

# Political Report

# HOWEY

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Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

Thursday, Nov. 9, 2006

## GOP apocalypse: Iraq, Iraq, Iraq

### Donnelly, Hill & Ellsworth ride a war into Congress

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Iraq. Iraq.

Iraq. Brad Ellsworth. Joe Donnelly. Baron Hill. Some will argue that the reasons for Hoosiers spurning President Bush and U.S. Reps. John Hostettler, Chris Chocola and Mike Sodrel were much more than Iraq. Yet, going into the final week of the campaign, polls showed Sodrel leading Hill and Chocola closing the gap on Donnelly.

And then, inexplicably, President Bush said he would keep both Vice President Cheney and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld through



Democrat 9th CD congressman-elect Baron Hill arm-in-arm with U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh in Seymour. The Iraq War helped sweep in three Democrats, but it was a tough subject. (Bayh Flickr Photo)

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## GOP needs to look in mirror

By **JOSHUA CLAYBOURN**

EVANSVILLE - With the Democrats' unsurprising - yet convincing - victory over Republicans yesterday, the national GOP will need to take a long look in the mirror. Former Congressman Tip O'Neil used to famously say,



"All politics is local," but one lesson from Tuesday evening is that sometimes congressional elections can indeed be nationalized. Across the country, from

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“ ”  
**QUOTE**  
of the Week



“To our enemies, do not be joyful. Our nation is committed to bringing you to justice. To our brave men and women in uniform, don't be doubtful.”

- President George W. Bush



the Senate down to county commissioners, voters took their distaste of President Bush out on local Republicans.

Pundits, analysts, and elected officials will rightfully see displeasure over the Iraq War as a major motivating factor and, hopefully, reassess that faltering policy. But a more subtle nuance to this election which deserves far more attention than it will receive is the Republican departure from traditional conservative principles.

In particular, the GOP leadership in the White House and Congress strayed from a principled and intellectual adherence to limited, responsible government. Many Republicans are in denial that the departure from these principles hurt them on Tuesday, but the evidence isn't hard to find. In Indiana's 9th congressional district - one of the most hotly contested in the nation - the Republican incumbent Mike Sodrel lost by roughly 2,000 votes. His problem? The libertarian candidate got 7,000, most of them siphoned off of Sodrel.

Clearly something more than the Iraq war is at play here, and it involves a disenchantment among true conservatives. The list of un-conservative policies from the current GOP establishment is endless:

\* A massive \$400 billion increase in Medicare spending over 10 years.

\* Education reform, the cornerstone of which was more spending tied to more federal regulation. Bush got Sen. Ted Kennedy to co-author the bill just for good sport.

\* Supporting a campaign finance law that protects the interests of incumbents by limiting free speech rights during elections.

\* A willingness and desire to

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entangle the U.S. military with virtually any nation. \* The unbridled expansion of executive branch and government

police powers.

\* A promise to cut farm subsidies (twice), followed by two separate bills which significantly increased farm subsidies, at which point

Bush signed and praised it.

\* The decision to impose strict steel quotas in opposition to conservative free market principles as a means to pander to union workers (a tactic which certainly failed).

\* Increased funding on a wide

range of bloated government projects and departments, including, for example, the National Endowment for the Arts.

\* General increases across the board on domestic infrastructure projects to a level not seen since President Johnson occupied the White House.

\* Close attention to diversity and affirmative action concerns in executive appointment (see, for instance, Harriet Miers).

\* Shunning the attractive, intelligent Republicans in favor of liberal incumbents, just because they're incumbents (see, for instance, Rep. Pat Toomey in the 2004 Pennsylvania primary with Arlen Specter).

\* A willingness to abandon any coherent or sensible immigration policy.

These aren't just minor missteps either. These policies - like the entitlement programs, Iraq War, and education regulations - were



**U.S. Reps. Mike Sodrel and Mike Pence in Columbus late in the campaign.**



cornerstones of their tenure. The policies and decisions were not mistakes that were later regretted. Instead, they were trumpeted and waved around like a child who is proudly showing off crayon graffiti he's added to his parents' living room walls.

What, exactly, makes this party conservative? The best answer partisans will give you is that they're willing to cut taxes. But that alone, especially when coupled with increased spending and regulation, counts for little. (In 2000

candidate Bush complained that Al Gore would "throw the budget out of balance.")

Republicans can rebound from the 2006 election wounds, but it will take a realistic assessment of what caused it. If his history of handling the Iraq conflict is any indication, I won't hold my breath for Bush to lead the way. But my hope is that new leadership holding fast to true limited government principles will reemerge to salvage

## Iraq: From page 1

the end of his term. "Both of those men are doing fantastic jobs and I strongly support them," Bush said.

Last Friday, Vice President Dick Cheney told ABC's George Stephanopolous that it was going to be "full speed ahead" on Iraq.

St. Joseph County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan, watching Donnelly's internals slip to a 7 percent lead, said that Bush's pronouncement "hurt Chocola bad, there was no question. Even people who supported the war and the troops felt Rumsfeld had to go."

Hill was shocked by Bush's statement. "I was surprised," he said in Indianapolis on Wednesday. "It was interesting to me that across the river in Louisville, Kentucky's (U.S. Rep.) Anne Northrup denounced that decision and asked for Rumsfeld's resignation."

Hill was less definitive than Morgan about the impact. "I don't know what it did. I had no way of gauging it."

But U.S. Rep. Rahm Emanuel was emphatic. "Iraq was the driving factor behind everything."

NBC's Tim Russert was asked this morning if the Bush/Cheney statements on Rumsfeld and the war cost Republicans seats, he responded, "I know there are - I've talked to them. Many Republicans believe that may have cost them their seats." Chocola and Sodrel were unavailable for comment.

**President Bush acknowledged** what he called a "thumpin'" on Wednesday, noting that many races like Sodrel's were close, but the cumulative impact was stark. "I believe Iraq had a lot to do with the election, but I think there were other issues as well," Bush said at a White House press conference. Just hours before Hill met with the press, President Bush announced that Rumsfeld would resign in a stunning reversal after Republicans lost both houses of Congress. "We cannot accept defeat," President Bush said of the war. "I am also looking forward to hearing

from the bipartisan Iraq Study Group. I am going to meet with them early next week," he said of James A. Baker III and former Indiana Congressman Lee Hamilton. "Now after a series of conversatons, the timing is right for new leadership at the Pentagon. Don Rumsfeld has been a surperb leader during a time of change. Don Rumsfeld is a patriot who served this country with honor and distrinction. I have a message for those on front lines: To our enemies,

do not be joyful. Our nation is committed to bringing you to justice. To the people of Iraq, do not be fearful. America is going to stand with you. To our brave men and women in uniform, don't be doubtful."

