



Obama's 'definitive moment' of change

Change agents win stirring victories in Iowa's caucuses

By RYAN NEES

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa - The Coliseum Veterans Memorial Building is a hulking limestone presence that seems to rise from the river which runs through the middle of Cedar Rapids. Bridges connect each side of the hallowed island to the city. Its forbiddance is only matched by the force of the thousands who gathered inside on the eve of the Iowa caucuses.

The stakes couldn't have been higher for Illinois Sen. Barack Obama. His campaign had spent the days leading up to the caucuses fervently urging his supporters to translate enthusiastic rally crowds into crowded caucus sites. Doubts had nagged Obama's campaign for weeks as the media speculated that his enthusiastic crowds would materialize on caucus night as little more than a Howard Dean-like fizzle.

"Understand that all these political writers over the last couple days, they've been questioning whether you are actually going to come out," Obama told the crowd of 2,000 gathered in Cedar Rapids on Wednesday. "They don't believe it because every year people



U.S. Sen. Barack Obama drew huge crowds of independent and first-time caucus goers at Wednesday rallies like this one at Des Moines Hoover High School. It prompted HPI correspondent Ryan Nees to report, "Something big may be happening." And it did. (HPI Photo by Ryan Nees)

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Stirring and enriching

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS – Watching U.S. Sen. Barack Obama give one of the most stirring and enriching speeches of my journalistic career Thursday night fresh off his stunning 8 percent victory in the Iowa caucuses, I couldn't help but think of the parallels to the last president from Illinois.



Brian Howey's Column

Without Abraham Lincoln, there would be no Barack Obama. At the beginning of both of their campaigns for the presidency - 148 years apart - neither possessed the top resume in their parties. Line up Lincoln's career against Seward, Chase and Bates in 1860 and



"A new day is needed in American politics, just like a new day is needed in American government."

- Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee after he won a big victory in Iowa Thursday night



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you most likely wouldn't have chosen the rail splitter who argued cases at the bar for the big railroads.

Ditto for Obama, who is facing a former First Lady, a former vice presidential nominee and the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Here is a two-year U.S. senator, and an eight-year state senator, seeking the most important office on earth. But when you listened to Obama Thursday night, you heard the soaring voice of a community organizer just across the Indiana state line on the south side of Chicago. You heard a man who could have joined a white shoe law firm after leaving Harvard, but chose a pauper's existence, toiling for the poor and who became a Sox fan. We heard Obama say, "We are choosing hope over fear, unity over division. This is a defining moment in history. We are one nation, one people and our time for change has come. People who love this country can change it." Obama's victory came in Iowa, a state that is 96 percent

white and had never elected a significant African-American politician. He talked of his father from Kenya and his mother from Kansas. Slaves from the African continent had pulled Abraham Lincoln into the issue of abolition, and he toured bloody Kansas a few years before his presidential candidacy trying to establish a new American moral code.

In late summer, the New York Times declared Sen. Clinton's inevitability and U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh jumped on the bandwagon with what has been described as a "soft commitment" for the vice presidency. But then we began to hear Obama's deep

voice. He went from an unemotional academic to a political figure who began delivering the resonance and passion needed for a nation that has spent the last seven years fighting the War on Terror and negotiating color coded terror threats. A culture of fear has gripped the nation. We've seen it as we've turned away foreign college students, foreign tourists, we've denigrated overseas investors. Our government has flipped 180 degrees since the mid-point between Lincoln and Obama when we had a president who said, "The only thing we have to fear is ... fear itself."

Last February, I journeyed to Springfield, Ill., to listen as Obama ignited his campaign. The day before Obama would give his introductory speech, I toured the Lincoln home. The day after, I visited his tomb. In between, I would hear Obama intone, "It was here, in Springfield, where North, South, East and West come together, that I

was reminded of the essential decency of the American people, where I came to believe that through this decency we can build a more hopeful America. And that is why, in the shadow of the Old State Capitol, where Lincoln once called on a divided house to stand together, where common hopes and common dreams still live, I stand before you today to announce my candidacy for President of the United States."

"I recognize," Obama continued, "there is a certain presumptuousness - a certain audacity - to this announcement. I know I haven't spent a lot of time learning the ways of





Washington.”

Many in the crowd yelled, “Good,” and many cheered. Obama was casting himself as the 2008 outsider and change agent.

In Iowa on Thursday, voters took the anti-Washington, pro-change route, just as they had in 1860. There stood Obama and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee as victorious change agents in the Great Midwest.

In 1860, at the Republican convention in Chicago, it was the Hoosier delegation led by Henry S. Lane that first

tipped the balance toward Lincoln’s nomination, and then, sandwiching the tentative Pennsylvania delegation between the Hoosiers and Suckers, set the stage for his dramatic four-ballot nomination.

This year, the Iowans may have set the stage for history.

It comes as we’ve watched the cross currents of change and fear tug at the heart of our own state. Now there is a considerable stir in the air, a gale from the West, and a message of hope. A whirlwind is upon us. ❖



Iowa, from page 1

say ‘young folks are going to come out, and they don’t come out.’ The question is: are you going to prove them wrong?”

“Are you going to prove them wrong?” he repeated.

There were signs on the ground that they would. In Cedar Rapids, where Obama, Clinton, and Edwards all held events Wednesday, Obama turned out three times the number of people at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum as did Edwards at the Marriott Hotel and nearly five times the number Clinton did at Kirkwood Community College.

Of the top three Democratic contenders, Obama’s campaign took the most extraordinary steps to prod his crowds to caucus. At seven rallies Wednesday local field directors played games of caucus trivia with the crowds, imploring Iowans to answer questions about their caucus location, how the caucus works, and what time the doors closed. In Des Moines on Wednesday, Obama staffer Ali Sutton tossed tee-shirts to the winners. The campaign distributed golden “tickets to change” to high school and

college students with information about their caucus sites. Then there were Obama’s own pleadings, which he repeated at every event.

Obama asked his crowds Wednesday for a show of hands of first-time caucus-goers. In Des Moines, about 40 percent raised their hands. In Cedar Rapids, the number pushed 60 percent, a stunning figure given that when Edwards asked the same question to a packed room at Saints Rest Coffee House in Grinnell, the number could have been counted on one hand. It proved prophetic about Obama’s chances.

