



Republican flirt with a strongman

The allure of Trump may be the anti-Putin

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosier Republicans are watching the Donald Trump presidential candidacy with all the fascination of witnessing a traffic accident. Many see a candidate who is articulating their deepest frustrations. But in the end,

they know that Trump lodged at the top of the 2016 ticket could be a harbinger for

widespread collateral damage.

Part of this enthrallment could be something as simple as this: They want a strongman at the helm. A capitalist Vladimir Putin.

Polling shows that Republicans are distrustful of



government. They are deeply critical of congressional leadership. They view President Obama as one of the worst presidents ever, underscored by his mealy national address Sunday night. They see the decline of the middle class and an evil and violent world sprawling beyond anyone's control, and they view Trump as a man who is not beholden to campaign contributors, who tells it like it is.

Between now and Super Tuesday on March 8, we will learn whether Trump can

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Exploding cigar Governor

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Years after the last cigarette was snuffed in the legislative lounges, there is still smoke in the air, now emanating from the second floor in the exploding cigar Mike Pence governorship. It comes a year after

JustIN obscured his HIP2.0 victory, and months after the RFRA fiasco broadsided him.

The first term governor is presiding over an economy with a 4.4% jobless rate, asphalt is pouring into road beds at a furious pace, and his 2016 rematch with John Gregg finds the opposition floating above the issues like a phantom. He should be on an upswing.

Yet, what happened



“I just received a death threat yesterday in my own office, and it’s largely in part to this toxic environment. You have demagoguery taking place from people who are seeking to become president of the United States.”

- U.S. Rep. Andre Carson



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earlier this week was entirely predictable. Tuesday morning, we learned that Catholic Charities had resettled a Syrian refugee family of four in Indianapolis despite Gov. Pence's Nov. 16 "ban" on such happenings. It came less than a week after Bishop Joseph Tobin spent an hour in the governor's office where Pence made his plea based on "security concerns" following the Nov. 13 Paris terror attacks.

"I listened to the governor's concerns regarding security and prayerfully considered his request that we defer from welcoming them until Congress had approved new legislation regarding immigrants and refugees," Tobin said in a statement. "I informed the governor prior to the family's arrival that I had asked the staff of Catholic Charities to receive this husband, wife and their two small children as planned."

This was followed by a perplexing press conference Tuesday afternoon at the Indianapolis International Airport, where Pence defended his "ban" that in reality never had any teeth, no statutory origin or judicial precedent. This Syrian family, and the one that detoured to Connecticut just after he announced his "ban," had left Syria well before ISIS formed and metastasized, and had gone through a two-year vetting process. It came as the New York Times reported that of the 780,000 refugees legally entering the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001, none of them had been caught or even linked to a domestic terror attack.

If you hear the late Congressman Earl Landgrebe's echoes of "don't confuse me with the facts," you are not alone.

"I do strongly disagree with the call that would ban Muslims from this country," Pence told reporters at the airport. "My concern with the Syrian refugee program has to do with the country of origin. It has to do with the fact that Syria is a war-torn country whose own regime has been exporting terrorism for years. For me it's about identifying a country of origin where we have security concerns. This is about public safety. It's not about identifying individuals on the

basis of nationality."

And when reporters pressed him, Pence said his administration wouldn't deny state benefits with resettled refugees. So the ban amounted to political theater, and a huge opening for Indiana Democrats, where spokesman Drew Anderson charged, "When will Mike Pence admit that his knee-jerk, Donald Trump-like reaction to 'bar' Syrian refugees from the State of Indiana was not only the wrong thing to do, but also puts our 'Hoosier Hospitality' reputation in jeopardy? Hoosiers deserve to have a governor who won't embarrass our state over a lousy attempt at political gain. We can do better."

This all came a day after Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump declared his position of a "total and complete" shutdown of Muslims – even U.S. citizen Muslims traveling abroad – entering the United States. It invited a furious rebuke from most of his fellow Republican contenders (sans Sen. Ted Cruz), Hillary Clinton and the Democrats, and even former Vice President Dick Cheney. Pence found him lumped into that narrative, with the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette's Niki Kelly describing the governor as navigating "a political minefield."

A minefield of his own making.

Pence went on to say "I do strongly disagree with the call that would ban Muslims from this country," before he was asked if he would support Trump should he win the Republican nomination. Pence responded, "I will be voting for the Republican nominee for president of the United States." On the same day, Republican National Committeeman John Hammond III told the IndyStar, "I think most Indiana Republicans consider him unfit to hold the office of the presidency. Those comments are completely outrageous and irresponsible. And I think they're seen that way by most Republicans."

Ka-boom.

That Pence made his Syrian refugee "ban" decision a mere 72 hours after the Paris attacks, along

with 24 other Republican governors (and one Democratic governor), made it seem like a contrived and overt political move. That his administration couldn't cite specific authority brought the process to the fore, as opposed to the security issue, was a problem unseen on all of the recent Indiana gubernatorial administrations.

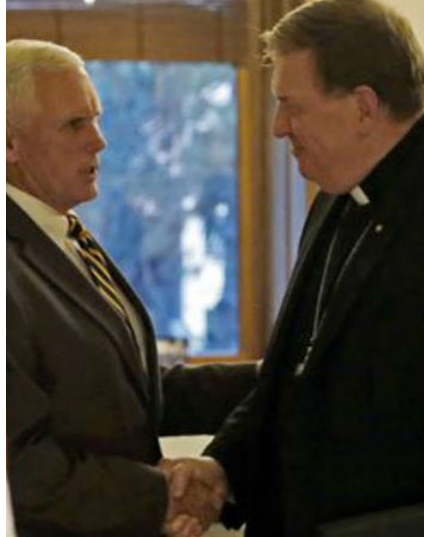
When Pence last met with the press on Dec. 2, he urged "national security and intelligence" figures to weigh in on the refugee threat. This came on the same day that a bipartisan letter from former secretaries of state Madeleine Albright and Henry Kissinger and former officials such as David Petraeus said, "We believe that

America can and should continue to provide refuge to those fleeing violence and persecution without compromising the security and safety of our nation. To do otherwise would be contrary to our nation's traditions of openness and inclusivity, and would undermine our core objective of combating terrorism." The other signers were the who's who of the U.S. security, defense and intelligence strata, including Samuel R. Berger, former National Security advisor; Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, former National Security advisor; General George W. Casey, Jr., U.S. Army (Ret.), former Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; Michael Chertoff, former secretary of Homeland Security; William S. Cohen, former secretary of Defense; Stephen J. Hadley, former National Security advisor; and Chuck Hagel, former secretary of Defense.

Last Saturday, at the University of Indianapolis, former senator Richard Lugar, arguably the state's most influential foreign policy expert, said, "I believe we ought to admit refugees. I believe there should be proper vetting and research on who they are, where they are coming from. We ought to be very cautious. But at the same time there are many in the state who would like to be helpful."

Asked by HPI if he had confidence in the refugee vetting process by faith-based organizations, Lugar explained, "I think there is a security concern, but I think it's a relative one," Lugar responded. "I think the vetting they have received in most cases is not only adequate, but from the humanitarian standpoint, we have a responsibility. In other words, I would not be in favor of an absolute prohibition of Syrians coming to Indiana or the United States. But I think it does behoove us all to think not only Syrians, but people of any nationality as to what factors are part of their lives. In this San Bernardino situation, it was very difficult to determine the motivation of people who do shootings."

When it comes to national security matters, the Pence record is problematic. He voted for the Iraq War



Gov. Pence meets with Bishop Tobin on Dec. 2 at his Statehouse office.

