



A courage vote; withering response

Hoosier Blue Dogs help health care pass; GOP challengers pounce, ads run

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - When the "aye" lights lit up next to the names of Baron Hill, Brad Ellsworth and Joe Donnelly in the U.S. House late Saturday night, the die was cast for what will likely be the critical issue of the 2010 election cycle: health care.

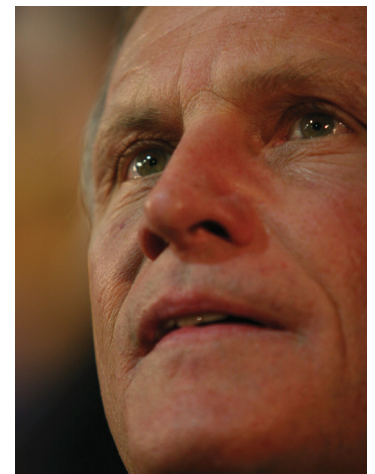
The Republican onslaught was withering.

State Rep. Jackie Walorski, who is preparing to challenge U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, called it "the most disastrous vote I have ever seen at the national level."

Todd Young, the Bloomington Republican taking aim at U.S. Rep. Baron Hill, questioned the incumbent's sincerity. "Baron Hill has done it again. The congressman who puts on a convincing act pretending to care about the well-being of his constituents has voted to give Hoosiers' health care decisions over to Uncle Sam. The bill that passed this weekend with Congressman Hill's unwavering support raises taxes on families and small businesses, cuts Medicare for seniors, and busts the budget to the tune of a trillion dollars."



U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly and fellow Blue Dog Baron Hill helped supply the critical margin as the health reforms passed 220-215. (HPI Photos by A.Walker Shaw)



And in the 8th CD, Dr. Larry Buschon who will challenge U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth, was a little more tempered, saying, "While I would agree that our current system needs reform, the plan currently before

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A watershed week

By **DAVID M. McINTOSH**

WASHINGTON - Last week was a watershed moment for the Obama administration and Congress - Republicans won the off-year elections, unemployment topped 10 percent and despite the tea parties, the House narrowly passed the President's health care bill.



Historically off-year elections serve as a referendum on the policies of the party in power in Washington. This month's elections were no different. Wisdom would counsel both Democrats and Republicans to examine the results and look for valuable lessons about the



"I was so focused on making sure that we were legal that I probably didn't pay as close attention as I should on, quote, appearances."

- U.S. REP. STEVE BUYER,
to CBS News on his foundation



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types of policies that would best serve the American people.

The Virginia and New Jersey gubernatorial races, along with the Maine ballot referendum upholding traditional marriage, show that the voters in "blue" states rejected radical liberal policies in favor of limited government, fiscal restraint, and moral conservatism. The same swing voters, Independents and moderates from both parties who elected President Obama, used the election to express their displeasure with his policies, choosing Republicans over Democrats. These swing voters are increasingly dissatisfied with massive government bailouts, huge deficits, government controlled health care, and anti-business legislation like card check, all of which undermined economic growth. They sent a signal to Democrats who control the House, Senate and White House that these policies are leading the country in the wrong direction.

The Labor Department announced on Friday that unemployment topped 10 percent, reaching a 25-year high. Polls show consistently throughout the year that the number one priority for most Americans is economic recovery, the change they hope for is a strong economy that will create jobs.

The very next day Speaker Pelosi made it clear she wasn't listening. In a rare Saturday session, she and President Obama spent the day twisting arms and making deals with reluctant House members to pass a massive government takeover of the American health care system.

Lost in all the hoopla is the startling fact that the bill ends up costing more Americans their jobs. Buried in 2,000 pages of health care legislation are \$135 billion new taxes on employment, up to an 8 percent surcharge if an employer (even a small company) fails to provide premium health insurance; a 28 percent increase in marginal income tax rates, hundred-dollar-per-day per worker fines if the government doesn't sign

off on the company health insurance. Yet another blow to American manufacturing jobs. Ironically, candidate Obama chastised his opponents last year for even hinting at taxing health insurance, or imposing mandates, or cutting Medicare. But now he is pushing health care bills that do all that and more.

The American people realize how detrimental a government-run system of health care would be. Only 29 percent in a Gallup poll would tell their Congressman to vote for the Pelosi bill. More Americans said they would tell their Congressmen to vote "no." They know how dangerous and reckless it would be to spend over a trillion dollars on a health care plan.

Some of the hardest hit are senior citizens. They don't quite believe the AARP flier that soothingly conjures up memories of Judy Garland with a message that seems to say, "Pay no attention to \$505 billion cuts in Medicare behind the curtain. The magical President of Oz will take care of everything."

Since virtually all the power in Washington rests in the hands of Democratic office holders, the key to restoring sanity is held by the moderates, the so called "Blue Dog" Democrats. They deserve credit for pulling back Speaker Pelosi from the brink of paying for abortions in the health care bill and restoring a decades-long, bipartisan consensus to prohibit taxpayer funding. But then many of the same moderates caved in to pressure and gave the Speaker the votes she needed to pass the health care with the tax increases, the government option, and the cuts in Medicare.

When the Blue Dog Democrats can't sway their leadership, then the job falls to the minority Republicans to spell out an alternative path. On the whole, Congressional Republicans have stuck to their principles of limited government and pro-growth economic policies. Tuesday's election had a lesson for them too. Up in New York a small group of party bosses



(and folks like Newt Gingrich) tried out a new political strategy that has become popular at Washington dinner parties: Republicans should try being like Democrats.

The election results showed just how much a disaster that new approach is. Both rank and file voters and conservative activists rejected it. They almost elected a third-party candidate instead. Lesson learned – this strategy will only lead to more electoral defeats for Republicans.

There is a void the American people thirst to have filled. It is one of consistent, steady leadership. It is one where politicians understand our Constitution. They know that its framework of limited government is the best way to protect freedom and to restore hope and opportu-

nity for all Americans. Both parties can listen to the will of the people, rather than believe that Washington knows best. If Republicans stick to these principles, they will have an opportunity to regain the trust of the American people and to show leadership even from the minority. On the other hand, if Democrats choose to exercise power but ignore public opinion, the door will be open for the Republican Party to reclaim the majority and implement the policies Americans desire. ❖

David M. McIntosh served in the United States House of Representatives from 1994-2001 from Muncie. His column appears monthly in HPI.