**Hill reacted, saying,** "I'm glad that he has. It should have happened a long time ago. It will put a fresh look on our policy in Iraq."

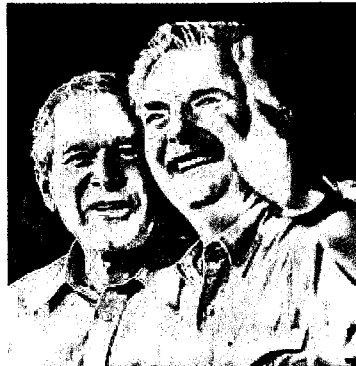
White House Communications Direct Dan Bartlett, asked about the President's reversal on Rumsfeld just a day after the election, said on NBC's **Today Show** this morning, "This was too important of a decision to inject into the final days of the campaign."

Sodrel refused to blame his loss on Rumsfeld or President Bush, who came to campaign for him in late October in an attempt to motivate his base. But the

move may have backfired. Exit polls showed that voters made decisions for "national" reasons, not local ones, as Tip O'Neill always said. Shortly after Bush campaigned for Sodrel, he announced he was planning to keep Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld until his term ended in 2009.

Sodrel explained, "I really think it had less to do with President Bush than it did with the conduct of certain individuals, members of the House. My sense is, whether your agree with him or disagree with him, President Bush is an honorable man. Nobody thinks he's done something illegal, immoral or unethical. They thought he had made a bad decision."

**"I think we need to wake up and smell the coffee - these folks intend to kill us,"** Sodrel continued. "This is not a criminal activity, this is a war. And if America is not committed and is not willing to prosecute the war, we're in



**President Bush with Rep. Sodrel in the final weeks of the campaign at Sellersburg. Sodrel ended up losing 50-46 percent after leading in polls.**



serious trouble."

Chocola acknowledged to the Associated Press that the war created a "tough environment."

None of the Indiana Democratic challengers used TV or radio ads to take a position on Iraq. Asked if during the campaign, Democrats had seen Iraq as a double-edged sword and were, therefore, reluctant to campaign on the issue, Hill explained, "Iraq is a complicated country and there are no easy solutions. We're there now and smart people are trying to figure this out. I think that's the reason why it didn't become a big campaign issue. It was a complicated subject matter to be talking about."

"Now the election is over we can move forward," Hill said. "The resignation of Donald Rumsfeld provides us with opportunities for a new policy in Iraq. With the Lee



President Bush bids farewell to Secretary Rumsfeld the day after the election. (White House Photo)

Hamilton commission looking for new ideas on Iraq, I look forward to seeing what those are."

Ellsworth, too, was looking for guidance, saying in his acceptance speech that part of his mission will be to find a solution for the Iraq War. "I want the war to end, too. I'm all about peace. We

got there under a failed plan. We can't afford to get out of there with a failed plan. We need our military leaders and experts in the Middle East to form a plan and implement it."

U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, who is mounting a campaign for House leadership, said, "Some will argue that we lost our majority because of scandals at home and challenges abroad. I say, we did not just lose our majority, we lost our way. While the scandals of the 109th Congress harmed our cause, the greatest scandal in Washington, D.C. is runaway federal spending."

**The New York Post observed:** When a pro-war independent Democrat (Joe Lieberman) wins while an anti-war Republican (Rhode Island's Lincoln Chafee) loses, the overall result can't exactly be called a referendum on the war.

Exit polls show that this election was nationalized, but also revealed that "corruption" (42 percent) was the leading reason for their vote. Iraq was actually fourth on the list, with 37 percent, which was surprising.

But without the growing debacle in Iraq, it's hard to see how Republicans would have lost so much, so quickly. Just look at the swing voters. They sided with

Democrats 57 to 39 percent over Republicans, according to CNN's Bill Schneider. "It wasn't number one, but it did drive Democrat voters and it didn't help Republicans." Voters disapproved of the war in Iraq by a 56-42 percent margin.

Without Iraq, could you imagine Chocola, Sodrel and Hostetter all sidelined at the same time? ♦

## New attention on Lee Hamilton

By MARK CURRY

WASHINGTON - The midterm election focuses new attention on Columbus native Lee Hamilton in his role as co-chair of the Iraq Study Group, the bipartisan commission promising to "provide recommendations that the Bush administration and Congress can use to consider the future direction of U.S. policy regarding Iraq."

James Baker III, secretary of state during the administration of President George H.W. Bush, co-chairs the study group with Hamilton, the Democrat who represented south-central Indiana in the U.S. House for 34 years. Hamilton most recently served as vice chairman of the 9/11 Commission.

During yesterday's press conference, President Bush referred to the "Baker-Hamilton Commission" no fewer than four times while explaining that he intends to work with the new leaders in Congress.

"This group is assessing the situation in Iraq and... is expected to provide recommendations on a way forward," he said. "And I'm going to meet with them, I think, early next week." Later in the day, Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid called on the president "to convene a bipartisan Iraq summit."

"After more than three years of a failed strategy, we must come together to change course and give the American people and our troops the real security they deserve," he said in a statement. "Americans want change, and Democrats will work with the President in a bipartisan manner to change course in Iraq."

The Iraq Study Group's carefully crafted bipartisan framework is widely seen as the best opportunity for Democratic leadership to engage the administration in meaningful dialogue. Fox News stated last Friday that early reports about the group's final recommendations suggest the commission could give the president political cover to start pursuing an exit strategy out of the troubled country.

But in a presentation at DePauw University last month Hamilton stressed "there's no easy solution here."

"I think there is among many Americans a kind of sense that, well, this Iraq Study Group is going to come up with the 'silver bullet' or the quick solution," he said, adding later "What has to happen here, no matter what you do, is a lot of things have to go right. And I don't know if a lot of things can go right." ♦



## 2006 Election Stories

An HPR tradition is recounting the election through the key players. Here are the 2006 version of Election Stories

### John Hostettler

The congressman denied the story. HPR reported in mid-October what everyone was whispering: U.S. Rep. Hostettler's heart wasn't into it any more. He wasn't raising money. He wasn't keeping a public campaign schedule. Public sightings were rare. Few knew how to reach him. At a point when he knew he would face the political challenge of a lifetime, Hostettler ducked. He took a pass and, inevitably, ended up running one of the worst re-election efforts on record. Only former Congressman Brian Kerns will top him in that category.



