



Political Report

HOWEY

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Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

Thursday, Oct. 19, 2006

Indiana's runaway congressman

Hostettler's swan song? Media trap?

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Heading into the 2006 campaign cycle, U.S. Rep. John Hostettler had, perhaps, the most compelling political story among Hoosier Republicans.

He had voted against the Iraq War, which has become a full-fledged and "disheartening" debacle threatening to swamp Republican majorities from Washington to Indianapolis.

He voted against the prescription drug plan four times on the House floor that has since become the biggest federal entitlement expansion since LBJ's Great Society with costs predicted to close in on half a trillion dollars in the next 10 years. He had cast one of the few votes against Hurricane Katrina aid, saying a "blank check" was inappropriate. As Hoosiers saw



U.S. Rep. John Hostettler at a Gibson County church.

pictures of thousands of unusable mobile homes sitting in an Arkansas field a year after the Gulf tempest, it was a stance that stood to resonate.

But today, three weeks before the election, Hostettler is trailing in the polls. A WISH-TV poll a month ago had him down by 6 percent. A less credible Indiana State University poll last week had him trailing by 22 percent.

On Monday, a reliable Republican source told HPR that Hostettler two weeks ago was signalling his intent to "retire." He told the Republican activists that he was more intent on holding the 21 immigration hearings in 13 states than in campaigning in the 8th CD. The Republican source, who spoke on back-

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Time for an Iraq deadline

By **ABDUL-HAKIM SHABAZZ**

INDIANAPOLIS - I normally don't write about the war in Iraq. My personal belief is that going into Iraq was a mistake because the true problem in the war on terror was Iran, as we are seeing today. However, I do not subscribe to the "cut and run" crowd, nor do I believe in "staying the course."



I do think however, it is time for a deadline. Why a deadline? Think about this. When I was in college I did an independent

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“ ”
QUOTE
of the Week



“It's no coincidence that the surge in attacks against coalition forces ... coincide with ... the run-up to the American mid-term elections.”

- Maj. Gen. William Caldwell, in Baghdad today



Political Report

study course. Part of it involved getting a paper done. The professor I had was adamant about the deadlines and I made sure I met them. Some of my other counterparts, though, had professors who gave them no deadline, but just told them to get the paper done whenever. They never got it done, because there was no deadline.

Now you maybe are saying to yourself, "Abdul, Iraq is not a term paper." You're right, but the same underlying theme still applies. If the Iraqis don't have a deadline, what incentive is there for them to step up to the plate and get control of their own country? Obviously the current sectarian violence isn't incentive enough. The Associated Press is reporting at least 700 people have been killed this month. So maybe a deadline is in order.

Now obviously there are consequences to not meeting a deadline. In college you fail. In Iraq, the consequence should not be for American troops to leave, per se. But I am of the mindset that dividing up the country into three autonomous regions will be the way to go. As my Dad would say, "If you boys can't play together, your mother and I are going to have to separate you!"

There have been several proposals on the table to partition the country into autonomous Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish regions. A new Iraqi Federation could be created, with each region sharing the proceeds from the nation's oil revenues. It's harsh, but maybe necessary. Obviously the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki can't do the job. If you don't think dividing Iraq will work, I point to the old Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

The President opposes a timetable for Iraq, saying it will embolden the terrorists. I argue a timetable will light the fire under the Iraqis and embolden them to take control of their destiny. ♦

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ground, expressed concern about the impact of Hostettler's lack of presence in the 8th CD would have on down ballot races.

While Hostettler was signalling his intent to hold hearings instead of campaigning, the National Republican Campaign Committee was in the process of dumping an additional \$151,000 into the Evansville and Terre Haute TV markets, part of a \$1.1 million expenditure, a decision that, given the demands of Hostettler's colleagues across the nation, stands to be second guessed in the



evitable post-mortem.

NRCC's Ed Patru put on a brave face, as the GOP poured in good money. "When we play, we play to win," Patru said.

And the notion of an absent Congressman in a politically crucial district was banded about for weeks. The Evansville Courier & Press couldn't find him during the traditional Labor Day weekend kickoff. PBS producers for the Lehrer News Hour couldn't find him in mid-September. They were told that on that particular week-

end, the congressman had no public schedule. New York Times reporter Joyce Purnick spent almost two days in the district on Oct. 6-7 and could not only not find the congressman, but had no contact with the campaign. WTHR-TV's Kevin Rader reported com-



ments made by Indianapolis Star columnist Matt Tully, who said, "It's hard to take a guy seriously when you can't find him. The candidate owes the public the courtesy of saying here is what I am doing. Here is where you can see me if you have a question about my stances or my positions. To his own party -- you talk to members of his own party in Republican circles and even they will say 'I honestly don't know whether this guy is campaigning, whether this guy is serious.'"

WGCL-AM talk host Darryl Neher in Bloomington said a number of his Republican sources have asked him the same question. "Short of the immigration hearings, where has he been?" Neher said. "He's never done the big splashy campaign events; he's always worked behind the scenes. But this year seems different."

Purnick did spend significant time with 8th CD voters. "They are deeply concerned about the war and the direction of the country," Purnick told HPR on Wednesday.

A bizarre response

When pressed by the Evansville Courier & Press after HPR connected the dots, Hostettler released one of the truly bizarre quotes coming out of a Congressional operation: "My 12 years of experience with Brian Howie (sic) and his so-called 'Report' is that if I could buy either of them for what they are worth and sell them for what they think they are worth, I would never have to hold another fundraiser for the rest of the times I would ever want to run for the House, the Senate, or the White House. And, no, this is not an announcement about any future plans for 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue at this time."

Karen Hammonds, Hostettler's sister and campaign office manager, said the statement is an unequivocal denial of Howey's report, the Courier & Press reported.

What else could she say? State Sen. Mike Delph, who describes himself as a "dear friend" and admirer of Rep. Hostettler, said that the Republican who planted the story "was a genius who probably ignited the organization" into a mode where "they will surprise a lot of people on Election Day."

"He is a tireless and aggressive campaigner," Delph said. "You can toss out conventional wisdom when it comes to the 8th Congressional District."