Resolution in 2002 that paved the way for the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, the civil war that followed, the Surge, the catastrophic withdrawal by the Obama administration, which created the vacuum that ISIS now fills.

As a congressman, Pence and U.S. Sen. John McCain toured the Baghdad Shorja bazaar on April 1, 2007, where Pence, dressed in a Kevlar jacket and helmet with U.S. helicopters flying overhead, observed, "Thousands and thousands of Iraqis were moving about in regular everyday life like a normal outdoor market in Indiana in the summertime." A day later, 21 Shorja vendors were massacred by insurgents.

Ka-blam.

When Pence announced his "ban" on Nov. 16, his administration appeared to be unaware that a Syrian refugee family was in the pipeline, with the Family Social Services

Administration spokeswoman at first saying no such family was en route, then backtracking over the next couple of days. FSSA spokeswoman Mari Lemons issued a painful response following student Statehouse File reporting: "I will say again now as I did on both of those occasions, that the answer I gave was a misstatement, a mistake on my part – one I openly acknowledged and for which I have repeatedly apologized. I didn't – and still don't – recall the question being asked or answered, and I had absolutely no intention of misleading TSF or anyone else."

That was not only a painful read, but it essentially exposed poor staff work. Before a governor makes an emphatic stand such as banning refugees from an entire nation, the legal authority, the activity within the administration, an awareness of external events and comments, all need to be understood and properly managed into a coherent set of talking points and actions.

Ka-boom.

Along with the defiance of Catholic Charities, the Pence administration faces a lawsuit over the matter from the American Civil Liberties Union, seeking a federal injunction stopping Pence from barring the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Indiana. "The actions taken by Gov. Pence to block Syrian refugees from entering the state of Indiana are not in line with Hoosier or American values," said Carleen Miller, Exodus Refugee executive director.

Perhaps the most treasured asset of the Pence portfolio has been his moral authority. He has repeatedly described himself as "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican" in that order. This episode now pits him against faith-based organizations that have long been part of his political underpinnings. It gave an opening to Connecticut Gov. Dannel Malloy, who criticized Pence's refusal to accept refugees saying, "If you believe in God, it's the morally correct thing to do."

Boom.

This all comes eight months after Gov. Pence

signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, then in clumsy fashion could not defend it on national TV, an episode that not only ended a potential presidential candidacy, but plunged the Indiana brand into national and international scorn. The Indiana brand continues to take a beating over the Syrian story today.

And the hard stuff is just over the horizon. It comes as Pence inconspicuously floats above the debate over civil rights extension, something everyone is debating, except the governor. Multiple Howey Politics Indiana sources are saying that legislative Republican leaders are warning members that a rejection of a civil rights expansion could result in the NCAA Headquarters leaving the state, which would be an economic and political disaster.

If that issue isn't enough to fill a plate (or ash tray), the next big conflagration will be the A to F ISTEP scores, which promises to place hundreds of schools in the Pence political base into the flunk zone, while teachers

and educators are ready to reactivate politically the way they did in 2012 against Supt. Tony Bennett. This worries Republicans throughout Indiana.

Pence's Syrian refugee ban is potentially good politics which will play well to the wavering Pence base, even if it intertwines him into the Trump narrative.

There are huge policy and political challenges ahead, including what is setting up to be one of the most controversial and nationally conspicuous General Assembly sessions in memory, following the RFRA exploding cigar last spring. Going into this session, legislators in both parties question Pence's leadership. They don't see an accessible staff, they see poor staff work and communication, there is no Pence enforcer.

The Syrian refugee "ban" is now a paper tiger. Republican leadership and the rank and file are prepared to move over, around and by the governor, who occupies a big, cavernous office. ❖

Strongman, from page 1

sew up the Republican nomination, or whether a multi-candidate primary will take place here in Indiana on May 3.

Prof. Larry Sabato of the University of Virginia, writes today, "The Donald Trump Show continues to dominate the airwaves and the polls, and the other candidates seem mere apprentices by comparison. The billionaire's appeal is very disproportionately tilted to the blue-collar half of the Republican electorate -- many are the old Reagan Democrats who have long since defected from the party of their fathers. Much of the college-educated half of the party, by contrast, views Trump with disdain, but they are fractured and split among the rest of the contenders. Will the anti-Trump majority in the GOP ever coalesce around one or two of his opponents? Surely that will happen eventually, but will it be in time to stop Trump's nomination?"

Almost two-thirds of likely 2016 Republican primary voters favor Donald Trump's call to temporarily ban Muslims from entering the U.S., while more than a third say it makes them more likely to vote for him according to a Bloomberg Politics/Purple Strategies PulsePoll, an online survey conducted Tuesday. It shows support at 37% among all likely general-election voters for the controversial proposal put forward by the Republican front-runner. Some 64% of likely Republican primary voters saying they favor the idea. That includes 52% who say they strongly support the proposal. Among all likely general-election voters, including Democrats and indepen-

dents, 18% say it makes them more likely to back Trump, while 33% say less likely and 44% say it has no impact.

In a New York Times/CBS Poll this morning, 35% of Republican primary voters support Trump, up 13 points since October, and his highest level of support in CBS News polling. Ted Cruz (16%) has moved into second place, while Ben Carson, who led the October poll, has dropped to third.

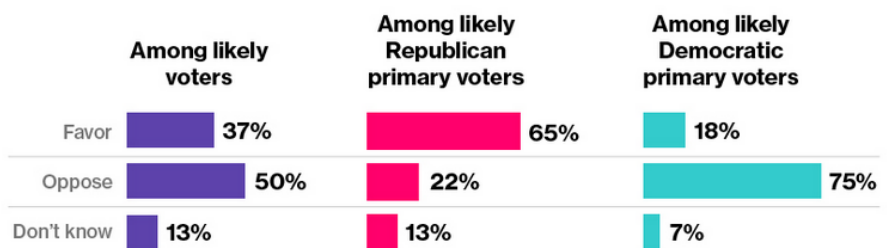
Trump is backed by 35% of Republican presidential primary voters in South Carolina, followed by Ben Carson with 15% and Sens. Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio with 14% each, according to a Fox News poll released today.

While many Hoosier Republicans Howey Politics Indiana has talked with say their party brothers and sisters seem to be living "vicariously" through Trump's radical positions, such as banning all Muslims from entering the country, they believe he will likely fade.

Former senator Richard Lugar explained at the University of Indianapolis last Saturday of the Trump

Trump's Statement on Muslims

This week, Donald Trump called for a temporary ban on all Muslims who are citizens of foreign countries from entering the United States. Do you favor or oppose this proposal?



Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Bloomberg Politics/Purple Strategies online PulsePoll of 605 likely 2016 general election voters, from December 8, 2015. Overall margin of error: +/- 4.0 pct pts

phenomenon, "Millions of Americans are very angry. They are very disturbed about the lives they are leading at the present. They have little confidence in governments at all levels, and this may be a way of manifesting their unhappiness, which in some cases is very extreme."

Clark County Republican Chairman Jamey Noel observed, "The discussion that I hear is the Trump will fade. I don't think he could win an Indiana primary but if he did, he would be supported in the general election by Republicans. I haven't seen anyone actively working/supporting Trump so far. All the local discussion is 'the more I hear about Rubio, the more I like him.'"

Noel, who is also Clark County sheriff, said Florida U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio "seems to be gaining a lot of momentum and is the only candidate that I have seen with boots on the ground thus far."