Health vote, from page 1

Congress is not the answer. The current plan does little to control cost, leads to soaring federal deficits, and results in turning one-sixth of our already struggling economy over to Washington bureaucrats."

The dilemma facing the incumbent Democrats is that by doing nothing, they would have left themselves open to ... well, doing nothing, which is a longstanding complaint about Congress.

"The one thing we couldn't do in this country any longer is do nothing," Donnelly said Tuesday at a press conference at his downtown South Bend office and covered by the Elkhart Truth. "There would have eventually been a financial day of reckoning somewhere down the road."

Ellsworth said in a statement, "This was a difficult decision; one that I have struggled with for months. But at the most basic level, my support for this bill is based on my strong belief that we literally cannot afford to leave this challenge unaddressed. To do so would be to endorse a status quo that denies medical coverage based on preexisting conditions, leaves millions of uninsured Americans at risk, and does nothing while the cost of health care spirals out of control."

And Hill explained, "Our great nation has been debating how to responsibly reform our health care system for decades and the debate has grown increasingly important as health costs have escalated sharply - growing at nearly twice the rate of inflation, premiums rising four times faster than wages, and more than 60 percent of bankruptcies due to insurmountable medical bills. Inaction is both irresponsible and dangerous."

Former President Bill Clinton told Democratic senators to frame the issue not only as a moral one, but as an

"economic imperative." According to Politico, Clinton told the senators at their weekly luncheon, "The point I want to make is: Just pass the bill, even if it's not exactly what you want. When you try and fail, the other guys write history."

Another element here is that should the package pass, some of the elements might be felt by voters come October and November of 2010, but certainly not the thrust of the entire legislation. It's unlikely the Republican lament on the coming horrors will still be that: a prediction. That



Candidates Joe Donnelly, Brad Ellsworth and Baron Hill during their 2006 campaigns. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

places Democrats into a mode of telling voters, "We did something," while challengers will be still sounding their warnings.

The 60 Plus Association announced today a new \$1.5 million campaign against 15 targeted House Members, including Donnelly, Ellsworth and Hill. The ad will say they "did not stand up for seniors and voted with Speaker Nancy Pelosi to cut \$400 billion from Medicare on Saturday."

Through the rhetoric, the battle lines began to take shape. Walorski centered her criticism on senior citizen issues. "Senior citizens who have worked hard all of their lives, will definitely see cuts to their Medicare benefits,



including many cuts to Medicare Advantage programs," the Jimtown Republican said.

Donnelly contends seniors will see increased benefits through Medicare, according to the Elkhart Truth, and small businesses with less than \$500,000 in payroll will be under no new tax obligations.

And he said he is confident that predictions by the bill's opponents will not occur, and the reform will not result in a government takeover of the health care system, according to the Elkhart Truth. "I know that absolutely will not happen. As a result of this, companies will have even more customers."

Buschon warned, "The current plan will limit access to care, reduce the quality of care, and lead to rationing of care. It cuts close to half of a trillion dollars from Medicare, which will directly affect the care and coverage given to our seniors. The unemployment rate in this country just hit a 26-year high of 10.2%. This health care bill will put further strain on the economy by placing new taxes on small businesses and increasing taxes on individuals. This will cause further job loss and slow the economic recovery. By working with the Democrat leadership in the house, Congressman Ellsworth is facilitating the passage of the bill."

Ellsworth seemed to take the tack that voting for the bill would move it along in the process to where it will be significantly changed in the Senate - providing it can get beyond cloture - and upon passage there, further compromise would take place by conferees before it gets anywhere near President Obama's pen.

"This bill is not perfect, but no bill ever is," Ellsworth explained. "We cannot allow this historic opportunity to pass us by; it is time for us to act and move forward to ensure every American has access to quality, affordable health care once and for all."

Through the GOP challenger criticism, one thing was missing: the elusive unified vision of where they would take health care reform similar to what Newt Gingrich was



Dr. Buschon (from top), Rep. Brad Ellsworth and Fort Wayne attorney Phil Troyer.

able to fashion in 1994's "Contract with America." That's because there is none.

Young picked up on another GOP complaint: the Obama-Pelosi "spending spree."

Young, who might find himself in a primary battle with former congressman Mike Sodrel, said, "Add this to Hill's other spending sprees - including his support for the equally expensive Cap-and-Trade bill, and his support for President Obama's tripling of our national debt - and you wonder: Just what is the purpose of the debt calculator on Hill's website?"

This is another potential issue battlefield. The Democratic incumbents will be quick to note that Obama inherited a \$1.2 trillion deficit that included the \$800 billion Wall Street bailout advocated by President Bush along with Obama and Sen. John McCain in October 2008.

And this is the element fueling the Tea Party movement, which drew 500 people in Corydon last weekend and perhaps even more in Warsaw on Nov. 14. Who wins this debate - which president, Bush or Obama, is the bigger spender? - could determine who wins in 2010. In 1994, it wasn't the failed Clinton health reforms that did in Democratic Reps. Jill Long and Frank McCloskey. It was the crime bill, gun control and the abuses that come when one party runs Congress for 40 years. So while conventional wisdom has the health reforms as the GOP's silver bullet in 2010, that is sheer speculation and subject to change.

Exhibit 1 on this front is the 3rd CD. In his reaction to the House bill, U.S. Rep. Mark Souder noted with considerable outrage, "This government takeover of our health care system not only ignores the concerns of Hoosiers who voiced their opinions in letters and phone calls, at town hall meetings, and in visits to Washington, it also erodes choice, competition, and innovation, leaving us with higher taxes, increased deficits and bigger government."