Turnout Shatters Anticipations

Obama’s Iowa co-chairman, former Iowa Democratic Party chairman Gordon Fischer, used to get laughed out of rooms predicting a turnout of 200,000. In the end, it exceeded 239,000, about 100,000 more than in 2004.

“I felt like the crowd sizes, not only for Obama, but also for the other candidates, were amazing,” Fischer told **HPI**. “And the intensity and energy and enthusiasm for Obama particularly, but also for the other candidates, simply had no precedent ... it is astonishing. He brought together such a coalition. It wasn’t just young people. It



was older people, it was minorities, it was progressives. He brought together a coalition of folks ... for the first time and caucus in numbers that we have never seen before, and frankly, may never see again."

Clinton campaign models had anticipated turnout at 150,000.

"There is no question we had a great night," Obama Campaign Manager David Axelrod said as the results poured in Thursday evening. "One thing's clear: we had unbelievable turnout today, perhaps 100,000 more than has ever participated before. We attracted many new people to the Democratic caucuses and the Democratic Party, and this is what we hoped to do moving forward. The message of this campaign has been that we need to bring people together, not just Democrats, but independents and Republicans," he told HPI at the Obama victory party in Hy-Vee Hall.

Iowans were inspired.

"Now the verdict is in," Axelrod said. "The question people are asking is who represents the most authentic voice for change and I think Obama emerged as that candidate in this campaign, with what voters said today. This is an urgent moment for this country. We've got a lot of problems and we're not dealing with them right now. I think people recognize that and they expressed that tonight."

Watching an Obama speech is like watching a virtuoso conductor lead his orchestra, summoning lifts and swoons. He blankets the audience with energy and engagement. Men and women move spontaneously, responding aloud to his words, shouting "amen" and "that's right." Obama touches hearts and souls, connecting the summoned flock anew with their long-forgotten hopes and dreams.

Obama engages a crowd with a smooth ease that electrifies. He urges them not to give up on "the dream that so many people fought for [though it] feels like it's slipping away."

In Cedar Rapids, the senator sprang into the great hall of the Coliseum as "Only in America" played over the speakers and plastered himself to the overflowing risers of supporters that tiered around the perimeter of the hall.

One middle-aged woman in the crowd threw herself at the senator, wrapping a right arm around him and burying her head into his shoulder. He stopped and reached up to her, whispered in her ear, and she curled both arms

around him in raw emotion. She kissed his cheek and cried.

The hope Barack Obama so often speaks of is not just printed on the signs outside his rallies. It can be seen in the face of the Cedar Rapids woman and the hundreds just like her that packed in the consecrated hall, desperate for a chance to believe again.

"All of you

were hungry, I was betting that all of you were desperate for a different kind of politics, one based on our common values," he told his audience. "A politics that wasn't based on ideology but on practicality and common sense...a politics that cared more about straight talk than about spin and P.R."

Raw emotion exuded from the crowd.

"He's captured people's imaginations by talking about the possibilities of this country and being straightforward about the challenges we face," Axelrod said. "We've had a politics that has divided us for so long and hasn't really appealed to our sense of common purpose and shared ideals, and he speaks to those."

In Des Moines, Obama took the stage with wife Michelle and daughters Melia and Sasha waving to the crowd of more than 3,000, an audience of millions watching live around the world. Obama's campaign sent out e-mails minutes before, with the simple subject line: "Turn on your television." It was a brief message: "We just won Iowa, and I'm about to head down to talk to everyone. Democrats turned out in record numbers tonight, and independents and even some Republicans joined our party to stand together for change. Thank you for everything you've done to



U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton spoke to a more subdued crowd at Kirkwood Community College. This rally attracted more older women, but Sen. Obama carried 35 percent of Iowa's women voters, to Clinton's 30 percent while 71 percent of Democrats voted against her. (HPI Photo by Ryan Nees)



make this possible. - Barack”

“They said this day would never come,” Obama said. “They said our sights were set too high. They said this country was too divided, too disillusioned to ever come together around a common purpose. But on this January night, at this defining moment in history, you have done what the cynics said we couldn’t do.”

“You did this because you believed so deeply in the most American of ideas: that in the face of impossible odds, people that love this country can change it.”

Hillary falls on Iowa ice

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA — If you went to a Hillary Clinton rally in Iowa, there always were chairs.

The crowd that gathered for Hillary Clinton in the gym of the Kirkwood Community College Recreation Center on caucus eve was, in a word, old. Crowds of bundled up elderly women dramatically sped up and slowed down as they trekked in five-degree weather from the ice covered parking lot to the gymnasium entrance. Grabbing the arm of another woman, one groped for stability as she shuffled her feet across the slippery pavement. The three hundred or so chairs around the stage provided much the same, as no one would be forced to endure standing for the hour-long stump speech.



Clinton continued to fade in the polls the week of the caucuses as she desperately worked to turn out her supporters in vote-rich eastern Iowa. Indeed, all three major Democratic campaigns held events in this second-largest city in the state on Wednesday within hours of each other.

Last week the Clinton campaign stacked new, plastic-wrapped snow shovels in storage rooms of her thirty-three field offices across the state, preparing to clear snow from the homes of elderly supporters.

Turning on the radio, it only took a minute to hear on 92.9 KAT-FM, the PAC of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, urging Clinton’s appeal to women alongside “today’s hits and yesterday’s favorites.” The elderly woman in the ad intoned that she was born before women had the right to vote, and before she died, she wanted to vote for a woman for President.

Suzann Ross, herself in her 60s, flew into Iowa from Arlington, Texas, to volunteer for Clinton in the final days before the caucus after signing up at the convention of the National Organization of Women in July. She passed

out placards to Iowans as they filed into the building. “This is the top of the heat,” she said. And though Clinton urged supporters at the Iowa Jefferson-Jackson dinner to “turn up the heat,” there was little heat in the mostly muffled gym. The campaign deftly dropped dividing curtains from the ceiling to make the space smaller, though the gym was really only half-full. The press contingent may have rivaled the size of the crowd, and it showed. One man was interviewed by five different reporters in the span of fifteen minutes.

