



# Sodrel ponders 5th race vs. Hill

*Hayhurst, McGoff bring familiar names, medical backgrounds to rematches*

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - We've reached the rematch phase of the Indiana Congressional battlefield shaping up for 2010.

Former Fort Wayne Councilman Tom Hayhurst filed paperwork with the FEC to challenge U.S.

Rep. Mark Souder in the 3rd CD. Former 9th CD congressman Mike Sodrel told HPI that he is weighing a fifth run against U.S.

Rep. Baron Hill. In the crowded 5th CD field, 2008 nominee John McGoff is one of four challengers to U.S. Rep. Dan Burton.

Sodrel told Howey Politics Indiana



Former congressman Mike Sodrel will decide whether he will square off against U.S. Rep. Baron Hill for a fifth time after he finishes writing a book in the next month or so.

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# Health reforms give cover for Democrats

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON - In the brutal heat and humidity of August, it looks as if health care reform is melting Democrats.



Raucous town hall meetings fueled by opposition to existing congressional proposals threaten to slow or halt reform efforts. Somehow, despite having huge House and Senate majorities and occupying the White House, Democrats have lost control of the debate.

Everyone from President Barack Obama to individual Democratic members



"I always say, it just shows how slim the pickings are."

- Gov. MITCH DANIELS, *asked about a potential 2012 presidential run in South Bend on Wednesday*



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of Congress are responding to Republican criticisms rather than promoting their own narrative to frame health care reform. On the Sunday talk shows, the administration seemed to pull back from the public option before the president and Health & Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius reiterated their support on Monday.

But when cool fall breezes replace wilting summer temperatures, Democrats may avoid a health care debacle because the final piece of legislation, assuming they pass a bill on their own, is likely to be massive and complex. Every Democrat will be able to claim some kind of victory.

The first thing to watch is how the three House bills will be melded into one. The Blue Dog Coalition of conservative Democrats made waves by forcing into the House Energy and Commerce Committee version several amendments that they said would make the measure more affordable and more friendly to small business and rural hospitals.

**One of the leading** Blue Dogs, Rep. Baron Hill, D-9th CD, voted for the Energy and Commerce edition of health care reform. A member of the panel, he was persuaded to get behind the bill because the Blue Dogs secured protections for small business, brought the total cost below \$1 trillion and ensured that a government-run insurance program, known as the public option, would have to negotiate rates with private insurers rather than use the existing federal reimbursement structure.

But the Energy and Com-



**U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly during his Kokomo town hall last week. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)**

merce bill is far from the final word on health care reform in the House, let alone in Congress as a whole. In the thicket of negotiations to come - within the House and Senate, between the House and Senate - there will be plenty of opportunities for tweaking in the bowels of a bill that could total more than 1,000 pages. Interpretations of the outcome will vary.

**Hill is not committing** to vote against a final health care measure if it doesn't contain the Blue Dog provisions inserted into the Energy and Commerce version.

"I'm not going to get into hypotheticals," Hill told HPI's Brian Howey last week at an Indianapolis Rotary Club meeting.

Competing Democratic views on the public option will have to be sorted out. The proposal to let the public plan negotiate reimbursement rates is anathema to House progressives, formerly known as liberals. They say that only government rates, such as those used for Medicare, will fulfill the promise of making the public option a true competitor to the private sector.

**The Congressional Progressive Caucus** is adamantly protesting what seems to be Obama's waning enthusiasm for including a public option in a health care reform bill. The caucus has more members than the



Blue Dogs--81 to 52--and more sympathizers from outside the group.

**A prominent House liberal**, Rep. George Miller, D-California and chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, confidently predicted on July 17 that the Democratic caucus would coalesce around a final health care bill. As one of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's top lieutenants, Miller likely will try to ensure that it includes a public option that satisfies progressives.

"Our (Democratic) members are in full force to come to the floor and work with this legislation and they will all report for duty at the time that that vote is taken," Miller said.

You can bet that many of the Democrats lining up to support the final bill will be Blue Dogs, who tend not to vote as a bloc. Indiana's Blue Dogs - Hill and Reps. Joe Donnelly, D-2nd CD, and Brad Ellsworth, D-8th CD - have come down on different sides of massive energy and budget bills this year. Although he hasn't taken a stance on the health care measures that are winding their way through the House, Donnelly looks as if he's laying the ground work to vote for a public option.

In an HPI interview last week, he described himself

as a "free market person" who wants to see a "strong, vibrant" national insurance exchange.

But the private market alone may not be able to produce such a system, according to Donnelly. He noted that in Indiana, Anthem controls most of the insurance market.

"That has affected our ability to compete," Donnelly said.

**But for now, Donnelly** is remaining agnostic on health care. He said he wants the final version to be deficit neutral, increase access and affordability, eliminate insurance prohibitions against pre-existing conditions and allow people to keep health care coverage they like.

In whatever measure emerges from the congressional sausage making, Democratic supporters will probably be able to argue that their criteria for health care reform was satisfied. ❖

**ELLSWORTH PHONE TOWNHALL:** Rep. Brad Ellsworth will host a telephone town hall to discuss health care reform. The call will take place at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. In order to comply with Indiana's automatic dial laws, constituents who wish to participate must sign up at the 8th District Online Office: [www.ellsworth.house.gov](http://www.ellsworth.house.gov).