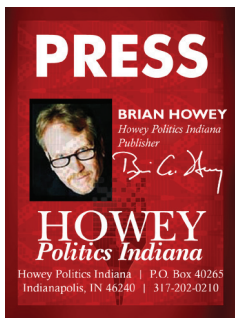
By Tuesday, Souder was taking heat on his right as Fort Wayne attorney Phil Troyer, who ran for Souder's seat in 1992, announced a primary challenge to Souder and noted the incumbent's vote for the Wall Street bailout. "He may sound like a fiscal conservative when he's back here in the district," Troyer told the Elkhart Truth. "but he votes like a big-spending liberal when he's in Washington." ❖



Taking stock in the emerging health reforms

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - I've been writing about politics and public policy since 1985 and the current health care reform sequence is the most complicated issue of my career. So what I'm attempting to do with this column is to work through the many elements that have brought us to the point where the U.S. House has passed a plan and the action now shifts to the U.S. Senate.



My own personal experiences as a father, husband and small business owner drew me to the conclusion some eight years ago that the current health care system is broken. As I've written before, I have a preexisting medical condition and found myself virtually uninsurable as a sole proprietor. A COBRA plan I was on cost

my business close to \$50,000 over a three-year period. My greatest fear is that a catastrophic illness in my family could bankrupt us.

I have many friends and family in health-related industry. I am watching a good friend battling a rare and serious form of brain cancer (glioblastoma) and have a front row seat to this personal crisis. His significant other is a nurse in the VA system. One good friend is a retired insurer. Another runs a Fort Wayne nursing home; his wife works in hospice care. One is an emergency room nurse in Martinsville. His wife works for a medical device maker. Another is a radiologist. My brother-in-law works for St. Vincent. I have talked extensively with my family physician and my dermatologist. At least half of these people are Republicans or lean that way. All agree: The system is broken.

Shortly after I began writing my political column, I watched President Reagan and HHS Secretary Doc Bowen achieve limited health reforms that were quickly undone by the special interests during the first Bush presidency. I watched the Clintons try and fail to overhaul the system. And I witnessed the resulting 1994 Republican takeover of Congress.

Beginning in 2007 and extending through 2008, I witnessed a most remarkable political revolution take shape through the presidential candidacy of Barack Obama. I covered close to 20 of the 49 campaign events he had in Indiana and two as president. At every one, Obama described the need to reform health care. As president, he has kept his promise to reform the system.

So it is at this point in history that I see perhaps

the best chance in my lifetime to create a 21st Century health care system. This is the hand we've been dealt and it comes in the most extraordinary set of circumstances - Wall Street meltdown, auto collapse, energy crisis and the Great Recession of 2009 - that took shape over the previous eight to 16 years during the Clinton and second Bush presidencies.

Certainly, the bill that passed the House last Saturday night is deeply flawed. I fear that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid made a bad choice to embrace the "public option" that may very well be politically untenable.

I listened to Sen. Dick Lugar urge "incremental" reforms during this economic crisis and weighed that against the other historic opportunities that brought us Social Security and Medicare which also occurred during times of national duress and crisis.

I thought U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly summed it up appropriately in South Bend on Tuesday: The United States is a rich country and yet so many go without affordable health care. "That is not what this country should be about," he said. "Health care is a basic human right."

I also listened to Gov. Mitch Daniels on C-SPAN last Sunday, calling the House plan "ruinously expensive." Asked for his solution, Daniels explained, "You would give the tax break instead of corporations and institutions, you would give it directly to the American people and then free up competition for them to shop and buy for themselves and control it themselves."

Asked about covering the uninsured, Daniels said, "In our state government, half the employees have consumerized health care. It's a personal account that they manage and if they should run through it, they would be covered beyond that. They have complete peace of mind. I really hope national policy would head in this direction instead of further down the trail of the problems that brought this to pass in America. We have a health care system that pays doctors and providers not how well they do, just how much they do. We make people feel health care is free at the first dollar, so we tend to over consume. We put a lot of defensive medicine in the system with a real ridiculous malpractice system."

All good points.

After listening to Daniels, I wish he were either in the White House or the U.S. Senate where he could help craft a wise compromise.

It just fuels the other perspective I've come to: the Congressional Republicans ducked this historic opportunity.

They came to an early political calculation to defeat any reforms that President Obama sought, as opposed to gathering up their wise men and women who have studied and worked on this problem - Newt Gingrich, Mitt Romney, Tommy Thompson, Bill Frist come to mind - and presenting a coherent alternative to the efforts of Obama, Chairman



Baucus and Speaker Pelosi. They could have barnstormed the country and earned a seat at Obama's table to craft a compromise. Their political calculation has shut them out of the debate at the time we need their wise people the most.

I just cringe when I hear Rep. Eric Canter, speaking to a rally with posters comparing President Obama to Adolf Hitler, say, "We will make sure not one Republican will vote for this bill."

This shouldn't have been a rank and file, party line vote or effort.

I listen to them talk about taxing and spending and wonder where these voices were on the trillion dollar Iraq war that was kept off the books.

I read and listened to the Indiana Republicans criticize the House bill. Rep. Mike Pence explained, "The Democrat health care plan targets us when we are most vulnerable. Illness, our own, or more importantly the illness of a parent, or a spouse, or a child, has the capacity to suspend our priorities. What was important before the crisis grows dim in the harsh light of disease affecting a loved one. The result: little by little, in the midst of family crises, we yield our freedoms and our resources to the ever-growing appetite of the federal government. But if liberal Democrats think this is what our nation wants, they don't know the America I know."

Given the conduct of these Republicans between 2001-07 when the party controlled the White House and Congress and warned that "the smoking gun" would likely be a "a mushroom cloud" with regard to Iraq, I'm troubled by their reduced credibility and fear mongering with all the equally dire warnings today. What about our family resources? Economic and personal tragedies unfold each day for countless American families, some with and some without insurance, who are battling an illness. The status quo is already targeting us every day. The status quo shouldn't be an option at this point in history.

The limp House Republican bill that finally surfaced in the final days leading to Saturday's historic vote - insuring only three million more people - was a joke.

What should the Senate do? I hope they address preexisting conditions, cap catastrophic expenses for families, allow insurers to cross state lines, and institute cost-saving mechanisms, protocols and outcomes that have proven successful at the Mayo Clinic and in the Hawaiian care system. Medical malpractice costs should be addressed. I liked Sen. Olympia Snowe's idea of a "trigger" for a public option if insurance reforms don't occur.