Clinton arrived and thanked a string of local officials, including State Senator Rob Hogg, which she pronounced like “hog.”

“Looks like hog, sounds like hoag,” a reporter next to me rified. The chief political correspondent of Iowa’s second largest newspaper frowned. The crowd broke into laughter. Indeed, the caucus gods were not treating the candidate kindly.

“Finally,” she said, “our nation became the first country in the world to make it absolutely clear that every child is precious to us” Her microphone went silent.

An aide brought her a new one, which she lifted to her mouth and began to speak again. Nothing. The aide took the mic back, and gave her another. Still nothing. She tried to continue the speech with her own

hoarse voice. A new microphone sprang to life only to die less than a minute later. Voiceless again.

“I’m not easily deterred,” she shouted to the crowd. “But it’s hard to be heard.” In Iowa, Clinton learned that lesson with more than just microphones. ❖

Iowa presents questions for Hoosier Republicans, Democrats

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON - When pursuing love, the first date is crucial but not always decisive. It’s a long way from dinner and a movie to the altar.

The presidential candidates completed their initial evening out with the American electorate on Thursday in the Iowa caucuses. Democrat Barak Obama and Republican Mike Huckabee each got a goodnight kiss from voters.

On the Republican side, Sen. John McCain and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney got hugs, although Romney had his fingers crossed for a kiss after spending a fortune to impress his date.

The candidates who are in trouble are those who



got a firm handshake at the door -- Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and former GOP Sen. Fred Thompson of Tennessee.

The setbacks these two suffered will not end their bids for electoral love. Clinton has money, grit and a lead in New Hampshire. Thompson may gain strength as the nominating process moves to the south.

But each has a formidable task ahead. Clinton needs to find inspiration. In her speech on Thursday night, she recited a bland laundry list of policies she would advocate as president.

In contrast, Obama fired up his supporters--and perhaps the nation--with an oration reminiscent of Martin Luther King Jr's cadence and call for unity. For now, Obama's message of change trumps Clinton's message of experience.

On the Republican side, Huckabee has rallied social conservatives in the way that many in the GOP expected Thompson to do the moment he entered the race. Instead, Thompson's desultory campaign may end with a weak finish in South Carolina.

Clinton's and Thompson's stumbles pose dilemmas for some Hoosier politicians. Clinton's demise in Iowa dims the prospect of a vice presidential nomination for Sen. Evan Bayh, who has endorsed and campaigned for Clinton.

As politically cautious as he is smart, it would be remarkable if Bayh has backed the losing candidate. His seal of approval for Clinton increased her aura of inevitability in my mind. Bayh wouldn't roll the dice on someone he

doubted could capture the nomination, would he?

If Clinton succumbs to Obama, that could be bad news for former GOP Rep. Mike Sodrel. He is running against Democratic Rep. Baron Hill for the 9th CD seat he lost in 2006.

Sodrel backers assume he would benefit from a Clinton candidacy. They say antipathy toward the former first lady is so great in southeast Indiana that it would propel Sodrel to victory.

But if Obama is the standard bearer for the Democrats, it might not help Sodrel. Obama is too new on the national scene to have developed a universe of enemies. And he proved in Iowa that he can garner the support of an overwhelmingly white electorate.

If Thompson falls, that presents a problem for Rep. Steve Buyer and perhaps Rep. Mike Pence. Buyer is one of several dozen House members who endorsed Thompson. Pence has been a leader of House conservatives.

Buyer and Pence probably like the pro-life Huckabee's social policies. But will they be able to stomach a GOP nominee

who raised taxes when he was Arkansas governor?

Huckabee argues those hikes helped build roads and provide needed government services. But that kind of reasoning may not resonate with the fiscal conservatism that Pence preaches.

The voters have plenty of time to sort out such questions before they choose their groom--or bride. ❖



Sen. Bayh endorsed Hillary Clinton just as the New York Times had reported her nomination was an inevitability. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

2008 State Presidential Polls

New Hampshire (R)		McCain	Romney	Huckabee	Giuliani	Paul
Suffolk/WHDH	Jan. 2-3	25	29	13	9	8
Zogby	Dec. 31-Jan.1	34	30	10	9	7
N. Hampshire (D)		Obama	Clinton	Edwards	Richardson	
Suffolk/WHDS	Jan. 2-3	25	37	15	4	
Zogby	Dec. 31-Jan.1	26	26	20	7	



Obama on track as first outsider since Carter to win Dem nod

By **CHRIS SAUTTER**

WASHINGTON - During the run-up to the Iraq War, Barack Obama made a critical decision that would not only help him win a United States Senate seat in 2004, but also provide him with a key credential for his presidential bid in 2007-8. As he prepared for his long-shot campaign for U.S. Senate, Obama agreed against the advice of some to speak on October 2, 2002 at an anti-Iraq War rally in Chicago. Obama spurned the advice of some of his more cautious supporters because he strongly believed the war would be a tragic mistake for America. But he also went public with his views on Iraq because he understood that his opposition to the war would be indispensable to obtaining necessary support from anti-war Chicago Lakefront liberals for his Senate campaign.



Chris Sautter
Column

It is this unique sense of how to build a winning coalition based on idealistic notions of change, learned as a young community organizer on the Southside of Chicago, which helped Obama win a decisive victory at Thursday's Iowa Caucuses. And, it may also help him become the first outsider since Jimmy Carter to win the Democratic nomination.

Obama entered the race for President in January as an articulate newcomer challenging the Democratic establishment with an idealistic message of change. The popular Bill and Hillary Clinton personify the Democratic establishment, and Hillary had a huge head start toward the nomination. Yet, Obama argued it was time to turn the page on the 1990's. He was Gary Hart to Hillary Clinton's Walter Mondale. Like Mondale in 1984, Clinton had amassed the support of the groups which represent Democratic constituencies— including organized labor and women's groups. John Edwards had scored a handful of labor endorsements. But Obama had virtually none of the endorsements for which presidential candidates compete in the early days of a campaign. Instead, Obama's core coalition in Iowa consisted of anti-war Democrats, idealistic students who were notorious for not voting, miscellaneous disaffected Democrats, and independents and even some Republicans. All had had enough of the damage caused by the destructive Bush policies and what they considered to be Democratic establishment complicity in these policies.