## CD rematches, from page 1

on Tuesday that he will decide on whether to challenge Hill after he finishes a book he is writing. That will come sometime this fall.

But a couple of other rematches will not happen. In the 8th CD, 2008 nominee Greg Goode moved to the Pacific Northwest and former Congressman John Hostettler doesn't appear to be interested in reclaiming the seat he held between 1994 and 2006.

In the 2nd CD, Republican sources say that former Congressman Chris Chocola is content in heading up the conservative Club for Growth and will not seek a rematch against U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, who defeated him in 2006 by 15,000 votes.

HPI believes that U.S. Reps. Pete Visclosky in the 1st CD (who might face Republican lightweight Mark Leyva again), Steve Buyer in the 4th, Mike Pence in the 6th and Andre Carson in the 7th are all in the "safe" category for re-election.

Here's a rundown on where the competitive Indiana CDs stand.

### 2nd CD: Donnelly's rose garden

This should be Indiana's most competitive district, but for now Donnelly is without a credible challenger. Dr. Lee Rosebush, a registered pharmacist and patent attorney

with degrees from Purdue and Case Western Reserve Law School, told the Hoosier Access blog last winter that he was looking at challenging Donnelly, but has been quiet since.

Several other prominent 2nd CD Republicans - State Rep. Jackie Walorski and Mishawaka Mayor Jeff Rea among them - have decided not to challenge Donnelly, Indiana Republican Party spokesman Trevor Foughty told HPI. If Rosebush were to challenge Donnelly, he would be the third candidate with a medical background to run, joining Drs. Hayhurst and McGoff.

A Chocola comeback would instantly put the 2nd CD in play, even though Donnelly gets good marks from both Democrats and many Republicans in the district.



ROSEBUSH

Donnelly's votes have reflected his Blue Dog nature, opposing the Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade bill while pressing President Obama on health care legislation that he believes must be "revenue neutral" while addressing systemic problems such as pre-existing conditions.

When Chocola was elected president of the Club for Growth last April, he explained, "In 2007, I became a member of its Leadership Council because I believe in the club's mission to promote limited govern-



ment and economic freedom. As president, I have every intention of maintaining that commitment to the fullest degree. The club's continuing role in affecting policy over the coming months and years will be crucial. We have already begun to see a dangerous growth in government over the past two and a half months, and we are committed to fighting for our nation's economic freedom." **Horse Race Status:** Likely Donnelly

### 3rd CD: Hayhurst comeback

Dr. Hayhurst ran in 2006 advocating health care reform while trying to pick up on the anti-Iraq War sentiment, losing to Souder by 15,000 votes, his narrowest re-election victory since his defeat of U.S. Rep. Jill Long in 1994. "There are a lot of things going on that are very worrisome," Hayhurst told the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette's Sylvia Smith on Saturday about his 2010 rematch. "I don't see much headway being made with regard to tackling some of these major problems." He listed the economy, health care and energy as the problems. "Jobs and the economy are probably the biggest for me," Hayhurst said, pointing to the high unemployment rate in northeast Indiana. "Even if things get quite a bit better in a year, there's still a long way to go. What bothers me the most is what's happened in the last 15 years. I know he's just one voice, but he's been part of government" since 1995.



**Dr. Tom Hayhurst, a former Fort Wayne Councilman, will take aim at U.S. Rep. Mark Souder again in 2010. (Hayhurst campaign photo)**

Many Democrats had hoped that Hayhurst would seek a rematch in 2008, but he passed and Michael Montagano won the Democratic nomination. Montagano pulled close to Souder in October before a series of news stories about homes and cars provided by his father derailed the upset bid. Democrat sources told HPI that some of Montagano's social stances put off a sizable segment of the Democratic vote. Souder ended up drubbing Montagano 155,693 to 112,309.

With President Obama becoming the first Democrat to carry the state since 1964 and Souder finishing with such an emphatic plurality, many observers (including HPI) were quick to conclude that Souder would probably be a lock in his current district.

Hayhurst is seen as a much more credible can-

didate than Montagano, but he resurfaces in an election cycle that could prove deeply problematic for Democratic challengers, particularly in the 3rd CD that is one of most Republican congressional districts in the nation.

The first mid-term for a sitting president is always tough on his party, as Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson, Reagan and Clinton learned in 1966, 1982 and 1994. President Obama has projected an activist agenda that has provoked many conservative Republicans. Unusual success could blunt a GOP comeback and thus help Hayhurst, but the more likely scenario is much of Obama's agenda will be a work in progress (as Reagan's was in 1982) and Souder will probably find a swift tailwind. **Horse Race Status:** Likely Souder

### 5th CD: Burton challengers face tough environment

U.S. Rep. Dan Burton faces four challengers - Dr. McGoff, Brose McVey, State Rep. Mike Murphy and former State Rep. Luke Messer - in the May 2010 Republican primary.

Among the challengers, Messer has raised the most money - a little more than \$200,000 in the first six months of this year - but Congressional Quarterly notes that fund-raising hasn't been easy, given the number of candidates and the state of the economy. McVey calls it a "brutal environment."

Murphy said, "I can tell you that I have not yet been turned down by anyone when I've sat down, one on one, and asked for contributions. But people would say, 'I would have given you X amount and now I'll give you Z.'"

While Messer appears to have momentum with his second quarter FEC report, Murphy has received the top endorsement of the third quarter thus far when former Lt. Gov. John Mutz announced his support.