I hope and pray that the kind of wise men and women who stood up during crucial periods of our history lay down their rhetoric and political posturing, come together and hammer out the kind of solution the people of our great nation deserve. ❖

As primary opponent emerges, Sen. Bayh releases a poll

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The Evan Bayh political organization is tops among Democrats. He controls the Indiana Democratic Party with trusted chairman Dan Parker minding the shop there. So on the day the first Democratic primary candidate-



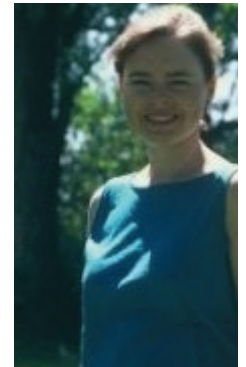
Bloomington restaurateur Tamyra d'Ippolito - announced a challenge, Parker released a poll.

Hamilton Campaign polling data "from battleground legislative districts in Indiana" showed Bayh's standing with Hoosier Democrats at 80 percent favorably and 15 percent unfavorably.

The poll shows that 54 percent of Republicans and 56 percent of independents view Bayh favorably. It shows that Bayh's total fav/unfav stood at 64/30 percent compared to President Obama's 48/51 percent fav/unfavs. Hamilton polling summary explains, "The poll findings show that Evan Bayh continues to have enviable support for a Democrat in some of the most competitive areas of Indiana.

"Bayh maintains this positive personal image with these voters despite the negative personal image of Barack Obama in the same areas of the state." Hamilton described the poll as 800 registered voters in competitive legislative districts in Indiana who are likely to vote in the November 2010 election. The poll was conducted between Oct. 29 and Nov. 2 and has a 3.5 percent error margin.

"I've done a lot of things as a citizen," d'Ippolito said. "I think the powers that be in Indiana are disconnected from the people. They are connected to the lobbyists and corporations. As Democrats we have been waiting and waiting for some career politicians to step up. It's kind of a sad state of affairs. I'm dismayed by what I see in this state. I began writing letters to our politicians. I got a response from Sen. Lugar; and a response from Evan Bayh's office three months later and it didn't even deal with the topic I wrote about. The health care is a huge issue for me." Her website is at TamyraforSenate.com.



d'Ippolito



3rd CD: Troyer will challenge Souder in GOP primary

Bayh isn't the only member of Congress to get a primary challenger. On Tuesday Fort Wayne attorney Phil Troyer announced he would challenge U.S. Rep. Mark Souder, whom he called a "big spending liberal when he's in Washington."

This will be Troyer's second congressional race. In 1992, while still studying law at IU, Troyer was to be the anointed candidate to challenge U.S. Rep. Jill Long. He had the imprimatur of powerful Allen County Republican Chairman Orvas Beers. The problem was that Troyer didn't win the Republican primary.

Chuck Pierson also had filed and spent months before the primary working the local gun and knife shows as well as the home schooling network. With the Bill Clinton-Jerry Brown presidential primary race drawing much of the attention, the turnout in the GOP primary was light and that allowed Pierson to forge the upset. Rep. Long routed Pierson in the general 62-38 percent as Pierson failed to attract GOP organizational support.

The seat was a priority in 1992 after Long upset Dan Heath during the 1989 special election to replace Dan Coats, who succeeded Vice President Dan Quayle in the Senate. The Pierson upset sent a shock through the GOP establishment and set the stage for Beers to retire.

Souder is no stranger to primary challenges. He fended off Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke in 2002 with a 60-37 percent victory. In 2006, an unknown named William Larsen polled 30 percent in the Republican primary, sending the first signal that GOP incumbents were in trouble. While Souder survived in the general election that year, albeit with a closer 15,000 vote plurality, Republican U.S. Reps. Chris Chocola, Mike Sodrel and John Hostettler lost re-election bids.

"I know it's a very, very difficult challenge," Troyer told the Elkhart Truth. "I know I'm never going to be able to match Congressman Souder on spending. But I do think I have a message that will resonate with voters."

4th CD: CBS grills Buyer on foundation

A CBS News Investigation is again raising questions about a scholarship fund started by Indiana Congressman Steve Buyer (R-4th District) showing that Buyer has made changes in its operation (Shella, WISH-TV). Steve Buyer launched the Frontier Foundation in 2003 with a goal of granting college scholarships. The CBS investigation focused on how that foundation is run and how Buyer is now reacting to critics.

The Frontier Foundation no longer operates out of the same Monticello office space as Steve Buyer's campaign, a change made in August after questions were first raised about the fund. Buyer admitted to CBS that he may

have provided fodder for those who question the way things were done. "I was so focused on making sure that we were legal," said Buyer, "That I probably didn't pay as close attention as I should have on 'quote' appearances."

Sharyl Attkisson of CBS conducted the interview with Buyer. 24-Hour News 8 spoke with her Wednesday about the story. "Buyer's own campaign manager was asking to generate funds among donors who had direct interests on his committees in Congress. And that really is what



U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer answered questions from CBS News about his Frontier Foundation that was located next door to his campaign headquarters in Monticello. (CBS News)

raises, at the very least, an appearance problem here," said Attkisson.

But there is no evidence that Buyer did anything illegal and he denies performing favors for donors. "Please do not assume that if a company contributes to the foundation, that somehow that's some type of influence upon what I'm about to do," said Buyer.

Because pharmaceutical companies are big donors to the foundation, Buyer points to his opposition to health care reform as evidence that he is willing to oppose their view. But Democrats also suggest he used the fund to get around campaign donation limits.

"You know, if any process mistakes were made, I am sorry and I will correct them," he said in the story.

After the airing of an investigative report on the CBS Evening News, Indiana Democratic Party State Chair Dan Parker released the following statement: "Tonight's report revealed even more questions about Steve Buyer, and once again the congressman seemed more interested in avoiding answers than giving them. Steve Buyer has gone from knowing nothing about this organization, to starting it, to everywhere in between. He's changed his stories so many times it's hard to tell what his version of the truth is at this point. Congressman Steve Buyer owes his constituents a full explanation for the troubling connections between his congressional office and this so-called foundation. Hoosiers are tired of waiting for answers."