The fact that Rep. Hostettler knew how to win over the past six elections is undisputed. His modus oper-

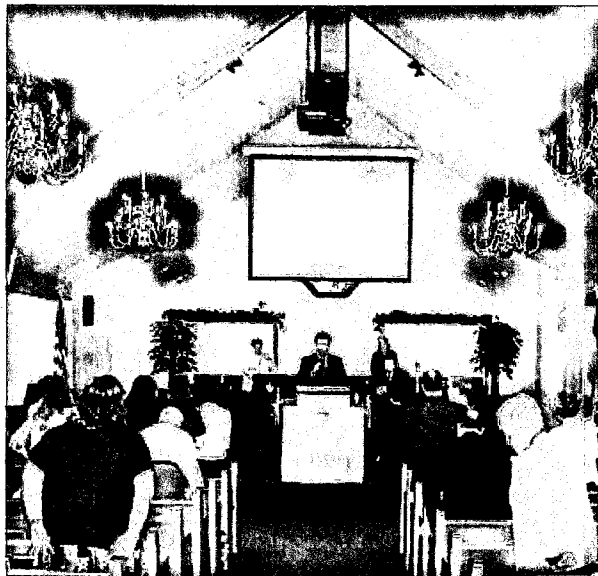
endi is simple: motivate the base, which means talk to the 50 to 53 percent who are inclined to vote for him. The Democrats, many of the independents, the non-true believers are irrelevant. And, of course, so is the media ... the liberal media. The dialogue only goes to the right.

Taking a bullet for the congressman

Joshua Claybourn, a columnist for HPR and an Evansville attorney, said that Rep. Hostettler first ran for office because of an intense dislike for President Bill Clinton.

"Clinton embodied everything that Hostettler and his Christian conservative supporters thought was going wrong with America, and they intended to change it ... or at least prevent its further 'decline.'"

Hostettler won a six-candidate 8th CD primary in May 1994 with 35 percent of the vote, easily out-distancing the runnerup by tapping into a base of Christian fundamentalist churches, 2nd Amendment rights activists, and home schoolers, then surfed a



wave by running against U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey (who he called "Frank McClinton") that was largely contextually framed by then House Minority Leader Newt Gingrich. Hostettler attacked McCloskey on gay rights, gun control, taxes and school prayer.

"It's a hallmark of his candidacy and what drives so many people to him," Claybourn said. "A strong undercurrent of the 1994 Republican takeover was the religious right and there are few politicians in America who tapped into this better than John Hostettler. The way in which he was able to win over Christian conservatives was impressive."

"I'll never forget," Claybourn said, "being at a Republican function where two grown men said, quite forcefully and in total seriousness, that they would take a bullet for Hostettler. That was symbolic of the zeal with which his supporters worked for him, and it's why his grassroots were so effective. Indeed, for those Christians who saw government as a means through which Christians were to shape the world, Hostettler was their champion. But perhaps most importantly, they saw Hostettler as a martyr that was stemming the tide of secular humanism."

Hostettler would defeat McCloskey by 8,672 votes (52-48 percent) in 1994. He would quickly defy Speaker



Gingrich by being one of 15 freshman to vote against the continuing resolution to reopen the federal government. Gingrich would cancel an 8th CD fundraiser (Majority Leader Dick Armey came instead), and Hostettler would later vote "present" the next time Gingrich was re-elected speaker.

It set off a string of narrow victories: 50-48 percent over State Rep. Jonathan Weinzapfel in 1996; 52-46 percent over Evansville Councilwoman Gail Riecken in 1998; 53-45 percent over Dr. Paul Perry in 2000; 51-46 percent over Bryan Hartke in 2002; and 53-44 percent over Boston Celtic scout Jon Jennings in 2004.

In his six terms, Hostettler has taken a number of controversial positions. He voted against: a balanced budget amendment (without a super majority); term limits (he's against amending the Constitution); hate crimes (he asked, "What is a crime motivated out of love? We should not create a federal thought police"); and the Violence Against Women Act.

He voted against the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform, but doesn't take PAC money and always runs shoestring campaigns. In his 2002 race against Hartke he out-raised the Democrat \$537,000 to \$392,000, but 2000 was more his style, with Perry outspending him \$1.5 million to \$743,000. This year? Hostettler has raised \$461,111, which is anemic even for him, compared to \$1.46 million for Sheriff Ellsworth. With the U.S. House hanging in the balance, Hostettler picked a strange time to go light on campaign funds.

In October 2002, he voted against the Iraq War resolution, fearing it would "set an ominous precedent" that the "rest of the world could justifiably follow." "Those are the policy and political reasons for Hostettler's success, and also why so many despise him," Claybourn said. "But there's another level to the man that often doesn't get covered. Hostettler is still seen as a traditional, rural guy. The type of people who drive pickup trucks, attend church each week, and work from pay check to pay check associate with him. And when he spurns the media, it doesn't turn these supporters off. On the contrary, it allows them to associate with him even more. He campaigned as the anti-Washington candidate and his distaste for the media, traditional political consultants, etc. only fuels that image."

Immigration could pay off

Another key issue is immigration, where Rep. Hostettler has invested much capital. A new poll suggests

that it may pay off for him. A survey of 500 likely voters in the 8th CD conducted on Oct. 4 and 5 by Polling Com Inc. showed that 49 percent cited immigration as one of their top three issues. Another 8 percent put it at the top of their agenda.

Hostettler has been trying to tap that sentiment through his work as chairman of the House Judiciary subcommittee on immigration. One of the strongest proponents of the enforcement-only House immigration reform bill, Hostettler hosted a field hearing in the district over the summer. Conservatives like Hostettler decry the Senate measure for promoting "amnesty." Hostettler also has taken a high-profile in calling for harsher sanctions against employers who hire illegal workers.

Following a House hearing in September that reviewed the results of the field efforts, Hostettler expressed confidence that immigration would be a winning issue for him. He hinted that he had an advertising campaign in the works

that would portray Ellsworth as supporting the pathway to legalization.

But Ellsworth has outlined a position on immigration that is almost exactly the same as Hostettler's. The Vanderburgh County sheriff has vowed to crack down on illegal immigrants, citing his law enforcement credentials to bolster his get-tough attitude.

Kellyanne Conway, CEO of The Polling Company, said that Hostettler should continue to set himself apart on immigration by emphasizing his role in influencing policy through his subcommittee leadership, though Ellsworth has pointed out that Hostettler had 12 years in Congress to staunch the immigration tide. "You still have an opportunity over the next three weeks to show a contrast," she said, acknowledging that it is harder for Hostettler to pin the "liberal" label on Ellsworth than it has been on his previous opponents. Hostettler is currently running an ad on immigration in which he claims Ellsworth, "said he favored a White House plan to give amnesty to millions of illegal aliens."