Burton will raise his profile in the coming weeks, hosting a town hall at Peru High School at 2 p.m. Aug. 27 and another one at 2 p.m. Sept. 18 at IUK's Kresge Auditorium. "Certainly he wants to see some reforms take place, but he thinks the program the administration has put forward would lead to a government-run program that will change the competitive market among private insurers," Burton spokesman Matthew Prine told the Kokomo Tribune.

Burton will remain in command of his political future unless the challenger field narrows between now and the February filing deadline. Mutz told CQ a narrowed field "is likely, once we start getting some opinion polls that



begin to show some distance between the candidates."

**Horse Race Status:** Leans Burton

## 8th CD: No credible GOP challenger

Thus far political novice Dan Stockton is the only announced candidate weighing a challenge to U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth, D-Evansville. He reported raising \$350 in the second quarter FEC report and had under \$50 cash on hand. He is not seen as a credible challenger so far.

Former Congressman Hostetler doesn't appear to be weighing a comeback. "I would never count John out of anything, but I haven't heard of any inclination," said Vanderburgh County Republican Chairman Nicholas Hermann.

Hermann said upper tier candidates like sheriffs, prosecutors and county commissioners appear to be awaiting new district lines. "You have people waiting for after redistricting," Hermann said. "We've gone through big Democratic swing years. People want to see that swing back. That's what I think people are waiting for. They think it will swing back Republican." **Horse Race Status:** Safe Ellsworth

## 9th CD: Sodrel will finish book first

After losing to Rep. Hill in 2002, claiming the 9th CD in the presidential year of 2004, then losing to Hill again in 2006 by 110,454 to 100,469 (Libertarian Eric Schansberg polled 9,893), the Democrat was able to hang on to the seat in 2009 with a 61,000 vote plurality. Many believed that Sodrel was headed to the dustbin of Hoosier congressional politics.

Not so fast, the trucking executive told HPI. "What I've told everybody was that I wasn't prepared to tell them I wouldn't seek the nomination, but I'm not prepared to tell them I will," Sodrel said on Tuesday.

Sodrel is writing a book entitled "Citizen Sheep: Government Shepherds" where the New Albany Republican will define for the common man what it means to be a capitalist, socialist, or communist. "People just don't understand the various terms," Sodrel said. "It's tough. I'm used to writing 750 word op-ed pieces. I don't want this to be long. I want it to be simple: short sentences; short paragraphs. It will be something for regular people."

Sodrel hopes to have his part of the project done in the next 30 days. Then he will take the temperature of the

9th CD. Hill, one of the leaders of the Blue Dog Democrats, has found himself in the vortex of pieces of Obama legislation such as health care reform and cap-and-trade. He was the lone Hoosier Blue Dog to vote for cap-and-trade.

Thus far, only Paoli attorney Todd Young and Travis Hankins of Columbus have entered the race. But several GOP sources tell HPI that Young is not a good fit for the district. There are still wounds from last March when 9th CD Republican Chairwoman Erin Houchin upset former Chair Larry Shickles, who was endorsed by Sodrel.

Other potential candidates weighing a run include Floyd County Prosecutor Keith Henderson and Republican National Committeewoman DeeDee Benkie of Versailles. Benkie told HPI, "Nothing can even be considered really until Mike Sodrel decides what he is going to do. If he runs in the primary, he will be the nominee."

Sodrel said that he follows Ronald Reagan's 11th Commandment and will not comment on the current Republican primary field.

Asked about Rep. Hill's conspicuous role in the health care debate, Sodrel chuckled. "It's amazing - his refusal to hold town hall meetings," Sodrel said, calling it a "duck and dodge."

"One of my first town halls was Monroe County in Bloomington. For a conservative, that's an interesting place," Sodrel said. "I find that people, if you are respectful of them, are respectful of you, if you set the tone."

As for his stance on health care, Sodrel explained, "I think national health care or socialized medicine is an exceptionally bad idea. There are a lot of things we should have done to make access to health care insurance easier and bring down the cost."

He mentioned allowing small businesses to band together across state lines where they would enjoy the same buying power of "big business and big labor." He also said that small businesses should be allowed to buy insurance with "pre-tax dollars instead of after-tax dollars."

"We can level the playing field, but I think we need to look at this thoughtfully and do it a piece at a time," Sodrel said. "They are trying to eat that elephant all at once."

Sodrel's time frame for his next political move will come after the book is finished, "This is something I've got to get done first. Sometime in the fall," he said. **Horse**

**Race Status:** Tossup ❖



**U.S. Rep. Baron Hill on Capitol Hill with Sen. Evan Bayh, U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth, and U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly. At this point, Hill faces the potentially toughest race in 2010 if former congressman Mike Sodrel challenges him for a fifth time. (HPI Photo by Mark Schoeff Jr.)**



## Bayh will ‘evaluate’ modified card check as EFA presses

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The pro-business Economic Freedom Alliance is pressing U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh for his stance on the Employee Free Choice Act.

And the senator’s response? The current legislation is being modified and “Sen. Bayh will evaluate it when there is something to analyze,” said Brian Weiss, Bayh’s spokesman.



In a press release issued Wednesday, the group explained, “Last week, Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania announced

that he will switch his vote and support the advancement of the Employee Free Choice Act (S.560) in the Senate. As the important 60th vote, Specter’s announcement makes it even more critical that Sen. Evan Bayh forcefully and publicly withdraw his support of this dangerous measure.”