HPR still stands by the story: a local elected official said that Hostettler had acknowledged that he was ready to retire; that he was more content on holding immigration hearings during the heart of the campaign season in August and September. Hostettler's response was a bizarre statement on the worth of HPR. **TIME** magazine would observe that after the HPR story broke, Hostettler picked up the pace of his campaign. But his 62 percent throttling at the hands of Democrat Brad Ellsworth stands as a testament to a congressman who gave up.

Charlie Cook, publisher of the **Cook Political Report**, directed harsh words at Hostettler in today's **Evansville Courier & Press**. "For all the vaunted reputation Hostettler had for grass roots, you can't just not raise money and not run a serious campaign. He had been living on borrowed time for a long time." Cook said Republican strategists and fundraisers at the National Republican Congressional Committee were sick of bailing Hostettler out by paying for the bulk of his TV ads every two years. "In the 22 years I've done this, I've never heard a party complain one-fourth as much (about anyone else) as about him,"

Cook said. "There won't be tears on First Street SE. The guy deserved to lose."

And Hostettler also blew it on the issues. He was convinced that immigration was a silver bullet issue for himself and Republicans. But Republicans who rallied on that issue: Chris Chocoma, J.D. Hayworth and Randy Graf all lost. The question is whether these Republicans sullied the party's image with the growing bloc of Hispanics for generations.

### Ed Mahern

The greatest irony of this election would be if State Rep. Ed Mahern, who drew the legislative and Congressional maps in 2002, lose. At this writing, he trails Republican Jon Elrod by 65 votes with all precincts reporting. Clearly he didn't take Elrod seriously, throwing up amateurish ads on the last weekend after several weeks of buzz that a GOP mystery target was in the works. The peculiar thing about Mahern's loss is that this year, there were five CDs and almost 20 Indiana House races in play. Some might see that as parity, but the fact is that about 80 Indiana House seats and 45 Senate seats are uncompetitive due to the gerrymandering that Mahern mastered for Indiana Democrats.

Gov. Daniels, State Sen. Vi Simpson, House Minority Leader Brian Bosma have all said they support computer drawn maps that would create as many competitive districts as possible. Daniels described the gerrymandered districts as the "elephant in the room." The key obstruction point on computer drawn maps will be Mahern's patron, Speaker B. Patrick Bauer. But unless he can erase a 65-vote deficit, Mahern won't have a say unless he can convince Marion County Democrats to slate him into Sen. Billie Breaux's soon-to-be vacant Senate seat.

### Todd Rokita

Secretary of State Todd Rokita won a second term on Tuesday with a narrow victory over underfunded Democrat Joe Pearson. But Rokita won in more ways than his own office. His voter ID law, decried by Democrats as a methodical way to suppress minority voters, apparently didn't keep a single person from voting. There were virtually no complaints. BMV issued more than 90,000 IDs prior to the election. Given the new HAVA standards and all the new voting systems, national groups had put Indiana on a watch list. While there were isolated voting problems in Marion, Delaware and LaPorte counties, for the most part, this election was what Rokita thought it would be: fair and accurate.



# Political Report

Weekly Briefings on Indiana Politics

## Troy Woodruff

Perhaps the biggest loser in 2006 was State Rep. Troy Woodruff. He cast the deciding vote on Daylight saving time, going back on a promise he made to 64th District voters. Then he groveled so much on the vote that Gov. Daniels told him to stop during a campaign appearance in Vincennes. Woodruff actually lost two jobs on Tuesday - his House seat and his district director job for Rep. Hostettler. At least his wife still has a good job at INDOT.

## Greg Walker

State Sen. Greg Walker completed an improbable journey from being an average Joe in Columbus to become a Senate giantkiller. In the process, he upset President Pro Tempore Robert Garton, arguably one of the most influential legislators in state history, and was blackballed by Indianapolis Star columnist Matt Tully, who wrote last month that he hoped Walker would lose, saying that he would forever be known only as "The Flogger." That was reference to Walker's 2003 letter to the editor several years ago advocating public flogging. Democrat Terry Coriden used it against him in the general election, but Walker won an impressive victory over the former Columbus city attorney. Walker won Bartholomew County with a tiny margin and took Johnson County with 56 percent. "My views represent the values of the community," Walker told the **Columbus Republic** after he won. "When you speak with integrity and honesty, you have nothing to worry about. I feel it's time for the work to begin now."



## David Long

Sen. Walker set off an improbable set of events with Garton's primary defeat and resulted in the new tenure of Senate President Pro Tempore David Long. Last February, when Long sat with his predecessor Robert Garton and defended the health care for life program, no one could have known that it would be he who would determine where that program goes, as well as the entire Senate. "Obviously I didn't think I'd be standing here today because I thought (Sen. Robert Garton) would be here until he chose to walk away, but none of us are in control of that decision," Long said Wednesday. "One of us is standing here today, but I'm not the only one with the



talent to run the Senate." In his new leadership position, Long will control the flow of the legislation, including being able to kill bills at any time by redirecting them to the Rule Committee, which he will run (Kelly, **Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). "I've known Speaker Bauer for the 10 years I've been here, and I think we have a good relationship, and I am confident we will be able to work together on the various issues facing us next session," Long said.

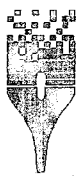
## Pat Bauer

Bauer's return as Speaker completes a total change in the Statehouse executive and legislative branches. Gov. Daniels, Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, Sen. Long and now Speaker Bauer, along with Ways & Means Chairman Bill Crawford mean a total change in power over the last two years.

Bauer was called a "car bomber" by Daniels during the last legislative class. Bauer represented a region that had lost a governor and speaker in the last election, and then went into political spasms with the toll road lease and the time zone battle between Elkhart and St. Joseph counties. On Wednesday, Bauer was saying, "We are going to work together to bring some progress in this state. I can guarantee you one thing: The next budget will be a bipartisan budget."

Bauer has promised to reopen the issue of Daylight saving time. But first on his plate could be full-day kindergarten, a priority of Democratic Govs. Frank O'Bannon and Joe Kernan, and now Gov. Daniels. If it doesn't get passed this session, along with some type of property tax relief, Democratic tenure





in power could be a two-year experiment. "I think that Pat knows that people on the other side of the aisle probably want to work together," said St. Joseph County Democratic Chairman Butch Morgan. "I believe he'll find ways to bring compromise and cooperation. That's not to say there won't be some spirited conversations, but they'll look for compromise. Pat's a smart guy and he's learned a lot over the past years."