Obama's core coalition built what became the best political organization in the history of the Iowa Caucuses. They loyally stuck with their candidate through the dog days of summer when Obama's candidacy was sputtering. Meanwhile, Obama began to display the promise he had shown with his electrifying speech at the 2004 Democratic convention. Hillary Clinton was running a flawless campaign. But when she stumbled during a debate, voters sensed her nomination was not as inevitable as had been assumed. Questions about Clinton created an opening for which Obama was ready. By Thursday night, Obama overwhelmingly won voters under 30 who this year voted in record numbers, and even narrowly carried the woman vote.

A pattern has emerged in the Democratic nomination process in modern times turning the primaries and caucuses into a contest between an establishment candidate and an outsider, with the establishment candidate eventually overpowering the challenger. The sole exception to this pattern was in 1976, when voter demand for principled change in the wake of Watergate made Jimmy Carter's unlikely nomination possible.



Sen. Obama and wife Michelle at the campaign kickoff in Springfield last February. (HPI)

The establishment candidate has regularly prevailed despite early losses because there has been a reservoir of money and blocks of reliable voters including African American voters to serve as a firewall for the establishment candidate as the campaign moved through the calendar. But this campaign is different. Obama has matched Clinton's fundraising and will cut deeply into her block of black support in states like South Carolina.

In the end, the fundamental dynamics of the 2008 presidential campaign have made a Clinton comeback highly unlikely. Change is clearly driving voter sentiment and Obama exudes change. Clinton embodies the past. Not only that, her votes on the war has made her complicit in the very policies which Democrats are rejecting. In short, Democrats are not buying her message of experience plus change. With Obama's rise to the top, 2008 is shaping up to be a watershed election.

Two additional losers in Iowa were the Democratic Leadership Council and Evan Bayh. The DLC, which was once led by Bill Clinton and later by Evan Bayh, promoted the kind of accommodating politics which prompted Hillary Clinton's initial vote on the War in Iraq. As for Evan Bayh, he waited until what seemed to be the last moment to endorse Hillary Clinton only to watch as her campaign almost immediately went into a tailspin in Iowa. ❖



2008 Indiana Governor

Governor 2008: Republican: Gov. Mitch Daniels, La Ron Keith. Democrat: Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Results:** Daniels (R) 1,302,912, Kernan (D) 1,113,900, Gividen (L) 31,644. **2008 Fore-**



cast: If you are Gov. Daniels, the news out of Iowa was mostly positive. Mike Huckabee's victory opens the door for U.S. Sen. John McCain to win in New Hampshire and get back into the race. Daniels is one of the few prominent Hoosiers backing McCain. The idea of Hillary Clinton being on the ropes is double-edged. Many Hoosier Republicans were looking at her nomination as a millstone around Democratic necks ... unless, of course, she selected Evan Bayh as her running mate. If Barack Obama prevails, it is extremely unlikely that Bayh moves up. But more importantly, Obama and Huckabee are change agents. And that is a mantle that Daniels is fully equipped to embrace. Schellinger and Thompson would like to possess this, but to date they haven't even come close to making that case. Daniels' first term is littered with broken molds and compelling change. It's a theme Daniels fits into well.

Mike Edmondson has relinquished the campaign manager position of the Jim Schellinger gubernatorial campaign but is still directing the campaign staff. "Mike is still with us," said Schellinger spokeswoman Candace Martin. "He's moving into an adviser type role." She added, "This is not any kind of a campaign shakeup." Edmondson started out as finance director for the campaign and then was named campaign manager last summer. As for a new campaign manager, Martin said, "Mike is still directing the staff." Martin also confirmed that Joel Miller has left the campaign. "We had some people who put systems in place and set things up," Martin said. "Joel has decided to move on. He has welcomed a new baby." Martin said the Schellinger campaign is preparing to release a "strong fundraising report" in the next several days.

The two Indiana Democratic gubernatorial candidates scrambled to beef up their year-end campaign finance reports. The financial reports will be critical for both Democrats and the most decisive marker at this point of the campaign. **Democratic Primary Status:** TOSSUP. **General Status:** TOSSUP

2008 Congressional

Congressional District 7: Republican:

Wayne Harmon, State Rep. Jon Elrod, Tom Rose, Blaine Dickerson, Marvin Scott Democrat: Indianapolis Councilman Andre Carson, Marion County Treasurer Michael Rodman, Councilwoman Joanne Sanders, State Rep. Carolene Mays, State Rep. Greg Porter, State Rep. David Orentlicher, Randle Pollard. **Geography:** Indianapolis. Media Market: Indianapolis. People: Urban 99.7%; median income \$36,522; poverty 13.5%; race white 63, black 29.4%, Hispanic 4.4%, Asian 1.3%; blue/white collar 26/58%; **2000 Presidential:** Gore 55%, Bush 43%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: D+6. **2002 Results:** Carson 77,478 (53%), McVey 64,379 (44%). **2004 Results:** Carson 121,303, Horning (R) 97,491, Campbell (L) 4,381. **2008 Forecast:** Democrat Andre Carson and Republican Tom Rose are in. Party chairmen are signalling they want a March 1 special election. 7th CD Republicans will caucus beginning around 5 p.m. Sunday Jan. 13. Tom Rose, former publisher and CEO of the Jerusalem Post From 1992 to 1997 and a columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times, has indicated he will enter the race. Rose served as special assistant to Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith. Other potential candidates are Marvin Scott, who lost a 50-40 percent race to Carson in 2000 while raising only \$82,000, and Blaine Dickerson, son of 2006 nominee Eric Dickerson. They are expected to join declared candidates State Rep. Jon Elrod and Wayne Harmon.



Tom Rose

For the Democrats, Marion County Treasurer Michael Rodman has filed his papers. We are hearing that Orentlicher is committed to the primary and not necessarily the special election. The critical question is whether Andre Carson can raise money; his grandmother was not a prolific fundraiser. A day after being sworn in to the City-County Council, Andre Carson set out on a larger goal: succeeding his grandmother Julia Carson as a member of Congress (Indianapolis Star). Carson said he understands concerns about his experience, and that he does not think of his candidacy as a question of legacy. "My heart is in public service," Carson said. "I want to carry on a tradition of public service and being a voice for the voiceless."