The EFA added, “Since the DoNotLetEvanBayhKill-Jobs.com billboards and radio commercials appeared, responses from Sen. Bayh have been vague and misleading. Sen. Bayh owes Hoosiers an honest and clear answer.”

The group cited several examples of Bayh responses on the issue since the Aug. 3 launch of the billboard campaign. It disputed what it said was a Bayh response that S.560 was dead. “All provisions of S.560 are currently alive,” the EFA said. Bayh’s staff responded, “Strangely, they provide documentation that contradicts their assertion that all provisions of the bill are currently alive,” noting a July 17 New York Times story.

In that New York Times story by Steven Greenhouse, it was reported, “The so-called card-check provision — which senators decided to scrap to help secure a filibuster-proof 60 votes — would have required employers to recognize a union as soon as a majority of workers signed cards saying they wanted a union. Currently, employers can insist on a secret-ballot election, a higher hurdle for unions. The abandonment of card check was another example of the power of moderate Democrats to constrain their party’s more liberal legislative efforts.”

The EFA said that Bayh has stated that “out-

side companies and special interests in Washington, D.C., are driving this effort to try to scare Hoosiers.” The EFA responded, “The Economic Freedom Alliance is comprised of business organizations across the Midwest, including in Indiana. The campaign to educate Hoosiers about the job-killing effects of EFCA (S.560) is funded primarily by Hoosiers.”

According to an Internal Revenue Service 8872 report from January to June 2009, most of the contributions came from Illinois and Missouri. Bulkmatic Transport Co. of Griffith contributed \$1,000 and Anne Hathaway of Indianapolis contributed \$15,000. Karl Rove, President George W. Bush’s chief political strategist, contributed \$100,000.

The EFA alleged that a Bayh response to WNDU-TV in South Bend, reported on Aug. 13 that Sen. Bayh said he did not co-sponsor EFCA in 2007 and did not have anything to do with it. Sen. Bayh was one of 46 co-sponsors of EFCA (S.1041) in 2007. EFCA passed the House in 2007, but failed by a slim margin in the Senate (Bayh voted in favor). National reporters who saw this story contacted Sen. Bayh’s office to ask for clarification, with no response, the EFA alleged. The Bayh spokesman added, “What Sen. Bayh said was he didn’t co-sponsor the current bill.”

Weiss told HPI that, “We have no record of EFA having ever requested a meeting with our office or asking to talk directly to Sen. Bayh or staff about EFCA.”

Bayh’s office provided this statement: “This group is clearly not interested in a constructive dialogue. If they were, they wouldn’t be running inaccurate, negative attack



U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh is being pressed for a stance on card check by both pro-labor and pro-business groups. A spokesman told HPI he will evaluate a compromise on the bill. Bayh is shown here at Allison Transmission at Speedway. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)



ads funded by non-Hoosiers. They are mistaken if they think these tactics will intimidate or influence Sen. Bayh. They are also ill-informed. Anyone who has been following the EFCA issue even casually knows that compromise discussions are under way and that the original proposal will be modified. Sen. Bayh will evaluate it when there is something to analyze. He did not co-sponsor EFCA this year because, although he supports meaningful labor law reform, he felt changes needed to be made."

### **Stutzman presses Bayh during tour**

State Sen. Marlin Stutzman called on Sen. Bayh to take stances on key issues. "Since Sen. Bayh is usually considered a 'swing vote' it should mean that he has some leadership and influence on the decisions made in Washington," Stutzman, R-Howe, said in a statement today. However, Stutzman does not believe that Sen. Bayh is utilizing his influence to serve the best interest of Hoosiers. "It's not an act of leadership to avoid listening or holding town hall meetings with your constituents, while making trips in and out of Indiana on Airforce 1 with the President," Stutzman added. "He needs to listen to the people who elected him. That's what we are doing in our campaign."

Undaunted by the \$12 million dollars in Bayh's bank account, Sen. Stutzman pointed out that more than two-thirds of Bayh's money comes from special interest lobbying groups and out of state sources; not invested Hoosier voters. As Stutzman says in his meetings all over the state, "This is a voter-funded, people-led campaign. It is dedicated to Hoosier values and the common ideals we all hold dear - fiscal responsibility, political accountability, and individual freedom."

### **Voorhies to challenge Rep. Hinkle**

Brett Voorhies will kick off his HD92 campaign Saturday at Leonard Park on 15th Street in Speedway. The seat is currently held by State Rep. Phil Hinkle. Voorhies is a long-time community, political and labor activist.

Hinkle defeated Democrat Stephanie DeKemper 15,907 to 12,957 in 2008. In 2006, Hinkle topped Democrat Robin Olds 9,836 to 6,890.

### **Murphy unveils ag plank**

Joining hundreds of farmers on Farmer's Day at Indiana's State Fair, State Rep. Mike Murphy released his federal agriculture policy plan Wednesday, the first part of the "Murphy Plan" — a policy road map based on his leadership, experience, and results in the Indiana legislature.

"Because agriculture has and will continue to be integral to the success of Indiana's economy, I found it only fitting that I lead with it as the first part of the Murphy Plan," Murphy said. "Protecting and improving something as important as Indiana's agriculture industry requires the knowledge, experience, and vision to drive policy in Washington. I believe that I am uniquely positioned to offer the necessary leadership to help stand up for Hoosier farms and small businesses."