A Politico Magazine story by Adam Wren on Vigo County, the national presidential bellwether, centered on the growing popularity of Trump. "All I ever heard about was Trump," said Vigo Republican Chairman Randy Gentry of manning the GOP booth at the county fair last summer. "The people who came into the fairgrounds said, 'Can I have a Trump button? Can I have a Trump sign?' At that point, he was just kind of starting this whole thing out. If you poll people on the street here, Trump would be a very strong candidate here right now. Carson's doing really well, too. I don't hear Rubio's name very much here. ... The top two names I hear are Trump and Carson ... but it's so early in the process."



Allen County Republican Chairman Steve Shine said, "There is a lot of excitement about a lot of individuals, Trump, Sen. Ted Cruz and Dr. Carson, probably because Carson is coming to Fort Wayne, with the talk and what he stands for prevailing now."

About Trump's rhetoric and bullying tactics, Shine said, "I can't speak for members of my party, but there are some very poignant things he says that are resonating with individuals, maybe not in the delivery, but certainly regards with the concept."

Former Indiana Republican chairman Rex Early was asked about whether Trump has political strength in Indiana. "Yes he does," Early said, as Trump campaign volunteers met at a nearby Antelope Club table, preparing his Indiana ballot access strategy.

But there are some cracks beginning to show. While the Indiana GOP congressional delegation (and U.S. Senate field) is mostly mute, and Gov. Mike Pence says he will support the party nominee even if it is Trump, National Committeeman John Hammond III told the IndyStar, "I think most Indiana Republicans consider him unfit to hold the office of the presidency. Those comments are completely outrageous and irresponsible. And I think they're

seen that way by most Republicans."

And U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan reacted to the Trump Muslim ban with an emphatic four words: "This is not conservatism."

Reuters political analyst Bill Schneider sees Trump as the anti-Obama. "Obama's terror speech ... highlights reasons for Trump's rise," Schneider explained. "What we're seeing right now in American politics is class warfare. It's not the working class versus the 1%. It's the working class versus the educated elite. In fact, one of the richest men in the world is leading the revolt: Trump. Trump's support for the Republican nomination is not defined by ideology or age or gender. It's defined by education. Among GOP voters with a college degree in the latest CNN poll, Trump comes in fourth with just 18 percent. But he has a huge lead among non-college voters, 46 percent. No other candidate comes close. Today, in the United States, the richer you are, the more likely you are to vote Republican. The better educated you are, the more likely you are to vote Democratic."

Pew Research observed, "A year ahead of the presidential election, the American public is deeply cynical about government, politics and the nation's elected leaders in a way that has become quite familiar. Currently, just 19% say they can trust the government always or most of the time, among the lowest levels in the past half-century. Only 20% would describe government programs as being well-run. And elected officials are held in such low regard that 55% of the public says 'ordinary Americans' would do a better job of solving national problems."

In Indiana, evidence of that is 20% voter turnout in the 2015 municipal election, and one of the worst turnouts in the nation during the 2014 mid-term elections. It is a state where Gov. Mike Pence won with just 49% of the vote, the first governor not to crack 50% in 50 years, while Republicans tossed Lugar out of office in the 2012 Republican primary despite his status as not only an international statesman who had successfully kept weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of jihadists, but he was the all-time leading GOP vote getter in the state's history.

Last weekend, the New York Times (described by Trump as "that failing newspaper") analyzed 95,000 words that Trump had uttered in the campaign context. It reported: "Something bad is happening," Donald J. Trump warned New Hampshire voters Tuesday night, casting suspicions on Muslims and mosques. "Something really dangerous is going on." On Thursday evening, his message was equally ominous, as he suggested a link between the shootings in San Bernardino, Calif., and President Obama's failure to say "radical Islamic terrorism." "There is something going on with him that we don't know about," Mr. Trump said of the president, drawing applause from the crowd in Washington.

The Times reported: The dark power of words

has become the defining feature of Mr. Trump's bid for the White House to a degree rarely seen in modern politics, as he forgoes the usual campaign trappings – policy, endorsements, commercials, donations – and instead relies on potent language to connect with, and often stoke, the fears and grievances of Americans. The most striking hallmark was Mr. Trump's constant repetition of divisive phrases, harsh words and violent imagery that American presidents rarely use, based on a quantitative comparison of his remarks and the news conferences of recent presidents, Democratic and Republican.

The emerging label for Trump: Demagogue. It's defined by Oxford Dictionaries: A political leader who seeks support by appealing to popular desires and prejudices rather than by using rational argument. Synonyms: rabble-rouser, agitator, political agitator, soapbox orator, firebrand.

Political analysts and mainstream Republican leaders have been thinking throughout much of 2015 that Trump will cross a line and will begin to plummet in the polls. Trump has offended the disabled with gestures aimed at a New York Times reporter. He has sparred with reporters from Fox News' Megyn Kelly at the first debate in August to Univision's Jorge Ramos. In Iowa in November, his Twitter feed suggested "too much Monsanto in the corn creates issues in the brain," and then in a now legendary rant in Fort Dodge, asked, "How stupid are the people of Iowa? How stupid are the people of the country to believe this crap?" That was in reference to Dr. Ben Carson's earlier youthful violence. He disparaged candidate Carly Fiorina, telling Rolling Stone reporter, "Look at that face!" He's called Mexicans - part of the nation's fastest growing voting bloc "rapists and murderers."

He used broken English to impersonate Asians and at a Florida rally, talked of Carson's Seventh-Day Adventist faith by saying, "I'm Presbyterian. Boy, that's down the middle of the road folks, in all fairness. I mean, Seventh-day Adventist, I don't know about. I just don't know about." As for U.S. Sen. John McCain, a Vietnam War POW, Trump said, "He is not a war hero. He is a war hero because he was captured. I like people that weren't captured, OK? I hate to tell you. He is a war hero because he was captured."

In the Iowa context, Trump has yet to be rebuked. A CNN/ORC Poll of likely voters released on Monday showed Trump leading with 33%, followed by Cruz at 20%, the fading Ben Carson at 16%, and "establishment" candidates Marco Rubio at 11% and Jeb Bush at 4%. A Monmouth Poll had Cruz leading Trump 24-19%.

And since the Paris terror attacks on Nov. 13, Trump has taken after Muslims, referring to non-existent news video showing "thousands" of Muslims in New Jersey celebrating the fall of the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001. It seemed to hit a crescendo on Monday when Trump called for a "total and complete shutdown" of all Muslims coming into the United States. He said Muslims had a "great hatred towards Americans" and added, "Without looking at the various polling data, it is obvious to anybody the hatred is beyond comprehension. Where this hatred comes from and why we will have to determine. Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life."

That outburst brought a reaction from retiring U.S.

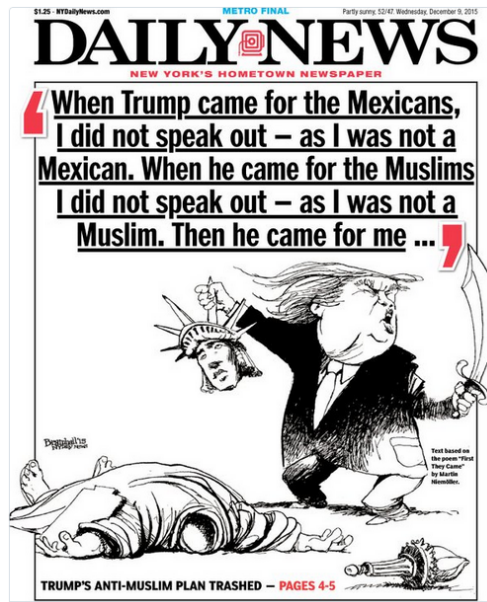
Sen. Dan Coats, who said, "Once again, Donald Trump has chosen bombastic rhetoric over sound judgment. There are Muslims around the world, such as the King of Jordan, who are vital partners of the U.S. We need to continue to work with moderate Muslims who are also in the crosshairs of ISIS simply because they reject violent jihad. Muslims who reject the barbaric tactics and religious perversion of ISIS are essential to defeating this evil organization."