"Ellsworth has run a very good campaign," said Conway. "You can't accuse him of being part of Howard Dean's party."

Yet Hostettler remains self-assured about his ability to cast Ellsworth as being too far to the left to represent the district. "The message will be clear," he said in a September interview. In that and other talks with HPR in the halls of Congress, Hostettler is a sharp contrast to the cloistered politician who rarely returns media phone calls.





He is relaxed and confident, unusually so for a candidate who is far behind in the polls. He describes his positions articulately and is always polite."

The tornado

On Nov. 6, 2005, a killer tornado skipped across the Ohio River and killed 25 people in Vanderburgh and Warrick counties. It thrust Sheriff Ellsworth into the limelight as his men searched for victims.

Hostettler was heavily criticized for not being more visible and accessible. Indeed, virtually every public official was in the area hit heaviest, making statements and doing photo ops. Yet Hostettler was nowhere to be found. Soon afterward he was noticed by the father of a local television journalist whose lawn Hostettler was cleaning up at the time. The encounter was entirely coincidence, and Hostettler's assistance was discovered only by chance. He had been helping the tornado victims all along, but refused to do it for political gain.



The incident highlights a noble aspect of Hostettler's personality and political philosophy. It is part of what endears him to supporters, but is also an example of why the media and politically apathetic center find him confusing.

Claybourn explains, "In sum, the very things that make Hostettler so appealing to his most ardent supporters are the same things that make him so detestable to his detractors. But as any two-bit political analyst will tell you, that only accounts for the fringes. To remain in office there's a certain moderate center that he must win over. For a number of reasons -- national moods, weak opponents, etc. -- Hostettler has managed to capture just enough of this center. But in Ellsworth the Democrats may have finally found someone who can siphon these off and send Hostettler home."

The irony of a Hostettler loss in '06 is that it could come about a year before U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton makes her move toward the White House. ♦

A 'rock star' comes to Indiana for the Dems

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - U.S. Rep. John Hostettler isn't the only one who doesn't particularly care for a dialogue with people he doesn't like.

You can add President Bush to that category as his administration has avoided any kind of dialogue with the Syrians, Iran, and North Korea.

U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, who came to Indianapolis on Monday to campaign for congressional challengers Brad Ellsworth, Baron Hill and Joe Donnelly, was asked by HPR about what he expects from the Iraq Study Group headed by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and former Indiana congressman Lee Hamilton. Specifically, should we be talking to Iran and Syria as Baker and Hamilton are expected to suggest?

"My general view is that everybody in the region has to be involved in how we bring about a peaceful



U.S. Sen. Barack Obama and Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. Obama graced the cover to TIME this week. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howe)

conclusion," Obama replied. "Iran has been a beneficiary, unfortunately, of our misguided policies there. But Iran now has a stake in making sure that Iraq doesn't collapse completely. So does Syria. They would see enormous influxes



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of refugees. They're already seeing them."

"You make a good point that this comes after the election," Obama said to HPR. "I would have liked to have seen this report prior to the election. I have enormous respect for Lee Hamilton. James Baker represents the style of bipartisan foreign policy ... that characterizes the first Bush. They are well-thought through and are a successful approach to the Gulf War. My hope is we're going to see a renewed realism around our foreign policy; a recognition that building alliances doesn't reflect weaknesses. We can defeat any nation on earth militarily, but rebuilding democracies and recreating order in disordered societies is a task that involves everybody."

Obama came to Indianapolis with a political rock star aura. He peered out of the Westin Hotel bookstore as the TIME magazine cover subject with the question, "The Next President?"

He entered the briefing room before Hill, Ellsworth and Donnelly and said, "How about those Bears and Colts? I just want to point out the Colts have just been barely eking out victories, where the Bears seem to be dominating."

Your point is? a reporter asked.

"No point. Just an observation," Obama said as laughter rippled through the room. "Peyton Manning knows how to win and knows how to come from behind. But Colts and Bears, I'm looking for a good Super Bowl matchup right there."

By late that night, the Chicago Bears had done just what the Colts had been doing, eking out a miracle victory over the hapless Arizona Cardinals, which lends further credibility to the notion that's why you play the games (and elections).

Reminded that Bears QB Rex Grossman is a Hoosier, Obama said, "Yes I do, and if you continue to send talent to Washington like you do to Chicago, that's very much appreciated."

Thus the segue.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for me to support three outstanding candidates here in Indiana," Obama said. "In the last week I've been in 15 cities. Everywhere I go, I get a sense the American people are really in a serious mood; a substantive mood. They are looking for some concrete, non-ideological solutions to the problems confronting them day-to-day. They want to know how health care can be more affordable. People are concerned about

the education their kids are getting to compete in a global economy. They're concerned about energy and why we can't harness the enormous productivity of Indiana farmers and Illinois farmers around flexible fuels, biodiesel that will relieve some of the national security problems from us sending \$800 million a day to some of the most hostile nations on earth.

"And, obviously, they are very concerned about Iraq," said Obama, who in the past year has traveled extensively with Sen. Richard Lugar. He talked about "the need for us to reassert the kind of foreign policy that matches the might of our military with the wisdom of our diplomacy and the strength of our alliances. And that treats our young men and women in uniform with the reverence they deserve and make certain that they are not sent into missions that cannot be accomplished."

Obama talked about the "sense of seriousness and

soberness about the challenges we confront signals a good election for Democrats. When people are paying attention, and they're not distracted by some of the negative campaigning that has characterized the past couple of election cycles. The message that Democrats have is one of hope and optimism. I think that will win out in the end. The three candidates I have before me exemplify that. They love to build bridges and they love to solve problems."

Of the three Hoosier

Democrats, Ellsworth and Donnelly appeared to be confident. Both had picked up Indianapolis Star endorsements. Hill seemed tighter, which reflected the SurveyUSA poll last week showing his race had closed to a 48-46 percent lead over Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Spirel. A South Bend Tribune/ANSBT poll had Donnelly leading U.S. Rep. Chris Choccola 50-45 percent, which was closer than other polls, but at least Donnelly was at the 50 percent mark.

Hill said, "We're bogged down in Iraq, the deficit is ballooning, we have an energy policy that causes us to be dependent on foreign oil. We are not addressing the health care issue. We have all kinds of ethics scandals and there needs to be change. Sen. Obama is a breath of fresh air for change and that's what he symbolizes for me."