Murphy has served on the Agriculture Committee in the House and as a voting member of the Indiana Farm Bureau. Major legislative achievements on agriculture issues include writing a law that eliminated estate taxes in Indiana for estates of \$100,000 or less. Murphy also voted to expand the sales tax allowance on E85 gas sales in order to encourage station owners to offer E85 and grow the market for Indiana corn. In addition, Murphy introduced legislation to free farm equipment from Indiana's personal property tax.

"Like any business, all of agribusiness requires a stable and predictable regulatory environment through which to operate," Murphy said. "As a legislator, I have fought against stifling regulation to encourage investment and help create jobs. I have also used my leadership to alleviate the tax burden for farmers and their families. My Murphy Plan takes the first step to explain to voters how I will leverage my experience on these issues in Washington to get real results."

For a free copy of the Murphy Plan, email [info@mikemurphycongress.com](mailto:info@mikemurphycongress.com).

### **Young town hall tonight**

Ninth CD Republican candidate Todd Young hosts the first in a series of town hall forums at 6:30 p.m. tonight at the Jasper Inn, 951 Wernsing Road, in Jasper. ❖



State Sen. Marlin Stutzman is calling on Sen. Bayh to take a stance on key issues. According to the Hoosiers for Stutzman campaign, the Republican U.S. Senate campaign has logged 6,230 miles this summer trying to build support for his campaign. Stutzman is shown during an interview with WFRN-FM. (Stutzman campaign photo)



## The unborn Obama

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - You will not read this in the New York Times, the Washington Post or the Chicago Tribune. Nor will you hear the proof for it on NBC, CBS or ABC. The mainstream media won't touch it.

But talk radio and blog presentations by the birthers - folks claiming that Obama isn't a natural-born U.S. citizen and thus isn't eligible to be president - provide arguments leading to a startling conclusion: Barack Obama was not born.

First, the birthers provided their proof that Obama was not born in Hawaii.

Too many questions, they say, and no original birth certificate in the form they demand has been provided to them. Sure, there's a copy of an official certificate. Sure, Hawaiian authorities repeatedly attest to its authenticity. But birthers know you can't trust officials.

Sure, there are newspaper accounts from hospital records at the time telling of Obama's birth there. But birthers know you can't trust newspapers. Those papers could have been involved in a conspiracy

even then to perpetuate a fraud on the American people and propel Obama to an illegitimate presidency. Maybe they picked him when cries as a baby showed he could become a loud campaign orator.

Second, since the birthers are sure that Obama was born in Kenya, they recently displayed proof of that on web sites.

There it was! A Kenyan birth certificate for Barack Hussein Obama. And not like the Hawaiian certificate in terms of questionability. A birther researcher named Orly Taitz, involved in a federal court challenge to Obama's citizenship and occupancy of the White House, filed a copy of the Kenyan proof in court.

**Alas, it proved to be a fake.** Apparently it was created by doctoring a certificate for an Australian named David Bomford. Some other Kenyan certificates also were found to be fake. So, since all the Kenyan searches have turned up no proof, we can conclude also that Obama wasn't born in Kenya.

If he wasn't born in Hawaii and wasn't born in Kenya, where was he born?

With both of the cited sites for birth being disproved, the answer is the inescapable:

Barack Obama was not born.  
Not on this planet.

We can go back to the research of the Weekly World News to find more. This publication isn't at all like the New York Times, the Washington Post or the Chicago Tribune. So, it can be believed.

The Weekly World News, once found in leading supermarkets, still is on-line and continuing to present revelations about aliens from other planets infiltrating government and doing evil.

**This widely read publication** reported in 1994 that a dozen U.S. senators were aliens from other planets.

Some admitted it. Sure, the mainstream media claimed the senators were responding only tongue-in-cheek, just joking. But, remember, this was the claim of the mainstream media.

Could Obama have joined the Alien Caucus in the Senate?

Scoff if you will at radio talkers like G. Gordon Liddy, at the birthers and at the Weekly World News. They all, however, report things you never hear about in the cover-it-up media.

The Weekly World News recently reported that Megan Fox is a man, born Mitchell Reed Fox. See, it pays to get the real birth certificate. Weren't you suspicious that Megan was a man?

And it has reported that Abraham Lincoln was a woman. Weren't you always suspicious about Honest Abe?

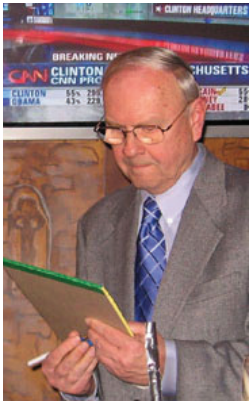
Who can forget the Weekly World News exclusives about Elvis faking his death? There were photos to prove that he lived on. As did John F. Kennedy. Now there's a question about whether Michael Jackson, just like Elvis, faked death.

**Then there was the** story of the woman in a fur coat. The animals came alive again and ate her.

Terrible.

Anything's possible. So, could it be that the birthers are only half right? Right that Obama wasn't born in Hawaii? But wrong, since their proof was fake, about Kenya? If so, there is a conclusion so logical that it could become a hot topic on some of those blogs and talk shows: Barack Obama was not born.

Remember, if this becomes part of the court suit, you read it here first. ❖



Could some of these senators be aliens from another planet? Weekly World News thinks so.