But there was silence (with the exception of Rep. Luke Messer) from the rest of the Indiana congressional delegation and many 2016 candidates. Attorney General Greg Zoeller, running for the Republican 9th CD nomination, was an exception, texting Tuesday afternoon, "As a lawyer and as state attorney general,

I swore to an oath to the U.S. Constitution. Monday's rhetoric that calls for barring people based solely on their religion is protected under our Constitution as free speech, but appeals to the worst impulses of fear and anger. Calling for a religious test is an affront to our constitution and avoids the serious policy discussion our nation should have."

Zoeller added, "Those of us who wish to see the constitution preserved, protected and defended now should repudiate such rhetoric."

While most of Trump's fellow presidential candidates (Sens. Ted Cruz and Rand Paul notable exceptions) did repudiate Trump's Muslim ban, many conservative commentators did not, perhaps revealing why many Hoosier candidates are mute, fearing they will alienate likely primary voters. Ann Coulter tweeted, "GO TRUMP, GO!" Laura Ingraham weighed in on Twitter: "Anyone who thinks @realDonaldTrump comments will hurt him don't know the temperature of the American ppl." Red State's Erick Erickson wrote, "And while I agree with my friend



Russell Moore on the merits of Donald Trump's proposal to bar Muslims from entering the United States, including Muslim America citizens currently outside the country, I feel compelled to defend Donald Trump from the reaction to his proposal by many of my other friends."

This is, obviously, not your father's Republican Party.

Chairman Shine explained, "People may not necessarily vote for him. But given the alternative of Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee, many will vote for the Republican nominee regardless of whether it is Cruz or Trump. She is not acceptable. I think people while at this time may applaud Donald Trump, I'm not sure they would vote for him."

Indiana has a long history of intolerance. Legendary Civil War Gov. Oliver P. Morton ran on the 1856 "No Nothing" ticket for a nativist party wary of foreign Catholics and Jews. The Republican Party and the Statehouse was taken over by the Ku Klux Klan, culminating in the election of Klan Gov. Ed Jackson and legislative majorities in 1924. The state gave rise to the John Birch Society in the 1950s. In 2006, Indiana legislative Democrats sought to derail Gov. Mitch Daniels' Major Moves Indiana Toll Road lease to "foreigners," in this case a relatively benign Spanish-Australian business consortium. And now Gov. Mike Pence tried in ham-handed fashion to ban Syrian refugees without the authority to do so, putting him at odds with Catholic Charities and other faith-based groups.

In all of these cases, political gains were sought with fear and loathing for "foreigners." While popular in the first drafts of history, most of these moves were later repudiated with time, a broader perspective and revealing events and commentary.



The murder of a Statehouse clerk by Klan strongman D.C. Stephenson and his conviction prompted the collapse of the GOP/Klan by 1928. Gov. Daniels won reelection with 58% of the vote in 2008, two years after he "sold" the toll road to foreigners while his approval rating fell dangerously low at the time of the deal.

The allure of Trump to Hoosiers and Americans, many in the uneducated sectors of the electorate, is that of a strongman. They witness Putin impressing his will with the partition of the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, and the dominance over the media and the legislature. Many Republicans view this as a needed step to improve the American station in the world. The news media is now an adversary, government is not to be trusted, and the wave of massacres ranging from white supremacists to American-born and -bred jihadists ignite cascading gun-buying binges. Americans and Hoosiers are arming.

Trump is their strongman. Whether his stay at the top of the polls is a relative flash in the pan, or a more enduring trend, is an answer we'll discover in 2016. ❖

A Trump nomination would be GOP disaster

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – I don't think Republicans are that dumb. They're not dumb enough to nominate Donald Trump for president. OK, maybe they are. If so, I'm wrong in thinking that political sense, common sense and concern about the nation as well as the party will prevail.

Historically, of course, the major parties have made some poor political decisions in picking presidential nominees. Barry Goldwater, the Republican nominee in 1964, led the GOP to political disaster, losing 44 states and causing such ruin to the party in



state-level races that Indiana elected not only a Democratic governor but also 78 of the 100 members of the Indiana House. That's right, 78 percent of the House went Democratic in traditionally Republican Indiana.

George McGovern, the Democratic nominee in 1972, was disastrous for his party, losing 49 states and dooming Democrats in myriad state-level races. In Indiana, there

was election of a Republican governor and 73 Republicans to the Indiana House.

Both Goldwater and McGovern had fervent supporters, as does Trump, sure that their choice, though offending many, would win and do wonders for the nation. They did wonders for the opposition party. The winners, Lyndon Johnson in '64 and Richard Nixon in '72, weren't exactly beloved figures. They won because the vast majority of voters found their opponents unthinkable for president.

Would Trump bring a GOP disaster? Republican leaders around the nation fear that he would. Trump retains his solid support of nearly a third of potential Republican primary voters, and that's enough to win in a field with so many candidates. Presumably the field will narrow.

But what happens if Trump actually wins the nomination and goes one-on-one with a Democratic nominee appealing to all the groups Trump now insults? His base cheers when he insults immigrants, women, African-Americans, Muslim-Americans and anybody else that he and they enjoy hearing him ridicule.

However, large percentages of all those groups could have the last laugh as they vote against Trump in November. So would independents and moderates in both parties who wouldn't want a business boss with a gigantic ego and refusal ever to back down or compromise actually trying to lead the nation.

Trump couldn't fire Putin. Couldn't fire China. Couldn't fire the Senate or the House. Couldn't tell Mexico, "Build my fence or you're fired." Couldn't tell millions of immigrants vital in the workforce, "You're fired. Leave now or I'll put you in a concentration camp surrounded by a beautiful fence."

Indiana Republican leaders fear that Trump as ticket leader would doom the already shaky reelection chances of Gov. Mike Pence, enable Democrats to win the U.S. Senate seat at stake in 2016 and give Democrats an enhanced chance to win more congressional seats, even in the 2nd District, where Republican U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski has appeared safe. And how many seats in the Indiana House would Democrats, now a pathetic minority, win in a Trump disaster?

How about the Democratic presidential nominee? I don't think Democrats are dumb enough to nominate Bernie Sanders for president. Maybe they are. But this nation isn't ready to elect a socialist, even one who defines his philosophy in more moderate terms.

Hillary Clinton, presumably to be the Democratic nominee, is strong with the groups Trump alienates, especially women. The fear that nominating Trump would elect

Clinton motivates Republican leaders seeking an alternative.

Are there potential Republican nominees with a better chance for the wider appeal needed to defeat Clinton? Sure. Bet you can think of at least a couple. One of them needs to emerge from the pack to battle Trump more evenly, consolidating support as other candidates run out of funding and drop out. This contest could last a long time, through the Indiana presidential primary in May and even until the Republican National Convention in July.

The Donald the nominee? I don't think Republicans are that dumb. ❖

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

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The trickle-down Trump effect

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – In the panic over Donald Trump’s early polling lead, it is seldom recognized that the anti-Trump (as in, “I will never vote for Donald Trump”) level is generally well over 50% and has hardened. It isn’t a protest against the general direction of the country, it is opposition to him. Trump, like Hillary Clinton, has the advantage of heavy name identification. Both also have the disadvantage, with high, firm negatives. Trump is Hillary’s political ace card.