### Brian Bosma

It could have been worse. Late last week, HPR came to the conclusion that Democrats could easily win 54 seats, and possibly as many as 56. "Those tough votes weren't for the governor," Bosma said. "They were for the future of Indiana." Right now the tally stands at 51, with three seats to be determined by recount. House Minority Leader Bosma, along with HRCC director Mike Gentry get credit for keeping the losses down. They were able to win almost all of the "toll road" seats, though Bosma said Wednesday at considerable expense to the caucus, which out-raised Democrats by \$1 million. Bosma articulated a 12-point vision, building on the economic structure House Republicans helped Gov. Daniels put in place over the past two years. Bosma also opened up the House proceedings on the internet. His social agenda, such as banning same-sex marriage and prayer in the House were controversial. He will be the focal point of Republicans seeking to regain the House in two years when they hope a different environment and Daniels re-election will create more opportunities.

### Chris Chocola

The phone rang at the HPR North American headquarters one bleak day last winter. The voice sounded familiar. It was U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. He was looking for the latest edition of HPR and was having trouble with access. Chocola was looking for the latest read from the Heartland. Unlike 1994, when the Republican tidal wave began to rise up in July, was identified by U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton in late August ("I see a curtain descending between me and my audiences") and was becoming ominous for Democrats by late September, the 2006 wave was evident last winter.

The war was troubling and there was no end in sight. The U.S. military seemed to be wildly grabbing at straws, from moving troops into Baghdad, to the half-baked notion of digging a trench around the capital city in order to keep the insurgents out (duh).

Chocola's political fate was much more complex than Iraq. Some tried to make him out as a victim of Gov. Mitch Daniels' Major Moves toll road lease and Daylight

saving time. That doesn't hold water when Republican legislators all along the toll road held on to their seats. State Reps. Steve Heim and Don Lehe may have paid a political price for DST that



knifed through their districts. Chocola's problem was more of just a nasty mood and attitude that seemed to descend across his district. This is a region that lost a governor and a speaker in the 2004 election. Major Moves and the DST fratricide between Elkhart and St. Joseph counties

contributed to that mood. But Iraq and the corruption that began taking its toll on Congressional Republicans were omnipresent. Democrat Joe Donnelly was able to tap into that energy and peg himself a congressman. It reminded us of U.S. Rep. John Hiler's farewell press conference after he lost in 1990 to Tim Roemer - "death by a hundred cuts." Chocola had lost to Roemer once, then defeated both Jill Long Thompson and Donnelly in 2004 to forge his modest two-term career in Washington.

His phone call last winter seemed to convey angst, just like we had seen briefly in the eyes of Jill Long walking to her campaign headquarters in September 1994. There was worry. And, as Tuesday revealed, it was justified.

### Brad Ellsworth

Most analysts agree that this year's election was dominated by national issues like the war in Iraq. But on Tuesday night, Democrats took their initial step toward control of the House of Representatives in a race that featured a GOP incumbent who voted against sending U.S. troops to Iraq. Democratic Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth



trounced Rep. John Hostettler, 61 percent to 39 percent, in the 8th CD thanks to voter concern over matters closer to home. "I heard from individuals and groups that when they tried to contact the congressman's (Hostettler's) office, there was no response," Ellsworth said in an HPR interview on Wednesday.

"They didn't feel they were adequately represented." Although the dyspeptic national mood toward Republicans helped propel every Democratic victor on Tuesday, Ellsworth maintains that a personal relationship with the electorate is required in the 8th CD.



"The people around here want to feel like they know their congressman," he said. "They want you to remain honest and true to yourself. They expect you to do your best and they want to know why you do what you do."

In the 8th CD this year, it was the national parties who tried to define the candidates. Shortly before election day, the National Republican Congressional Committee had made a total of \$1.7 million in independent expenditures against Ellsworth. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee spent \$2.1 million against Hostettler.

Much of the NRCC money was invested in commercials linking Ellsworth to the likely new Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi. The GOP tried to make San Francisco Democrat Pelosi the boogey(wo)man.

But Ellsworth vows to take his direction from 8th CD voters rather than Democratic leadership in Washington. That may mean that he sometimes pushes back against Pelosi priorities. "I sure don't mind doing that," he said. "The people who put me in office expect me to speak my piece and their piece. That's what I'll do."

## Mike Sodrel

In the end, incumbent GOP Rep. Mike Sodrel could not overcome the energized Democratic base in the 9th CD. Former Democratic Rep. Baron Hill reclaimed the seat he had lost to Sodrel in 2004, 50 percent to 46 percent. But even in a losing bid, Sodrel's campaign is proud of the progress it achieved in building the GOP electoral base in Southeast Indiana. For instance, it established phone banks in each county months ago. Over the last 11 days before the election, Sodrel forces engaged in a massive get-out-the-vote effort, making 195,159 phone calls and knocking on 39,836 doors. The Hill campaign also touted its GOTV efforts, asserting that it had 400 volunteers and a much-improved field operation compared to two years ago.

"We did a great job of getting our people out," said Sam Savage, Sodrel's campaign manager. "There won't be a lot of regret or looking back on our part. I've never seen anyone work harder than Mike Sodrel over the last two years. We were a victim of the national environment." But the campaign worked to ensure that the local climate was favorable to Sodrel. Savage takes pride in building the GOP machine in Democratic areas like Crawford County, which elected a Republican sheriff on Tuesday.

That kind of effort will pay dividends in future campaigns, said Savage. "There's an infrastructure in southern Indiana for Mike Sodrel or whoever

comes next," he said. "And, quite frankly, it wasn't there before." But this time around, Hill prevailed, winning back a seat he lost by fewer than 1,500 votes in 2004. Hill's TV ads that labeled Sodrel as "Millionaire Mike" resonated at the end of the campaign. Sodrel built his wealth through a Jeffersonville-based bus and trucking company that he founded. "I've never seen this kind of nasty stuff," said Savage. "Class warfare has been an effective tool for Democrats for many years." Outside spending racked up enormous totals in this race, too. The NRCC laid out \$3.1 million in independent expenditures against Hill. The DCCC spent \$2.3 million against Sodrel. But Hill turned out to be unstoppable. "Hill has run a much more aggressive race this time." Chris Sautter, a Hoosier Democratic campaign consultant based in Washington, said last week.

## Richard Lugar

The Senator won a record sixth term and when all the votes are counted, will likely set every Senate record in Indiana as well as carry all 92 counties. He was the first senator to run unopposed from the other major party in memory. But at the end of the day, with Democrats taking control of the U.S. Senate, Lugar will have lost his coveted Foreign Relations Committee chair. And in reading all of the books - "Fiasco," "Cobra II" and "State Denial" on the Bush presidency and the Iraq War, the fact that Dan Coats' name comes up more often Lugar - zero - should tell you why the Bush administration has so many problems in Iraq.