## Remedy for reality? Have some happy news!

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - The elderly woman sat before me nervously straightening the seams of her dark grey stockings. "Miss Wonderley," I said, "we've met before."

"No," she said in a voice I had to strain to hear.

"I'm just out of the joint; been there for more than sixty years."

"I know you," I said.

"No one knows me," she responded. "After all, I'm only the alias of a fictional murderess."

I didn't know what to say, so I waited. Soon she said, "I need a job. Back when I went up the river all I could do was lure susceptible men to help me find the Maltese Falcon. From reading today's

papers, that won't cut it in the job market. Then too, my age makes it tough to get a job. I've held my figure on jail-house food, but all that bleach in the laundry doesn't leave a girl with an Ivory-smooth complexion."

"You're in luck," I said. "The Happy News Network (HNN) just called and they want a mature, female anchor for their prime time revitalization of "All Good News, All Day, Every Day."

"An anchor?" she asked. "You think I should be a dead weight?"

"Not at all," I said.

"The TV anchor is the person on a news broadcast whose presence gives personality and continuity to the program. A pleasant smile, a willingness to laugh at anything said by a member of your team, and a lightning fast ability to switch from tragic to trivial are the essentials for employment."

"I could do that with a little practice," she said brightening.

"**Oh, no practice required,**" I said. "The less you understand what's going in the world, the better you are suited to the job. Experience, legitimate knowledge, and true compassion are detriments as proven by numerous communication consultants. Why today, no one would hire Walter Cronkite."

"Walter who?" she asked.

"Never mind," I said. "Let's consider how you would deal with a widely used economic indicator. Every month we get unemployment data for each county in the nation. How would you handle it for HNN?"

Miss Wonderley spent a long time in thought. "I'd want to know about people who kept their jobs in the worst places. I'd emphasize how many counties were experiencing little change in their unemployment rates. I'd report every local and state press release on the potential possibility of more jobs in the next five years."

"Good, go on," I said.

"**I'd interview corporate** and government executives," she said. "They would describe how they save jobs and continue to provide products and services, while slashing budgets. We'd call that segment 'Magic by Management' and play 'How Great Thou Art' as musical background. It should ensure us continuing corporate support."

"Very imaginative," I said, "but that is already being done on public and commercial TV all across the nation. HNN would need more... more joy, more triumph, more giddiness."

Miss Wonderley looked at her knarled hands. "It might be embarrassing," she said in her dour voice, "but we could focus on people who haven't been hurt by the current economic trauma, people who didn't need to pull back on spending, who don't understand that others are in peril because of health care costs, who don't acknowledge that pensions have been cut sharply and dreams destroyed by the irresponsible behaviors of many who should have known better."

"There are, I imagine," she said, "many such people out there."

"**Precisely,**" I said, "trash the trauma, repress the recession, hype the happy."

"Wouldn't that be contrary to standard journalistic sensationalism?" she asked.

"Not the concern of HNN," I replied. "They want ratings, not analysis. I'll call them and see if we can get you an audition."

"Thank you," she said. "There is redemption for repentant sinners." ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, speaker, and writer formerly with IU's Kelley School of Business.**



Morton Marcus  
Column



The administration of President Bill Clinton once tried to shut out bad news in favor of happy news.



**Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette:**

Sometimes you just want to shake your head and wonder what's in the water. That could be the intro to musings about lots of things, from parents who force their over-sexualized 5-year-old daughters into beauty contests to Gov. Mark Sanford. But today I'm thinking about those folks who help their kids with the homework, make a casserole for the lonely old lady across the street, run their daily two miles, phone a parent in another state or a kid in college, trim the grass that keeps growing onto the sidewalk, buy a just-because card for their sweetie, think deeply about how to cut household expenses ... and still have time to scream at members of Congress for not making President Obama's citizenship Priority One. For those of you who actually have a life (see above) and may not have heard the echoes from the whack-a-doo chorus, here's the short version: A rumor from the 2008 campaign persists: Obama was born in Kenya, not Hawaii, and therefore is ineligible to serve as president because the Constitution requires presidents to be natural-born citizens. A copy of the Hawaiian birth certificate doesn't convince the "birthers," as they have come to be known. Statements by the director of the state's health department that she has seen and verified the birth certificate don't quiet them. Court cases to the contrary don't resolve it for them. A unanimous vote in the House last week congratulating Hawaii on 50 years of statehood and containing the sentence that Obama was born there is irrelevant to them. Birthers, aided by pundits such as Lou Dobbs, simply will not believe any document, statement or fact. They are convinced that Obama is an African by birth and thus constitutionally barred from the Oval Office. They are sure that any evidence to the contrary is concocted. Conspiracy theorists will always be with us, and sometimes there are reasonable assumptions – even facts – that support the theory. But not in this case. ❖

**Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana:**

Tony Bennett would be a good short-order cook in a diner. He doesn't mind breaking eggs to make his Denver omeletes. Bennett, Indiana's superintendent of public instruction, is aggressively working to improve the quality of education in the state. That's clearly bucking state tradition, which is earning him a backlash from special interest groups. But wait until you hear how far he's willing to go to bring about change for the sake of the students. The state might have to look at the collective bargaining structure for teachers in order to provide quality education with limited state funds. "That's a sacred cow, but they do make the best hamburgers," Bennett said with a twinkle in his eye. Here's how that might come into play: In Indiana, local property taxes

pay for school facilities, while the state pays for schools' operating costs. The state isn't likely to simply raise taxes the way school districts have done in the past to pass along increased labor costs. That needs to be put in perspective. Bennett's ultimate goal isn't to break the back of teacher unions; it's to improve the quality of education in Indiana. He points, for example, to his insistence that school districts start keeping students in school the full day if they expect that day to count toward the minimum of 180 days students must attend school. In Europe, the school year typically is 195 days. Add those additional 15 days a year together over the 12-year school career, and Hoosier students lose the equivalent of an entire year of education compared to their European counterparts. In a global marketplace, this is a statistic worth remembering. Why should Hoosiers be handicapped even before they graduate



from high school? Bennett, like me, believes school boards aren't effective enough in bringing about improved student performance. "They don't focus on student achievement," he said. "They should be focused on setting policy to focus on student achievement" and not on which coaches to hire and similar details. ❖

**Rich James, Post-Tribune:**

Have you ever wondered why: Why every other commercial on television is for a drug to help you live longer, breathe better, have fewer aches and pains or give new meaning to sex? Have you wondered who pays for those commercials? Here's a hint. Pharmaceutical companies is the wrong answer. Some of the slugs protesting (let's say yelling and being obnoxious to be more accurate) at public forums rail against government involvement in health care and in the same breath threaten people with death or worse if someone messes with their Medicare? Those with health insurance don't seem to have any compassion for those who don't have it? Fox News is so irresponsible that it perpetuates Sarah Palin's lie that President Obama's health care bill constitutes a "death panel" for the elderly? Some people seemingly don't have a problem with an insurance company executive deciding what test or treatment they will pay for -- all in the name of their profit, not your health? Those who rant and rave at the public forums refuse to debate? Could it be because they can't think for themselves? Or because they are pawns for right-wing radicals? Conservatives think it would be bad for the insurance industry to compete against a public option? Could it mean less money for members of Congress because the insurance companies would have to cut their billion-dollar profit margins in order to compete? The medical care the government provides for our service veterans is not considered socialized medicine? ❖



## Biker governor eyes Harley-Davidson plant

SOUTH BEND - As if on cue, the severe thunderstorm that swept through the city Wednesday evening arrived just in time for Gov. Mitch Daniels' address to members of the Summit Club on the state's efforts to weather the current economic crisis (Blasko, South Bend Tribune). Daniels appeared at the club, located at the top of Chase Tower, as part of the club's "Economic Overview Speaker Series."

In pleated slacks and a button-down, blue oxford — and apologies for violating the jacket-and-tie dress code — the two-term governor delivered a speech titled "Fighting the Recession to Win." With many states struggling with huge debt, Daniels heralded Indiana's more than \$1 billion budget surplus, a sign of financial stability, he said, for businesses looking to invest in the state. The surplus, he said, was accumulated by cutting per capita spending — without sacrificing service — and without raising taxes. In fact, he said, Indiana is one of only a handful of states that has not either raised or proposed raising taxes since the beginning of the recession. Because of these and other business-friendly policies, Daniels said, the state has continued to attract outside investment and create jobs at a time when other states are struggling with



both. As an example, Daniels pointed to Dometic LLC, an international manufacturer of RV accessories that announced earlier this month it would move certain operations from Sweden and Mexico to Elkhart and LaGrange, creating an estimated 350 combined jobs by 2012. He also mentioned meeting with a site-selection group from Harley-Davidson earlier in the day about possibly relocating a plant from Pennsylvania to Rushville, Ind. He said the company is attracted to the state because of its good investment climate. "Part of what we're doing to fight the recession," Daniels said, "is accenting the advantages of Indiana. If you're having trouble, we know of places where you can succeed."

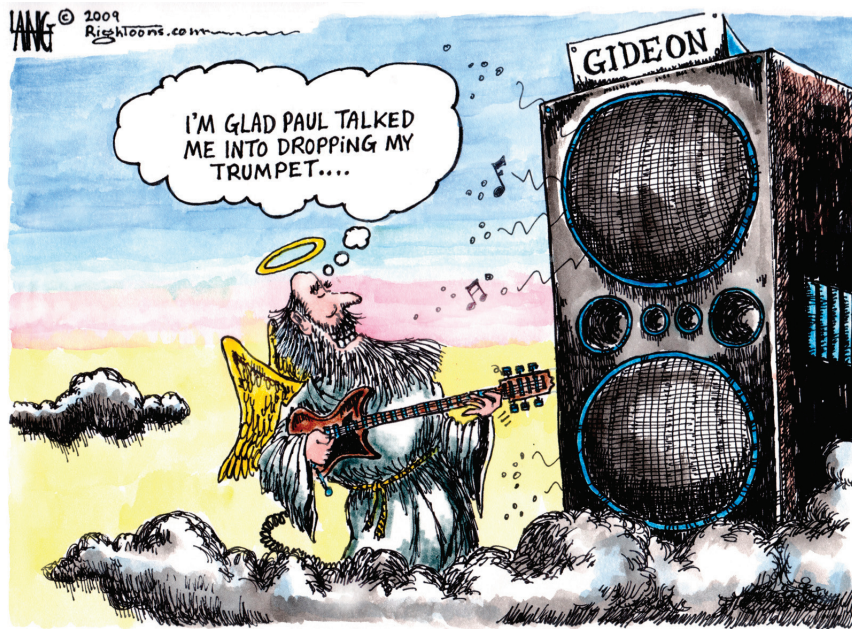
from PricewaterhouseCoopers' Health Research Institute, 42 percent of employers surveyed said they would increase the share of the premium their workers pay in 2010. That's up from 38 percent last year.