When the voting begins we don’t know many things including: 1.) Will Trump supporters actually vote for him, or do they just want to shake up the system by telling pollsters that because they are angry? 2.) Are Trump supporters going to actually vote? 3.) How many opponents, especially serious

ones, will he have in each state (i.e. will 30% be enough to win primaries)? 4.) How many Democrats and “Democrats masquerading as Independents” will cross over to vote for Trump to help their weak candidate? Those are but a few of the unknown variables.

The only known variable is this: If Trump is the Republican Presidential nominee, Indiana in 2017 will be led by Gov. John Gregg, represented by two Democrats in the U. S. Senate, likely have at least two more Hoosier Democrats in the U.S. House, the Indiana Democrat state representatives will fill more than one van, and – thanks to staggered elections – Senate President Pro Tem David Long will sit nearly alone among Republicans in the annual Howey Politics Indiana Power 50. In other words, to act like this wouldn’t be a bigger disaster than even the 1964 Goldwater race for Republicans is just silly. In retrospect, Goldwater seems calm, intellectual, loving, and cautious.

But Trump will not be the nominee. I don’t even believe there is a small chance of it happening. I do believe that if Trump has the delegate lead going into the convention, or the second or third most, he will then justify in his own mind (he has very, very low standards when it comes to judging himself) that he was “ganged up on.” Then he will run, as was always the likely scenario, as his soulmate Democrat George Wallace did in 1968, as an independent candidate. Just to be clear, because Trump would doom the party, is simplistic and peddles hate, and has never been a conservative or a Republican, Trump is going to be ganged up on. So justifying it to himself will be more than self-delusional: It will be real.

The more practical problem for down ballot is the

Trump voters, the trickle-down Trump effect. This group includes conservatives absolutely infuriated by the hypocrisy of the liberal gun control advocates, who demand gun laws be changed in spite of endless futile efforts to do so, but claim ObamaCare is the law so is thus sacrosanct; who accept Trump-like bullying of those with moral disagreements over homosexuality or those with scientific arguments different than theirs on global warming; and who refuse to acknowledge obvious radical Islamic terrorism as having a common core, etc. (pick your subject). Trump voters also include an expanded category of the “don’t trust Washington” populist movement that always exists. Many, if not most, of those will likely vote for Mike Pence for governor and the Republican candidates for other offices. Or not vote. They are unlikely to vote for liberals like Gregg and Hill.

More problematic are the smaller but significant faction of Trump supporters who are more racist and, to pick a somewhat unfair word that captures bullies and male chauvinists, “wife beater” voters. Statistics show such people exist in high numbers in this nation and there is little doubt who they support for president.

Intensely anti-Trump voters will also not vote for Republicans who have “catered to” the bigoted faction of the Trump vote. Not criticizing Trump and separating from him, but then echoing the conservative complaints, logically associates such candidates with his style and bigoted comments as well. Assuming Trump runs as a third party candidate, which is the most likely scenario, he is likely to attract 10 to 20% of the voters depending upon many variables, including those yet unknown. But since neither party currently tops 54% statewide in a two-way scenario (not to mention the Libertarian Party variable), so these voters are an election wild card.

In spite of all this, I believe Gov. Mike Pence will survive. Richard Mourdock’s debate error tanked all the Republicans in 2012, and Tony Bennett was also dragging down the ticket. Pence’s large lead fell because of other variables. Had the election lasted another week, even an out-of-date candidate like Gregg might have won.

I believe Pence has charted a conservative path that has aggravated many Republicans at one time or another but has a proven conservative record which provides a path to victory, though likely by a narrow margin. He will win unless other variables again drag him down.

Pence’s biggest threat, in my opinion, is the trickle-down Trump effect combined with Marlin Stutzman as the Senate nominee. Stutzman labeled incumbent Dan Coats as unacceptable in 2010, backed Eric Miller over Mitch Daniels, and launched this campaign attacking what most of his active supporters call “Republicans in Name Only (RINOs).” Those blasting Pence as a fake conservative are not Todd Young and Eric Holcomb supporters. This type of rhetoric blasting other Republicans appeals to all Trump voters. If Coats, Daniels, Pence, and Richard Lugar – Indiana’s longest serving senator in history – are Republicans In Name Only, then there is no path to victory.

A Senate nominee tied to the extremist rhetoric will doom Pence as well as elect another Democrat senator from Indiana.

At the end of the day, the Indiana Republican Party could hold almost all the currently Republican held offices, including that of the governor, in spite of a Trump

third party candidacy. But I would argue that the Senate primary nominee, as well as the trickle-down Trump effect, will be a critical variable. ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.

Trump wreaks havoc in GOP, Clinton coasts

By CHRIS SAUTTER

WASHINGTON – In his breakthrough book “Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus,” historian Rick Perlstein reveals how the Republican establishment in 1964 continued to be in denial about Sen. Goldwater’s rise to the nomination all the way to the California primary in June when he defeated New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. By then it was too late to stop Goldwater and he went on to an historic loss to President Lyndon Johnson.



Obviously, there are many differences between 1964 and 2016, but the similarities are striking. The GOP establishment

this cycle has been similarly in denial about Donald Trump. Month after month Republicans and the media have predicted his demise as Trump has continued to ride high in the polls. Last week’s CNN/ORC poll puts Trump at 36%, 20 points ahead of bad boy Ted Cruz who is now in 2nd place nationally. Conservative outsiders have topped the field since July. Even if the establishment were able to take down Trump, he might not be replaced by anyone remotely acceptable to them.

Like 1964 when Goldwater occupied an empty field for months, there is a vacuum of message in the 2016 race that Trump has filled. At the outset of the cycle Republicans bragged about the quality of candidates in 2016. Grover Norquist, conservative president of Americans for Tax Reform, called them the “strongest field the Republicans have had since Reagan ran” in 1980. Instead, the politicians on Norquist’s list have since dropped out or are

languishing in single digits due to their inability to connect with the Republican base. The abject failure of any of the establishment candidates to articulate a message that resonates is to blame for Trump’s success.

The national Republican Party is in total disarray as Donald Trump has dominated the early nominating process. Unless the dynamics change dramatically soon, the GOP is poised to nominate an unelectable presidential candidate who, because of his outrageous and sometimes racist positions, would provide Democrats with their most one-sided victory since 1964. The possibility of a deadlock in the process or that a third breakaway party could emerge from the turmoil is also increasing.

Just as in 1964, Republican Party leaders have no intention of allowing the outsider candidate to win the nomination. And, just as in 1964, establishment leaders have no idea whatsoever how to stop him. The more they attack Trump, the more his supporters dig in and his poll numbers rise.

Worse, new party rules designed to help an establishment candidate such as Jeb Bush lock up the nomination early may, in fact, now favor Trump because they bind delegates to the outcome of primaries and caucuses. If Trump wins early primaries, delegates are bound to him even if he begins to fade later. And, the process is more front-loaded than ever increasing the odds that Trump gets on a roll. The new rules mean Trump could very well arrive at the Republican Convention in Cleveland with enough

delegates to, in effect, dictate the outcome even if he cannot win the nomination himself.

Political pundits have traditionally said that there are but “three tickets out of Iowa”—meaning that only three presidential candidates can emerge viable in the wake of Iowa’s first-in-the-nation event. If true this cycle, the Republican nominee would likely be one of Trump, Ben Carson, or Ted Cruz or possibly Marco Rubio.

