



### Stutzman, Young on 2 Obamacare paths

Reps. Stutzman and Young take different approaches as the ACA comes online; but shutdown discredited

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The notion of a government shutdown in an effort to defund Obamacare might find its center in the northeastern Indiana district of U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman.

But beyond this conservative bastion, there appears to be a growing assessment that Republicans in the 2012 election lost the White House, did not retake the U.S. Senate, and that such a move by House Republicans could be politically disastrous.

Other Republicans, such as U.S. Rep. Todd Young, while voting for repeal numerous times, are beginning to seek ways not only to “tweak” components of the Affordable Care Act, but to, as Young puts it, “fundamentally rework” the law.

On July 25, Stutzman became the first House Re-



U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman at a DeKalb County town hall in Auburn last night where Obamacare was the No. 1 topic. (WANE-TV)

publican to embrace a continuing resolution showdown in an effort to defund Obamacare. “I’m not going to vote for a continuing resolution that funds Obamacare,” Stutzman said in a news release. “It makes no sense to spend an-

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### The Joe Sixpack impact

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – Way back in 1969, Congress shared its abundant wisdom with the American people by requiring

Environmental Impact Assessments as part of virtually all phases of life here in the good old United States. This legislation has been the salvation of the Slippery Nosed Hogwarter, the Eastern Alabama Fig Beetle and the Minnesota No-see-um to just name a few of the beneficiaries.

In the time-honored spirit of advocating for legislation, (isn't it every columnist's right?) I hereby offer



**“The red line means going to war. This is a very dangerous because we may be aiding people who will use the arms against us and our allies.”**

- Former Sen. Dick Lugar on Syrian chemical attack



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up my idea for saving another endangered species, Joe Sixpack.

You all know Joe Sixpack. He's the guy or gal who gets up every morning, goes to work, comes home to his family, watches a little television after dinner and then repeats the whole process over again the next day. On payday, Joe Sixpack's naughty little indulgence may be to stop by the Stop and Drop and buy a six-pack of brewskies for the weekend.

**Joe or Josephine** Sixpack string 4,316 of these weeks together, call it a life and then move on to their final reward. Of course, you can add in helping kids with homework, coaching ball teams, graduations, weddings and grandchildren into the mix, but in general, life is pretty repetitious for the average American. Perhaps it is because the Amalgamated Average American Political Action Committee has yet to harness the financial power of its millions of members and hire the K Street and Capitol Avenue lobbyists to advocate for their betterment that so little legislation ever benefits the common taxpayer.

Because there is a void of lobbyists on the side of Joe Sixpack, I will take up the challenge and advocate for the faceless masses who look at Congress and the Indiana Legislature and collectively ask, "What the...?"

My idea, (please control the ooing and aahing) is to require that every piece of legislation passed by the Indiana Legislature or the United States Congress must carry a Joe Sixpack Impact Assessment at the beginning of the bill.

Imagine a scenario where no legislation could pass unless the author of the bill clearly stated what the impact would be on the average working stiff. Just picture Sen. Roland McCheesy of Fern County introducing legislation that carried the following Joe Sixpack Impact Statement: The attached legislation will provide absolutely no benefit to the average taxpayer. The legislation proposed is

to enrich certain of my friends and contributors and not the average Hoosier. At no time in the coming years will this legislation inure to the financial or physical well-being of the average Hoosier.

Status: Legislation dead on arrival.

Wouldn't you just love to take a walk down memory lane and append a Joe Sixpack Impact Statement to some of our past legislative gems on both a local and national level. In fact, it begs the question of just how many pieces of enrolled legislation in either Congress or the Indiana Legislature would be passed if they carried the Joe Sixpack Impact Statement.

I am certain that clever legislators like Rep. Martin Blowback of Destiny County would try and slip something like this statement into his Casino Racino Enrichment Act of 2014: The following legislation will enrich average Hoosiers by giving them a warm feeling from knowing that at least someone will benefit from this legislation. In addition, lights from the greatly expanded casino parking lot will help reduce crime in the immediate area. Casino and racino owners are known big tippers so service personnel, valets and restroom attendants will economically prosper.

**In my world** of make believe, Joe Sixpack Impact Assessments would have to be written in plain English, for a 12-year-old reading comprehension. Heck, let's just mandate that it has to be written by a 12-year-old without the assistance of a major Indianapolis law firm.

For the record, let's define who isn't entitled to claim Joe Sixpack status. If you own a speedway, you are not Joe Sixpack. If you own a professional football, basketball, baseball, hockey, soccer or tidily wink franchise, you are not Joe Sixpack.

If you own a professional cricket team, you are not American and therefore not Joe Sixpack. If you own racehorses, are thinking of own-



ing racehorses or have ever thought of owning racehorses, you are not Joe Sixpack. If you have ever won money by gambling or by owning a large building full of slot machines, you are not Joe Sixpack.

**You can still be Joe Sixpack** if you say you won money in Las Vegas. If you are the author of the legislation, then your brother, father, mother, sister, cousin, aunt, uncle or in-law twice removed is not Joe Sixpack. If you own the land that will have the new Rutabaga-to-Fuel plant built on it from the proceeds of the legislation, you are not Joe Sixpack.

For those of you who may think I am heartless in attempting to block legislation that absolutely does nothing to benefit the average Hoosier and American, I offer up the following pieces of legislation that would not be subject to the Joe Sixpack Impact Assessment. Legislation naming an official pie, cake, cookie, bird, car, fish, mammal or reptile

would be excluded. In addition, legislation naming bridges, highways, byways, drainage ditches and bike paths could still be named for deceased legislators and/or their contributors. Any legislation supported by the NRA would also be excluded from the Joe Sixpack Impact Assessment.

Hey, I'm not stupid. I want my legislation to pass.

**As summer study** committees wind down and the real work of drafting bad legislation begins in earnest, here's hoping that Gov. Mike Pence lets it be known that he will be looking at the figurative Joe Sixpack Impact Assessment on each piece of legislation to pass the Indiana General Assembly when it comes to bill signing time in 2014.

Average Joes deserve a break! ❖

### **Dunn is chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.**

## **Obamacare,** from page 1

other dime on a failed law that the President has already delayed."