9th CD: Sodrel attends Tea Party

Former Congressman Mike Sodrel made an appearance at a Tea Party rally in Corydon last Saturday, but he didn't announce he would once again challenge U.S. Rep. Baron Hill. According to the Hoosier Access blog, the organizers made clear there would be no campaign speeches. Mike Sodrel honored their request. In fact, at the end of the Tea Party, the organizer allowed candidates for elected office to come up in front of the crowd (but not speak). A lot of people pushed Mike to go up and join them. Sodrel told them, "No, I promised them that I wouldn't do anything like that today." Hoosier Access notes, he didn't say, "I'm not running." Informed and reliable HPI sources are saying that Sodrel is likely to re-enter politics in the near future.

HD30: Dems want Sosbe out

With State Rep. Ron Herrell, D-Kokomo, facing a strong re-election challenge from Republican Kokomo Common Councilman Mike Karickhoff, pressure has been building on Chuck Sosbe to bow out of the primary (de la Bastide, Kokomo Tribune). Sosbe, a lobbyist for the Professional Firefighters of Indiana, made a Labor Day announcement of his intention to challenge Herrell. Last Thursday, Sosbe confirmed he's been approached about running instead against District 21 State Sen. Jim Buck, R-Kokomo. "There are people that want that to happen, and I've been in discussions with them. And that's as far as I've gone," Sosbe said. "I haven't decided."

HD31: Mahan files against Rep. Pearson

Former Blackford County Sheriff Kevin Mahan officially filed his candidacy to challenge freshman State Rep. Joe Pearson, D-Hartford City. Mahan told HPI, "I made it official yesterday by filing for the District 31 State Representative race."

HD66: Lucas declares candidacy

Surrounded by family and friends, and with his wife of 15 years, Lynn, at his side, Seymour Councilman Jim Lucas officially announced his candidacy for HD66 on Tuesday. Lucas said he was running because the state legislature has been spending taxpayer money irresponsibly without realizing the heavy burden it will place on the next generation. "We cannot allow politicians to continue playing these sorts of games with our state government," said Lucas. "Those of us who believe in the free market, fiscal restraint and personal responsibility are growing increasingly weary of seeing the same scenario played out over and over again. We cannot continue to stand by while the government attempts to shackle our children to debt through their reckless spending." Lucas is running against State Rep. Terry Goodin, D-Crothersville, a member of the



Seymour Councilman Jim Lucas declared his candidacy on Tuesday against State Rep. Terry Goodin. (HPI Photo by A. Walker Shaw)

House Ways and Means Committee. Goodin told the Seymour Tribune, "Mitch sees the Democrats in the House as the only stumbling block between his pursuit of total domination of state government. And, of course, the winners of this election will redraw the maps for the next election." Lucas noted that reckless spending by House Democrats accomplished little and took attention from more pressing issues like job creation. "Rather than spending time on issues that could help business locate here, expand and create new jobs, they were concerned with trying to drain the state's bank account," said Lucas. According

to the Seymour Tribune, Dr. Jack Gillespie who challenged Goodin in 2008 will not seek Republican nomination in this district.

HD67: Rep. Duncan won't seek 9th term

State Rep. Cleo Duncan, R-Greensburg, said Monday that she will not seek a ninth term in the General Assembly. Duncan, who has represented the 67th District since 1994, is retiring to spend more time with her family. HRCC's Mike Gentry told HPI today that five candidates are looking at running. Gentry considers the seat "reliably Republican" and HRCC is unlikely to get involved in the primary. Duncan wrote Indiana's Move Over Law, co-authored Indiana's Major Moves Law and helped attract Honda to Greensburg.

CNN Poll reveals anti-incumbency

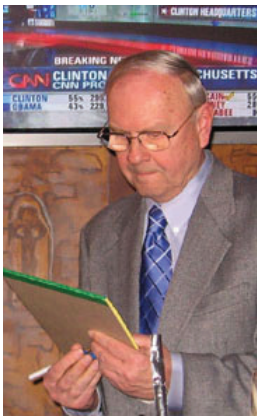
When it comes to Congress, a 'throw the bums out' attitude appears to be alive and well. According to a new Pew Research Center poll, 52 percent of registered voters would like to see their own member of the House of Representatives re-elected next year, while just over one in three say that most members of Congress should be returned to office. Both numbers come close to the all-time lows seen just prior to the 1994 election, when the Republicans won control of Congress, and the 2006 contest, when the Democrats returned to power in both chambers. The survey indicates that only 42 percent of independent voters want to see their own representative re-elected in 2010, and just one in four independents think most members of Congress should be returned to office. Gallup now has the congressional generic at 48 percent Republican and 44 percent Democrat. ❖



Republicans become the party of 'no'

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - Political columnists and commentators, as well as candidates and campaign strategists, seek now to evaluate what the election results mean for prospects of the party of "no" in 2010 races for control of Congress.



Their forecasting is as risky as efforts of the local TV weather forecasters, who are at the mercy of the whims of winds across Lake Michigan in predicting depth of December snow.

Republicans won the two big governor races, in Virginia and New Jersey, with independents shifting to the GOP and the young and black voters so important in election of President Barack Obama staying away from the polls in droves.

But Republicans self-destructed in a New York congressional district where they had always won since the Civil War, with a Democrat winning, perhaps to provide that one additional vote Obama will need for final passage of health care legislation.

In Virginia and New Jersey, the Democratic contenders for governor were not exactly charismatic figures. That's putting it mildly. And the White House is correct in saying the results were far more about state issues and the state candidates than about voter evaluation of Obama.

Still, Obama campaigned for the Democratic candidates, halfheartedly in the dismal Virginia effort, but more extensively in the closer New Jersey battle.

If those Democrats had won, the White House would be hailing the results as an indication of Obama's popularity and ability to help party candidates.

In that New York congressional race, Democrats point to their victory as indication that the GOP still doesn't have its act together, with right-wing conservatives driving a moderate Republican candidate from the field and burning down the "big tent" in which a winning voter majority could assemble.

Still, conservatives who brought about the results say they may have lost the battle but will win the war by making the Republican brand stand for clear conservative principles that will prove popular in the long run.