Some observers, including Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, have predicted there will be more than three candidates coming out of Iowa this year. Even if that were the case, there

Obviously, there are many differences between 1964 and 2016, but the similarities are striking. The GOP establishment



Donald Trump and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz are the hottest Republican presidential candidates.

is little room at the top for establishment candidates like Jeb Bush, Chris Christie, or John Kasich, none of whom are even seriously competing in Iowa.

Iowa puts more pressure on these establishment candidates to perform well—meaning finish in the top three—in New Hampshire or drop out. The only way to stop Trump is to get him in a one-on-one race since his ceiling seems to be no higher than 40%. Would Bush drop out or does his financial advantage assure he remains in the race until he runs out of money? Many are betting on the talented Rubio, who looks like he is still in college, to be the last one standing with Trump. But Rubio has to contend with both Bush and Cruz. You have to win or at least show to move on in presidential politics.

Just like 1964, the Republican establishment is perplexed as to what rank and file Republicans see in the frontrunner. In fact, there is nothing mysterious about Trump's appeal. Like Goldwater, Trump's appeal lies in his take-charge style, his willingness to speak his mind even when (especially when) it is impolitic to do so, and his success in the business world. Trump's message of making America great again is pure Ronald Reagan. And, Reagan's message descended directly from Goldwater, for whom he campaigned hard in 1964. For all of Trump's controversial statements, no other candidate in the 2016 race has a message anywhere nearly as powerful as Trump's.

Meanwhile the mess in the Republican race has eclipsed the Democratic contest, helping Hillary Clinton consolidate her support and avoid the brutal scrutiny of earlier this year. Clinton seems to have found her footing over the past several months. The e-mail controversy has faded and her solid appearance before the House special committee investigating Benghazi has reassured a majority of Democrats that she is the strongest candidate with the best chance of winning the general election. Currently, Clinton leads Bernie Sanders by 27% in the USA Today poll released late last week.

However, Sanders continues to poll well in Iowa and New Hampshire. One recent poll has him still ahead in New Hampshire but most Iowa polls give a slight edge to Clinton. Sanders will need to win both early contests to have any possible shot at the nomination. Short of a seriously unfavorable FBI report regarding national security breaches from her private e-mail server or a collapse due to unforeseen circumstances, Clinton will almost certainly be the Democratic nominee.

Of course, things happen in political campaigns and dynamics shift. We have witnessed such a shift in the past couple of weeks with Paris and San Bernardino. However, contrary to some predictions, those events appear to have strengthened both Trump and Clinton within their respective parties while Sanders and Rubio seem to have been hurt. If past is prologue, Republicans could be headed for a disaster of 1964 proportions. ❖

Sautter is a Democratic media consultant based in Washington.

Presidential race poised for Indiana

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – It's the time of year when dreams of sugar plums dance in the heads of all good little boys and girls. But what about Republican Party chairmen and political junkies? On those nights when I climb into my trap-door jammies and start to drift off into ethereal sleep, my dreams turn to a contested election in the Indiana Republican presidential primary.



I bought my 2016 calendar recently and the first date I double circled was May 3, the date of the Indiana primary. Next year, I may forget my anniversary, the birth dates of my wife and children and the dates to pay my property tax, but I can double dog guarantee you that I won't forget May 3.

May 3 has historically been a relatively insignificant date. According to the "On This Day" website, we can mine historical gems about May 3 such as: 1382; Battle of Beverhoutsveldn; the Ghent town army beat a drunken Bruges militia. 1654; Bridge at Rowley Mass begins charging tolls for animals. 1936, Joe DiMaggio made his major league debut getting three hits. But this May 3, in the great Hoosier State, has the potential to be different. This may be the year when Indiana Republicans get a say about who their presidential candidate will be in November.

As much as I enjoy watching Republican presidential candidates make the trek to Iowa in a seemingly endless procession of months-long genuflecting leading up to the all-important Iowa caucuses, I long for a time when Senator Bluenose of Seagram's Point, N.H., must drop by and eat Coney dogs and discuss Hoosier basketball with the locals at the Cone Palace in Kokomo. I want to see Elmer Hindscratch take 10 minutes to enlighten Governor Ganderwurst of Georgia on the finer points of milk bottle collecting. Every four years we must witness these events in Bugtussel, Iowa. I ask, "Why not Indiana?"

The most interesting element of a potential contested Presidential primary in Indiana is that, as Hoosiers, our long-awaited political slugfest may not feature just two candidates, but could bring a short-bus load of aspirants to every nook and cranny to Abraham Lincoln's boyhood backyard.

A surreal campaign and new Republican National Committee rules may shake up Indiana more than when the 1938 circus sideshow star Buxom Betty fell off of her stool during the Sunday matinee. It's gonna be big, I tell you!

Republican National Committee rules promulgated

after the sad 2012 election are intended to provide greater competition and diminish the power of a campaign with big early money. States holding primaries on unapproved dates would be punished by the loss of National Convention delegates. Any state which holds a primary prior to March 15 is forced to allocate delegates on a proportional basis to the candidate's votes received, and not based on winner-take-all. States holding their primaries later in the election cycle were presented with a Hobson's choice requiring significant changes.

Before this latest round of RNC-induced rule changes, Indiana held its primary where people voted on both presidential candidates and delegates to the Indiana Republican Convention. Prior to the Indiana Republican Convention, district Republican committees would meet and select three delegates and three alternate delegate candidates from each congressional district. The candidates would be nominated at district caucuses conducted at the state convention. While the nominated candidates generally prevailed, the opportunity existed for nominations to come from the floor in the caucuses. Now, because of the RNC rule changes, Indiana's relatively late primary date and a Republican National Convention that has been brought forward several weeks, Indiana Republicans will be doing things differently and this will impact how Indiana delegates to the national convention are apportioned and selected.

The new rules adopted by the Indiana Republican Party call for anyone expressing an interest in serving as a delegate to the national convention to file a form indicating that interest in March. In early April, the nine Republican sets of congressional district officers will meet to prepare a slate of candidates for delegate. These slates will be either voted up or down during May district meetings. If approved, delegates are deemed selected. If the slate is voted down, nominations will be taken from the floor of the district meetings.

Because Indiana Republicans were required to change our procedures due to the compressed time between the state convention and the national convention, there was no practical way to allow for selection of delegates at the state convention. Because delegates to the Republican National Convention will not be selected at the state convention, RNC rules require that Indiana change from a winner-take-all format to one that allocates the delegates votes on the first convention ballot to the candidates who won each congressional district. Therefore, 27 of Indiana's national delegates will go to whoever wins the congressional districts. The remaining Indiana delegates will go to the overall state winner.

In short, these rule changes forced by the RNC will mean that Indiana is in play and with numerous potential candidates, it could get really interesting. Let's say Carly Fiorina doesn't have the financial resources to run a statewide campaign. She could focus on three or four congressional districts and grab a few delegates. It's a whole new ballgame!

Who do I see coming to Indiana as candidates in May? Donald Trump will hit the stump in Beanblossom. He will come as a much-deflated candidate as the 70 percent of Republicans who don't like him make their voices heard at the polls. Ben Carson will make the rounds because he has money and an army of true believers. Ted will cruise into Covington because I believe that he is really running for the 2020 nomination. Lt. Governor Sue Ellsperman will bring Carly Fiorina and her low-budget campaign to the bigger cities where women voters will want to be heard.