Stutzman spoke at a DeKalb County Town Hall and a 9/12 meeting Wednesday night and Obamacare was the key topic. "Reality is setting in, and the American people, Hoosiers I talk to everyday are telling me the consequences that they now are experiencing," Stutzman said. "Since reality is here, and we're seeing higher premiums, we're seeing part-time labor increasing because businesses are moving hours. We're seeing that this law is not working, so defunding it, stopping it, whatever it takes to fix this problem is what we need to do. It's the number one issue right now. People are afraid of what the future holds."

Stutzman said he's told the district that it's an uphill battle. "Harry Reid in the Senate, and Democrats in the Senate, don't seem to be interested in reforming it" Stutzman said. "Senator [Joe] Donnelly, which I'll give credit to, has a bill to deal with the 40-hour work week, but he's probably one of the few. Republicans are trying. Democrats for the most part are not, and are insistent that this be the law of the land.

Appearing on Fox TV's "Sean Hannity Show" on Wednesday, Stutzman said, "As Republicans — we control the House of Representatives — we should not have our fingerprints on the funding of Obamacare whatsoever and [we should] send a

continuing resolution over to the Senate, reluctantly voting for all these other aspects of government spending but not putting Obamacare in the continuing resolution. Send it over to the Senate and make the Senate, if they want to put the funding in for Obamacare, let them do it. That way they have to go back to their constituencies and answer to them why they are the ones funding ObamaCare when it's hurting them."

### **The 'false choice'**

Stutzman also called the defunding and a government shutdown a "false choice."

"Our goal is not to shut the government down — that's been the President's rhetoric," Stutzman told Hannity.

"He's the one that brought the matter up. You can tell that he is dead set on forcing Obamacare on the American people, forcing premiums to go up, forcing people to go into part-time work, forcing people to lose benefits and insurance. That's his doing. He's willing to make us choose between that and shutting the government down? That's a false choice. That is not something that we have to choose between. That's why we in the House of Representatives need to keep talking about how we're going to fund the government. We're going to do our work. We're going to do our job. But what we

hear every day from our constituents is that Obamacare is bad for America and that we shouldn't fund it."

Roll Call reported: Senior aides from both sides of the aisle say the threat would surely backfire on Repub-







licans if they carry it out. For one thing, most of Obama's new health care program is mandatory spending that is not affected by appropriations bills, so it would continue to receive funding in any event. "Even if you shut down the government, Obamacare will continue to be funded, and all you will have accomplished in that scenario is a government shutdown," a senior Republican appropriations aide said.

"I don't think shutting down the government is a good idea, but I do think that we were elected, conservatives were elected, to try to stop this overreach, this government takeover of healthcare," U.S. Sen. Rand Paul told "Fox News Sunday."

Stutzman cited support from northeastern Indiana constituents for pursuing what could be a government shutdown. He told *The Hill* last week, "I have not heard don't shut down the government over Obamacare," Stutzman said, referring to meetings with his constituents over the recess. "I have heard this law is not ready for primetime and we need to do anything we can to stop it."

The sophomore Republican from Howe finds good company within and beyond the Indiana Republican congressional delegation to repeal the Affordable Care Act, with all members voting some 40 times on repeal legislation. But none of them has followed him down the government shutdown path.

Heritage Foundation President Jim DeMint and Mike Needham of Heritage Action advocated the defunding in an Aug. 8 op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal*. "There are some who argue that Obamacare can't be defunded because most of its spending is deemed 'mandatory,'" DeMint and Needham wrote. "Their assertions are wrong. According to the Congressional Research Service, Obamacare 'administrative costs will have to be funded through the annual discretionary appropriations.'

Furthermore, annual appropriations bills routinely carry funding limitations to mandatory spending and often block a wide range of potential government activities. The Hyde Amendment to a 1976 appropriation bill, for example, blocked all taxpayer funding of abortion, and has every year since 1976. Congress can disallow funding for Obamacare and effectively stop the implementation of the law. Yet doing that will require resolve. President Obama, along with all the Democrats, will accuse Republicans of trying to shut down the government by giving the President a spending bill that he must veto. But there is no "must" about it. If the President opts to shut down all of govern-



**Rep. Todd Young has begun the process of reforming the Affordable Care Act. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)**

ment instead of just Obamacare, that will be his choice, not the wish of conservatives."

Politically, there are a lot of rhetorical fireworks, but little movement. NBC's Chuck Todd and Mark Murra wrote on the First Read blog, "The Defund Obamacare effort has gone nowhere. GOP leaders (like Mitch McConnell, John Boehner, and Eric Cantor) aren't on board. Neither are some stalwart conservative senators (like Rand Paul and Ron Johnson). "From the leaders of the GOP establishment to usual Tea Party allies, a growing number of Republicans are splitting with

movement conservatives who are pushing to shut down the federal government if funding is not cut off for President Obama's health care law at the end of September," *National Journal* wrote over the weekend.

First Read continued: There are two reasons for this. One, the votes simply aren't there, especially with Democrats in control of the Senate and White House. Two, Republicans see a government shutdown over Obamacare as Democrats' best opportunity to upend the 2014 apple cart that currently favors the GOP. Consequently, GOP leaders have turned to another idea – using the sequester and debt limit to delay the health-care law's individual mandate (though it's doubtful that the votes are there, too).

## **Young seeking revisions**

Rep. Young, R-Bloomington, is one of the first Indiana Republicans to move into the zone that then-U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, who voted for the law in March 2010, said would be inevitable, which are the tweaks and revisions to the complex law that many compare to a Rube Goldberg contraption.

"I'm looking for opportunities to improve upon our current circumstances by replacing specific components of the ACA or replacing it with a comprehensive bill altogether, which I understand in the current political environment is not realistic yet," Young told HPI. "But I think replacing individual portions of it is realistic. You have to remember that of these 40 bills the President frequently lampoons, we voted on to defunding, dismantling or replacing the ACA, he signed into law seven of them. Now, seven out of 40 is pretty good odds. So I am looking for other opportunities to improve people's circumstances by repealing the most egregious aspects of the law."

Asked for examples, Young cited the ACA's definition of 30 hours as "full time."



"One example," Young said, "since January of this year, 75% of the jobs that have been created in this country have been part-time jobs, which is basically an inversion of what you typically see in a down economy. Typically you see more full-time jobs. One of the primary drivers of this trend is the 50 employee and 30 hours threshold established by the Affordable Care Act. If you're an employer and you've got 50 employees full time, when full time is defined by 30 hours or more, you are mandated to provide government approved health insurance to those employees. I introduced a bill in the House, the Save American Workers Act – it's got 150 sponsors right now – that would redefine full time up to 40 hours. I am proud that I've been able to persuade so many of my colleagues to sign on to that bill and we'll continue to try and do that. That's one I think it has a fighting chance. The substance is similar to the Donnelly-Collins legislation."

