



Political Report

HOWEY

V12 N38

Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

Thursday, June 1, 2006

Sore Dems search for soul

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Less than a week before Indiana Democrats convene for their first convention sans governor in nearly 18 years, a news story in the **Anderson Herald-Bulletin** jumped out.

There was Madison County Commissioner John Richwine, a Republican, applauding the coming Major Moves money - some \$2.89 million worth. "It's going to be a considerable investment of new dollars," Rep. Jack Lutz said. "More importantly, it's new dollars without any tax increase." He said that without Major Moves, the improvements would have to be paid for with a doubling of the 18-cent state gas tax. "And with the price of gas, that would just add to it," he said.

Fixing the roads in Madison County, some of which are in a bad state, is a good thing, said Commissioner Richwine. "Any improvements are going to make life simpler," he said. "New and better roads will appeal to businesses willing to locate here."

The **Herald-Bulletin** continued: But State Sen. Tim Lanane was still questioning Major Moves. "What I heard during the session was a lot of questions and we



never got answers," Lanane said. "Why 75 years? Why a foreign company? How do we even know we got a fair price?"

Money and concrete vs. lingering questions. If you are a swing, independent voter, which way to you go?

Then there was a letter to the editor written by State Sen. Karen Talian in which she invoked the "foreigners" and the "Indianapolis gets everything" MO. "Northwest Indiana is getting shortchanged," Talian said. "Lake and Porter Counties will receive a combined total of \$446.7 million compared to the \$1.424 billion that will be pumped into Indianapolis. Sadly, of the nearly \$12 billion the gov-

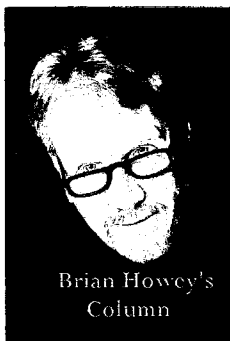
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Tail wags the Evansville dog

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

EVANSVILLE - The Kentucky tail, it seems to me, is wagging the Evansville dog. I came to this conclusion after watching the excruciating time debate still raging in Southwestern Indiana. Almost six months after the U.S. Department of Transportation locked this corner of the state into Central Time, now Knox, DuBois and Martin counties have decided they would rather be on Eastern Time with Indianapolis and most of the rest of the state.

It's the classic, "We'd rather be with Indy rather than Evansville"



Brian Howey's Column

“ ”
QUOTE
of the Week



“It's a process. It takes time. There is no clear consensus right now on who will be the next leader.”

- State Sen. David Long, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*



setup. The question I have is, why is Evansville aligned with Western Kentucky time? Evansville is the predominant metropolitan area of the "Tri-State Region." It is Indiana's third largest city with a population of 121,000. Its neighbor across the Ohio River, Henderson, Ky., is 27,000.

You can understand why the Northwest Indiana region goes with Central Time to be in alignment with Chicago. But Indiana's third largest city aligning with that little guy Henderson? I don't get it.

When you look at a U.S. time zone map, you notice that the lateral states of Kentucky and Tennessee are divided down the middle. Kentucky's Eastern/Central time zone split is in its center, about 60 miles east of Evansville. But if you look at the U.S. map a bit more closely, you'll notice that the Eastern time zone, with all apologies to Jeff Sagarin, extends about 150 miles further west in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

I called the Evansville Chamber of Commerce this morning to ask them why they prefer Western Kentucky time as opposed to being with the rest of Indiana. But the recording at the Chamber said their business hours began at 8 a.m. Central time, so I had to wait an hour. When Steve Schaefer, vice president for public policy, called me back, he said the historical reason for Evansville's time station "is the people of southwestern Indiana wanted to be tied to the Chicago market."

And there are the commuters from Henderson and Southern Illinois. "We've been looking at those numbers," Schaefer said. "Ultimately, everyone would like the whole state of Indiana to be on the same time."

Schaefer said the Chamber would be taking another look at the issue.

To which I say, shift the time dilemma to Kentucky and Illinois. I mean, Indiana is at the crossroads of the universe, isn't it? ♦

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Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington
Writer

Mark Curry, Washington Writer
Jack E. Howey, Editor

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Call 317-254-0535.

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

www.howeypolitics.com
BrianHowey@howeypolitics.com

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

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Long announces

Pro Tem candidacy

FORT WAYNE - Fort Wayne Republican Sen. David Long has become the third official candidate to seek the Senate's top leadership post.

"I definitely am running, but I'm not saying there aren't other good candidates in the race," the 10-year legislative veteran said Wednesday (Kelly, **Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). "I have a tremendous amount of respect for all of them."

The others who have said they are vying for the spot are Sen. Brent Steele, R-Bedford, and Sen. Tom Weatherwax, R-Logansport.

Two more are considering a run: Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, and Sen. Jim Merritt, R-Indianapolis. Long said he has been having a lot of

phone conversations with fellow senators — and has made visits to other



Senate districts when business has permitted it — but he hasn't specifically asked for any votes.

The president pro tempore position is open because current leader Sen. Robert Garton, R-Columbus, was defeated in the May primary election. He is finishing his term, and a new leader is expected to be picked right after the November general election.

"It's a process. It takes time," Long said. "There is no clear consensus right now on who will be the next leader." ♦



ernor says he will spend on road improvements around the state, the very communities that are suffering from his lease deal the most, benefit the least."