7th CD Chairman John Hammond III told Howey Politics Indiana that there will be two parts of the caucus. The first will be a slating caucus. The second process, which he expects to begin around 7:30 p.m. will be a nomination caucus for the special election. Just when that election will occur is still undetermined. **Status:** TOSSUP





Hoosier reality check looms on property taxes

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Around 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 8, the Indiana Senate will take up the legislation that proposes a constitutional amendment to repeal property taxes. The hearing on Senate Joint Resolution-8 will take place in Statehouse Room 431.

SJR-8 is assigned to the Senate's Rules and Legislative Procedure Committee, which is essentially a graveyard for legislation. Critics of this situation – who turned out with pitchforks and torches at the Statehouse on Jan. 3 – see Jan. 8 as the death knell for property tax repeal.

And the powers-that-be – ranging from Gov. Mitch Daniels, to Senate President Pro Tempore David Long, House Minority Leader Brian Bosma, and House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer are lining up against the repeal.

Sen. Long said late last year that "personally, I'd like to see property taxes eliminated" and said that a plan promoted at a dozen town hall forums by Advance America's Eric Miller might work "in the abstract" and "it sounds good." He acknowledges three recent polls showing support for a repeal, but says when there is an "honest" accounting of costs in increase sales and income tax, "that support drops."

In announcing his property tax reforms last October, Daniels said, "Much as I would have liked to have taken that route, the risks to our schools, our small businesses and to our economy in general dissuaded me. In particular, I could not support the large increases paid by every Hoosier worker and most small businesses, which would be necessary for total elimination."

After Gov. Daniels announced his plan to cap property taxes at 1 percent for homeowners, 2 percent for renters and 3 percent for business, ardent property tax repeal advocates like State Rep. Jackie Walorski (R-Lakeville) and Doug Eckerty representing the Citizens of Delaware County for Property Tax Repeal seemed to back off. Walorski appeared with dozens of supporters wearing "Eliminate property tax" T-shirts at an Elkhart parade last summer. She called the governor's plan "bold" and a "starting point" for property tax relief. Eckerty called it a "step in the right direction."

Eric Miller says that what he learned from his rallies is that "people fear for their family, their jobs and the right to own their own homes. The only way to do that is to permanently repeal property taxes. The people understand that they are only renting from the government."



Miller explained that it just isn't about the repeal itself. "They want 'right to vote' to repeal property taxes. They understand that legislators are trying very hard to solve the property tax problem for decades and they haven't been able to do it."

That's a similar sentiment of Daniels, who proposes changing the Indiana Constitution to provide for the differing property tax caps.

Miller's plan calls for the legislature in 2011 enacting a 1 percent income tax increase and a 2 percent sales tax hike that "will save \$100 million."

While Daniels and legislative leaders scoff at Miller's math, he does have economist Bill Styring who says the plan will work as long as there are spending controls on local governments. Miller cites "scare tactics" when legislators talk of a 13 percent sales tax increase or a 9 percent income tax hike because, he says, "those figures are dealing with replacing property taxes in 2007." He maintains if there is a repeal, Indiana will open itself to an economic boom.

Miller wields a big hammer on this debate. He points to a poll he commissioned that showed 76 percent would be "less likely to re-elect a legislator" who might vote to block the amendment from passage. Asked if he would consider challenging Gov. Daniels in the May primary, Miller answered, "It is not my intention at this time to run for governor."

This is a political reality that is just beginning to take shape well before the filing period of Jan. 22 to Feb. 22. There are already a handful of legislative primary challengers, such as George Rogge, Dennis Meeks and Ron Tabacynski in Lake County taking aim at State Reps. Charlie Brown, Shelli VanDenburgh and Linda Lawson in primaries. Meeks said it was time for "lanterns and pitchforks" to make a show in the streets. Republican Duane Conover is challenging Republican State Rep. Amos Thomas, R-Brazil. "We may all be thrown out," Rep. Thomas said.

In the Indiana Senate, there is a small but ardent core of conservative Republicans who are pushing the repeal. State Sen. Mike Delph (R-Carmel) hand-delivered a letter to Gov. Daniels seeking "bold leadership" in shifting Indiana to a "fair tax system," he said.

John Hammond III, 7th Congressional District Republican chairman and a confidant of Gov. Daniels, calls the property tax repeal a "practical impossibility." While he notes the Senate conservatives, he has a hard time believing that small core will grow into Senate and House majorities needed to pass the repeal amendment.

Then again, with Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard taking office after his stunning upset of Bart Peterson, Hammond said, "I pinch myself. After Ballard's victory, I'm going to question myself on everything."

So on Jan. 8 at the Indiana Statehouse in Room 431, the Hoosier reality check begins. ❖



4 dead in a pond, 3 dispatch centers, 1 dive team ... too late

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

CARMEL - There are real people out there ... Those words from Jeff Gillaspay, my editor at the Elkhart Truth, were ringing in my mind once again as I took note of the awful news of a Carmel mother and her three daughters who slipped off a snow-covered road and into a pond. Batul Abbas had enough time at 9:34 p.m. Dec. 15 to call 911 as the family mini-van slipped into the dark, 8-foot-deep waters.

The first Carmel Fire Department units arrived at 9:38 p.m. But Carmel has no dive team. The Fishers FD has a dive team at Geist Reservoir, 12 miles away. It got its first call for help at 9:41 p.m. It wouldn't be until 9:53 p.m. that the first family member was pulled from the van by Carmel firefighters. The Fishers dive team wouldn't arrive until 10:01.

There are three dispatch centers in this cluster of suburban cities in Hamilton County – at Carmel, Noblesville and Fishers. They listen to each others radio traffic, but they do not respond until the primary agency calls for help.

Twenty-two minutes after the first call – and a minute before the Fishers dive team arrived - the last of the Abbas children was pulled from the van. By the next morning, 8-year-old Azmeh, 14-year-old Shaail, and 18-year-old Shazreh would all be dead.

A witness, Carlos Castaneda, told WRTV-6 news that the scene was "heart-wrenching."