Donnelly and U.S. Sen. Susan Collins, R-Me., have introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

Referring it to a "tweak," Young explained, "This is not a tweak from my perspective, this is a major rework of the legislation. I hope in a bipartisan way we can advance

this idea."

Young mentioned ACA "components" in plural. What are the others?

"We're actually going to consider a menu of different targeted reforms of the ACA in the coming weeks and months," he said.

As for repeal and replace, Newt Gingrich, former House speaker and presidential candidate, reprimanded Republicans last week, blaming GOP members of Congress for developing "zero" alternatives to President Obama's health care reform law. "I will bet most of you go home in the next two weeks, when your members of Congress are home, and you look them in the eye and say, 'What is your positive replacement for Obamacare?' They will have zero answer," Gingrich said.

Gingrich blamed the problem on Republican culture that rewards obstruction and negativity instead of innovation and "being positive." "We are caught up right now in a culture, and you see it every single day, where as long as we are negative and as long as we are vicious and as long as we can tear down our opponent, we don't have to learn anything," Gingrich said. ❖

## Freedom Indiana Coalition hires Robertson to manage fight against amendment

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – There will be a well-funded potentially two-pronged battle over the marriage amendment after a new coalition - Indiana Freedom - working against its passage announced its formation and the hiring of Megan Robertson, who has managed campaigns for Republicans.

Absent a presidential, gubernatorial or U.S. Senate race, and with Indiana Democrats struggling to recruit credible candidates in the 2nd, 8th, or 9th CDs, the marriage issue will be the prime statewide political battleground in Indiana next year.

Robertson (pictured right) managed Rep. Luke Messer's 2010 Republican primary race against Rep. Dan Burton, then worked on Sen. Dan Coats' campaign, followed those two races by managing Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard's reelection in 2011 and then Messer's successful race in 2012 in the 6th CD. All were million-dollar



aces.

"Indiana is known for Hoosier hospitality, values freedom and individual rights," Robertson said. "This amendment does not send the message that we are a welcoming state."

She said there will be two phases to the Indiana Equality campaign that will be backed financially by companies like Eli Lilly and Cummins. "We will work to kill the amendment in the Indiana General Assembly, and if it passes there, we will work against the referendum," Robertson said. "Both sides will be well financed both at the grass-roots level and at the donor level."

Robertson emphasized that she has traveled extensively across Indiana on behalf of Messer, Coats and Ballard over the past decade and she knows that even among some Republicans who voted for the amendment there is increasing discomfort, "particularly with the second sentence of the law."

House Joint Resolution 6 reads: "Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Indiana. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized."

"There are a number of Republicans who are uncomfortable with the amendment itself," Robertson said. "There is already a marriage law. With that second sentence, a lot of them



believe it goes too far. I think we'll see a lot of support from Republicans."

House Speaker Brian Bosma told HPI in June, "If I had my druthers, Part B would not be there. I think the first part is very clear. Part B raises a question. But virtually every statute raises some question."

**An HPI Poll** conducted by Bellwether Research's Christine Matthews in April revealed 50% support the amendment, and 46% opposed, which is right at the margin of error. That was a survey of 600 likely voters taken April 18-21. The Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll in October 2012 had 48% supporting the amendment and 45% opposed. Matthews tweeted about the coalition on Wednesday, saying, "They will be strong."

In the April HPI Poll cross tabulations, 55% of Republicans back the amendment and 37.5% were opposed; compared to 44.7% of independents for and 44.9% of independents against. For Democrats, 57.6% were opposed and 35.6% were for. Among Republicans ages 18 to 44, 51.7% were for the amendment and 42.5% were opposed.

Gov. Mike Pence, a number of Republican sources tell HPI, is expected to ardently campaign for the marriage amendment in 2014, including the most controversial provision, which is the second sentence. Bosma and Senate President Pro Tempore David Long both expect legislation for the referendum will pass by March 2014.

"The move to protect the statute in the constitution is a reaction to those states that have had the non-elected judiciary make the decision on what marriage is," Bosma said. "I'm a firm believer that decision should be in the hands of the elected representatives, the legislative branch, and ultimately, in the hands of the people. That's what the discussion is."

**Pence said following** the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in June on the Defense of Marriage Act, "I am confident that Hoosiers will reaffirm our commitment to traditional marriage and will consider this important question with civility and respect for the values and dignity of all of the people of our state."

Robertson said there will be a main campaign office in Indianapolis and, if the campaign goes to referendum, there will likely be field offices. "My hope is it doesn't make it to a referendum," she said.

"She's absolutely what we need, and she knows what to do," Rick Sutton, executive director of



**Rick Sutton (top) of Indiana Equality and Micah Clark of the American Family Association will square off in this epic battle.**

Indiana Equality Action and president of the new coalition, told the Indianapolis Star. "Before it's finished, we will have the assets and resources we need to get our message out. It is our goal to be taken very seriously and to make sure people feel empowered to contact their legislators and to not let narrow arguments win the day."

Micah Clark of the American Family Association here in Indiana said Hoosier voters should decide. "The issue of marriage is too important to decide," Clark told WTHR-TV. "Like 31 other states have done, whether or not we want to protect our laws or keep them as is, where a mom and a dad matter and marriage involves men and women or if it's undefined and can involve anything any group wants," said Clark.

William Perez, writing on taxes for About.com, observed, "Same-sex married couples are now considered married for federal tax purposes after the Supreme Court decided that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act was unconstitutional in the case of the United States v. Windsor.

Previously, such couples were required to file federal tax returns as unmarried persons. Filing status could still be an issue for same-sex spouses who live in a state that does not recognize same-sex marriages. We're waiting for the IRS to provide taxpayers with guidance on how to handle this question. In order to address this issue, the IRS can go in two different directions. They could allow such couples to file as married, or they could allow state law to determine the marital status for federal tax purposes."

**But the Supreme Court** ruling is creating changes that could impact Indiana. It is paving the way for U.S. military members and federal employees to file joint tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service, and state departments of revenue will likely follow suit. Earlier this summer, Secretary of State John Kerry announced the Department of State will equally consider same-sex couples' and opposite-sex couples' visa applications.