Asked about a presidential campaign, Obama deferred. "It's flattering. It's hard to stand outside yourself. I am focused on trying to get some Democrats in the House and Senate so I can get a bill passed." ♦



8th CD Democrat Brad Ellsworth (left) Sen. Barack Obama along with Baron Hill and Joe Donnelly on Monday. (HPR Photos by Brian A. Howey)



Birch Bayh on war and family

INDIANAPOLIS - HPR's Brian A. Howey conducted this interview with former Sen. Birch Bayh on Monday after the news conference with Sen. Barack Obama.

HPR: The polls are showing your son's presidential campaign to be under 5 percent. Is it correct to say these polls are essentially meaningless right now?

Birch Bayh: Yes.

HPR: He's got a good organization. He's raising the money. When does he need the momentum?

Birch Bayh: I don't know. At this stage, in 1976, neither Jimmy Carter or Birch Bayh were at 1 percent. We were "among others." In Iowa, Jimmy Carter came in first, I came in second. Carter had done such an effective job. Carter had the grassroots, having slept in so many homes. He had two years to do that and I had to work in the Senate. The fact that Mark Warner dropped out will be a real plus if Evan decides to move forward. He's got a real tug-o-war. I talked to him as I was headed up to Kokomo Friday morning. He called in. We had been missing each other. He had just come in seeing one of the boys playing soccer and the other one playing football. He has that family; he loves his family. This would mean not being there as often. Also, he loves the state. I see these people all over the state that say Evan should run, but those are the people Evan doesn't feel like he will walk away from. This is his roots and that's the way he should feel.

HPR: Do you expect to have a conversation with him by Thanksgiving on whether to proceed?

Birch Bayh: I'll have a conversation with him, but, you know, he is his own man. He's very in tune with what's going on. The river's run a long time since I've been involved in politics. I have enjoyed working for these congressional candidates, who are outstanding good people. The difference between them and their opponets is whether you want to go forwards or backwards. Do you want to be for something or against something?

HPR: America is facing a critical presidential election in 2008. The sole superpower is at a crossroads and what happens over the next decade may determine whether we are still the only super power in 2050. We can't do anything about North Korea. We don't talk to Iran.

Birch Bayh: We have no soul and no goal. And what does that mean? Where are we now with George Bush in the White House? We lost our soul. Nobody knows what the goal is. Everybody is angry at once another, even within the power structure, let alone between Republicans and Democrats. We have to have somebody like John Kennedy who asked not what your country could do for you,

but what could you do for your country; challenging each of us to be better than ourselves. This group fills the airwaves with hatred. And Congress with hatred. I have never seen such a group of angry men in my life.

HPR: Does it concern you about your son being at the pinnacle of power, having to clean up the mess in Iraq; having to deal with North Korea and Iran and a new nuclear arms race?

Birch Bayh: There are some insurmountable problems. Do you believe in the future of this country? Do you want it to be better tomorrow for my grandkids than it is now? Sure. Somebody's got to do it. But it's like electing Baron Hill, Brad Ellsworth and Joe Donnelly. Those are three steps that can be taken to turn this country around. The mess is there and we have to clean it up. We have to elect somebody to put this country on a different pathway. We need a president to put his eye on the future and get us off the seat of our pants and do something. Forgive me for being on a soapbox but I feel very strongly about this.

HPR: The kind of problems we face today keep many thinking men and women up at night.

Birch Bayh: I've thought a little bit about why you would run for president. I thought I had the best job in town, just like I think Evan thinks he's got the best job in town. I finally decided the reason I would run is because I didn't want four more years of Richard Nixon. He had filled this country with hatred and disgust with Watergate and one thing or another. I said, I think I have something to offer. People decided they didn't want me, so fine, they decided they wanted Jimmy Carter.

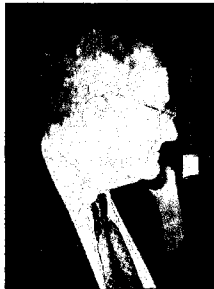
HPR: What kind of process did you go through when you split with President Johnson on Vietnam?

Birch Bayh: It was the right thing to do. I voted for the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. My country wanted to support our troops over there. I went over there and tromped around for three weeks to see what was happening; talked to a lot of people. Took helicopter trips at about tree-high level; talked to the guys in some of the hospitals there. I started adding 2 and 2 and I ended up with 1. This would have been '66 or '67 and I knew something had to be done. We had no reason for being there. Just because the French had been our allies in Europe; just because we needed to save their rear ends in Europe didn't mean we needed to save their rear ends in Vietnam. We decided with the domino theory we had an interest. Well, we really didn't have an interest. We have some interest in Iraq.

HPR: There is a big difference in the strategic importance of Vietnam and Iraq.

Birch Bayh: Absolutely. If we have to do something in Iraq, we have to do it right. ♦

HPR Interview





Bayh sees red, but hopes to turn blue

By MARK CURRY

WASHINGTON - Sen. Evan Bayh will be chalking up some serious frequent campaigner miles in the 18 days remaining before the midterm elections, with announced visits to five states, including two trips to Indiana.

"Bayh to Campaign in Red States and Districts Between Now and Election Day" was the headline on a news release distributed by the senator's office earlier this week. According to the published schedule, Indiana's junior senator will dedicate nine days supporting Hoosier Democrats. He is slated to be on the road a total of a dozen days during the time period.

Earlier this week Bayh visited Atlanta where he attended a fundraiser on behalf of gubernatorial candidate Mark Taylor. Polls indicate the Democrat trails GOP incumbent Sonny Perdue by 20 points, with as many as 15 percent undecided. President Bush carried Georgia 58/41 in 2004 (C-SPAN).

Today our former governor is in Nevada (Bush 50/48) stumping on behalf of the Dina Titus for Governor campaign, congressional candidate Tessa Hafen and other Democrats. Bayh is slated to appear at a Titus event to discuss senior issues at a town hall forum in Las Vegas. Recent polling in the gubernatorial race favored Republican Jim Gibbons 45/36, with 10 percent undecided (Las Vegas Review Journal). The same poll found Hafen trailing 47/37 in an evenly split district.

New Hampshire (Kerry 50/49) is on the agenda for midweek. Tuesday he visits Norton's Classic Cafe to stump for Nashua City Democrats. Wednesday, a busy day for Bayh, begins at the Bedford Village Inn for a Politics and Eggs forum.