So, what does all this mean in the 2010 race for congressional control? Well, first of all, which side will be

evaluated by voters as the party of "no" in 2010?

Republicans have been labeled the party of "no" for opposing all that President Obama proposes and scoffing at calls for bipartisanship.

Democrats, however, in control of Congress as well as the White House, sure aren't the party of "yes." At least not yet.

Although the House voted Saturday night by a narrow margin to approve health care reform, with all five Hoosier Democratic representatives voting for it, there still is a long way to go before legislation of the type promised by Obama and most of the Democratic members of Congress is enacted. Lots of wrangling and delay has occurred, and Democratic moderates and liberals often seem about as close to agreement as were those Republican moderates and conservatives in New York.

"Yes, we can," the Obama rallying cry, could still be changed in the Democratic-controlled Congress to: "No, we can't."

Just as the winds shift over Lake Michigan, the political winds shift from election to election, sometimes rapidly in the midst of a campaign.

Whether health care legislation is enacted will play a big part in determining which way the winds blow.

If health care legislation is passed by Congress and signed into law yet this year by President Obama, Democrats can escape the party of "no" label. That wouldn't mean that they will escape denunciation for what is passed. Whatever is passed will be denounced by partisan opposition. But having something to show, something that provides at least some of the promised reforms, would be better politically than having nothing at all to show for all the talk, all the promises, all the legislative bickering.

With health care legislation passed, Congress could turn to other pressing matters still getting a "no."

And more of those independent voters and the young and black voters who stayed home last week might decide that the Democratic label does mean something.

If there is no health care legislation, Republicans will have a chance to emerge as the party of "yes," promising - as some Republicans now do - that they, if given the chance, could deliver the type of health care improvement that Americans really want and that the Democratic Party of "no" never could deliver. ❖

Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.



Diversity within Indiana's economy

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - Not every county in Indiana is like every other county. This is important to understand (particularly if you are a state legislator) because we cannot assume one remedy is appropriate for all ills statewide. Likewise, your county is not unique, probably not even distinct from other Indiana counties. This is important to understand (especially for members of the General Assembly) because it is unlikely the problems your county faces deserve unique legislative attention.



Morton Marcus
Column

Where is what done in Indiana? First, let's look at farming. Statewide, farming accounts directly for 0.8 percent of the state's earnings by individuals (figures are for 2007). The top five farming counties are all in the north-west quadrant of the state. In Warren County, farming provides 21 percent of earnings, 19 percent in Benton County. Pulaski, Newton

and Starke each exceeds 10 percent. Another 15 counties derive more than five percent of their earnings from farming. In 49 of Indiana's 92 counties, farming amounts to less than two percent of earnings.

Second, consider manufacturing, Indiana's most important sector, with one-quarter of the state's earnings. Howard County is most dependent on manufacturing at 59 percent followed by Lagrange County at 57 percent. The next four (Kosciusko, Noble, Gibson and Elkhart) are clustered around 55 percent. Another 25 counties ranging from Jefferson (33.5 percent) to Posey (49.4 percent) derive a third to a half of their earnings from manufacturing. Only six counties (Brown, Hamilton, Martin, Pike, Greene and Switzerland) receive less than 10 percent of their earnings from manufacturing.

Next to manufacturing, private health care is the second largest sector in our economy. (Health care provided by government institutions is not included here.) Statewide, private health care accounts for 9.7 percent of Hoosier earnings, but we have data for only 55 of the 92 counties. Disclosure issues limit our analysis for this and many other sectors, but we won't go into the oddities of efforts to protect the privacy of individual firms.

According to the available data, Delaware County is

most dependent on health care with 19 percent of its earnings originating in that sector. Vigo is second at 16 percent, Wayne third at 15 percent; Allen and Vanderburgh tie for fourth place at 14 percent. Low shares (under five percent) of earnings are found in 14 counties. Does this indicate inadequate access to health care? Let's hope no one in a position of authority says "Yes" to that question without some intense thought and investigation.

Cutting the data a different way, we find that real estate services are the most concentrated: Marion and Hamilton counties alone account for 49.5 percent of earnings originating in that sector. Those two counties also provide 47.7 percent of earnings from professional and technical services.

By contrast, farming is the least concentrated activity followed closely by utilities, local government, manufacturing, and retail trade. When you think about it, only manufacturing is a surprise. Every place has utilities, local government, and retail trade. But that manufacturing should be among the least concentrated activities suggests that Indiana is truly a state where manufacturing is pervasive, vital to the economies of most counties.

Among the counties, Martin, with the Crane facility, has most concentrated economic activity (75 percent of earning originating on federal payrolls). Heavy manufacturing counties identified follow as being heavily concentrated as well.

Beyond that we dare not go because of missing data stemming back to those infamous disclosure problems. For example, only 65 percent of earnings in Monroe County are reported by sector by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). What's missing? State and local governments. Why are these missing? Only BEA can say. We can guess that there is concern about the size of IU in the state sector. But IU is a public agency. Why are public data suppressed?

These disclosure issues are found in state as well as federal data. For example, why can't we have accurate sales tax revenues by county in Indiana when such data are available in other states?

You'll excuse me now. I have to take antidepressants every time I deal with the incomprehensible disclosure rules of our statistical agencies. ❖

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



Stephanie Salter, Terre Haute Tribune-Star:

Think anti-abortion rights politics is simple? Take a look at the week Rep. Brad Ellsworth had. Staunchly anti-abortion, Ellsworth is a longtime poster boy for "pro-life" Democrats. He has been given a "zero percent rating" from the Planned Parenthood Action Fund. His threat early last week to withhold support of the House health care bill, unless five "key pro-life changes" were made, will keep that negative rating unmarred. As expected, Planned Parenthood and other abortion rights groups spoke out against Ellsworth's proposed changes as soon as they heard about them. Instead of seeing an amendment that would close perceived loopholes in federal funding of abortion, pro-choice organizations saw "new language [that] could tip the balance away from women's access to reproductive health care," according to a statement from Planned Parenthood vice president Laurie Rubiner. The less predictable reaction came from several anti-abortion camps. A spokesman for the National Right to Life Committee likened Ellsworth's proposed changes to "a money laundering scheme that is truly laughable." In an e-mail statement, Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the committee, said Ellsworth's altered language "is intended only to wrap the pro-abortion provisions in additional layers of concealment ... Some of the people involved in this enterprise apparently think that their constituents are simpletons." Ellsworth not only was blasted by anti-abortion groups like Johnson's, his proposed amendment was rejected by the men who manage his church, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Apparently giddy with the political muscle they're flexing these days on Capitol Hill, the bishops were unhappy with the level of anti-abortion zeal their fellow Catholic displayed. Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the bishops conference, told reporters mid-week that Ellsworth meant well, but that his proposed amendment was really just "an accounting gimmick." Ellsworth entered the fray last week by floating amendment language that would have tightened all the health care bill's existing and plentiful abortion restrictions, as well as providing for specific abortion prohibitions on the off-chance some future Congress decides not to rubber stamp Hyde re-appropriations. Ellsworth also reportedly proposed a monitoring setup to make certain that women's personal insurance premiums for abortion coverage were not commingled with the premiums for all other medical coverage in their health insurance exchange plans. That setup would have included a private contractor to handle the private premiums. But the most ferocious anti-abortion forces, in and out of Congress, wanted something tougher, an amendment that — until yesterday — carried the names of its two main authors, Bart Stupak, D-Mich., and Joe Pitts, R-Pa. Now it is the Stupak-Ellsworth-Pitts, et al

amendment. It passed last night, 240-194, and it offers all the Hyde limitations and more. Stupak-Ellsworth-Pitts says government money can't be used "to cover any part of any health plan that includes coverage of abortion." ❖

Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette:

Where Sen. Evan Bayh sends his kids to school is a factor in his political career. Who'da thunk it? Obama campaign manager David Plouffe identified two areas of potential weakness to the selection of Bayh for the VP slot: Susan Bayh's corporate role and the boys' schooling. The fact that Plouffe gives ink to those issues shows their significance. He said Susan Bayh's positions "would draw fire if we selected him." Plouffe said Bayh was passionate in defending his wife's professional qualifications and the way the couple avoids conflict of interest. Plouffe was sold: "We were satisfied he could bat down any questions on that front." If that was Plouffe's true assessment, you have to wonder. The pumeling Bayh is undergoing these days, especially among the left, because of his wife's income from insurance and pharmaceutical companies was predictable. It may or may not have been a major focus during the campaign, but certainly Susan Bayh's portfolio would have undergone national media scrutiny. How Bayh handled it would have been beside the point. And then Plouffe moves to the head-scratcher. The Bayhs' decision to keep their kids in Washington and send them to a private school "would draw some criticism," he wrote. Plouffe doesn't have to spell it out: privileged kids, rich parents, no sense of what regular folks struggle with, former Indiana governor made such a big deal about improving education but doesn't trust Hoosier schools for his own sons. Plouffe was impressed with Bayh's explanation, although it is not clear whether he was struck more by the "humanity and warmth" Bayh displayed in discussing it or by the choice itself. Either way, the fact that the passage was included in "The Audacity to Win" tells us that Obama's closest advisers were well aware of the image issue. ❖



Rich James, Post-Tribune:

Dear Attorney General Greg Zoeller: Contrary to what downstate Republicans think, the words "East Chicago" and "corruption" don't generally belong in the same sentence. Although there have been times over the years when "East Chicago" and "corruption" seemed inseparable, that's more lore than reality. For decades, East Chicago was a powerful political machine, perhaps the strongest in the state. It also was a city that - for the most part - worked. If it hadn't, that political operation would have been cast aside years ago. Don't confuse hard-nosed politics with corruption, Greg. ❖



Ambassador concerned over troop ramp up

WASHINGTON - The United States ambassador to Afghanistan, who once served as the top American military commander there, has expressed in writing his reservations about deploying additional troops to the country, three senior American officials said Wednesday (New York Times). The position of the ambassador, Karl W. Eikenberry, a retired lieutenant general, puts him in stark opposition to the current American and NATO commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, who has asked for 40,000 more troops. General Eikenberry sent his reservations to Washington in a cable last week, the officials said. In that same period, President Obama and his national security advisers have begun examining an option that would send relatively few troops to Afghanistan, about 10,000 to 15,000, with most designated as trainers for the Afghan security forces. This low-end option was one of four alternatives under consideration by Mr. Obama and his war council at a meeting in the White House Situation Room on Wednesday afternoon. The other three options call for troop levels of around 20,000, 30,000 and 40,000, the three officials said. Mr. Obama asked General Eikenberry about his concerns during the meeting on Wednesday, officials said, and raised questions about each of the four military options and how they might be tinkered with or changed. A central focus of Mr. Obama's questions, officials said, was how long it would take to see results and be able to withdraw. "He wants to know where the off-ramps are," one official said. The officials, who requested anonymity in order to discuss delicate White

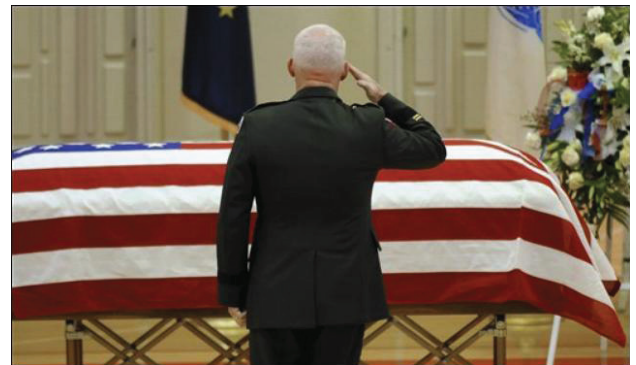


House deliberations, did not describe General Eikenberry's reasons for opposing additional American forces, although he has recently expressed strong concerns about President Hamid Karzai's reliability as a partner and corruption in his government. Mr. Obama appointed General Eikenberry as ambassador in January.