Finally, on Wednesday, State Sens. Billie Breaux Vi Simpson and Richard Young brought some kind of vision to the Indiana Democratic Party spectrum when they announced the Hoosier Health Security Plan in the 2007 General Assembly session. "Many other states are moving forward in this arena and there's every reason for Indiana to do so as well," Sen. Simpson said. "There are many components that should be part of a comprehensive program and we are calling on our colleagues in both chambers to join with us in putting together a bipartisan model."

Everywhere House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer appears these days, he is hailed as the "next speaker of the Indiana House," something that will be repeated often at Saturday's Indiana Democratic State Convention.

And they may well be right. There are enough national chips stacked on the shoulders of voters - Iraq, gasoline prices, immigration - that could make this election a "slam dunk" (to quote former CIA Director George Tenet) for Democrats.

Or, as we well know from the Iraq fiasco, that "slam dunk" can be as much of a mirage as Indiana Republicans retaking the Indiana House under the shadows of President Clinton's impending impeachment back in 1998. It didn't happen.

In the Indiana House that year, a technological advantage by the Democrats swung the seven or eight House races in play, saving their majority from cocky Republicans who believed impeachment was the ticket to power.

Indiana Democrats will face Republicans with more access to cash and a huge staff advantage. While Republicans face base suppression, Democrats risk watching the low hanging fruit rot on the ground without an active agenda .

Pollster John Zogby told the **Washington Times** that the Democrats could "blow this opportunity" if they do not come up with an agenda that appeals to swing voters, and former congressman and White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, among other Democrats, is urging his party to come up with "an agenda and a message for voters, sooner rather than later."

"They ought to present a very clear vision to the country in four or five areas. People want to know they stand for something," Panetta said. "The public is hungry to know what solutions this party is going to present."

U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh warned Democrats in the dust of the November 2004 elections that his party must stand for something other than the "sum of our resentments."



House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer thinks he has a lock on the speakership without a cohesive vision. (HPR Photo)

When Sen. Simpson was pressed on Indiana Democrats and their vision, she agreed that much was lacking. "We've got to deserve it," she said of retaking the House and making inroads in the Senate.

The loss of a governorship is always wrenching for a political party. For Indiana Democrats, it has taken on an almost personal character. They haven't responded well to the sometimes arrogant and heavy-handed ways of the Daniels administration. They appear to be flailing away at Major Moves, with legislators like State Rep. Winfield Moses testifying in the lawsuit that looks to be a losing cause while the bulldozers cue up in places like Kokomo, Lakeville and LaGrange.

Simpson said this weekend's Democratic convention will be mostly a "red meat" rally. Whether anger translates into ballot success remains to be seen. ❖

Judy Anderson to join ticket

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana Democrats will officially unveil their ticket this afternoon.

Vigo County Commissioner Judy Anderson, the former mayor of Terre Haute, will run for auditor. Highland Clerk-Treasurer Michael Griffin will be running for treasurer.

Joe Pearson, former Blackford County School Board member and Department of Agriculture deputy commissioner, will be running for Secretary of State. ❖



Political Report

Sen. Simpson surveys health care, 2006 elections, governor's race

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Shortly after the Senate Democrats announced their universal health care initiative, State Sen. Vi Simpson sat down with HPR's Brian Howey to survey the political landscape.

HPR: The last time I saw you was on Feb. 18 with

Sen. Garton's disastrous health care press conference. Why did you attend that?

Simpson:

This is an issue the caucus had been talking about for awhile. Sen. Hume (to end lifetime health care) had this bill and he went to see Sen. Garton and told him 'I'd like to introduce this bill and give

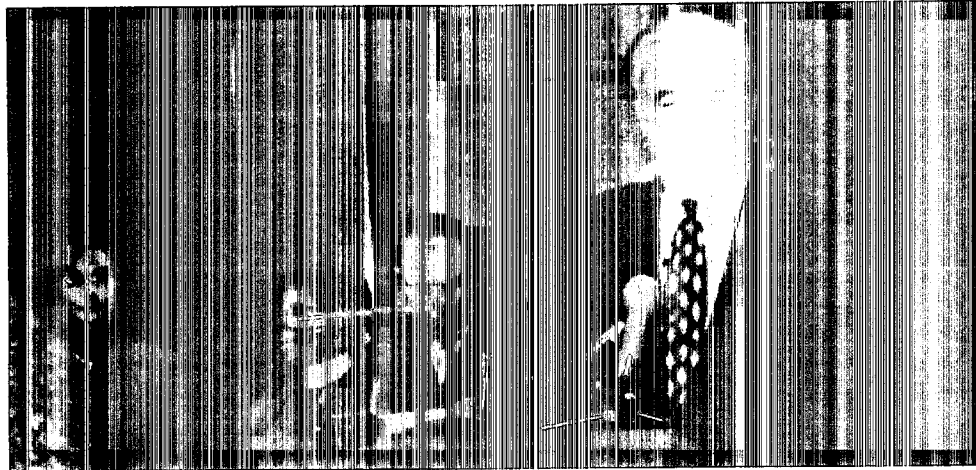
it a hearing" and Sen. Garton said no. He went further and said, "I'm going to handle this administratively and I'm going to ask you not to introduce the bill." As a courtesy, Lindel did not introduce the bill. Later, we had expressed to Sen. Garton and Merritt that we really had a problem with it. Sen. Garton asked Sen. Kenley if he would put together a reform plan. Was it the plan I would have put together? No. Sen. Garton said these are the parameters. It had to include our employees, he wanted some sort of sliding scale, he wanted people to pay something. I asked for a couple of changes that were minor, but that was the only input we had. Sen. Garton asked if I would come to the press conference.