Later he flies to Kentucky (Bush 60/40) for an appearance on behalf of Ken Lucas, Democratic candidate in Kentucky's 4th Congressional District. Two recent polls indicate voters favor incumbent Geoff Davis by a slim margin (46/49, 44/47).

The day ends in Indiana (Bush 60/39). Bayh's office has not released any

Battle for the House

HPR Forecast: R 51, D 49

Likely Takeover (1-R)

Heim (Dembowski)

Tossups (6-R; 2-D)

Buell (Barnes)

Orendtlicher (Densborn)

J. Smith (Herrell)

Micon (Blasham)

Harris (Hile)

Woodruff (Battles)

Bright (Cheatham)

Open (Ayres: Soliday v. Graham (D))

Leans (7-R; 3-D)

Lehe (Sutton)

Ulmer (Puro)

Denbo (Patton)

Stutzman (Rorick)

Tincher (Dallas)

Open (Messer: Eberhart vs. Lux)

Austin (Metzger)

Saunders (Sadler (D), and Bell (L))

Walorski (Kovach)

Open (Budala: Dermody vs. Renner)

Likely (5-R; 2-D)

Lutz (Mengelt)

Clinker (Rhoda)

Open (Hoffman: Knollman vs. Lanning)

Hay (A. Smith)

Dodge (Raven)

Hinkle (Olds)

Davis (Liggett)

Safe (33-R; 41-D)

(33 Republican) Gutwein, Wolkins, Ruppel, Friend, McClain, Thompson, Richardson, Turner, Buck, Torr, Whetstone, T. Brown, Foley, Frizzell, Behning, Murphy, Noe, Pond, Borrer, Bell, Espich, Ripley, Crouch, Duncan, Koch, Open (Yount: M. Smith), Burton, Cherry, Leonard, Neese, Borders (Bledsoe), Open (Thomas: Thomas v. Thompson (D), Bosma (Fuldauer)

(41-Democrats) Avery, Lawson, Harris, C. Brown, Bauer, Niezgodski, Dvorak, Pelath, Cheney, Grubb, Stevenson, Open (Aguilera: Reardon), Dobis, V. Smith, Kuzman, Bardon, Tyler, Reske, Kelsey, Welch, Pierce, Goodin, Robertson, Cochran, Oxley, Stilwell, Open (B. GiaQuinta, P. GiaQuinta), Moses, Dickinson, VanHaaften, Day, Summers, Mays, Crawford, Mahern, Porter, Pflum (Bell), Fry (Hiler), Bischoff (Ullrich), Open (Stemler v. Theobald), Crooks (Arnold)

Movement in bold. Range runs from 51 seats Republican to up to 55 seats for Democrats.





details on either of two trips to the Hoosier state, including the first, which runs Wednesday through next Friday. The senator's news release reported Bayh's agenda simply as "Indiana Campaigning with Congressional and Legislative Candidates." Earlier this month he conducted a two-day campaign blitz on behalf of Democrats running in the three congressional races considered by many observers to be among the state's most competitive - the 2nd, 8th and 9th. It would not be surprising to see a Bayh visit to the 3rd CD before the election. Yesterday HPR reported that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has put the 3rd CD on its "emerg-



U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh campaigns with 2nd CD Democrat Joe Donnelly. (Bayh Flickr Photo)

ing races" category, and that Democratic challenger Thomas Hayhurst holds a significant money advantage over incumbent Mark Souder. HPR has listed the race as "Leans Souder" throughout the current election cycle.

On Nov. 1st Bayh is slated to appear at a fundraiser for Tammy Duckworth, the Democrat who hopes to win the 6th CD of Illinois (Kerry 55/45), the seat vacated by retiring Republican Rep. Henry Hyde. A Reuters/Zogby poll

released earlier this month shows Republican Peter Roskar trailing 43/38. Although he has yet to announce any further details, Bayh's communications team indicated the senator will stump in Indiana Nov. 2-7. ♦

In the midst of national trends, elections become more local

Sodrel, Hill mount ground operations in final push designed to reach out

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON—An election cycle that has featured national issues like the Iraq war and national trends like voter disenchantment with Washington incumbents in the end may be defined by how effective campaigns are in bringing their races home to voters.

As is usually the case in off-year elections, victory in competitive Hoosier races this year will depend on turning out voters. Despite poll after poll showing incumbent GOP Rep. Mike Sodrel

trailing Democrat Baron Hill in the 9th CD, the Sodrel forces say they can pull out a win based on a superior ground attack.

Their confidence stems from their efforts to take the campaign to parts of the sprawling, predominantly rural district that usually don't receive much attention.



"You should watch for people knocking on doors in places where doors have never been knocked on before," said Cam Savage, Sodrel's campaign manager.

Spencer, Orange and Crawford counties are examples of areas that this year are receiving the same kind of effort that normally is devoted to Bloomington, Seymour and New Albany. Sodrel has had a phone bank operating in Crawford County since the summer.

"That part of the district and state have never seen this kind of organization before," said Savage.

Thanks to technology that enables the Sodrel campaign to parse databases and identify voters and their electoral habits, Sodrel supporters can be more sophisticated in choosing exactly which house to approach when they're touring neighborhoods.

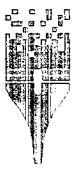
"I've never seen our base and our volunteers as efficient," said Savage. "They've learned how to do grass roots and voter contact. It's become more science than art."



Democrats mount strong ground operations

Although the national GOP is renowned for its skill at "micro-targeting," in Indiana

the Republicans are trying to catch up to the Democrats when it comes campaign technology. Led by former Hoosier



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and national party chairman Joe Andrew in the 1990s, the Democrats were the first in the state to utilize sophisticated voter ID software.

This year, the party is not conceding any ground when it comes to the ground attack. Hill has mounted a county-by-county organizational effort that will involve 100 volunteers brought in specifically to execute the initiative.

The campaign is undertaking get-out-the-vote efforts on a daily basis and benefits from a field organizer in the district who was appointed through the state party by the Democratic National Committee.

"We started building this program in June," said Michael O'Connor, the lead consultant for Hill's campaign. "It's a turnkey operation. We're as well organized and technologically sophisticated as we've ever been. I feel pretty good about it."