Terre Haute buries Sgt. Griffin

TERRE HAUTE - A city and a nation bid farewell Wednesday to a fallen son, brother, friend and soldier (Foulkes, Terre Haute Tribune-Star). The flag-draped casket of U.S. Army Sgt. Dale Griffin, 29, sat in the middle of the Terre Haute South Vigo High School gymnasium as hundreds of people, many in military uniforms, many from long distances away, filed into the school where Griffin was a student, a wrestler, a football player and member of the show choir before graduating in 1999. "Dale marched to the beat of his own drum," said longtime friend Gabe Euratte, who was one of several speakers at Griffin's funeral service. Griffin, who was killed in action as part of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan on Oct. 27, had a love of life, competitive spirit and the ability to lift up those around him, his friend said. "You couldn't be down around Dale," Euratte said. But "sometimes he would knock you down when you needed knocked down." Sgt. Dale Griffin was killed in Afghanistan about four years after enlisting in the Army in 2005. He wanted to join to defend freedom, his friends and family said. Griffin told Euratte, who tried to talk him out of joining the military, he would live his life with regret if he didn't serve his country. There was

no changing Dale's mind, Euratte said. Also at Wednesday afternoon's funeral service, which was attended by more than 1,000 people, Griffin was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. His parents, Gene and Dona Griffin of Terre Haute, accepted the awards, signed by the United States Secretary of the Army, on their late son's behalf. Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett also read a proclamation during the service declaring Wednesday a "Day of Honor" in the city for Sgt. Dale Griffin and other fallen and serving American veterans. "He's a true American hero," Bennett said. U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth also paid tribute to Sgt. Griffin at Wednesday's service. "Each



U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Scott West renders honors to Sgt. Dale Griffin's casket, Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2009, during the funeral service at Terre Haute South High School. (JOSEPH C. GARZA/The Tribune-Star)

of us here today has been touched by Dale's life," Ellsworth said. Sgt. Griffin's name became part of national and world news when his casket's arrival at Dover Air Force Base was greeted by a saluting President Barack Obama during the early morning hours of Oct. 29. The Griffin family has "been held in the arms of a mourning nation," Gene Griffin said during the service.

Daniels 'fighting the recession to win'

INDIANAPOLIS - Three hundred-fifty manufacturing jobs in New Albany; 100 construction jobs in



Indianapolis; up to 50 automotive jobs in Elkhart (Carden, Times of Northwest Indiana). Surprisingly, this isn't the latest list of jobs lost during the Great Recession. These are new jobs coming to Indiana over the next year. How can Indiana possibly be attracting new businesses during the worst economy in a generation? Gov. Mitch Daniels said it's because Indiana is "fighting this recession to win." "Everybody understands that somehow keeping taxes and the other costs government imposes down is the most important thing we can do, so jobs come here," Daniels said. Growing the Indiana economy is "the single best way" to pull Indiana out of recession, he said. And it seems to be working. Moody's economy.com, an economic forecasting firm, said last week Indiana is one of 11 states "emerging" from recession.

INDOT favors southern high speed rail route

ELKHART - If high-speed rail comes to northern Indiana, the state Department of Transportation favors a corridor passing through Fort Wayne, not Elkhart and South Bend, as sought by boosters here (Vandenack, Elkhart Truth). No formal route decision has yet been made should the long-term plans materialize to develop a \$2.82 billion high-speed passenger rail network across the top of Indiana between Chicago to Cleveland, as proposed. A more northerly route through South Bend and Elkhart has been tabbed as one possibility, along with a more southerly corridor through Warsaw and Fort Wayne. However, INDOT "is recommending that the southern route be selected" because it will cost less and it's expected to have greater ridership, Leigh Morris, an INDOT deputy commissioner, said in an e-mail. Moreover, the corridor passing through Elkhart County handles more freight, so there would be fewer potential hiccups with such carriers by going with the more lightly traveled southerly corridor. The

Elkhart-South Bend area is the "second-largest economic engine" in the state, said Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce Vice President Kyle Hannon, and "if it's going to happen, it should hit our area as well." John Letherman wonders why some sort of corridor can't be developed along the Indiana Toll Road to carry high-speed trains.

Majestic Star defaults on loan payments

GARY - After missing three interest payments on its debt, a Gary casino operator was dealt another blow after lenders in a loan and security agreement declared the company in default of its requirements (Times of Northeast Indiana). On Oct. 30, The Majestic Star Casino.

Morgan to head Indiana Bar

INDIANAPOLIS - For the first time, an African-American lawyer will head the Indiana State Bar Association. Roderick Morgan, a partner with Bingham McHale in Indianapolis, was named president for the 2009-10 term, the organization said Wednesday. The bar association's board has 23 members.

Gov. Quinn eyes Illiana Expressway

CHICAGO - Illinois Governor Pat Quinn is ready to support a plan to build the Illiana Expressway between I-65 in Lake County and I-57 in Illinois (Frugal Hoosiers). The project has been considered for some time at a cost of \$1 billion. The Democratic Governor also supports the exploration of a public-private partnership to build the road. "The governor is ready to commit to the creation of the new expressway, which would connect Interstate 57 in Will County with Interstate 65 in Lake County, Ind.," a Quinn

source said (Chicago Sun-Times). A privateshot? "It could be a public/private venture, but Quinn would like the creation of the expressway to become part of his legacy," the source added. "It would significantly cut traffic congestion and change the dynamic of the south suburbs."

Dobbs leaving CNN

NEW YORK - Lou Dobbs may have left his anchor chair, but he says he'll keep talking. The last of the original CNN hosts, Dobbs told viewers on Wednesday that he was quitting his nightly show -- effective at the end of the hour -- to pursue new opportunities. What those are is still unclear, though he vowed to be a leader in the "national conversation" to restore "inspiration to our great free society and our market economy." CNN, meanwhile, plans to announce its decision on who will replace Dobbs on Thursday.

Kokomo to rehire 3 firefighters

KOKOMO - The Kokomo Fire Department is bringing back three laid-off firefighters in response to an ongoing manpower shortage, city administration officials announced Monday (Smith, Kokomo Tribune). Firefighters Landon Bartley, Martin Meyers and Robert Leonard were all scheduled to return to duty Wednesday, city director of operations Randy Morris said. "Some of it was unexpected, and some of it concerns issues we can foresee in the near future," Morris said. "We've had some health issues with firefighters; there have been several unexpected illnesses within the department." ❖