HPR: None of you looked very happy.

Simpson: It wasn't our deal.

HPR: Did he threaten you?

Simpson: No threats. The Senate doesn't work that way. But when Sen. Garton asked for something, we usually tried to accommodate. But at the press conference, I did talk about universal health care coverage. We talked about state employee coverage. It's my understanding that nothing's been done with that. I don't think any changes have been made. I don't think any changes have been made in the House, either. Nobody has signed on any dotted line to change the program. Everybody's just talking about it.



HPR: It is an absolutely explosive political issue. When did you come to that conclusion?

Simpson: I'll tell you the first person who brought it up in our caucus and this was a couple years ago ... Sen. Lanane. He had great political and policy instincts and he brought up in caucus, "People aren't going to be very happy of us having better health insurance than other state employees." And he's got a lot of state employees in his district. When that stuff passed, and it happened to two or three bills, none of us knew it at the time. It wasn't until it

was done and in place, then we got a choice between the State Police plan or the employee plan. We knew we were doing something for Patch Wheeler. That was spoken.

What we didn't know was what we were doing to Murray Clark.

HPR: How does Sen. Garton's defeat change the Senate? The state?

Simpson: It changes the Senate enormously. A lot of that will depend on who the new Pro Tem will be and how much of Sen. Garton's legacy in terms of process and procedure and issues of equity will continue.

HPR: You expressed some concerns about some of the Pro Tem candidates. Are you worried about Sen. Long or Weatherwax or Steele?

Simpson: I worry about the people who think the requirement for leadership is their philosophical position on a particular issue.

HPR: Shortly after the 2004 elections, Sen. Bayh said that Democrats need to stand for more than the sum of their resentments.

Simpson: That was a lovely way to say it.

HPR: Yet, that's what I see coming from Indiana Democrats. They seem pissed at being out of power after 16 years.

Simpson: I couldn't agree more.

HPR: I'm not seeing much of a vision, up until today when you announced the health insurance initiative.

Simpson: You could see how hard it was, the kinds of questions I got.

HPR: I just had a reporter tell me in the hallway



Bayh Talks Energy; Ads Talk Marriage

By MARK CURRY

WASHINGTON - Sen. Evan Bayh winds up a two-day, eight-city tour across the state today to acquaint Hoosiers with particulars of an energy plan his office said "outlines an economic roadmap for Indiana to become the capital of the new energy economy."

After serving as keynote speaker this morning at the **Indianapolis Business Journal's** Business Growth Strategies summit beginning at 8:30 a.m. (ET), the senator is slated to appear at a Jiffy Mini-Mart in Terre Haute two hours later, then visit the Evansville Transit Center at 11:15 (CT) before stopping by Hap's Aerial at the Jeffersonville airport early this afternoon.

Yesterday he visited Gary, South Bend, Fort Wayne and Lafayette.

Tom Coyne of the Associated Press wrote that during an appearance at the New Energy Corp. ethanol plant in South Bend, Bayh indicated "The United States needs to take a similar approach to solving its dependency on oil as it did in putting a man on the moon."

Bayh's Vehicle and Fuel Choices for American Security Act aims to cut oil consumption some 10 million barrels per day over 25 years, in part by boosting production and consumption of alternative fuels, including ethanol, and offering incentives to produce and purchase electric drive and alternative motor vehicles. The bill would also raise vehicle fuel efficiency standards, order the federal and state governments to reduce fleet petroleum consumption by nearly a third and increase funding for research and development. (See HPR, April 27)

No more Mideast oil

Bayh has said in recent speeches that his bill would completely eliminate the need to import oil from the Middle East within 10 years. He also has insisted that the nation's energy challenge can be made into "a real opportunity" for American businesses and workers.

"We can create hundreds of thousands of good jobs in this country in the energy sector, including building high-mileage vehicles right here in Detroit, Michigan and across Indiana, if we just dedicate ourselves to doing

exactly that," Bayh told Michigan democrats in April. VK Sharma, director of engineering for International Truck in Fort Wayne, told Victoria Edwards of the **Fort Wayne News-Sentinel** yesterday that Bayh's legislation "will bring economic growth to Indiana, and provides the economic blueprint to build Indiana into the new energy economy."

Family matters

While Bayh has been out stumping for legislation that senators on both sides of the aisle say will help solve America's energy problem, Focus on Family Action has put together an advertising campaign in support of the Federal Marriage Amendment that asks "Why Doesn't Senator Bayh Believe Every Child Needs a Mother and a Father?"

According to Focus on the Family Action Media Representative Christopher Norfleet, the ads ran yesterday in the **Indianapolis Star**, **South Bend Tribune** and **Evansville Courier-Press**. Radio ads also played on stations in those same cities as well as in Fort Wayne and Bloomington.