Both Sodrel and Hill, who held the seat for three terms before Sodrel edged him in 2004 by about 1400 votes, have plenty of money to spend on getting voters to the polls. As of Sept. 30, Sodrel had \$1,072,484 on hand while Hill had \$927,401. Both parties have combined to spend more than \$2 million so far on the race.

But O'Connor stresses that voter turnout depends as much on human resources as it does on technology. That's where he says the Democrats have an advantage this year. Stoked by the "time for a change" mantra and chaffing at Republican control of both the White House and Congress, their base is fired up.

"Democrats are really motivated to vote," said O'Connor. "You see a malaise among the Republicans."

Ellsworth extends reach to northern 8th CD

In the 8th CD, observers might not see much from

the campaign of GOP Rep. John Hostettler. But the six-term incumbent has an idiosyncratic way of reaching his fiercely loyal conservative base, who faithfully shows up to help him pull out victories by slim margins.

This year, however, polls have consistently shown Hostettler lagging behind his Democratic opponent, Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. Ellsworth's staff asserts that it will turn the poll sentiment into votes on election day.

"I can assure you that we're mounting an aggressive ground campaign reaching out to voters across the 8th district," said Matt Weisman, Ellsworth's spokesman. "We've been received with a lot of enthusiasm."

Ellsworth is making inroads beyond his Evansville

base, according to recent polls. He's becoming known in Terre Haute and northern parts of the district.

"That's a testament to the hand work Sheriff Ellsworth has done in getting out there and talking to voters and listening to what's on their minds," said Weisman, who says the campaign has more than 1,000 volunteers. "He's spent quantity and quality time traveling the district."

He also has a larger quantity of money than Hostettler. As of Sept. 30, Ellsworth had \$413,463 on hand. Hostettler had \$269,704. Both parties are spending heavily in the district. The National Republican Congressional Committee has sunk \$1.66 million into the race while the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has invested \$1.41 million.

But despite the money sloshing around in southern Indiana, the outcome in the 8th and 9th CDs likely will hinge on which candidate does a better job of pinpointing his message to the neighbor most inclined to vote for him. ♦



Sheriff Ellsworth chats with Evansville Courier & Press reporter Bryan Corbin as campaign manager Jay Howser looks on. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Honey)



NBC: Cong approval at 16%

Trendline No. 1: NBC Nightly News (10/18, lead story, Russert, 9.87M) reported, "Only 38% of Americans give President Bush a positive job approval. 57% disapprove." Meanwhile, "16% approve of the job Congress is doing and 75% disapprove, three out of four Americans disapprove. Compare that to October 1994, Congress had a 24% job approval." On the generic ballot, "37% said Republicans and 52% say Democrats. It is the highest disparity since we have found since the beginning of this poll and certainly since 1994. And look at this, just a month ago there was a nine-point spread. Back in 1994 the Republicans had a six point advantage going into that election in November of 1994. The Democrats have three times that. Republicans are very, very nervous tonight."



Trendline No. 2: Republican officials now concede they could lose a net of 23 to 27 seats in the House, that higher figure being close to twice the 15 Democrats would need to take control (TIME).

Trendline No. 3: Morton Kondracke writes in Roll Call: "Except at the White House and the top reaches of the Republican National Committee, I can hardly find a single politician, consultant or pollster, Democratic or Republican, who thinks the GOP can retain control of the House."

Trendline No. 4: The Daniels administration gave a total of \$75 million in road funds to local governments last Friday (Shelbyville News). transportation infrastructure at all levels is vital to our future economic comeback."

Trendline No. 5: House Minority Leader Pat Bauer, D-South Bend, said, "I can hear it now: 'This windfall is coming your way only because of Major Moves and our sale of the Indiana Toll Road. Without it, you wouldn't be able to do anything about repairing your roads, or even filling in the potholes that crop up next spring,'" Bauer said. "Give us a break. This administration knows no boundaries in its efforts to make a bad deal sound better."

Trendline No. 6: Indiana Democrats sure put out a snappy blog, but they aren't answering the phones.

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:** A South Bend Tribune/WSBT-TV poll (400 likely, Oct. 16-17, +/-5%) released Wednesday had Donnelly leading Chocola 50-45 percent. Research 2000 chief Delair Ali believes that Donnelly still has the edge because, "undecideds break for the challenger this late in the game. I have no doubt Donnelly's ahead," said Ali, adding, "it's close." An RT poll last week had Donnelly leading Chocola 50-46 percent. Chicago Sun-Times columnist Bob Novak lists this race as a "likely Democratic takeover." National Republicans are no longer running advertisements in three districts where they once thought they had a chance to take over Democratic-held seats — in South Carolina, West Virginia and Ohio — as well as a district in Arizona now held by a Republican (Nagourney, **New York Times**). The party has not broadcast any advertising in four days on behalf of Representative Chris Chocola, one of three Indiana Republicans who polls suggest are headed for defeat, though Republican officials said that does not mean they have written off Mr. Chocola's seat. these numbers, reported Monday, cover finances through Sept. 30. **Money:** Rep. Chris Chocola, Republican • \$2.7 million raised; • \$1.96 million spent; • \$1 million in the bank; Who's giving the most: • National Republican Congressional Committee: \$354,662. Joe Donnelly, Democrat: • \$1.15 million raised: \$827,839 spent. • \$333,450 in the bank: Who's giving the most: • DCCC \$613,325; • MoveOn.org: \$245,603 (campaigns against Iraq war, supports campaign finance reform, seeks to reduce America's dependence on oil); • American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees: \$225,016. **Status: LEANS DEMOCRAT**

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:** Hayhurst holds a significant money advantage



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over U.S. Rep. Rep. Mark Souder, R-Fort Wayne (HPR). Souder had \$299,193 raised; \$222,712 spent; \$111,365 in the bank as of Sept. 30. Thomas Hayhurst, Fort Wayne: \$592,494 raised; \$500,932 spent; \$91,562 in the bank as of Sept. 30. The DCCC has put the 3rd CD on its "emerging races" category.. **Status:** LEANS SOUDER

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:** Chicago Sun-Times columnist Bob Novak lists this as a "likely Democrat takeover." As we approach the final three weeks of the 2006 midterms, it's becoming increasingly clear that a handful of Republican incumbents may well be beyond saving (Cillezza, **Washington Post**). In this week's House Line, Reps. John Hostettler (Ind.), Don Sherwood (Pa.) and Deborah Pryce (Ohio) are all cracking the top five for the first time. Republican strategists are extremely skeptical about any of the three returning to Congress in 2007 and may soon focus their resources elsewhere. **Money:** Rep. Hostettler: • \$461,111 raised; • \$224,290 spent; • \$269,704 in the bank; Who's giving the most: • National Republican Congressional Committee: \$1.66 million. Brad Ellsworth: • \$1.46 million raised; • \$1.05 million spent; • \$413,464 in the bank. Who's giving the most: • Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee: \$1.41 million. • American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees: \$151,765. **Status:** LEANS DEMOCRAT

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:** Chicago Sun-Times columnist Bob Novak lists this race as "leans Democratic takeover." **Money:** Rep.