I write about this tragedy because in Recommendation #5 of the Kernan-Shepard Commission, in its efforts to reform local government, simply states, "Create a countywide body to oversee the provision of all public safety services." It notes that there are 1,150 local government police and fire departments. "This complex and overlapping web of local government units and service arrangements increases the overall costs of these services and has the potential to affect citizen access to critical services when minutes matter."

When minutes matter.

It goes on to state, "Moreover, inequities exist within this complex system. A number of local governments are too small or dispersed to provide an acceptable mini-

mum level of police and fire protection in isolation."

Now, when I think of isolation, I think of the further reaches of places like Jackson County, or the lakes region of Steuben and Noble counties, or the winding roads outside of Lawrenceburg. The fact that "isolation" can come in a retention pond in Carmel, or Westfield or Noblesville – some of the highest-growth cities in the state – is sobering.

The report from former Gov. Joe Kernan and Indiana Supreme Court Justice Randall T. Shepard goes on to say, "Better coordination of public safety services across local governments has enormous potential to provide improved service, equity of service and responsibility for costs and cost saving as the result of economies of scale relative to administration, staffing, training and equipment."

Specifically, it calls for a county or regional 911 dispatch, fire suppression and emergency medical services. Kernan-Shepard recommends that this new entity be chaired and administered by a single elected county executive. "We proposed that the county executive and the mayors be given voting authority. In the event that there is no included city, the town with the largest population should have voting authority."

Kernan-Shepard urges – with citizen input – new local service standards within 18 months. "We also strongly recommend exploration of collaboration or consolidation with adjacent counties."

In Recommendation #6, Kernan-Shepard calls for consolidating emergency public safety dispatch by county or multi-county region, with all dispatch using the Project Hoosier SAFE-T statewide 800 MHz communication system.

Quoting from the Commission's report: "Local emergency public dispatch services are fragmented among municipal and county departments. Historically, public safety agencies have been unable to communicate with each other during significant events such as tornadoes."

Or, perhaps, when a mini-van with a mother and her three daughters slips into an icy suburban retention pond that on a normal day, seems just an arms reach away.

Capt. Ron Lipps of the Fishers FD, told WTHR-13 news after the Abbas family tragedy, "It's just a matter of whatever their system prompted for that response type as to how and when we got called out."

Is that good enough for you? It wasn't for the Abbas family. ❖



A "heart wrenching" rescue in Carmel failed to save four Abbas family members on Dec. 15. The Fishers FD dive team arrived too late. (WRTV Photo)



Help us compile 2008 50 Most Influential List

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

There's no question about it, we went out on some limbs when the **2007 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL LIST**.

Some of them, like our "premature adulation" for Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters, who lost in the Fort Wayne mayoral primary, were busts. It happens every year. But others like Long Beach native Chief Justice John Roberts, who has ushered profound changes to the U.S. Supreme Court, and UAW Presidents Ron Gettel-finger and Mo Davidson, who helped rework auto contracts and land the Getrag plant deal at Tipton, were right on the money.

Obviously there were profound changes in the November elections and people like Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson, Greg Ballard and Tom Henry will emerge on the 2008 list. And that's where you come in. Send us your list, whether it be someone you think is deserving, a top 10 or an entire list to: brianhowey@howeypolitics.com. Keep in mind, our list is based on who will impact the events for the coming year. We'll publish the list on Jan. 17, 2008.



2007 HPI 50 Most Influential List

1. U.S. Supreme Court Justice John G. Roberts
2. Gov. Mitch Daniels
3. Speaker B. Patrick Bauer
4. Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson
5. U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar
6. Koichi Kondo
7. Senate President Pro Tempore David Long
8. UAW Presidents Ron Gettel-finger and Mo Davidson
9. Ways & Means Chairman Bill Crawford
10. U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh
11. U.S. Rep. Baron Hill
12. Carmel Mayor James Brainard
13. Evansville Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel
14. Allen County Commissioner Nelson Peters
15. Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi
16. Gary Mayor Rudy Clay
17. US. Rep. Pete Visclosky
18. Lee Hamilton
19. IEDC Director Nathan Feltman
20. State Sen. Bob Meeks

21. State Sen. Luke Kenley
22. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky
23. U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth
24. U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly
25. U.S. Rep. Mike Pence
26. Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker
27. Indiana Republican Chairman Murray Clark
28. U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer
29. U.S. Rep. Mark Souder
30. House Minority Leader Brian Bosma
31. Farm Bureau President Don Villwock
32. Tim Roemer
33. Marion County Democratic Chairman Michael O'Connor
34. Terre Haute Mayor Kevin Burke
35. U.S. Rep. Julia Carson
36. Republican Executive Director Jennifer Hallowell
37. Chamber President Kevin Brinegar
38. IMA President Pat Kiely
39. Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman
40. South Bend Mayor Dennis Luecke
41. U.S. Rep. Dan Burton
42. State Reps. Sheila Klinker and Peggy Welch
43. St. Joseph Democratic Chair-
man Butch Morgan
44. FSSA Commissioner Mitch Roob
45. IACT President Matt Greller
46. Lugar Chief of Staff Marty Morris
47. State Sen. Vi Simpson
48. Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard
48. Senate Minority Leader Richard Young
49. State Reps. Kreg Battles and Jon Elrod
50. John Gregg

Honorable Mention (alphabetical)

Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson; 7th CD Chair Sherlonda Anderson; Warren Township Trustee Jeff Bennett; Betsy Burdick; Deputy Mayor Steve Campbell; Attorney General Steve Carter; Dan Coats; United Methodist Bishop Michael Coyner; Kathy Davis; Michael Davis; Shaw Friedman; State Rep. Craig Fry; Time Goeglein; Earl Goode; Bob Grand; Bill Haan; John Hammond III; Al Hubbard; Madison Mayor Al Huntington; Lacy Johnson; Joe Kernan; Joe Loftus; Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott; Kokomo Mayor Matt McKillip; LaPorte Mayor Leigh Morris; John Okeson; State Rep. Greg Porter; Jim Purucker; Indianapolis Councilman Isaac Randolph; Mishawaka Mayor Jeff Rea; Supt. Suellen Reed; Charles Schalliol; Dan Seitz; Tom Sugar; Hamilton County Republican Chairman Charlie White; Abdul Hakim-Shabazz; Mike Sodrel; Sen. Thomas Weatherwax; Gary Welsh; Robin Winston; Senate Minority Leader Richard Young. ❖



washingtonpost.com

The Best State Political Reporters: Indiana - Brian Howey

After a HUGE response to a post earlier this month on the best state politics reporters around the country, we decided to provide a final list of all the people nominated by The Fix community.