## Julia Carson

During her speech at the Indiana Democratic Convention, it was interesting to watch most in the press corps put their pens down as she began to ramble. Listening to Rep. Carson is like hearing a stream of consciousness. There are homespun nuggets of wisdom along with acerbic jabs. Her acceptance speech on Tuesday night was classic Julia. "It's like a dream," she said. "That's Nancy Pelosi, the first woman speaker of the United States Congress." The crowd erupted in jubilation. She had just dispatched Republican Eric Dickerson by about 10,000 votes in a fitful campaign that ended on an ugly note. "I'm glad it's over," Carson said. "There's a time to cry and a time to laugh. We have to display humanity and gratitude," she continued before saying, "They put a car dealer in the race. He used to sell Buicks. The more they dogged Baron Hill, the stronger he got. Then you got Hostettler going back ...



to where ever he came from. He's going back home. This is a great day for the Democrats."





Democrats laughed, as they always do. But this is unmistakable: This is the deepening twilight of a legendary political career. If Carson runs for re-election in 2008, she is likely to find young, energetic and well-funded challengers in both parties.

## Carl Brizzi

If there was a bright spot for Hoosier Republicans, it was with the Marion County Prosecutor, Carl Brizzi who won a 4 percent re-election victory Tuesday. When you look at the baseline vote in Marion County, this performance looks even more impressive. Democrats carried almost all the county races with pluralities in the 15,000 to 17,000 vote range. State Treasurer candidate Michael Griffin defeated Richard Mourdock in the county by a 53-47 percent



margin. Some believe that Brizzi's opponent, Melina Kennedy, was fundamentally flawed in the "experience" department and point to that as a reason for Brizzi's success. But the manner in which he conducted himself in office during events such as the Hamilton Avenue massacre, along with his campaign which held a significant money advantage, means that Brizzi has fully

emerged from Scott Newman's shadow. This is an office that has projected two recent figures - Stephen Goldsmith and Jeff Modisett - into a statewide orbit. Newman was certainly within that caliber, too. Now Brizzi will factor into future power equations, particularly in a post-Mitch Daniels environment.

## Mitch Daniels

The Governor spent much of this campaign season lurking in the shadows, raising money, but not making many public appearances. He had become, to some, radioactive as he pressed state lawmakers to abandon inertia and the status quo and he used significant political capital to do so and with no apologies. Even after Tuesday. And he had to have had a good laugh when the Indianapolis Star reported earlier this fall that he might slow down.

"The direction of this administration won't change," he said. "Neither will the pace. People talking to each other, I've noticed, have come up with some notion that maybe this will represent some lessened commitment to reform and progress and change in Indiana, and if you think that, just watch."

Speaking at the 9th annual TechPoint summit last month, Gov. Daniels unveiled his latest version of the "stasists vs. dynamists." He directly took on the opponents of change. "When you hear words like 'private,' 'profit,' 'corporate' thrown around in a negative, contemptuous way,

you are listening to the enemies of change." Daniels said. "When somebody says how terrible it is something might be privatized, put in the private sector, tell them, 'Wait a minute friend, that's where I live.' When somebody uses 'corporate' as a term of contempt, say 'which corporation did you mean - mine, my customers, my vendors? Which corporations did you want to leave this state?' When somebody uses 'profit' as though



it were a dirty word, please remind them somebody better make a profit or no one has a job. When 'corporate' becomes a cuss word, when 'private' becomes a pejorative, when 'profit' becomes a profanity, we've got trouble." Daniels received a rousing ovation when he added, "In case

there is any doubt, let me express my point of view on this subject. I am in favor of the biggest, strongest, most profitable private sector we can have in Indiana, and the smallest possible government we can get by with and still serve the public interest." Within hours of the election, Daniels was announcing plans for the I-69 extension.

## Bart Peterson

The once-GOP townships are turning Democratic. That's good news for the Indianapolis mayor who will seek more fire department mergers and, most likely, a third term.

## Dan Parker and Murray Clark

J. Murray Clark could have been President Pro Tem had he not decided to resign late last year. He called it his penchant for "impeccable timing." Instead, he succeeded Jim Kittle Jr. as state Republican chairman and presided over an election nightmare. Gone were three Congressional seats and the Indiana House. Clark can take solace that it could have been far worse. He now must prepare the party for 2008 when Gov. Daniels will be up for re-election and there will be a better environment to retake the House. Or, Clark could take a long, hard look at the Republican Indianapolis mayoral nomination.

Parker, a protege of Sen. Bayh, gets the accolades for winning three Congressional seats and the Indiana House. He made some tough decisions, such as not challenging U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, the first time a senate nomination had gone unfilled in the Midwest in decades.

Parker's achievement is even more impressive when we recall Rex Early's quip about the difference between being party chairman with a governor as opposed to being one without: "It's the difference between shit and ice cream." Vanilla or chocolate, Mr. Chairman? ♦



## Mid-term election was good for Sen. Bayh's presidential bid

By MARK CURRY

WASHINGTON -Democratic voters were good to Evan Bayh in this year's midterm elections.

The two-term senator from Indiana is not scheduled to run for re-election until 2010, but he did have a

lot riding on the success of numerous candidates in races throughout the country. For starters, our former governor invested manpower, funding and reputation in the Hoosier state's three key congressional races.

The three victories support Bayh's claim, delivered to thousands of Democrats all across the country, that he can help the party win votes in red states. He wasted no time touting the successes with a statement disseminated Tuesday night.

"The lesson of this election is clear," the statement read. "We won by turning the red states of the heartland blue. Indiana, which has voted for the Republicans in 16 of the last 17 presidential elections, sent three new Democrats to congress. This is not an accident.

"Out here in Indiana, we have developed a formula for winning under the most difficult of circumstances. We are fiscally responsible, tough on national security, share the values of middle class families, and value progress over partisanship."

One Indiana Democrat who credited Bayh's support with aiding the cause was Evan Kelsay, who managed Terry Coriden's losing campaign in State Senate District 41.

"Evan Bayh's Sunday rally for Baron Hill definitely went a long way to energizing the Democratic base in Bartholomew County, a heavily Republican area by the numbers," Kelsay, who was running his first campaign, told HPR. "Voter turnout was at presidential-year levels.

"In a place where none of its 19 county-wide Democratic candidates won their races, Baron was able to keep pace with Mike Sodrel, only losing [the county] by 306 votes," Kelsay said. "In all honesty, that was a win for Baron, because it forced Sodrel to play defense and not to take the county for granted."