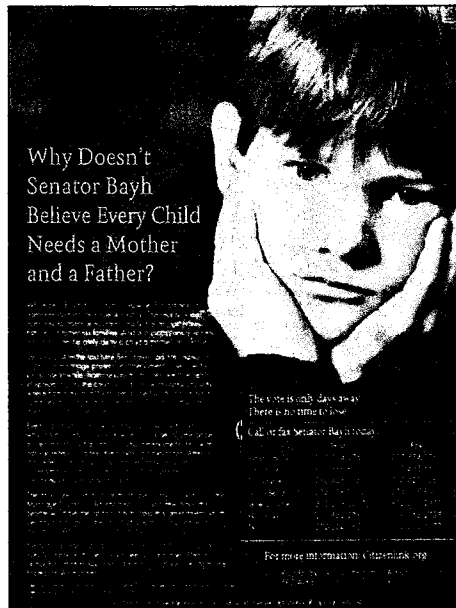
The half-page ad that appeared on Page A9 of yesterday's **Star** featured a freckle-faced boy cupping his hands to his cheeks and looking quizzically at the camera. "Every child understands how important a mom and a dad are," the ad copy reads. "But apparently Sen. Bayh needs a reminder."

For comment, HPR contacted a representative of Indiana Equality, a coalition of Hoosier organizations with the stated mission of "ensuring basic human rights for Indiana's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens."

'Divisive and unnecessary'

Indiana Equality Communications Chair Jerame Davis wrote in an email that "The divisive and unnecessary federal constitutional amendment - which failed overwhelmingly when last brought before Congress - would ban not only same-sex civil marriage, but also any 'legal incident of marriage' for unmarried couples - both straight and gay. This proposal, like the one that will be considered by the Indiana General Assembly in 2007, undercuts equal protection, threatening every government-enforced protection and every vestige of first-class citizenship for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Hoosiers."

John Clower, who chairs the organization, stated "Hoosiers, along with the rest of our country's citizens, face great challenges today - record high gas prices, an endless and costly war in Iraq, and skyrocketing health care costs



Why Doesn't Senator Bayh Believe Every Child Needs a Mother and a Father?

The only thing that says there's no time to love is the clock.

For more information visit www.familyfocus.org



Political Report

what a tedious issue health insurance is.

Simpson: You know what, they are really out of touch.

HPR: Most reporters don't have to worry about getting health insurance.

Simpson: That's what people are talking about. After gas prices, it's health care.

HPR: After Major Moves was announced last September, I waited for Indiana Democrats to come out with an alternative.

Simpson: We had an alternative. We showed the financing and we showed we could raise as much money as he (Gov. Daniels) did and keep the toll road.

HPR: The fact that government owns something, does that make it sacred?

Simpson: The toll road should be a profit center for the state. If we are willing to raise the tolls ...

HPR: We never had the will to raise the tolls, both Republican and Democratic governors.

Simpson: But we're doing it now. If we raised the tolls and managed the property correctly it could be a profit center to do all the things the governor is doing, and we didn't have to lease it to a foreign entity, not that I care whether it's a foreigner. I personally was not opposed to what the governor was trying to do, which was to improve the infrastructure. I proposed the last gas tax and lived to tell the tale. For people to think this was the only way to do it was crazy. I'm not even sure it was the best way. What I really objected to was they weren't giving us any information. They weren't telling us how they analyzed the bids, they wouldn't tell us why this was better than doing it ourselves. It was like, "Too bad. Here, take it, shove it."

HPR: The Democratic Party looks poised to have a great fall; great general election.

Simpson: Yeah, but we've got to deserve it.

HPR: What Hoosiers are looking for is vision. I hope I hear some of that on Saturday at the convention. What can you tell us.

Simpson: I don't know if you're going to hear much. It will be fun for the delegates. There are no decisions. It's kind of a rally. But that will be true of the Republican convention as well. I know we're not a very big caucus but we're going to spend the whole month of June talking about health care all over this state. The whole

month of July will be government reform. Don't let me forget to tell you the ethics problems with the FSSA contract. There were campaign contributions from bidders. The governor met with ACS last October and his campaign committee got a \$5,000 check. They had been discussing the RFP. Talk about your ethics. August will be education. Full day kindergarten. Last year we rolled out full day kindergarten at the beginning of the session and everybody poo-pooed it. Right after the session, the governor comes out and says, "I think we should do full-day kindergarten." So, we have our ways of turning the debate around.

HPR: Can Terry Coriden win in SD41?

Simpson: I think he can. It has become a race between a moderate Democrat and a radical Republican. I'm right next door to that district. I know the people of Columbus and they are not radical.

HPR: Your name comes up when the 2008 governor's race is discussed, along with Mayor Peterson. What can we expect from you? It's not that far away. You're also up for re-election.

Simpson: I have a lot of decisions to make. But I won't do any of them until after the 2006 election because my No. 1 priority is getting more Democrats elected.

HPR: I don't see many Democrats in the legislature where you can picture a future governor. You, perhaps someone like Sen. Lanane. I look in the House and I don't see anybody over there.

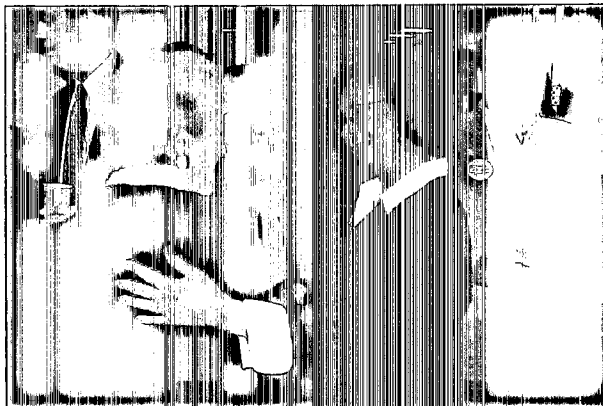
Simpson: They will be upset when they hear you said that (the room is filled with laughter). One of the things I would like to see this party work on is that we don't do a great job of developing our bench.