Indiana University Maurer School of Law professor Steve Sanders told Indiana Public Media that because immigration is dealt with on the federal level, same-sex couples living in states like Indiana that don't recognize such marriages, will still be able to get spousal-based visas.

"That does seem to be the upshot. The federal government can't force Indiana for Indiana law purposes or anything that Indiana controls to recognize your marriage, but you know people will leave their state to go get married somewhere else," he said. ♦





## Lugar talks 'red line' after ghastly Syria chem attack

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — The images we've seen this week are grotesque, disturbing and may be just a preview of what the future holds.



The chemical attacks – apparently by the Syrian government against rebel strongholds outside of Damascus – have killed an estimated 1,300, including dozens of children.

In a civil war against the Assad regime, more than 100,000 people have been killed as Iran, Russia and Hezbollah have supported the government. But the chilling specter is the potential for Al Qaeda to not only take power in this

fractured state, or part of it, but to gain control of Syria's chemical stockpiles.

Former U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar spent the last 20 years of his Senate career trying to prevent this type of attack, forging the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Act that initially took aim at the decaying nuclear, biological and chemical stockpiles in the old Soviet Union. Over time, Nunn-Lugar worked to rid Albania of its chemical stockpiles

In a statement to *Howey Politics Indiana*, Lugar said this morning, "One year ago, while in Moscow, I made a public suggestion that the United States and Russia work together to secure and destroy chemical weapons in Syria.

Recent reports on the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and the destabilizing effect the conflict in Syria is having on the broader Middle East, underscore the continuing importance of the United States seeking to work with Russia and our NATO allies to ensure that chemical and biological weapons in Syria and elsewhere are identified and destroyed."

**Lugar was defeated for reelection** in the Republican primary in 2012, leaving a void in Congress on who will continue the crusade to stabilize and eliminate the WMD stockpiles. There has been notable success, as states such as Ukraine, Belarus, Albania and Kazakhstan have given up their stockpiles.

But the events in Syria raise the nightmare scenario of terror networks obtaining chemical shells. As Nunn-Lugar officials explained on an August 2007 tour of Russia,

one sarin gas shell strapped in C4 plastic explosives and carried in a suitcase could kill tens of thousands of people in a Western subway or sports stadium.

There is little doubt that if Al Qaeda obtained this type of weaponry, it would raise the terrorism stakes to harrowing levels.

**In 2005, then-U.S. Sen. Barack Obama** traveled to Russia with Lugar, forging an alliance that prompted the two to write legislation to expand Nunn-Lugar to cover conventional weapons. As a presidential candidate in 2008, Obama cited his relationship with Lugar at his campaign kickoff in Springfield, Ill., and his Democratic National Convention acceptance speech.

President Obama now finds himself accountable for what he identified as a "red line" exactly a year prior to this attack, should Syria gas its own people.

"We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus," Obama said on Aug. 20, 2012. "That would change my equation. . . . We're monitoring that situation very carefully. We have put together a range of contingency plans."

The White House said it was trying to confirm the reports independently but that the allegations pose a test for the embattled Assad, who has said he wants to disprove allegations of chemical weapons attacks.

Lugar said on MSNBC this morning, "The President is going to have to deal with Congress on these issues. The 'red line' . . . means going to war. Essentially, the President said there would be enormous consequences. He needs to start outlining what would be involved. This is very dangerous because we may be aiding people who will use the arms against us and our allies."

Lugar said that during his 2012 visit to Russia, he urged them to "draw up a plan to capture the chemical weapons in Syria" with the United States

**This atrocity poses a test for President Obama.** He faces a similar scenario President Bill Clinton did during the genocide in Rwanda and Serbia. Clinton did not act in Rwanda, and eventually bombed Serbia at the behest of U.S. Rep. Frank McCloskey.

The U.S. public has little appetite for another ground excursion in a Middle Eastern country. But bombing runways and stockpiles, no fly zones, and special ops taking out WMD should be on the President's table for a swift decision. ❖





## There's still a wist for Mitch in 2016

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Call it the wist for Mitch.

While the 2016 presidential cycle begins in earnest next year with a dozen or so hopefuls, and the nibbling has already begun in Iowa and New Hampshire, there is a two-year window for the eventual Republican nominee to get into a race that for the first time in decades does not feature a "presumptive nominee." U.S. Sen. John McCain stretched that a bit in his 2008 run, but he was the key rival to the last presumptive nominee to move into 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, Texas Gov. George W. Bush in 2000.

It is the best route to the White House, with governors and gubernatorial wannabes Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Bush43 achieving the ultimate political rung for any earthling.

U.S. Sen. Dan Coats told HPI last spring that with the approval rating for Congress wallowing in the single digits, Republicans should turn to a governor in 2016. And there are lots of governors and former governors who look in the mirror and ponder a future president: New Jersey's Chris Christie, Bobby Jindahl of Louisiana, Scott Walker of Wisconsin, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Ohio's John Kasich, South Carolina's Nikki Haley, New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, Texas Gov. Rick Perry and, here in the Hoosier state . . .

. . . former Gov. Mitch Daniels.

**Actually, the least kept** secret in the Indiana Statehouse is Gov. Mike Pence's presidential aspirations, that cast a shadow over his conduct during his first legislative session. Kyle Robertson, Pence's 2012 campaign manager and executive director of the Indiana Republican Party, sent out a Town Hall Magazine cover story by New York Daily News columnist S.E. Cupp on Pence this week in

which he is called the GOP's "Face of the Future" and suggests that "Mike Pence may be the GOP's best chance at the White House in 2016."

But a persistent Republican murmur in many circles these days isn't about Pence, it's about Daniels, who appears to be ensconced into academia and just two years into a five-year term as president of Purdue University.

**It comes from many** quarters, from former Statehouse associates, to golfing buddies, to county chairs, officeholders and friends.

Coats is a classic example. When he identified a governor as the Republican nominee-to-be, the name he brought up was Daniels. A conversation with Pence about a potential run hadn't happened.

Now, Daniels wouldn't touch this one with a 10-foot pole. He became politically "celibate" when he was

hired by the Purdue Board of Trustees a little more than a year ago.

Since taking the reins in January, he has ignited a similar restructuring that he did at the state level. He is questioning the status quo, has frozen tuition, taken aim at mid-level bureaucrats and in a sprawling letter released within days of taking the helm, painted a mural of emphatic change coming to academia, with much of it taking place beyond the control of the calcified ivory towers. Online learning is taking the

place of on-campus dorms. Students are taking classes for free from such noble stations as MIT, UCLA and Stanford, with the successful collecting letters of recommendation from their remote professors.