Bayh's influence reached well beyond Indiana's borders. In total, the senator campaigned, contributed money and/or provided paid staff for approximately 350 candidates and party committees nationwide, said Dan Pfeiffer, the senator's communications director. Bayh's leadership PAC, All America PAC, featured 28 state and federal races in 14 states, with Democrats winning two dozen. Perhaps more significantly, AAPAC provided 50 paid staffers from the Camp Bayh program to campaigns in the key presidential primary states of Indiana, Iowa, New Hampshire, South

Carolina and Nevada. Bayh blogger Rob Harrington of Confessions of a Hoosier Democrat reported that the Camp Bayh staff tallied an 18-7 record on Tuesday.

Politicians took notice. Yesterday's Hotline included this tidbit under the headline "Bayh The Key To Victory In IA?":

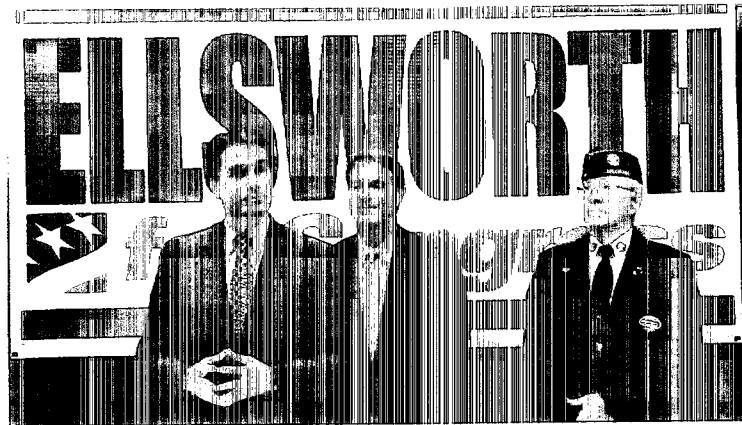
"IA GOP sources credit staffers detailed to IA state leg races by Sen. Evan Bayh's All America PAC for the Dem victory in the state. Approx. 25

staffers paid by Bayh's PAC helped IA Dems work on those campaigns; Republicans had fewer than 10 paid staffs working on leg. races (Hotline reporting, 11/7)"

Boston Globe political correspondent James Pindell, who served as a panelist at this year's HPR Forum, said Bayh has also earned the right to bask in an historical Democratic victory in New Hampshire, where the party gained the majority in both state houses for the first time since 1874.

"There's no doubt that Evan Bayh can take some credit for the fact that Democrats in New Hampshire had an historic night," Pindell told HPR. "He gave his time. He gave his money. He also allowed 15 staffers to share their resources for these races. The most important thing Evan Bayh can take away from the victories in New Hampshire is a more knowledgeable staff."

Pindell, who hails from New Castle, said that while some New Hampshire candidates may not exactly be indebted to Evan Bayh, they "at least have to give him a fair shot. So Evan Bayh definitely does come off better than most presidential candidates. There's only probably John Edwards that could even come close in paralleling the influence that Bayh has had." ❖



Tuesday's victory by Brad Ellsworth (left) boosts Sen. Evan Bayh's presidential aspirations.



**Matthew Tully, Indianapolis Star**- As U.S. Rep. Julia Carson walked into her polling place early Tuesday, it was hard not to hope she was wrapping up her final election campaign. She walked slowly, as she has of late, and some of her comments to pesky reporters were confused, as they have been of late. She talked to me about returning to the Indiana General Assembly, though she last served in that body 15 years ago. And the ballot confused her, forcing officials to void it after Carson filled it out incorrectly.

So ended a sad campaign for the Indianapolis legend. It was a campaign that never hit its stride. Carson waited too long to reach out to voters, leading her nervous party to send out some of the nastiest, most desperate mailings of the year. She made a series of clumsy television appearances, and in the end worried about losing to a guy who raised just \$53,000. Carson won, but many would not have been surprised if she'd lost -- perhaps because she offered voters so little. But now that she has proved herself once again, it's hard to deny this should be Carson's final time on the ballot. Her lackluster campaign exposed a politician who doesn't give up but who needs to do what a certain president did not -- prepare an exit strategy. Don't for one second mistake that for the typical anti-Julia sentiment that flows to my e-mail inbox so often. The hardest thing about saying it's time for Carson to start wrapping things up is the guaranteed "attaboys" that message will bring from knuckleheads who punctuate their criticism of Carson with talk of her race. I'll say it here: I like Julia Carson. She has served her city well. I've seen her steal the show so often from more polished politicians that I understand why she is such a force. She takes constituent services seriously and voted against the war when other Democrats didn't have the guts to do so. But this year's slow-moving campaign made clear it should be her last. All year, something was missing. The famed "I (heart) Julia" signs weren't as ever-present as in the past. Too often, while on stage, it seemed she was on the verge of nodding off. In a TV appearance Sunday -- which a colleague called "the most awkward TV segment" ever -- Carson rambled and looked lost. Even her TV ads hid her. After voting Tuesday, Carson seemed to apologize for her party's negative campaigning, and said how much better life would be if she had to run for re-election only every four years. Then she headed into the rain, staffers helping her and holding an umbrella over her. Democratic friends say that symbolizes one of Carson's fears: that if she retires, she will no longer be revered. That's just not true. But nobody -- at least nobody on her side -- would dare tell Carson to prepare an exit strategy from her political life. So I will. This city needs someone who can work overtime bringing home

federal cash. This city needs someone whose health isn't a constant concern. And Carson deserves to relax. With this win, she can end a long career on her own terms. At some point, all politicians must step aside. After this term, Carson needs to do so. ♦

**Susan Page, USA Today** -- The coalition that re-elected President Bush and bolstered Republican margins in Congress just two years ago fractured Tuesday under the weight of an unpopular war, economic unease and a series of scandals. Fueled by dissatisfaction with Bush's leadership and the direction of the country, Democrats scored significant gains in the Senate and won control of the House for the first time since 1994. "Remember that song, 'I feel the earth move under my feet?'" says Bernadette Budde of BIPAC, a business-oriented political action committee. She likens the midterm elections not to a tidal wave, with floodwaters that recede, but to an earthquake that permanently alters the political landscape. Officials will find themselves "standing on a tectonic plate," she says. ♦



**Dick Arme, Wall Street Journal** - If there was still any doubt, the Republican Revolution of 1994 officially ended Tuesday night with the loss of at least 28 seats and majority control of the House of Representatives. It was a rout. How did we get here? The war in Iraq and historical voting patterns that favor the opposition party in off-year elections are factors suggested by many post-election pundits. Certainly, the mounting problems in Iraq were on voters' minds, but responsibility for the conduct of the war lies with the executive branch, and President Bush was not on the ballot. That said, this was a national election, driven by national issues. One big issue in exit polls suggests widespread voter backlash against the "culture of corruption." There is something to this, I think. Over time, too many Republicans in the governing majority forgot or abandoned their national vision, letting parochial interests dominate the decision-making process. ♦