HPR: Well, you have your mayors, Peterson, Weinzapfel ...

Simpson: Graham Richard. We've got some great mayors. We don't bring young people along very well. We should be molding these kids and training them. I'd like to see some intense leadership training, like the Lugar Series. You're right, the bench is sparse.

HPR: Mayor Peterson has to make his decision this November. If he doesn't go, will you?

Simpson: Mayor Peterson has to make that decision in November and he and I and others will be discussing them. ♦





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Thursday, June 1, 2006

FRED BARNES, Weekly Standard - June 6, 2006, is an important date, not only because it's the 62nd anniversary of D-Day. It's also the day the Senate will vote on the so-called marriage amendment, which would amend the Constitution to restrict marriage in America to a man and a woman. It won't pass. A constitutional amendment requires a two-thirds majority in the Senate and the House. When the Senate voted in 2004, the amendment got only 48 votes. This time, it's likely to get more—probably between 52 and 58—in part because a powerful and unusually ecumenical religious coalition is now backing the amendment. And President Bush, despite his wife Laura's admonition that the marriage issue ought to be kept out of politics, plans to host a pro-amendment event at the White House and speak out in favor of the amendment. Once dismissed as a sop to social conservatives, the proposed amendment has become a serious rallying point for opponents of same-sex marriage. The June 6 vote will put senators on the record and make their position on the amendment a potential campaign issue. And the formation of the religious coalition means the issue won't go away soon. Much of the conventional wisdom about the amendment and the marriage issue turns out to be wrong. For instance, the amendment is not being pushed by Republicans as a wedge issue aimed at dividing Democratic voters. Republican senators regard the issue as touchy and awkward. In fact, they agree with First Lady Laura Bush, who said on Fox News Sunday that the subject of gay marriage "requires a lot of sensitivity" and shouldn't "be used as a campaign tool." ♦

MIKE SMITH, Associated Press - There's no doubt that taxpayer-subsidized health care retirement benefits for lawmakers has been a major campaign issue in some legislative races over the past two years. But should it remain one as Republicans and Democrats head toward November fighting for control of the narrowly divided House, now that chamber leaders from both parties have pledged not to restore the perk if either wields the gavel after the election? And will all the talk about seeking affordable health care for more Hoosiers next year really go anywhere? House Minority Leader Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend, promised the same day not to restore the special benefits if Democrats win back control of the chamber and he becomes speaker again. He also said it belonged in law. Bauer and the state Democratic Party noted that Republicans filed bills the past two sessions to end the perk, but Bosma assigned them to the Rules Committee — often a

graveyard for legislation — and indeed they went nowhere. Of course, Bauer could have decreed the benefits void when he was speaker before Bosma took the gavel after the 2004 election. But it was really in the months after the 2004 session that the issue became a hot campaign topic, one Democrats accuse Republicans of mischaracterizing to help win their narrow 52-48 control of the chamber. Bosma told reporters that he and his members were not signing the pledge because it was a campaign issue. "We're doing it because it's the right thing to do," he said. But then he acknowledged that the health benefits program was a campaign issue. "Obviously it is," he said. "I'm sure somebody will use it in that fashion again. It's a powerful issue when people see what the program is." ♦

RICH JAMES, Post-Tribune - When House Speaker Brian Bosma and fellow Republican legislators gathered outside the Statehouse earlier this week, the only thing missing was a copy of the Ten Commandments as a backdrop. They wanted you to think they were holier than thou. Such sanctimony. That was just to cover up the fact that it's not the wrath of God they fear the most. They wouldn't have had this public display of deceptive decency if the voters hadn't sent a message on May 2. When the Republican electorate threw out Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton, who had held the job for a quarter of a century, and longtime Rep. Mary Kay Budak of LaPorte, Bosma and company took notice. "If our own Republicans are that angry, what's going to happen to the rest of us in November, when we have to face the Democrats," is pretty much how the thinking went. Republicans, who control the House 52-48, know they may be six months away from slipping back into the minority. With all the buildup, one would have anticipated the legislators announcing plans to turn Interstate 65 into a toll road and use the revenue to feed the hungry or provide college scholarships for all graduating seniors. Nope. They came to announce to Hoosiers that they no longer plan to rip them off. ♦

PEGGY NOONAN, Opinion Journal - Something's happening. I have a feeling we're at some new beginning, that a big breakup's coming, and that though it isn't and will not be immediately apparent, we'll someday look back on this era as the time when a shift began. The Perot experience seemed to put an end to third-party fever. But I think it's coming back, I think it's going to grow, and I think the force behind it is unique in our history. ♦

COLUMNISTS
Indiana



that are bankrupting families and businesses

"Instead of addressing these real challenges, the Republican leadership in Congress and the Indiana General Assembly has chosen to put politics ahead of real progress by debating a divisive amendment on marriage," continued Clower. "The last thing Hoosiers want are legislators reaching into a family's private life."

Sen. Bayh told a group of Indiana bloggers last week that his opposition to the current federal amendment is based on constitutional grounds. He also voted against a previous Federal Marriage Amendment which failed to pass the Senate in July 2004.