The academia of tomorrow could very well face the kind of gripping change that has confronted newspapers, book publishers and retail stores, TV networks, the music business and beyond.

The Hoosier Republicans who dare mention Daniels in the context of 2016 express in their wist the need for a canny strategist and tactician to take aim at what will be an open White House. They suggest that Daniels came to



Then Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in 2012.





an assessment that President Obama would not be defeated for reelection, and that 2016 would present the type of year for another American revolution. Jefferson talked about the "revolution of 1800" as overshadowing the one he had scripted 24 years earlier.

What about the Daniels family "female caucus" that denied the 2012 run? The daughters are older, building their own families. The Daniels divorce and remarriage has been vetted and is old news. The resources would be there, particularly if Jeb Bush decides not to get in.

**The scenario that is conveyed** is this: Despite RNC Chairman Reince Priebus's attempt to alter the 2016 nomination process, too many state laws become obstacles. A wide field forms early and the right carves up "moderates" like Gov. Christie, who might be an early frontrunner. In 2011, Daniels observed that the nominating process begins way too early. His allies suggest he waits until the fall of '15, resigns from Purdue, lines up the Bush money, and enters late. His strategic and tactical acumen provides a late dash of excitement. If he wins one of the early caucuses or primaries, the field eats his dust.

"I would be shocked," is how one influential Republican reacted to the scenario. Daniels had set the stage in May 2011, steered potential in-state rival Pence to the governor's race, had the resources lined up, and no clear frontrunner. His retail politics prowess would have contrasted with the Romney stiffness and lack of the common touch. Romney stayed in Hiltons and Waldorfs; Daniels would be figuring out how to work the shower head in the

Cedar Rapids home of Joe Precinctworker.

But in walking through the scenario, the degree of incredulity recedes.

What about Gov. Pence's political aspirations? I wrote a column in the winter of 2011 suggesting that the time was . . . was then.

Pence's problem on the home front is that he barely won the governor's office with 49% while Romney polled 56%. He tacitly watched Sen. Lugar get thrown overboard, then nearly lost when Richard Mourdock's implosion waves rocked the GOP vote, with females jumping ship in droves.

Pence is now faced with a predecessor contrast, and it has not been pretty. When the emergent Daniels administration untracked in 2005, there was little doubt who the alpha character was. His lieutenants had whips they would crack. Agency heads were sent into the hostile villas and burgs to advocate great change. Daniels could sell a tax increase in doughnut counties to build an NFL stadium in downtown Indy.

**Pence faces a persistent 8.4%** jobless rate that he will soon own. The epic decisions facing his administration summon the need for the kind of pragmatism that Daniels used in the wake of the IMB/FSSA fiasco.

The fact that Pence is learning to ride a Harley has the fretful potential of putting Dukakis in a tank.

Mitch for president in 2016? Yes, shocking, should it happen.

But Hoosier Republicans are talking about it. ❖

## Will Hillary peak too early . . . again?

By **CHRIS SAUTTER**

WASHINGTON – What's going on in Hillary land?

The conventional wisdom was that after retiring as Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton would lie low for a year or more and quietly begin to prepare for 2016. After all she is considered the odds on favorite for the Democratic nomination for president. Why make yourself a target before it is necessary? Why not let the glow from her tenure as ambassador to the world remain for as long as possible?



Instead, rather than retreat from public view to recharge after four exhausting years at the State Department following a gru-

eling presidential campaign, Ms. Clinton has jumped into the fray with a recent speech to the ABA on voting rights and a planned series of "major policy addresses" on issues like national security to be delivered in the fall of 2013.

**The Super PAC "Ready for Hillary"** has been clearing the way for a presidential run for months. And, many of Hillary's long time loyalists like Harold Ickes and James Carville are publicly on-board as well as some top Obama campaign staffers such as 2012 field director Jeremy Byrd. In short, the 2016 presidential campaign is underway, much to the chagrin of the White House.

So why is Hillary Clinton re-emerging onto the public stage so soon?

One theory is that she needs to display an early sign of strength to convince Vice President Biden to stay out of the race. A Wall Street Journal piece Monday disclosed that close advisers of Biden have concluded he can win the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination even if Hillary Clinton runs and they are now outlining steps for him to take to prepare for a potential candidacy. As a sitting Vice President, he can attract money and support. And Biden is nothing if not entertaining. If Hillary were to trip



up or run another underwhelming campaign, Biden would be there as the alternative.

Another theory is that Hillary wants to nail down her left flank before she formally enters the race — a lesson from her failed 2008 campaign. Both Barack Obama and John Edwards ran to Hillary's left in the early months of her last campaign and both finished ahead of her in Iowa. Why allow someone like Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who has enormous potential among grassroots Democrats in states like Iowa and New Hampshire, to surprise her as Obama did?

Whatever the reason, her early activities beg the question of whether Hillary Clinton will peak too early just as she did in her previous campaign.

Already pundits and opinion editorial writers are warning that Ms. Clinton is in danger of repeating her mistakes of 2008. Dan Balz of The Washington Post points out that her front-runner status could produce a cautious and plodding campaign reminiscent of her first one.

New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd says Clinton must clearly articulate the rationale for her candidacy: Is it an insurgency motivated by the goal of electing the first woman president or is it restoration of the popular Clinton era?

To some degree these concerns ignore the objective differences between the 2008 and 2016 elections. Clinton is in a much stronger position than she was in her previous run.

**Then as now, Clinton** enjoyed a large lead in the polls for the Democratic nomination. Yet, then there was considerable doubt about whether she would be a strong general election candidate. It was still too close to the Bill Clinton presidency with all its drama.

Many Democrats were looking for a reason to bail out on Hillary's last campaign and Obama's historic candidacy gave them a reason. But the dignified way in which she fought back during the 2008 campaign (many forget that Hillary Clinton actually received more votes than Barack Obama during the 2008 nomination process) followed by four strong years as secretary of state has left her with much higher favorability ratings than before and made her a much more appealing candidate.

There are two tracks to the nomination — the inside or establishment track and the outsider or insurgent track.

The establishment candidate usually wins the nom-

ination but faces problems in the general election because Americans generally want change.