Sodrel, Republican: • \$2.2 million raised; • \$1.2 million spent; • \$1.07 million in the bank; Who's giving the most: • National Republican Congressional Committee: nearly \$1.39 million. Baron Hill: • \$1.5 million raised. • \$600,803 spent; • \$927,402 in the bank; Who's giving the most: • Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee: \$790,582. **Status:** TOSSUP

Legislative Races

House District 4: Republican: Ed Soliday.

Democrat: Sylvia Graham. **2004 Results:** Ayres 19,656, Siegers (D) 8,850. **2006 Forecast:** We believe this race has tightened up and could be a potential Democratic pickup. **Status:** TOSSUP

House District 17: Republican: State Rep.

Steve Heim. Democrat: Nancy Dembowski. **2004 Results:** Heim 14,100, McLiver (D) 8,321, Foley (I) 854. **SD5 Results:** Hainold (R) 24,753, Dembowski (D) 24,398. **2006 Forecast:** We now believe this is the most likely seat to flip to the Democrats. **Status:** LEANS D (Likely Takeover)

House District 20: Republican: LaPorte

School Trustee Tom Dermody. Democrat: LaPorte City Councilwoman Andrea Renner. **2002 Results:** Budak 12,551, Gillon (L) 2,540. **2004 Results:** Budak 12,944, Spevak (D) 10,013, Schadowsky (L) 1,038. **2006 Forecast:** Democrats have dropped at least six mailings into this district, but our sources are saying that Dermody's lead is in "low double digits." Toll road issue hasn't been the silver bullet Democrats thought it would be, but it hasn't completely faded for Republicans. **Status:** TOSSUP

House District 21: Republican: State Rep.

Jackie Walorski. Democrat: Bob Kovach. **2002 Results:** Mangus 10,722. **2004 Results:** Walorski 13,753, Kaser (D) 7,737. **2006 Forecast:** We think Walorski holds on to this seat. Not seeing Kovach up on TV. Sources say he is not walking the district. **Status:** LEANS REPUBLICAN.

House District 27: Republican: Lafayette

Councilman Jack Rhoda. Democrat: State Rep. Sheila Klinker. **2004 Results:** Klinker (D) 12,462, Crites (R) 6,374. **2006 Forecast:** Republicans think they can pick off Klinker, but we're not convinced, though we're watching. **Status:** LEANS DEMOCRAT.

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:** We think Davis holds on to this seat. **Status:** LEANS DAVIS.

House District 26: Republican: Tippecanoe

County Councilwoman Connie Basham. Democrat: Joe Micon. **Geography:** Lafayette, West Lafayette, Tippecanoe County. **2002 Results:** Scholer 5,630, Micon 4,731. **2004 Results:** Micon (D) 10,077, Basham (R) 9,471. **2006 Forecast:** Basham is dropping what has been described as



"gay bashing" direct mail. Republican sources tell us they believe this race has tightened up. **Status: TOSSUP**

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:** Pure tossup. Very much in play. **Status: TOSSUP.**

House District 31: Republican: State Rep. Tim Harris. Democrat: Blackford County Commissioner Larry Hile. 2002 Results: Herrell (D) 9,017, Rudolph (R) 6,966, Fridholm (L) 379. **2004 Results:** Harris 10,480, Hile (D) 10,330. **2006 Forecast:** Pure tossup. This could be the classic bellwether seat. It's a rematch, and it appears to have picked up from the narrow margin in 2004. It is not inordinately impacted by Major Moves, though the CAFO issues involving the Daniels administration may come in play. We will have an eagle eye on this race on election night. **Status: TOSSUP.**

House District 46: Republican: Reid Dallas. Democrat: State Rep. Vern Tincher. **2002 Results:** LaPlante (R) 8,079, Tincher (D) 7,275. **2004 Results:** Tincher 11,533, LaPlante 10,799. **2006 Forecast:** This race has been historically close. Still think Tincher has the upper hand, but this could change, particularly if Dallas to use family ties in the Stinesville area to cut into Tincher support there. **Status: LEANS D.**

House District 49: Republican: State Rep. John Ulmer. Democrat: Mike Puro. **2004 Results:** Ullmer 17,592. **2006 Forecast:** Republicans believe Ulmer will hold on to this seat. **Status: LEANS REPUBLICAN**

House District 54: Republican: State Tom Saunders. Democrat: Judge David G. Sadler. **2004 Results:** Saunders 18,202, Durber (D) 7,318, Bod (L) 1,194, Cramer (I) 577. **2006 Forecast:** Republicans believe they will hold on to this seat. **Status: LEANS REPUBLICAN.**

House District 57: Republican: Shelby County Councilman Sean Eberhart. Democrat: J.D. Lux. **2002 Results:** Stine (R) 8,384, Wheeler (D) 5,429, Jester (L) 508. **2004 Results:** Messer (R) 16,004 **2006 Forecast:** Our sources are telling us they believe Eberhart will prevail. Shelbyville News reported this week that the city will receive \$500,000 in Major Moves money. **Status: LEANS REPUBLICAN**

House District 63: Republican: Washington School Trustee Ron Arnold. Democrat: State Rep. Dave Crooks. 2004 Results: Crooks (D) 12,246, McFeators (R) 11,687. **2006 Forecast:** We believe Crooks will be re-elected. **Status: SAFE CROOKS.**

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:** Our local sources tell us this race is extremely tight and could go either way. Still tough territory for Republicans, but it is not looking as grim as it did earlier this fall **Status: TOSSUP**

House District 69: Republican: Billy Bright. Democrat: Dave Cheatham. **2002 Results:** Lytle 9,777, Newell 7,678. **2004 Results:** Bright 12,639, Lytle 11,018. **2006 Forecast:** Ditto. Still a potential Dem pickup, but as the Sodrel-Hill race tightens up, GOP prospects brighten a bit. Very much in play. **Status: TOSSUP**