Thirty-three states are covered. If yours isn't, stand up and be counted in the comments section below.

A word to the wise: Save this post for future reference. We sure will.

Arkansas: John Brummett, Arkansas News

California: Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Weintraub, Los Angeles Times columnist George Skelton, San Francisco Chronicle reporters Phil Matier and Andrew Ross and Sacramento Bee columnist Dan Walters.

Delaware: Delaware Grapevine editor Celia Cohen

Florida: St. Petersburg Times columnist/politics editor Adam Smith.

Georgia: Bill Shipp, Southern Political Report Editor Tom Baxter, InsiderAdvantage Georgia editor Dick Pettys.

Idaho: Idaho Statesman columnist Dan Popkey

Illinois: Capitol Fax Blog author Rich Miller

Indiana: Howey Political Report editor Brian Howey

Iowa: Des Moines Register columnist David Yepsen, Associated Press reporter Mike Glover, Radio Iowa's O. Kay Henderson.

Louisiana: Louisiana Political Fax Weekly editor John Maginnis.

Kansas/Missouri: Kansas City Star reporter Steve Kraske

Kentucky: Louisville Courier-Journal columnist Al Cross, Kentucky Enquirer political reporter and columnist Pat Crowley.

Massachusetts: Boston Globe statehouse bureau chief Frank Phillips

Minnesota: Former Star Tribune reporter Eric Black

Missouri: St. Louis Post-Dispatch columnist Jo Mannies

Mississippi: Jackson Clarion-Ledger editor Sid

Salter

Montana: Lee Newspapers reporter Chuck Johnson

Nevada: Las Vegas Sun columnist Jon Ralston

New Hampshire: Union Leader columnist John DiStaso, Nashua Telegraph reporter Kevin Landrigan

New Jersey: Newark Star-Ledger columnist John Farmer, Newark Star-Ledger reporter Josh Margolin, Newark Star-Ledger columnist Tom Moran

New York: New York Post columnist Fred Dicker, Albany Times Union reporter Jim Odato, radio talk show host Alan Chartock, Newsday columnist Rick Brand

North Carolina: Raleigh News & Observer columnist Rob Christensen

Ohio: Cleveland Plain Dealer columnist Tom Sudes, Columbus Dispatch senior editor Joe Hallett, Cincinnati Enquirer columnist Howard Wilkinson

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia Inquirer columnist -- and Fix friend -- Dick Polman

Rhode Island: Providence Journal columnist Charlie Bakst

South Carolina: The State's Lee Bandy. Greenville News reporter Dan Hoover

South Dakota: Sioux Falls Argus-Leader's Dave Kranz

Tennessee: Knoxville News Sentinel reporter Tom Humphrey, Tennessee Journal editor Ed Cromer

Texas: Texas Monthly senior executive editor Paul Burka, Dallas Morning News senior political writer Wayne Slater, Houston Chronicle reporter Clay Robison, Houston Chronicle reporter R. G. Ratcliffe, Austin American Statesman reporter and columnist W. Gardner Selby

Virginia: University of Virginia professor Larry Sabato

Washington: Seattle Post-Intelligencer correspondent Joel Connelly, Seattle Times political reporter David Postman, Associated Press reporter Dave Ammons

Wisconsin: Wispolitics.com editor Jeff Mayers

West Virginia: Radio host Hoppy Kercheval



Lou Jacobson, Stateline.org - As recently as a few months ago, it seemed Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) had moved past some of the biggest problems from early in his term, including an unpopular toll-road lease and a complicated change in time zone policy. But anger over rising property taxes and growing pessimism about the state's economy has made all incumbents in Indiana targets, Daniels first among them. On Election Day 2007, voters stunned political observers by tossing out Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson, a result blamed on the tax issue. Mayors were also booted in nine other Indiana towns, even though many of these locales boasted factories built or expanded in recent years — "an all-too-real reminder that big economic gains are not enough to power the presiding executive to further terms," the Indiana-based Howey Politics Indianawrote, in a clear reference to Daniels' reelection strategy. ❖



Rich James, Post-Tribune - When the sun rises on Christmas morning, many deserving gifts won't be under the tree. To help Santa Claus, I'd like to deliver the following gifts to: The GOP -- A name change from Grand Old Party to God on Parade. The city of Gary -- A drastic reduction in homicides in 2008. U.S. Rep. Ron Paul -- The Republican presidential nomination. U.S. Sen. Barack Obama -- The Democratic presidential nomination. Gov. Mitch Daniels -- Another four years to finish the many projects he has started. Lake County Surveyor George Van Til -- Reclamation of his reputation as a fine elected official. Lake County Sheriff Roy Dominguez and staff -- Continued success solving cold cases. U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh -- The vice presidency in 2008. Gary Mayor Rudy Clay -- Patience; you can't turn around the city overnight. New Crown Point Mayor David Uran and new Hobart Mayor Brian Snedecor -- The ability to lead their cities without allowing their backgrounds in law enforcement to dictate the direction. U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar -- The secretary of state's job, regardless of which party wins the presidency. The Chicago White Sox -- A lead-off man, a center fielder and a second baseman. The Chicago Cubs -- Nothing; they seem to be doing quite well this off-season. Northwest Indiana decision makers -- The willingness to pay more than lip service to regionalism. The next president -- The ability to right this unsettled nation. The people of Northwest Indiana -- The shot in the arm we so richly deserve. ❖