Jeb Bush has got cash, supporters and a long-term game plan for victory. He'll come to the Hoosier State and pop up north, south and central. Marco Rubio, who is starting to emerge as a consensus alternative to Trump, will still be alive and kicking as May 3 rolls around.

Finally, either John Kasich or Chris Christie will compete in Indiana. I don't really see how both will have the money and support to compete this late in the cycle.

I can't believe that I just predicted that seven presidential candidates will be competing for Indiana's delegates on May 3. Perhaps it is the circus-like atmosphere, that has so focused attention on Donald Trump's incredibly successful campaign to sew up every flap on the Republican tent, that has kept other candidates from breaking out of the herd. It will take the massive delegate distribution in the March primaries to bring a cold dose of reality to the race for the Republican nomination. My crystal ball just doesn't shrink the field enough at this time. So seven it is, until it isn't! No, when I drop off to sleep at night, I don't dream of sugar plum fairies. I dream of my secretary buzzing my office to tell me that it's Donald Trump on line two and I tell her, "He'll have to call back because I'm talking to Jeb and Marco's on hold." Now that will be the Greatest Spectacle in political racing! ❖

Dunn is chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.

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YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?

Hill kicks off attorney general campaign

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Four-term Republican Elkhart County Prosecutor Curtis Hill kicked off his attorney general campaign Monday morning in a state that has led in domestic methamphetamine production for the past three years. It is a topic that Hill knows all too well. “It 2003 we had a serious meth problem,” Hill told Howey Politics Indiana. “It was different at that time. We had a great deal of it coming in from Mexico and out west. A lot of meth in the rest of Indiana was more rural. We put an aggressive program in place and sent a lot of people to prison.”

By 2008, the meth labs had dropped in Elkhart County, though Hill says that taking the key ingredient of pseudoephedrine and making it a prescription drug won’t end the problem, though he supports that move. “It’s a positive impact if we’re able to stop more cooks,” he said of the meth labs that spring up in rental properties, motels, and even WalMart parking lots. Hill has testified before Congress on “Methamphetamine in the Heartland” and served as a presenter for the Northern Indiana Methamphetamine Summit sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President of the United States.

“Here’s the interesting thing,” Hill said, “the key to the entire meth discussion is that the demand is still there even if you stop the cooks. Even though we cut off a major supply, you still have people in this area that are meth abusers. The typical user is a 34-year-old white male laborer. Making PSE a prescription will certainly impact the meth labs springing up, but it doesn’t necessarily stop it. Meth will find a way.”

Supporters of making PSE a prescription say it will curtail much of the collateral damage that includes 360 children found on meth lab sites (only about 10% of those exposed), the more than 100 police, fire and municipal code officials injured in dealing with meth labs, and the tens of thousands of dollars to remediate meth houses and sites. Many times, owners of these properties abandon them, leaving cities, towns and counties with damaged homes that go off the tax rolls.

Hill is facing a Republican convention nomination fight that includes former attorney general Steve Carter

and State Sen. Randy Head. Former Democratic Lake County Circuit Court Judge Lorenzo Arredondo is also preparing to run. If elected, Hill would be the first county prosecutor to become attorney general since Democratic Marion County Prosecutor Jeff Modisett was elected in 1996.

Indiana Republicans have never nominated an African-American for a statewide office, though Butler University Prof. Marvin Scott was nominated and lost a U.S. Senate race to Democrat Evan Bayh. Democratic African-Americans Pamela Carter (attorney general), Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and Dwayne Brown (clerk of courts) and Cleo Washington (treasurer) were all nominated, with Carter and Brown winning office.

Hill, who served 14 years under former Elkhart County Prosecutor Michael Cosentino, believes having a prosecutor serving as attorney general is an important factor. “As a prosecutor, you have decision making on a daily basis. We make the call on very serious matters, on life and death matters,” he said. “It’s the strongest background. I’ve been a prosecutor for four terms. The things that we see, interaction with legislature, it all feeds very well with attorney general.”

Hill notes, “We live in a very dangerous world.



Elkhart County Prosecutor Curtis Hill kicked off his attorney general campaign with the support of some 60 follow prosecutors while he has raised \$100,000 in the last few weeks. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

There is lots of focus on international issues. We are a divided nation many ways, political, socially, economic, spiritually. We have to focus on what’s going on in our backyard and the safety of all our residents, working with the courts, and influence legislation. We want to make sure we enforce personal property rights.” And, he said, it is “very important to focus on our state’s constitutional sovereignty. There are always federal and state issues that come into the crosshairs. We have to protect the interests

in the state. I believe in strong federal government, but sometimes they tiptoe in our lane."

"Justice and liberty are the cornerstones of our American heritage," Hill said Monday morning. "The role of the prosecutor within our American justice system is central and essential to the integrity of our society's success."

Hill is past president of the Association of Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys.

Governor: Smoking out John Gregg

Indiana Republicans are beginning to try and smoke Democratic gubernatorial candidate John Gregg out on the issues. Gregg has taken a stance on the civil rights expansion, backing the "four words and a comma" approach. But when it comes to other issues, Gregg isn't taking stances, other than that he thinks Gov. Mike Pence is an ideologue and dividing governor.

Republicans have attempted to get Gregg stances on the keystone pipeline and highway funding. Indiana Republican spokesman Robert Vane noted, "In his losing campaign to Mike Pence in 2012, Democrat candidate John Gregg proposed eliminating the sales tax on gasoline. Just last month, the House Democrat Caucus announced its fiscally irresponsible infrastructure plan, one that would recklessly spend down our state's reserves and limit our ability to fund schools and Hoosiers' healthcare needs. And how do the Democrats propose to fund their plan? By siphoning the sales tax on gasoline from the state's general fund and not replacing these monies, which fund education, health care and our National Guard, with any other revenue source. Obviously, these two schemes contradict each other. So, does John Gregg still want to repeal the sales tax on gasoline or does he stand with his fellow Democrats who want to use this tax to fund their unrealistic plan?"

On Nov. 6, Republican Governors Association spokesman Jon Thompson said, "While Gov. Mike Pence has strongly led and stood up for the Keystone XL pipeline, energy jobs and American infrastructure, Democrat John Gregg has been silent, instead choosing to stand with President Obama and extreme environmentalists. Now, John Gregg can't even muster an opinion, proving how out of touch he is with Indiana voters by offering a 'no comment' response when asked if he agrees with Obama's decision to block the pipeline. Even Indiana's top Democrat, Sen. Joe Donnelly, supports Keystone and puts Indiana over party on this issue. Hoosiers cannot afford an out-of-touch extremist who refuses to lead, like John Gregg as governor."

"What we've heard from John Gregg is pretty much nothing except he dislikes everything the governor is doing," State Sen. Carlin Yoder, R-Middlebury, told the Associated Press. Alluding to Gregg's campaign logo, which incorporates the candidate's facial hair, Yoder added: "You can only say, 'Hey, look at my mustache' so many times before you have to put out an original thought."

Gregg gets IPACE endorsement

Citing his commitment to strong public schools, the Indiana Political Action Committee for Education has endorsed Gregg and contributed \$100,000 to his campaign (WAMW). IPACE chairwoman Mary Putney says "John believes that every child deserves a quality public education, whether they live in Gary, Zionsville or Vevay".