**An outsider often splits** the party, as George McGovern's candidacy did. But an outsider during the course of a campaign can also win over the establishment by convincing them of the power of his/her new ideas, as Bill Clinton and Barack Obama did. An outsider nominee with establishment credentials and support usually has the best chance of winning a general election.

Hillary is no outsider. But as a woman candidate,



she has the ability to combine her establishment credentials with a change message. Being a woman or a Clinton cannot be her rationale for running. But they can be powerful corollaries to her message.

There is a general sense in the country that it is past time to have a woman president and Hillary strikes most as the candidate most likely to break the glass ceiling.

**But a Clinton candidacy** that fails to provide a clear roadmap for where the country needs to go is one that is destined to failure. Certainly, that was the problem for her in 2008. If that becomes the case again, it opens the door for Joe Biden or even a newcomer like Elizabeth Warren.

There are unquestionably Democrats who are "ready for Hillary." The question is whether this time Hillary is ready to lead them. ❖

**Sautter is a Democratic consultant based in Washington.**



## Tim Roemer remembers his late father

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND - Jim Roemer was a child of Notre Dame. He was the son of a Notre Dame professor and grew up in the Harter Heights neighborhood adjacent to the university. As a little boy, he played hide and seek with other kids at Cedar Grove Cemetery on the campus. He was what they call a Double Domer, getting two degrees there. His were in economics and law. He later was general counsel, dean of students and director of community relations at Notre Dame.



Now, he will be buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery. He died Aug. 11 at age 83.

And although security is tighter now at the cemetery, if some little kids manage to sneak in to play hide and seek where he will rest, Jim Roemer wouldn't mind. He loved kids, especially his own five children and 13 grandchildren, and other kids, too, including disadvantaged ones he sought to help in the many community projects in which he participated.

"He was my hero," says Tim Roemer, Jim's son, a former congressman from South Bend who also served on the 9/11 Commission and was ambassador to India.

Tim, himself a Double Domer and with a son now a student at Notre Dame, credits his dad with teaching the lessons that led to his own opportunity to serve in Congress, be an ambassador and meet with presidents and other national and international figures.

Of all those he met, says the former congressman, his father "was the best person I ever met."

He has many stories to explain why - one about when he announced as a Democratic candidate for Congress in 1989, taking on a Republican incumbent. He would visit every county in the district in announcing candidacy and hold a news conference at each stop.

**After the announcement** in the first county, Tim recalls, his father was driving him to the next stop. So, he asked: "Dad, how did I do?"

"My father was always kind, but always honest," Tim says. His dad's reply: "Tim, you will get better."

He didn't say: "You blew it." He wasn't unkind.

Nor did he say: "Fantastic, son, you were brilliant." He wasn't untruthful.

What he also said was: "Here are some things you might want to improve on."

By the third or fourth county, Tim recalls, his message had improved, was sharper, as he launched his successful campaign to defeat Republican Congressman Jack Hiler.

**His father asked him to** help with one of the many efforts for kids, a National Youth Sports Program at Notre Dame for disadvantaged kids.

Father and son walked with some of those kids around one of the lakes at Notre Dame. Resident ducks quacked away.

"Have you ever seen ducks?" the then-congressman asked a youngster.

Reply: "No. Never seen ducks before. Never seen a lake before. But I wanna come some day to Notre Dame." Another Domer? Probably not. But at least that kid saw there were opportunities for something better, better than life in a troubled neighborhood.

His dad is his hero, but who were his dad's heroes? Martin Luther King Jr. and Stan Musial.

Tim recalls when he came home from school and found his dad crying. King had been assassinated. His dad told him: "A great man has died."

Sad, indeed. But the son soon wanted to go out to play baseball.

"No," he recalls his father saying. "Sit down. We need to talk about why he was a great man."

His father also regarded Musial, one of the best hitters in the history of baseball, as a hero. Not just because Musial was a consistent superstar, 1,815 hits at home for the St. Louis Cardinals and 1,815 on the road, but because he played the game without controversy, never once thrown out for arguing with an umpire, and he gave back to the community, to all kinds of causes in St. Louis.

**Tim says his father** taught him about baseball, how to throw and catch, and about public service, how to serve the public and not just yourself. How to play the game right.

A mass will be celebrated for James A. Roemer at 2 p.m. Thursday at the Basilica at Notre Dame. ❖

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





## High marks for Gary Mayor Freeman-Wilson

By RICH JAMES

GARY – Increasingly, people are singing the praises of Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson in terms of her efforts to turn around her city. The mayor is seemingly everywhere as she attempts to engage people and communities.



Gary is in much the same boat as was East Chicago during the 1999 Democratic mayoral primary. Native Hoosier Chris Sautter made a documentary of that race between incumbent Mayor Robert A. Pastrick and challenger Stephen R. Stiglich. At one place in the film, a Stiglich supporter said East Chicago had declined so much that it no long was possible to buy a pair of socks in the city.

It is much the same scenario in Gary where Freeman-Wilson has been at the helm for just a year and a half. Freeman-Wilson knows she can't rebuild the city on the empty promises of developers, which was the tactic used by her predecessor, the late Rudy Clay. The mayor knows she needs money to get the job done, and she knows the best source for money is the federal government, especially with U.S. Rep. Peter Visclosky, D-Merrillville, sitting high on the House Appropriations Committee.

**Freeman-Wilson** has been working religiously to strengthen the relationship between her city and the federal government. That became evident last week when the representatives of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Economic Development Administration and the U.S. Small Business Administration addressed area businessmen and elected officials on how the government can help the area.

Perhaps the most impressive thing to come out of the meeting was Freeman-Wilson's call for a regional approach and more cooperation among local communities across the area.

"It's important to understand this

message is not about Gary, our challenges or our potential," Freeman-Wilson told the gathering. "It's about Northwest Indiana. As Gary, Ind., goes, so does the region. As the region goes, so does Gary, Ind."

**High on the list of projects** that can have a far-reaching impact on the area is the conclusion of the runway expansion at the Gary/Chicago International Airport. It is not a coincidence that Gary legislators earlier this year won a commitment from the General Assembly to study the viability of a deep-water port at Buffington Harbor, less than a mile from the airport. With the airport, the advent of a port and the existing railroad network, it could make Gary the cargo hub so many have talked about for years.

But Freeman-Wilson knows her city can't grow without getting rid of blight, which translates into less crime. She has had an ambitious program of razing abandoned homes in the area of Indiana University Northwest to make way for the University Park project between the city, the university and the school city.