Not a simple sound bite

It's difficult to reduce the senator's position to a headline or a simple sound bite. In response to an HPR query, the senator's office emailed the following statement:

"Senator Bayh does not support same-sex marriage. He thinks marriage should be between one man and one woman. That is currently the law in Indiana and the law nationally. He also believes that the Constitution should only be amended when absolutely necessary, not because of hypothetical situations that may or may not come to pass. If the Supreme Court ever strikes down the state or national laws prohibiting same-sex marriage, then he believes that a Constitutional amendment should be considered."

Despite the fact he does not support same sex marriage, Bayh is consistently rated high on GLBT issues by the Human Rights Campaign, which describes itself as "America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality." In ranking the Congress before the 2004 election, HRC scored Bayh at 75, compared with 88 for Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) or 17 for Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN).

Earlier this year Bayh announced Congress had passed legislation on his first bill in the Senate, the Responsible Fatherhood Act, which will provide funding for state and private organizations to establish responsible fatherhood workshops. "As a father, Senator Bayh understands that strong families are crucial to our children's future success," reads an item entitled "Fatherhood" on his website at senate.gov., and the senator often weaves family into his discussions of today's most pressing issues when he takes to the stump.

"You know, enabling all our children to overcome the obstacles that have been placed in their way, to help them fulfill their God-given potential, that has to be our cause," he said earlier this month at the Indiana Jefferson-

Jackson Dinner. "Our cause has got to be a little girl who came up to me in Valparaiso a few years back. It was at an early childhood development center. It was a step ahead program, all the programs in that community gathered together to help little girls like that. She had a frilly dress on and bright blue eyes and she threw her arms around me and looked into my face and she broke my heart. Because she looked up at me and said, 'Will you be my daddy?' She lost her father and her mother lived in an institution. You know, thinking of reaching out to girls like that and helping them make the most of what God may have to offer them, helping them carve out a future and have a tomorrow and let them know they're not being left by themselves, but that we all care as much about them as we do our own. That must be our cause in these elections." ♦

Most Hoosiers were shocked by the primary upsets of Sens. Borst and Garton.

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More Senate Democrats Coming

TRENDLINE: Senate Democrats not only think they can pick up Senate District 41 with Terry Coriden, but perhaps three or four other seats as well. Jeff Harris told HPR that another three or four candidates will be slated in the coming weeks. State Sen. Vi Simpson said that 23 out of the 25 seats up for election will have Democrats.

Congressional Races

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S.

Rep. Chris Chocola. Democrat: 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:

Chocola has begun attack ads against Donnelly, with the strategy apparently intended to lure Donnelly to spend money early.

Retired 1st Sgt. Samuel Alameda was enjoying his

breakfast Tuesday morning at American Pancake House in Mishawaka when he lost his appetite. A buddy asked if he had heard about what happened at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He hadn't, so his friend quickly filled him in (Moor, **South Bend Tribune**). "I was dumbfounded," he said. And a Michiana congressman questions how it could happen. The government reported Monday that thieves stole personal information from an estimated 26.5 million veterans who have been discharged since 1975. An employee of the VA improperly took the information home before it was stolen from the home. Some personal information, such as Social Security numbers and birth dates belonging to those veterans, appears to be in jeop-



ardy. "You feel baffled, like someone has double-crossed you," said Alameda, a Mishawaka resident who retired last year. He served in the Gulf War. "There's no trust now. It's almost like being robbed." U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola said Tuesday that he will introduce legislation Friday to help veterans protect themselves against identity theft. Among other things, the Veterans Identity Protection Act will require the Veterans Administration to provide a free credit report every three months over one year and provide one year of free credit monitoring to every veteran whose personal information was compromised, according to Chocola spokesman Marcus Barlow. "I have many questions about how a data analyst had the capability to bring home information on almost 27 million veterans," Chocola stated through a news release. "I expect the VA inspector general and the FBI to get to the bottom of this, hold accountable all who are responsible, and put systems in place to make sure that this never happens again."

Status: TOSSUP

Congressional District 3: Republican: U.S.

Rep. Mark Souder. Democrat: Fort Wayne Councilman Thomas Hayhurst. **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:** Rep. Mark Souder (R-Ind.) just got a wake-up call about the political risks of Congress' immigration debate. Having been hammered by constituents for his moderate stand on illegal immigration, Souder this month got 7,100 fewer votes in the GOP primary than in 2004, when he ran against the same challenger (**Los Angeles Times**). His experience helps explain why so many House Republicans adamantly oppose any compromise that would allow illegal immigrants to earn legal status. They have concluded it could be political suicide to give ground to the Senate immigration bill, expected to pass today, which would do just that. "The mood is so angry, we can't hold the House with any bill" like that, Souder said. "The Senate bill would be worse than nothing." But other Republicans fear a different political risk — that the party would suffer if it came up empty-handed after the long, emotional debate on immigration that has spilled from Capitol Hill



into the streets of major cities. "At the end of the day, 'no deal' doesn't work," said Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va.). "This will be a test for voters: Are Republicans capable of governing?" Souder got a glimpse of that this month when he visited a large retirement center on what was deadline day for seniors to sign up for the Medicare prescription drug benefit. Souder got only one question about Medicare. The rest of the hour he fielded questions about immigration. "There is a pot boiling out there," Souder said. "We've got to secure the border first." Souder, one of 17 Republicans to vote against the House bill last year, is not the only GOP lawmaker who has seen political backlash over the issue. Is Souder vulnerable? We believe he is if an extreme national tidal wave develops and, thus, we move this race from LIKELY to LEANS. Hayhurst is his most credible opponent: since he defeated Rep. Jill Long in the last tidal wave - 1994. Keep an eye on this one. This is the coal mine canary for Hoosier Republicans. If it tightens up, you'll know the wave has arrived. **Status:** LEANS SOUDER

Congressional District 6: Republican:

U.S. Rep. Mike Pence. Democrat: Rev. Barry Allen Welsh.