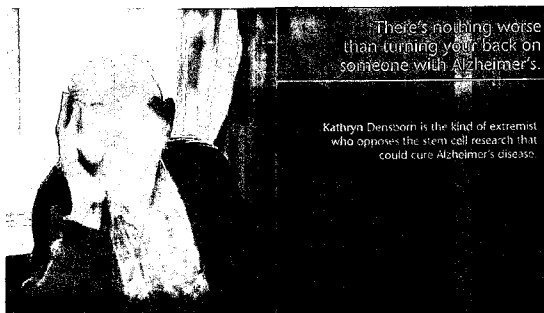
House District 77: Republican: Andrew G. Smith. Democrat: State Rep. Phil Hoy. **2004 Results:** Hoy (D) 11,308, Hennig (R) 9,804, Garrett (I) 1,285. **2006 Forecast:** Smith has mounted a furious effort, but the district favors Hoy. **Status: LEANS D**

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:** This is the donnybrook. We are hearing

of all sorts of reports of an organized effort to place Jesus Christ images over Densborn's signs that feature her picture. Orentlicher has dropped a third direct mail piece on the stem cell issue that has outraged Republicans. This could be the most expensive House race ... ever. **Status: TOSSUP.**

House District 89: Republican: State Rep. Larry Buell. Democrat: John F. Barnes. **2004 Results:** Buell 15,391. **2006 Forecast:** A big wave with Marion County Democrats could defeat Buell, but Republicans think they will hold on. **Status: TOSSUP.**

Senate District 41: Republican: Greg Walker. Democrat: Terry Coriden. Libertarian: Kenn Gividen. **1998 Results:** Garton 26,499. 2002 Results: Garton 21,918, Gividen (L) 3,350. **2006 Forecast:** Walker has received the endorsements of the Indiana Chamber, Indiana Manufacturers Assn., National Federation of Independent Business, Indiana Family Action PAC, American Family Association; Indiana Right to Life PAC. Walker will be outspent, but told HPR this morning, "Just like the primary, this is not going to be a money race." As for "The Flogger" issue, Walker said, "It's not an issue in this race. It rarely comes up when I go door-to-door." **Status: TOSSUP** ♦



There's nothing worse than turning your back on someone with Alzheimer's.

Kathryn Densborn is the kind of extremist who opposes the stem cell research that could cure Alzheimer's disease.



U.S. military re-evaluating Baghdad security operation

BAGHDAD - Operation Together Forward, the U.S.-led military operation aimed at cracking down on insurgent attacks in Baghdad, is being re-evaluated after a "disheartening" rise in violence.

"Operation Together Forward has made a difference in the focus areas but has not met

our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence," U.S. military spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell said Thursday. "We are working very closely with the government of Iraq to determine how best to refocus our efforts." Caldwell said insurgents are looking to influence midterm elections in the United States. "It's no coincidence that the surge in attacks against coalition forces and subsequent increase in U.S. casualties coincide with our increased presence on the streets in Baghdad and the run-up to the American midterm elections," he said. "The enemy knows killing innocent people and Americans will garner headlines and create a sense of frustration. However, the coalition will not be deterred from establishing an Iraq that can provide for its own security and govern itself." Caldwell said that there has been an uptick in violence during the holy month of Ramadan, which is ending in a few days. He noted a 22 percent increase in attacks during the first three weeks of Ramadan compared with the three weeks preceding the holy month. Caldwell said the security crackdown in Baghdad "has made a difference in the specific areas but not reduced the levels of violence." A dozen U.S. service members were killed on Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing the American death toll to 71 in October and putting the month on track to become

one of the deadliest for U.S. forces since the 2003 invasion.

Voter ID law in hands of appeals court

CHICAGO - Three weeks before the Nov. 7 election, supporters are asking the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals to uphold Indiana's tough voter identification law (*Post-Tribune*). The Indiana Civil Liberties Union and the state Democratic Party each filed suit to challenge the new law, which passed in 2005 and went into place for the first time during the May primary. On Wednesday, Ken Falk, attorney with the ICLU, outlined for the court the Bureau of Motor Vehicles process for issuing an ID card, which requires a birth certificate and two other forms of identification. The process can be time-consuming and expensive for members of some groups such as the elderly, minorities and the homeless, he said. "It shows for some people, not just poor people, obtaining an ID is not a simple task," Falk said in oral arguments. Thomas Fisher, solicitor general with the Indiana attorney general's Office, supports the new law. "We are not asking them to go to the moon. We're just asking them to bring a license," he said. Presiding Judge Richard Posner asked the ICLU why it could not produce a disenfranchised voter. Falk said they relied on a survey by AARP, which said 3 percent of its members do not have IDs.

Rokita defends voter ID

TERRE HAUTE - Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita believes Indiana's new voter identification law is constitutional, despite courts shooting down similar laws in other states and a lawsuit challenging Indiana's law (*Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). Rokita was at the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

on Wednesday, where a panel of federal judges heard a challenge against the new law. The Indiana Democratic Party and the American Civil Liberties Union claim the new law infringes upon Americans' constitutional right to vote. The new law, passed by the Republican-controlled General Assembly, requires most people to show photo identification before voting. In April, a federal judge upheld the law. "If people feel their vote is disenfranchised, then the voters will not come back," Rokita, a Republican, said during a teleconference Wednesday in which he explained the reasoning behind the law. Rokita and state Sen. Vic Heinold, R-5th, noted that the law was created to protect people from voter fraud. The law allows some exceptions to showing an ID, such as for those who have a religious objection, the indigent and people voting by absentee ballot.

Sodrel won't appear with Cheney Friday

EDINBURGH - Vice President Dick Cheney will fly into Columbus Municipal Airport aboard Air Force Two Friday before heading to Camp Atterbury to thank the troops for their sacrifice in the war on terror (*Columbus Republic*). The public has not been invited to either location to avoid crowds that cannot be accommodated. Only the soldiers, their families and the press have been invited. However, Gov. Mitch Daniels and U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., will be among Cheney's guests, their offices confirmed Wednesday. U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel, R-Ind., has to be in Madison and will not attend, his campaign manager said.



This Could be Dangerous



Abdul & Howey, 9 a.m. Every Monday
webcast @ www.wxnl.com