**It also could result** in the building of a teaching/trauma hospital, which is another of the studies the General Assembly approved earlier this year.

There seemingly is more hope for a better Gary than there has been for years. ❖

**Rich James has been writing about state and local government and politics for more than 30 years. He is a columnist for The Times of Northwest Indiana.**

**HOWEY**  
*Politics Indiana*

When Chris Cillizza of the *Washington Post* posed the question to readers across the nation - Who's the most influential political journalist in your state? - the answer in Indiana was this: Brian A. Howey of *Howey Politics Indiana*. Since 1994, *Howey Politics Indiana* has provided news, analysis and commentary from throughout Indiana and Washington D.C. Howey reaches the most influential insiders with his newsletters and the masses with his weekly newspaper column and [www.howeypolitics.com](http://www.howeypolitics.com).

*Photo: Howey with Richard Lugar and Sam Nunn in Russia.*

**The Washington Post**  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2007

**"The Best Indiana Political Reporter: *Howey Politics Indiana* editor Brian Howey."**



## Economics remains a strong teacher

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS — Every student who has taken introductory economics will tell you that “if the price rises, less will be bought.” This is so firmly believed that it has been called “The Law of Demand.”

We even have a little picture or diagram that shows a line flowing from the top left downward toward the bottom right. And we put a big D on this line for Demand. So it hath been said and so it shall be.

Sadly, the student and the instructor often forget that both the picture and The Law are simplifications used to teach distracted and indifferent freshman. What we often neglect to say is, “All things being equal,” by which we mean all things being the same.



Yet where in the world will we find all things being the same even an hour apart? The number and variety of persons passing a particular street corner does not remain the same throughout the day, or from day to day, let alone month to month or year to year.

Our Law of Demand, nonetheless, is the rock upon which economics rests and this minor imperfection is not enough to throw out the whole doctrine of economic thought.

Come with me now away from this cool stream of lofty contemplation and enter the hot house of empirical reality. Let’s see what is actually happening to prices and the quantities purchased of things we know well.

We’ll start our adventure looking at food services and accommodations (everything from a burger and a room at Motel Four to dinner and a suite at the Ritz). Over the past two years (second quarter 2011 to the same three months of 2013) prices rose 5.3 percent in the United States, but our consumption rose by 6.1 percent.

**Prices went up and so** did the quantity we consumed, a violation of the Law of Demand. But not so. Perhaps our incomes rose during those two years. Perhaps the numbers of persons increased. Both would be very rational, ordinary changes. Nothing here to get excited about.

For all consumer goods and services, prices climbed by 2.9 percent in those two years while the quantity purchased by us rose 4.2 percent. The biggest price increases were found in financial services and insurance

(6.2 percent), but there the Law of Demand did well with total purchases rising a mere 0.5 percent.

**On the other side**, the greatest fall in prices came in recreational goods and vehicles (bowling balls, ice skates and RVs), a whopping 11.5 percent decline that was accompanied by a 22.7 percent increase in the quantity sold. The Law of Demand is looking mighty good.

While many question the fundamental wisdom of Federal Reserve Chairman Bernanke, they might do well to consider the fact that basic economics has a strong record of guiding us to the right answers. Even a simple “model” used to teach freshman, flawed as it might be in some respects, leads us to better answers than does the jabbering of those who never bothered to learn basic economics.

Who are those folks? You’ll find them all across the AM radio dial, sitting on your county council, and representing you in Congress. ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, writer and speaker. Contact him at [mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com](mailto:mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com)**

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## Gallup: Common Core unknown

PRINCETON, N.J. - A recently released Gallup poll indicates only a third of Americans have heard of a new set of academic standards known as the Common Core, even though Indiana lawmakers are in the process of debating the standards (Bray, Indiana Public Media).

The poll also shows that many of those who know about the Common Core don’t know much about the actual standards. Indiana adopted the Common Core in 2010. But state lawmakers voted this spring to pause implementation of the new standards pending a formal review.

Stand For Children spokesman Jay Kenworthy says that makes Hoosiers more aware of the Common Core than their national counterparts.

A Howey Politics Indiana poll conducted in Indiana last April showed 54% of Hoosiers believe the state should move forward with the Common Core and 26% were opposed to the program, but he says proponents could be more vocal in their support of the standards.

“Education organizations, and business leaders, and higher education leaders who are out there supporting Common Core just need to be out there in public, ahead of this, dispelling myths, talking to parents and concerned members of the community,” Kenworthy says. ❖



**Tom LoBianco, Associated Press:** When former Gov. Mitch Daniels was pushing to keep liberal historian Howard Zinn's readings out of Indiana classrooms three years ago, he had a definite idea of what should be there instead: conservative education leader Bill Bennett's review of American history. News that the new Purdue University president tried to have Zinn's "A People's History of the United States" kept from classrooms has sparked a surge in demand for the 1980 book at Indiana libraries. It also put Daniels on the defensive over the past month, drawing condemnations from academics nationwide and having him reiterate his support for academic freedom in higher education even as he is steadfast in his belief that Zinn is wrong for lower grades. Emails obtained by The Associated Press through a public records request show Bill Bennett had much more favor among Daniels and his advisers. In January 2010, when Daniels discovered the board of education had changed the state's textbook rules to allow Bennett's book, he quickly asked how soon his advisers could get copies of "The Last Best Hope" in classrooms. "This is excellent to hear ... now someone make my day and tell me that his book is becoming the textbook of choice in our state and I'll buy beers for everyone," he wrote in a Jan. 27, 2010, email to then-schools chief Tony Bennett, Bennett's former chief of staff, Todd Huston, and David Shane, a longtime Daniels colleague, Republican donor and school board member. Bill Bennett has a strong national following, dating from his time as Ronald Reagan's education secretary. And he's been an incredibly popular figure in Daniels' circle of education reformers. A little more than a week after Daniels asked how to get Bill Bennett's texts in schools, he wrote an exchange dubbing Zinn "anti-American" and looked for ways to "disqualify the propaganda" he said was being used in teacher preparation courses. ❖