Geography: Anderson, Muncie, Richmond; Wells, Adams, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union, Decatur, Franklin, and parts of Bartholomew, Shelby, Johnson and Allen counties. **Media**

Market: Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Dayton, Cincinnati.

People: urban/rural 59/40%; median income \$39,002; poverty 9.7%; race: 93% white, 3.8% black, 1.3% Hispanic; blue/white collar 35/49%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 58%, Gore 40%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+10; **2002 results:** Pence 118,436 (64%), Fox 63,871. **2002 Money:** Pence \$1.2m, Fox \$342,987. **2004 Results:** Pence 182,529, Fox (D) 85,123, Roots (L) 4,397. **2006 Outlook:** Pence has been in the crosshairs of national public policy this week. The **Opinion Journal** endorsed his immigration compromise. But he drew a rebuke from U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood for his efforts on cutting the budget. **Status:** LIKELY PENCE

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: 37/52%. **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:** House: Majority Leader John Boehner, who opposed the House Republican immigration bill, attended a clandestine fundraiser in Evansville for Hostettler. The incumbent's campaign did not publicize the visit. The divisions in the Republican Party generated by the fight over immigration are being reflected in Indiana's congressional delegation (Groppe, **Gannett News Service**). U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, like President Bush, wants to go beyond tougher security on the borders. The Hoosier Republican was one of 23 members of his party who voted Thursday for a Senate bill that would, in addition to strengthening security, set up a guest-worker program and give a path to citizenship for some of the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants already in the country. "My sense is that a majority of Hoosiers are realists. They are pragmatic," Lugar said. "They understand that this is a monumental problem and will not be served by emotional rhetoric." At the other end of the spectrum is Hostettler, who is chairman of a House immigration panel. He has criticized the Bush administration for not rounding up and deporting illegal immigrants, including those who have participated in protests against the border-security and workplace-enforcement bill the House passed last year. "I will continue to urge the president to do one thing: enforce the laws that we have on the books today," Hostettler said after Bush tried to rally support for a broader approach this month. "Holding employers accountable is the single best thing that we can do today to really solve this problem." **Status:** TOSS-UP

Congressional District 9: Republican: U.S.

Rep. Mike Sodrel. Democrat: Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville (11%), Indianapolis (23%), Louisville (55%), Dayton, Cincinnati (10 percent). **People:** urban/rural 52/48%, median income \$39,011; race white 94%, 2.3% black, 1.5% Hispanic; blue/white collar: 34/50%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+8. **2004 Presidential:** Bush 59%, Kerry 40%. **2002 Results:** Hill 96,654 (51%), Sodrel 87,169



(46%). **2002 Money:** Hill \$1.144m, Sodrel \$1.62m. 2004 Results: Sodrel 142,197, Hill 140,772, Cox (L) 4,541. **2006 Forecast:** When Mike Sodrel defeated Rep. Baron Hill by fewer than 1,500 votes in Indiana in 2004, he was the only Republican challenger to beat a Democratic incumbent outside of Tom DeLay-redistricted Texas (**The Hill**). The National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) outspent the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) by \$1 million over the last two months of the campaign in Indiana's 9th District, while Democrats pumped millions into the races of four incumbent Texas Democrats who lost by double digits in their newly drawn districts. Now Hill is back, trying to regain the seat in his third straight race against Sodrel. The race is expected again to be one of the closest in the House, with most experts calling it a toss-up, and both candidates are seeing a level of interest they haven't seen in their two previous match-ups. Hill said he doesn't want to talk about what happened in 2004, especially support from his party. "I'm not going to judge that," Hill said. "That was then, and this is now. I'm focused on now and not then. All I know is I like what's going on with the DCCC right now." He said that the DCCC has been "much more aggressive" and helpful this time around. **Status:** TOSSUP.

State, Legislative Races

Secretary of State: Republican: Secretary of State Todd Rokita. Democrat: Joe Pearson. **2002 Results:** Rokita (R) 789,261, Fernandez (D) 627,416, Sink-Burris (L) 60,937. **2006 Forecast:** Ouch. Just as Rokita heads to the GOP Convention, he endorsed Rick Niemeyer for Lake County Republican chairman over John Curley, who then took two-thirds of the vote. That kind of rebuke from his home county was not only embarrassing, but suggests

vulnerability. **Status:** LEANS ROKITA

Senate District 22: Republican: State Sen. Ron Alting. Democrat: David C. Vorbeck. **2002 Results:** Alting 15,902, Sanders (D) 8,087. **2006 Forecast:** Sen. Vi Simpson tells HPR that she believes this is a winnable seat for Democrats. She calls Vorbeck "one of the most articulate candidates" in recent memory. **Status:** TOSSUP.