**Morton Kondracke, Roll Call** - The 2006 election results were a rebuke not just to President Bush and Congressional Republicans but to radio talk-show hosts and other right-wing polarizers. The right managed to win seven more anti-gay marriage referendums across the country, but it was repudiated on Iraq, immigration and excessive religiosity. At the same time, while Democrats won control of the House and possibly the Senate, they did so by capturing the votes of moderates and independents, whom they could lose easily with demonstrations of wretched excess. ♦



## How did HPR's forecast fare?

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

**INDIANAPOLIS** - So how did the Democrat Direct Mail campaign do against the more traditional GOP-GOTV-TV campaign?

In six House districts - State Reps. Larry Buell, Bill Davis, Tim Harris, Tom Saunders and Ed Soliday, and challenger Tom Dermody - Republicans went up on TV in the final weekend and won all those races.

Democrats won the House and that can't be taken away, but it could have been far worse for Republicans.

Here's my Final 2006 Election forecast released Monday. As you can see, I wasn't too far off

### **INDIANA CONGRESSIONAL RACES**

**2ND CD:** While we've seen this race tighten, we believe Donnelly prevails. We remember John Hiler's 1990 analysis after he lost to Tim Roemer: "death by a thousand cuts." For Chocoma, the war, the toll road, second presidential mid-term are all issues that hurt the incumbent. Chocoma did mount a tenacious GOTV operation in the final hours. **LEANS DONNELLY.** Result: Donnelly won

**3RD CD:** Democrat Tom Hayhurst made this interesting, but we believe Rep. Mark Souder prevails. **LEANS SOUDER.** Result: Souder won 54-46 percent.

**7TH CD:** We've had too many Democratic sources tell us that this race has tightened up. U.S. Rep. Julia Carson was running the kind of TV ads this past weekend she should have been running last summer. She looks very fragile and we detect an absence of the kind of energy we've seen associated with past Carson campaigns. Polls showed her lead eroding after she told the Indianapolis Star about Eric Dickerson's arrest. Key question is whether the DCCC's nasty 11th hour flier had an opposite impact. On Saturday, Carson called a press conference to disavow the DCCC flier. Democrats also seem to be very hot and bothered about the new voter ID law. Will that put a serious dent in what the Wall Street Journal called "The Carson Show" and its controversial GOTV? Our Democratic sources believe that ultimately, Carson pulls this one out. It's never wise to bet against the Carson machine, but this has a different feel to it, so we'll leave it in ... **TOSSUP**, and ripe for an upset. Result: Carson won 54-46 percent.

**8TH CD:** As is the case with Carson, it is difficult to bet against the political machinery of U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. We always said it will take a wave for him to meet his political demise. We believe Sheriff Brad Ellsworth rides that wave. **LEANS ELLSWORTH.** Result: Ellsworth won 61-39 percent.

**9TH CD:** The momentum appears to be with U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel. We give an ever so slight edge to the



House story lines include (top) Kreg Battles, who defeated State Rep. Troy Woodruff, Sean Eberhart (upper right) and Tom Dermody with State Rep. Mary Kay Budak. Some believe Dermody kept the Budak seat in the Republican column

incumbent, even though we'll leave this in ... **TOSSUP.** Result: Oops. Hill won, 50-46 percent.

**U.S. House:** HPR forecasts a 35-seat gain for Democrats. Result:

**U.S. Senate:** We forecast 50-50, making Vice President Cheney the 51st vote for the next two years now that President Bush has confirmed that he, along with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, will stay through January 2009. Result: Democrats take control.

### **Indiana House**

**LIKELY TAKEOVERS:** We believe Democrats Nancy Dembowski, Ron Herrell and Sylvia Graham will defeat Republican State Reps. Steve Heim, John Smith and Ed Soliday. While recent tracking shows State Rep. Troy Woodruff on a roller-coaster, we believe that Kreg Battles wins there due to an accumulation of issues ranging from DST, to the demise of U.S. Rep. Hostettler. Result: Soliday won, but otherwise, we were on target.

**TOSSUPS:** State Rep. Billy Bright vs. Dave Cheath-



am: If U.S. Rep. Sodrel bounces back in a big way (winning by 3 to 4%), he could help Bright. If it's under 2 percent or Sodrel loses, Bright's a goner. TOSSUP. If I had to place a bet, I'd go with Cheatham. Result: Sodrel lost and Bright got hammered.

State Rep. Tim Harris vs. Larry Hile: A classic TV vs. mail campaign. Harris ran heavy TV this week in Fort Wayne and Indianapolis. Hile had a tiny lead going in. TOSSUP, but if I had to bet: Harris. Result: Harris won by 25 votes.

State Rep. Tom Saunders vs. David Sadler and Rex Bell. If Bell, the Libertarian, gets 14-15%, Sadler wins. If it's under 10%, we believe Saunders returns. Result: Saunders won as the Libertarian got less than 5 percent.

State Rep. Bill Davis: Another TV vs. mail campaign. We think Davis's late TV hitting Liggett on lifetime health care (a lethal issue) gives him a slight edge. TOSSUP. Davis gets the money bet. Result: Davis won.

State Rep. John Ulmer: This is a 70 percent Republican district with a terrible incumbent candidate and a credible challenger in former Goshen Mayor Mike Puro. TOSSUP, but if I had to bet, Ulmer, due to the GOP strength of his district. Result: Ulmer won.

State Rep. Larry Buell: Prosecutor Carl Brizzi may save Buell. TOSSUP. Result: Brizzi saved Buell, but this will be a big problem for the GOP in 2008.

### LEANS REPUBLICAN

State Rep. Don Lehe: We believe Lehe survives. Result: He did, but about 130 votes, we think. Tom Dermody vs. Andrea Renner. Tracking shows Dermody with an 8% lead, down from 12% earlier this month. Renner is closing, but not enough to win. Result: Dermody won. State Rep. Jack Lutz: His race against Leeann Mengelt appears to have tightened up. Result: Lutz survived

### LEANS DEMOCRAT

State Rep. Joe Micon, State Rep. Teri Austin and State Rep. David Orentlicher all look like they will return. Result: All won comfortably. We add State Rep. Ed Mahern to this list. Jon Elrod has lodged an attack TV ad and Mahern responded with an ad that looked very hasty. We think Mahern prevails, but this could be one of those "surprises" everyone is talking about. Result: Mahern appears to have lost.

