grown and generated in our state," Lugar and Visclosky wrote in a letter to Lehe. "The development of these Hoosier energy resources is also a national security pri-

ority. America's dependence on foreign oil threatens our living standards, increases the risk of war in the most unstable parts of the world, and accelerates environmental degradation. "In Congress, we have been working to enhance U.S. economic and national security by promoting new energy resources, especially the production and distribution of cellulosic ethanol. Indiana's historic prowess in engineering and manufacturing can lead the way in creating the next generation in transportation and power generation technologies," Lugar and Visclosky wrote.

Thompson withdraws controversial amendment

INDIANAPOLIS - House Republicans avoided further in-party squabbles Wednesday when a GOP member withdrew an anti-gay rights amendment that stalled work the night before (Kelly, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). Rep. Jeff Thompson, R-Lizton, sought to add the language to eminent domain legislation, and Democrats objected on procedural grounds, as well as on principle. The amendment would have prohibited any local government from passing laws related to housing and employment discrimination that shield a class of people not protected by federal law or the Indiana or federal constitutions. It likely would have overturned gay-rights ordinances that exist in Fort Wayne, Indianapolis and other cities. House Speaker Brian Bosma, who was off the floor Tuesday night when the situation arose, said he asked Thompson many times to withdraw the amendment so it didn't distract lawmakers from other business. When Thompson announced he withdrew his amendment members of both parties clapped.

Dominguez seeks FOP audit

CROWN POINT - In a letter

urging a federal investigation, Lake County Sheriff Roy Dominguez hints at a widening financial scandal in a local chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). But officials at FOP Chris Anton Lodge 125 said politics motivated Dominguez's request that U.S. Attorney Joseph Van Bokkelen audit the lodge. John Buncich, a candidate for sheriff against Dominguez, is a senior trustee in the organization. The letter from Dominguez to Van Bokkelen says an internal lodge audit into financial irregularities while County Police Officer Mitchell King was lodge treasurer indicates other members of the organization may have been involved in stealing or misappropriating at least \$70,000.

Rival Indy Works bill passes committee

INDIANAPOLIS - Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson's plan to consolidate local township government and fire department services may have to rely on an ardent opponent for ultimate success after a Senate panel passed a competing plan Wednesday (*Indianapolis Star*). The Government Affairs Committee passed Senate Bill 1 on a 7-4 vote, moving it to consideration in the full Senate. The author, Sen. R. Michael Young, R-Indianapolis, has been a consistent critic of Peterson's consolidation plan, known as Indy Works. Several senators expressed concerns about Young's bill after business and fire officials spoke against it and in favor of a compromise Peterson proposed. But even the Democratic sponsor of Peterson's compromise, which did not get a vote, ended up voting for Young's bill to keep the door open to more negotiations.