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:** Vincennes City Councilman Steve Thais has a decent shot at winning this seat, according to State Sen. Vi Simpson. **Status:** TOSSUP.

Senate District 31: Republican: State Sen. James Merritt. Democrat: Russell Brown. **2002 Results:** Merritt (R) 17,154, Sloan (L) 1,387. **2006 Forecast:** Rumors swept the Statehouse on Wednesday that Merritt was about to resign his seat and that Republicans were seeking a new nominee. But Cassandra Sponsel, executive director of the Majority Caucus, said Merritt plans to run. "He has neither entered or exited the race," Sponsel said. Due to changing demographics, the Republicans are going to have to work to keep this seat. **Status:** LEANS MERRITT

Senate District 41: Republican: Greg Walker. Democrat: Terry Coriden. **1998 Results:** Garton 26,499. **2002 Results:** Garton 21,918, Gividen (L) 3,350. **2006 Forecast:** Sen. Vi Simpson was asked with Coriden can win this 60 percent Republican district. "I think he can," she told HPR. "It has become a race between a moderate Democrat and a radical Republican. I'm right next door to that district. I know the people of Columbus and they are not radical." **Primary Status:** TOSSUP ♦

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Curley seeks to unite Lake GOP

MERRILLVILLE - John Curley has been the big man in Lake County Republican politics for years, but still has trouble proving to some he can fill the shoes of a county chairman (Dolan, **Times of Northwest Indiana**). He admits his win Tuesday night over Rick Niemeyer by a 149-92 vote among precinct committeemen to lead the county's organization didn't feel like a landslide, but he'll take it and said he'll bring his party back into respectability among voters. "This was not an overwhelming victory, but it was close to it. Now, I'm elected chairman. I'm not an appointed chairman anymore and I won't get that thrown in my face anymore," Curley said. State party officials appointed Curley county chairman in 2003 to replace previous chairman Roger Chiabai. Curley said he will use his mandate to bind the party's wounds. "I want to get together with all elected Republican officials who have a problem with me. I want them to be a part of the solution," Curley said. Vern Vierk, a veteran Republican activist who said he has had a long relationship with both Curley and Niemeyer, warns this is a wake-up call to a party still so weak it cannot even field candidates for many of the county's 554 precincts. Curley insisted the committeemen gave him an "A for effort" in building up the party, recruiting more candidates for office and providing them with campaign literature and training. "We are going to make noise in the fall. We have a message beyond just lowering taxes," Curley said.



Senate Democrats reject health care for life

INDIANAPOLIS - Senate Dem-

ocratic leaders Wednesday became the third caucus to come out against a health care perk for retired legislators while also announcing a push for universal health care for Hoosiers (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). Minority Leader Sen. Richard Young, D-Milltown, told reporters that his caucus recently met and decided that any member who returns to the Senate next year will not accept the retirement health care benefit in its current form. "Our caucus firmly believes that senators should receive no benefits greater than what other state employees receive," he wrote in a letter to the Senate secretary.

Ethanol plant coming to Jay County

PORTLAND - Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman joined Broin Companies executives today to announce plans for the construction of Premier Ethanol LLC near Portland, Ind. The company plans to build a new 120 million-gallon corn ethanol facility in two phases, further propelling Indiana into leadership as a national hub for biofuels production. This is the 10th new ethanol plant Indiana has announced in the last year.

No bids for Dunes hotel

PORTAGE - Indiana Department of Natural Resources officials were surprised and environmentalists were relieved on Wednesday as the deadline for proposals to build a hotel at Indiana Dunes State Park passed without a single submission (**Times of Northwest Indiana**). Department Director Kyle Hupfer said the state DNR will consider whether it should ask again for private proposals, put the idea on hold or build its own Dunes hotel. Tom Anderson, executive director of Save the Dunes Council, said he expects future proposals to develop public land on the Dunes, but he was pleased with Wednesday's news. "It wasn't a defeat," said Anderson. In

January, Hupfer proposed putting privately built hotels at the Dunes, Potato Creek State Park and Versailles State Park. He said the 100-room, 87,000-square-foot hotel would be built on previously disturbed land and it would add needed lodging to the area.

Rep. Bottorff to sell her home

JEFFERSONVILLE - State Rep. Carlene Bottorff plans to sell her home on Ind. 62 to make way for a proposed subdivision on 45 acres. Construction on the project, called Irish Heights, may begin before the end of the year if all the necessary approvals are granted (**Louisville Courier-Journal**).

Hobart mayor to seek fourth term

HOBART - Mayor Linda Buzinec, at a news conference Wednesday, said she will run for a fourth term in 2007 (**Post-Tribune**). "This is a day to look toward new heights," she told more than 50 supporters.

Retirees protest union pension cuts

ANDERSON - Two retirees from United Auto Workers Local 662 picketed its office for cutting off their pension (**Anderson Herald-Bulletin**). The UAW local, which represents workers at Delphi Corp., cut off benefits and pension supplements for its 10 retired maintenance men and secretaries Wednesday. Only one part-time maintenance person still works at the union hall. Two of the retirees — Bob Harris, 59, and Rubion Isbell, 67, began picketing outside the union hall Wednesday. "I don't know what I'm going to do," said Harris, who lost his health insurance and half his \$1,500-a-month pension. The union hall employees are unionized with Local 357 of the AFL-CIO. "When the UAW treats you like this, what are you going to do?" said Isbell. ♦