## Battle for the House

### HPR Forecast: D 54, R 46

#### Likely Takeover (4-R)

Heim (Dembowski)  
J. Smith (Herrell)  
Open (Ayres: Soliday v. Graham (D))  
Woodruff (Battles)

#### Tossups (6-R; 0-D)

Bright (Cheatham)  
Harris (Hile)  
Saunders (Sadler (D), and Bell (L))  
Davis (Liggett)  
Ulmer (Puro)  
Buell (Barnes)

#### Leans (2-R; 3-D)

Lehe (Sutton)  
Open (Budak: Dermody vs. Renner)

Austin (Metzger)  
Micon (Basham)  
Orentlicher (Densborn)

#### Likely (6-R; 1-D)

Lutz (Mengelt)  
Open (Hoffman: Knollman vs. Lanning)  
Dodge (Rauen)  
Walorski (Kovach)  
Stutzman (Rorick)  
Open (Messer: Eberhart vs. Lux)

Mahern (Elrod)

#### Safe (33-R; 45-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), Hinkle (Olds)

**(45-Democrats)** Avery, Lawson, Harris, C. Brown, Bauer, Niezgodski, Dvorak, Pelath, Cheney, Grubb, Stevenson, Open (Aguilera: Reardon), Dobis, V. Smith, Kuzman, Bardon, Tyler, Reske, Kersey, Welch, Pierce, Goodin, Robertson, Cochran, Oxley, Stilwell, Open (B. GiaQuinta, P. GiaQuinta), Moses, Dickinson, VanHaaften, Day, Summers, Mays, Crawford, Porter, Pflum (Bell), Fry (Hiler), Bischoff (Ulrich), Open (Stemler v Theobald), Crooks (Arnold), Tincher (Dallas), Denbo (Patton), Hoy (A. Smith), Klinker (Rhoda) ♦

### HOOSIER PUNDIT ROUNDUP

**Brian A. Howey, HPR:**

Indiana House 54-46D; Donnelly; Dickerson; Ellsworth; Sodrel

**Ed Feighenbaum, In-**

diana Legislative Insight: Indiana House 52-48 D; Donnelly; Carson; Ellsworth; Sodrel

**Jim Shella, WISH-TV Indiana**

House 51-49D; Donnelly; Carson; Ellsworth; Sodrel

**Eric Berman, WIBC Indiana** House 51-49D. ♦

**Abdul-Hakim Shabazz, WXNT** Indiana House 52-48D ♦



## Daniels proposes the 'Commerce Connector'

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Mitch Daniels today proposed the construction of the Indiana Commerce Connector, an outerbelt tollway that would link six interstates through Morgan, Johnson, Shelby, Hancock and Madison counties.

The connector would stimulate economic development for many regions of the state and ease traffic congestion on existing interstates, the I-465 loop and other highways. The governor also announced today there will be no tolls on Interstate 69 (I-69) from Evansville to Indianapolis. He has directed the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to notify the Federal Highway Administration that the state is moving forward with the plan to build I-69 as a non-toll interstate. "We have the chance to create six tremendous new job zones without a penny of borrowing or a tax increase. We've talked to leaders in communities across these counties and they are enthusiastic, so I want to move quickly to measure the transportation marketplace interest in building this road with private funds while paying the state money we can use to help complete I-69 and other critical investments in our future," said Daniels. Shelbyville Mayor Scott Furgeson said such a road would be a great economic development tool for his community. "The more access a community has, the better we are. Every company looking for a good location looks for ease of access, so another major thoroughfare would be a great asset for us," he said. The governor would utilize a public-private partnership to design, build, operate and maintain the Indiana Commerce Connector. This is an approach other states, such as Texas, are consider-



ing to fund their transportation needs. Daniels will seek legislation during the 2007 legislative session to transfer the tolling authority the Indiana General Assembly granted this year for the Evansville to Indianapolis segment of I-69 to the new Indiana Commerce Connector. INDOT will immediately commence work to estimate the connector's cost, establish its specific location, analyze traffic patterns, explore toll rates and revenues, and determine the connector's value. Preliminarily, INDOT believes the value of the project would not only be enough to build the connector itself but would generate contributions toward funding other projects. Private funding to design and build the tollway could speed its construction, shaving years off the normal processes. "Major Moves gave us a way to get started on I-69 by 2008, a decade ahead of the previous plan. And it provided enough cash to build at least to Crane. Now, we've got an even better idea about how to finish the job," said Daniels.

## House Democrats pick leadership

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana House Democrats have selected State Reps. B. Patrick Bauer from South Bend, F. Dale Grubb from Covington and Russ Stilwell from Ellettsville as their leaders for the 2007 and 2008 sessions of the Indiana General Assembly. Since Democrats will have control of the House the next two sessions, Bauer will serve as Speaker of the House during that time. Grubb will serve as House Democratic Caucus Chairman, while Stilwell will be Democratic Floor Leader.

## House GOP pick leaders

INDIANAPOLIS - The Indiana House Republican caucus unanimously elected Rep. Brian Bosma (Indianapolis) as Republican Leader, Rep. Bill Friend (Macy) as Floor Leader, and Rep. Kathy Kreag Richardson (Noblesville) as Caucus Chairperson. These leadership positions are effective im-

mediately, while official duties begin on November 21st, Indiana's legislative Organization Day.

## Marion County Dems make township inroads

INDIANAPOLIS - Marion County Republicans were reeling Wednesday after apparently losing control of three more township governments in Marion County, although recounts are possible in several races (*Indianapolis Star*). Democrats appeared to have taken control of the township leadership in Lawrence, Warren and Wayne townships. They kept hold of the government in Center and Pike townships and solidified their grasp on Washington Township. Republican Party officials said they were hurt by anti-Republican sentiment nationally, a shift in Marion County's political leanings and a strong turnout for Democratic U.S. Rep. Julia Carson, who was re-elected. "We're not really sure what happened," said Dino Batalis, Republican candidate for Lawrence Township trustee. "We're still in disbelief." Officials there and in Warren and Wayne townships were preparing for a transition to a new administration. The party said recounts are possible in all three townships. Republican Warren Township Assessor William Birkle has watched the township become steadily more Democratic over the years. Tuesday, voters instead chose the Democratic challenger there. "You could see there was a changing tide," he said. "It's just demographic shifts. I don't know what else to say. Definitely, people didn't pay attention to qualifications." Democratic trustee candidates tend to favor consolidating township fire departments with the larger Indianapolis Fire Department. Speaking at Democratic headquarters late Tuesday night, Mayor Bart Peterson said he had high hopes for consolidation in light of the Democratic victories. "Those who might be interested in consolidation . . . obviously, we're ready to do it," he said.