Leslie Stedman Weidenbener, Louisville Courier-Journal - Recent projections that show the state's tax revenue is slowing down seem like bad news for the legislature's property tax relief efforts. Although most of Gov. Mitch Daniels' plan for tax restructuring involves raising the sales tax to pay for property tax relief, he

is planning to supplement it with about \$80 million from the state's main checking account. Following this month's new revenue projection, Daniels' budget officials said his plan would still be possible. The bad financial news has some lawmakers on edge, though. The more money the state has available, the higher a property tax cut could be. But this revenue projection could actually be a great development as lawmakers progress through their property tax talks -- at least if the goal is to produce something that is smart and sustainable. That's because almost all the tax plans on the table involve the state taking over some local costs. In other words, programs that are now paid for with property taxes -- such as child welfare and basic school spending -- would be shifted to the state budget. The swap also would eliminate tax relief payments the state makes to local governments to keep property tax bills lower. But the worrisome part of that plan, at least to some, is that property taxes tend to be a steadier source of revenue than the income and sales taxes that pay for the bulk of the state budget. Even when times are bad, when people are losing their jobs or fuel prices are up, people's property tax bills don't go down. That's a problem with property taxes, opponents say. But it does make the resulting revenue reliable. ❖

Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune - Joe Donnelly for president? Chris Chocola for president? No. The '06 opponents in Indiana's 2nd District congressional race won't ring in '08 on the presidential campaign trail. But if they could transfer their vote totals from just St. Joseph County in their Indiana race to Iowa on Thursday, each would become a formidable presidential contender. Chocola, the Republican incumbent in '06, didn't do so well in St. Joseph County. He got 33,485 votes. Not so well is relative. If Chocola got that many votes in the Iowa Republican caucuses, he'd become a top tier presidential candidate, perhaps the Iowa winner. George W. Bush got 35,948 votes in the last contested Republican caucuses in 2000 and was a big winner, going on to the Republican nomination and the White House. Donnelly, the congressional race winner, would beat Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John Edwards if his voters from just St. Joseph County, 46,189 of them, could support him in the Iowa Democratic caucuses. Our strange way of selecting our leader grows even stranger. The rush of states to move up their primaries in order to have a voice in determining the nominees resulted in the Iowa caucuses, the traditional first test, coming on the third day of the new year. The New Hampshire primary, the second big test in a small state, comes Jan. 8. Once again Iowa and New Hampshire will cut the field. A candidate winning in both states will have momentum for wrapping up the nomination on Super Duper Tuesday, Feb. 5. ❖



RNC out-raises DNC

WASHINGTON - When it comes to fund-raising, Democrats have outpaced Republicans almost across the board. The lone exception is the Republican National Committee, which reported yesterday that it had raised \$83 million for the year, easily topping the Democratic National

Committee, which had raised \$50.5 million in the first 11 months of 2007. Republicans say that this cash pile — the Republican committee has \$17.2 million on hand, compared to the \$2.8 million the Democratic committee reported — should help the Republican presidential nominee in the fall. "Our significant fund-raising advantage over the D.N.C.," said Alex Conant, a spokesman for the Republican committee, "will put the Republican nominee in a strong position in the general election, with the resources to communicate our message and mobilize voters."



Moses eyes hate crime legislation in session

FORT WAYNE - Hate crime legislation is one of the least understood bills, but it's an option Indiana's courts need when dealing with crimes motivated by hate (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). That was the message Rep. Win Moses, D-Fort Wayne, delivered Thursday during a discussion about hate crime legislation at the Allen County Public Library. The discussion was led by the Rev. Michael Latham, president of the local NAACP; Jonathan Ray, president of the Fort Wayne Urban League; and Moses. About seven people attended the discussion as well as representatives of the media. The speakers each emphasized that Indiana is one of

five states that don't have hate crimes laws on the books. Moses said that though legislation has been introduced at the Statehouse at least three times by Rep. Gregory Porter, D-Indianapolis, it has never been passed into law. During the 2007 legislative session, the bill made it out of committee to the House, but Porter pulled it after an amendment was proposed that would have made the abortion of a viable fetus a hate crime. Porter chose to pull the bill because abortion is a volatile issue, and he didn't want the two issues combined, Moses said.

Clay excited by Obama

GARY - Sen. Barack Obama and former Gov. Mike Huckabee have a long way to go before they can capitalize on their victories in the Iowa caucuses and become their parties' nominees (**Post-Tribune**). But local political leaders were energized by the first political contest of 2008. Gary Mayor Rudy Clay, who also serves as the Lake County Democratic chairman, is an Obama supporter. "One thing it shows is the people of Iowa know a good presidential candidate when they hear, see and talk to one," Clay said. "Once you win in Iowa, it gives you a springboard going into New Hampshire." Clay collected signatures for Obama, of Illinois, to get on the primary ballot in Indiana. He is concerned that the race to be the nominee may be over by the time Indiana's primary rolls around May 8. "The picking of the nominee in this system is flawed," Clay said. "I think the entire nation should go to polls one time and vote for who they want to be president. We'll have 22 primaries before Feb. 22."

Burke appeals court ruling

TERRE HAUTE - Former Terre Haute Mayor Kevin Burke is appealing a court ruling that allowed for Mayor Duke Bennett to take office this week. Attorneys for Burke on Thursday filed a notice of appeal with Vigo County

Superior Court Division 3, which states that the case will head to the Indiana Court of Appeals (**Terre Haute Tribune-Star**).

Rep. Crouch bill would move Indiana primary

EVANSVILLE - Rep. Suzanne Crouch, R-Evansville, said she will introduce a bill during the Legislature's 2009 session that would move Indiana's May presidential primaries to earlier in the year. Several similar bills have been introduced over the past two decades — including one by state Sen. Tim Lanane, D-Anderson, in February — but none have been passed. Crouch told WEHT-News25 this week she is motivated by the conviction that Indiana's primaries come far too late to influence the selection of the parties' presidential nominees.

Talian bill would change property tax payment

INDIANAPOLIS - Writing a check to pay a lump-sum property tax bill could be a thing of the past under legislation proposed by State Sen. Karen Tallian, D-Ogden Dunes (**Times of Northwest Indiana**). Senate Bill 208, which was filed on Thursday, would give homeowners the option of paying their property taxes through an automatic monthly bank deduction. It's an option Tallian believes would help the large number of people who do not have escrow accounts.

Employers join INShape

INDIANAPOLIS - Hoosier health and fitness is getting another boost to start the new year. Gov. Mitch Daniels said today that more than a dozen companies, led by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Indiana, have agreed to participate in company wellness programs that incorporate INShape Indiana, his program to promote healthy lifestyles. ❖