**Doug Ross, NWI Times:** What's the going rate for public corruption? We saw two important sentences pronounced this week, and I'm still scratching my head over them. Former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. stole \$750,000 in campaign funds and was sentenced to 30 months behind bars. Former Hammond City Councilman Al Salinas took a \$10,500 bribe and was sentenced to 42 months in prison. Is there fairness evident here? There are differences between the two cases, to be sure, but there are a lot of similarities, too. Jackson pocketed money from private donors who believed in him but were betrayed. Those donors wanted to sway decisions made in Congress -- why else would you help get a candidate elected? -- and, perhaps, in federal agencies where Jackson could exert some influence. While in Congress, Jackson accomplished a good

deal for his district. The Deep Tunnel project is an excellent example. Flooding in that district has been greatly reduced because of the tens of millions of federal dollars Jackson directed to this massive public works project, and the jobs it created didn't hurt, either. Salinas took \$10,500 from the owner of a tree service looking for influence, namely a city contract. Salinas will spend more time behind bars than Jackson as they both contemplate their similar sins. "I'm very sorry," Salinas said at his sentencing hearing as he pleaded for sympathy. "I have embarrassed my name, the Salinas name." He also embarrassed his city. But Jackson arguably did worse. ❖

**David Orentlicher, Indianapolis Star:** With comprehensive immigration reform faltering in the face of political polarization, the need for electoral reform continues to grow. Partisan conflict prevents members of Congress from responding to key national problems, whether illegal immigration, budget deficits, gun violence or global warming. Many observers believe we can defuse political polarization by eliminating the gerrymandering of congressional districts. In this view, partisan conflict has escalated because of the way that electoral maps are drawn.

Party strategists employ sophisticated computer technology to create safe Democratic and Republican seats whose representatives do the bidding of party extremists. But we won't solve political polarization by eliminating gerrymandering. Even if all districts were drawn on a nonpartisan basis, we still would end up with a highly polarized House of Representatives. Rather than getting rid of gerrymandering, we should replace bad gerrymanders with good gerrymanders. We also should pursue other political reforms. It is not surprising that observers worry about partisan gerrymandering. Fewer and fewer congressional seats are competitive. From 1976 to 2002, for example, the number of safe Republican districts almost doubled, while the number of safe Democratic districts rose by 45 percent. Moreover, in many states, the voting strengths of the parties do not correlate well with their representation on Capitol Hill. In Indiana, for example, Republican candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives outpolled Democratic candidates by a 53-45 percent margin statewide last November. Yet Republicans hold 78 percent and Democrats only 22 percent of Indiana's House seats. Observers are correct when they worry about the increase in political polarization and the mismatch between voting strength and representation. But neither problem is driven by partisan gerrymandering. Even if electoral mapmakers drew simple, compact districts without looking at voting data, congressional polarization would be high, and voting strength would not correlate well with representation. ❖





## Syrians use chemical weapons

**BEIRUT, Lebanon** — The Syrian government pounded rebellious areas east of the capital, Damascus, early Wednesday, and antigovernment activists said some rockets included chemical weapons that killed scores of people, and possibly hundreds (New York Times). Photographs and videos showed rooms full of lifeless bodies laid out in rows, some wrapped in white cloths, others lines up in mass graves. Some showed victims staring and motionless, others twitching uncontrollably.

The Syrian government vociferously denied mounting any chemical attack, and its ally, Russia, blamed Syrian rebels for launching a rocket with an unknown chemical agent that had caused civilian casualties, calling it a preplanned effort to accuse the government of President Bashar al-Assad of using chemical weapon. The White House says it's 'deeply concerned' about reports that chemical weapons were used by Syria's government against civilians. White House spokesman Josh Earnest says the U.S. strongly condemns any use of chemical weapons and says the Obama administration is urgently working to gather information.



## Neal joins an obscure company

**INDIANAPOLIS** - News that Heather Willis Neal was leaving Gov. Mike Pence's administration to join Limestone Strategies was met Tuesday with a resounding, "Who?" Several lawmakers had never heard of the political and communications consult-

ing company. And its profile on the Internet is near nil (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). No website. No phone number. No Facebook page. There is only a reference to Cam Savage and Kevin Ober being principals in the company on their LinkedIn pages. Savage previously was communications director for former Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett, and helped run campaigns for Mitch Daniels, Dan Coats and Todd Rokita. Ober is the former executive director of the Indiana Republican Party, who left in December 2010. Neal's name recently surfaced in the A-F accountability scandal with her former boss Bennett, who resigned his Florida post. She was serving as Pence's legislative director at the time emails involving her became public about changing a charter's school's grades. Limestone announced Monday she will head its lobbying efforts instead. The Secretary of State's Office shows Limestone was created as a company in January 2011. The group has given one political donation -- \$1,000 to Mike Pence's campaign committee in June 2012. But it received \$61,000 from Tony Bennett's re-election campaign in 2011 and 2012 for "campaign consultant" work. It also provided Rep. Todd Huston campaign management services worth more than \$18,000 for his state-house run in 2012.

## Gun protests at Coats office

**FORT WAYNE** - Organizing for Action, which describes itself as a nonpartisan social advocacy group, will demonstrate Wednesday night outside the Fort Wayne office of Sen. Dan Coats (Francisco, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). The news organization Politico recently referred to OFA as "President Barack Obama's political arm," while others have called it the successor group to Obama's 2012

re-election campaign. OFA volunteers will take part Wednesday in what the group says is "a gun violence prevention event." In a news release, OFA praised Senate legislation that would have expanded background checks on gun buyers. The group said "an obstructive minority" of senators defeated the bill in April. Although OFA does not identify Coats as one of those senators -- he did vote against the legislation -- the group asks "what will it take for Sen. Dan Coats to take action?"

## 275 supporters at Amtrak hearing

**LAFAYETTE** - More than 275 people gathered Wednesday to hear a panel of experts discuss the pros and cons of maintaining passenger train service between Indianapolis and Chicago (Mikus, Post-Tribune). Amtrak officials and passenger rail advocates explained potential benefits to the state, while state legislators and transportation experts warned about high costs. In October, the Indiana Department of Transportation will decide whether to keep, expand or end the rail service between Indianapolis and Chicago, known as the Hoosier State line. A study conducted by the department is scheduled to be released in September, and will look at costs and benefits of either ending or expanding the service. In 2012, the federal government decided it would no longer fund trips under 750 miles after Oct. 1. Sen. Brandt Hershman, R-Buck Creek, offered an amendment to the state budget earlier this year that offers INDOT the authority to decide the future of the Hoosier State. Ray Lang, Amtrak's chief of state relations, said that if the state decided to continue services, the federal train corporation would cover about 20 percent of the operating costs.