## Rokita pushes transit referendum

INDIANAPOLIS - Follow the law. That's the simple message Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita had Wednesday for Lake County officials battling over whether to hold and how to pay for a November transit referendum (Times of Northwest Indiana). "This referendum is ordered by state law to take place in these four counties. The date of the referendum is set by law, too. So, in the opinion

of the chief election official, the only task for the County Board of Elections and registration to perform is to follow state law," Rokita spokesman Jim Gavin said. Rokita is head of the state's election division. The Lake County Council has refused to pay the estimated \$414,000 cost of the referendum determining whether a regional transit authority is created in Northwest Indiana. Voters in Porter, LaPorte and St. Joseph coun-

ties also are set to participate in the referendum. In Lake County, officials are preparing for an expected lawsuit from the state ordering the election to be held. But Gavin said Lake County officials might want to look closer to home for the source of a potential lawsuit. "Any of the voters have the right to make the officials perform their duties by bringing an action in



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## Health insurance rates expected to rise 42%

INDIANAPOLIS - American workers and employers soon will find themselves faced with another hefty increase in the price they pay for health insurance (Lee, Indianapolis Star). According to a new report



court to mandate that officials follow state law," Gavin said. "It doesn't take action by government for this to occur. It could take one voter."

## **ABC/WP Poll shows Afghan war erosion**

WASHINGTON - A majority of Americans now see the war in Afghanistan as not worth fighting and just a quarter say more U.S. troops should be sent to the country, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. When it comes to the baseline question, 42 percent of Americans say the U.S. is winning in Afghanistan; about as many, 36 percent, say it is losing the fight. The new poll comes amid widespread speculation that the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, will request more troops for his stepped-up effort to root the Taliban from Afghan towns and villages. That is a position that gets the backing of 24 percent of those polled, while nearly twice as many, 45 percent, want to decrease the number of military forces there. In January, before President Obama authorized sending an additional 17,000 troops to the country, public sentiment tilted more strongly toward a troop increase. Overall, seven in 10 Democrats say the war has not been worth its costs, and fewer than one in five support an increase in troop levels. Among moderate and conservative Democrats, a slim majority say the United States is losing in Afghanistan. Republicans (70 percent say it is worth fighting) and conservatives (58 percent) remain the war's strongest backers, and the issue provides a rare point of GOP support for Obama's policies.

## **Obama prepares to end cash for clunkers**

WASHINGTON - The Obama administration is developing plans to wind down the popular Cash for

Clunkers program and could announce by Friday when the incentives will no longer be available (Associated Press).

## **300 jobs coming to Fleetwood at Decatur**

DECATUR - An unexpectedly strong market and a smoother-than-expected transition have Fleetwood RV Inc. saying it likely will add 300 workers to its Decatur operations in the next three months (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). The company also plans to invest \$7.4 million in its facilities, company and state officials announced Wednesday.

## **85 jobs coming to Peru**

PERU - A newly created Miami County manufacturing business hopes to create 85 jobs during the next two years (Kokomo Tribune). The Miami County Council Tuesday passed through the first reading an ordinance to provide up to \$150,000 in incentives over the next five years to support Riverside Travel Trailers.

## **Indiana one of 3 states seeking Harley plant**

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana is trying to edge out Kentucky and Tennessee and land a Harley-Davidson motorcycle assembly plant that could employ at least 1,000 workers (Indianapolis Star). Economic development leaders in Indiana have met with executives of the motorcycle company and touted the state's pro-business tax climate, a state official confirmed Wednesday. Harley-Davidson, based in Milwaukee, has told Pennsylvania union officials that it has begun to study the future for its aged production complex at York, Pa. Harley-Davidson officials appear to be interested in Indiana sites that include property in Shelby County northwest of Shelbyville along I-74, said an Indiana businessman familiar with the state's economic development activities.

## **Teddy pushes succession change**

HYANNISPORT - A cancer-stricken Sen. Edward M. Kennedy has written a poignant letter to Massachusetts leaders asking that they change state law to allow a speedy replacement of him in Congress (Associated Press). The note to Gov. Deval Patrick and the state's Senate president and House speaker acknowledges the state changed its succession law in 2004 to require a special election to fill any vacancy. At the time, legislative Democrats were concerned Republican Gov. Mitt Romney would be able to fill any vacancy created as Sen. John Kerry ran for president. But Kennedy writes "it is vital for this commonwealth to have two voices speaking for the needs of its citizens and two votes in the Senate."

## **Prison chief takes blame for breakout**

MICHIGAN CITY - The superintendent of the Indiana State Prison says he takes responsibility for staff shortcomings that contributed to three inmates' escape last month (Associated Press). Superintendent Mark Levenhagen told lawmakers from LaPorte and Michigan City Tuesday that the inmates escaped because a handful of staff failed to follow proper procedure. He says that's his responsibility. Three prison guards have been suspended for failing to properly supervise inmates Lance Battreal, Mark Booher and Charles Smith. The men escaped through underground utility tunnels July 12 but were later recaptured. Levenhagen and Department of Correction Commissioner Edwin Buss say the prison will invest in technology to help secure the tunnels. A report on the escape is expected this month.