Senate

Another Stutzman campaign shakeup

Indiana Republican Rep. Marlin Stutzman's Senate campaign replaced its media and digital strategists this week, capping off a widespread staff shakeup since he launched his bid in May. The moves come on the heels of another major staff departure in October, raising concerns about the state of his campaign (National Journal). Stutzman, who has been endorsed by the conservative Club for Growth and Senate Conservative Fund, initially rolled out a team of veteran campaign operatives with close ties to the National Republican Senatorial Committee. His initial approach assured Republicans that if he won the nomination, he would have an experienced team in place and avoid repeating mistakes that past conservative grassroots candidates have made. Since then, however, Stutzman overhauled his staff, replacing Washington veterans with outside-the-Beltway consultants who have more experience running insurgent campaigns. The late-stage shakeup is worrying even some of his allies about the state of his campaign. "I can tell you there have been email exchanges about what the hell's going on with Marlin Stutzman and his campaign," said one conservative strategist supporting Stutzman, who requested anonymity to speak candidly. "There is a cause for concern." Stutzman's electability has always been a concern for party leaders, given his reputation as an unwavering conservative in the House. He sits well to the right of the field in a three-way primary contest that includes his fellow House colleague, Rep. Todd Young. His early campaign approach, however, assured campaign officials they wouldn't be seeing a repeat of another Indiana Senate nominee, Richard Mourdock, whose inexperience cost the party a winnable Senate seat in 2012. Stutzman's first hires included former NRSC executive director Rob Jesmer and former NRSC deputy political director Terry Nelson, both partners at FP1 Strategies, which has close ties to the campaign committee. Brooks Kochvar, who worked on New Hampshire Sen. Kelly Ayotte's 2010 race, was Stutzman's general consultant, and Brendon DeToro, previously the chief of staff to fellow Indiana GOP Rep. Jacke Walorski, was named campaign manager. But over the past two months, that entire team has been replaced. On Thursday night, Stutzman announced in a Facebook post: "Exciting news for our campaign! We hired The Strategy Group Company to join our creative advertising team." His campaign confirmed Friday that FP1 was no longer working on the race, and

that they were bringing on Strategy Group Company, as well as Texas-based Harris Media for digital strategy.

Hill fundraiser in DC

Senator Heitkamp hosted an event for Democrat U.S. Senate candidate Baron Hill at her Washington house last night. Other Senators who attended and were listed on the invitation were Sens. Warner, Donnelly, Kaine, Carper, Heinrich, Wyden and Gillibrand.

Congress

Orentlicher to challenge Rep. Bucshon

Dr. David Orentlicher announced that he has filed documents with the Federal Election Commission to become a candidate in Indiana's 8th Congressional District. A former award-winning Democratic state legislator, Orentlicher is running against Republican incumbent Larry Bucshon to make Congress work for the 8th District. Orentlicher will make a formal announcement in early 2016. "Bill Clinton was right. If you work hard and play by the rules," said Orentlicher, "you should be able to provide a good life for your family and a better future for your children. That's not true anymore, and we need to make sure it is true again. We need to make the American Dream a reality for all Americans. That's what this campaign is about.



"It's not right when so many of our children never have a chance to succeed," declared Orentlicher. "Far too many children suffer because their parents can't find good-paying jobs, their schools are in decline, and their neighborhoods are plagued with drug use and crime. At one time, government made sure we had a strong middle class," continued Orentlicher. "Now, government works for the special interests. They dominate Congress with their big campaign contributions. And they dominate Larry Bucshon. Most residents of the 8th District no longer have a voice in Washington. The 8th District needs a representative who speaks for the district and a Congress that serves the interests of all Americans. We need to unstack the deck in Washington, D.C., so everyone gets a fair shake from their government and the United States once again is a land of opportunity for all of its citizens." David Orentlicher is an educator, physician, attorney, and former three-term member of the Indiana House of Representatives. He has practiced both medicine and law, and he teaches at Indiana University School of Medicine in Terre Haute, IU School of Medicine in Indianapolis, and IU Robert H. McKinney School of Law. This is not Orentlicher's first Congressional race. He ran in the Democratic caucus for the 7th CD seat following the death of U.S. Rep. Julia

Carson, finishing second to current U.S. Rep. André Carson in February 2008.

Legislature

Three seeking HD62 caucus nod

David Sabbagh, former Bloomington City Council member and current MCCSC board member, believes now is the time to send "a real, classic" Republican to the Indiana House (Tonsing, Bloomington Herald-Times). Sabbagh is one of four people now vying for the District 62 Indiana House of Representatives seat, vacated last month by Linton Republican state Rep. Matt Ubelhor. District 62 Republican Party precinct committee leaders will vote on Ubelhor's replacement at a caucus Dec. 21 in Bloomfield. A news release announcing Sabbagh's interest in the Statehouse seat read, "He believes core government responsibilities include fostering an environment that allows business and people to create jobs. He believes government must build necessary infrastructure. He believes education and safe public schools are important to the development of our state and the best way to help people out of poverty and to develop an educated workforce. ... He also believes that early childhood education is a key to preparing children to achieve success in school." Nathan Abrams, a Greene County commissioner; Jeff Ellington, a Bloomington firefighter and business owner; and Amy Lore, the Greene County General Hospital public relations, marketing and business development manager; are also candidates for the vacant seat.

Kenley faces primary challenge

Indiana Senate Appropriations Chairman Luke Kenley announced Wednesday he will seek reelection, a day after a Westfield businessman said he planned to challenge the powerful Republican in next May's primary (Howey Politics Indiana). "I have always been committed to making sure our state budget supports our priorities such as road funding, K-12 and higher education, and economic development and job creation, and that commitment will never waver," Kenley said. "Many elected officials tend to forget that every tax dollar our state spends was first earned by a hard-working Hoosier, and government should not take one penny more than is necessary to provide essential services. It is our responsibility as public servants to ensure those dollars are spent as efficiently as possible so we deliver the very best services at the lowest cost. Hoosiers deserve nothing less." On Tuesday, Scott Willis announced that he is running for SD20. "Hamilton County has seen tremendous growth in the last two decades in large part due to our great schools," Willis said. "Our schools have consistently been asked to do more with less as our tax dollars are redistributed throughout the state. The current school funding formula has made it extremely difficult for our schools and puts education in Hamilton County at risk." Kenley pointed out that he was

the "architect of the new school funding formula which ensures growing schools receive the funding they need by having the dollars follow the student." He also pointed out that he authored legislation providing record increases in education funding including \$470 million for K-12 and \$70 million in performance funding. "My campaign slogan is 'A Citizen's Legislator in Touch with the People' and I'm looking forward to going door to door and hearing from the voters in Senate District 20," said the Harvard Law School graduate. "We have a strong grass-roots plan in place and I'm ready to hit the ground running. I work hard to represent the good people of Hamilton County and I hope they will hire me for another term."

Pressel announces for HD20

Jim Pressel, a lifelong resident of LaPorte County, announced today he is running for HD 20, the seat being vacated by State Rep. Tom Dermody (Howey Politics Indiana). Pressel (pictured) is the owner of Pressel Enterprises Inc., a company Pressel started in 1992. Today, Pressel Enterprises is a premiere homebuilding company in the area. Pressel believes that his experience and knowledge in running his own successful small business can be applied to state government. Pressel said, "As an owner of a small business, I know how important it is to have sound leaders who know how to lead in a rapidly changing economy. We need a smaller government, that works to keep money in the taxpayer's hands, not in the government's. I will focus on creating higher paying jobs and making sure we have great local schools." Pressel is the incoming 2016 president of the Indiana Builders Association, helped start the New Prairie building trades vocational program and currently serves on the LaPorte County Planning Commission. He and his wife are members at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in LaPorte. Democrat Karen Biernacki, CEO of Family Advocates in LaPorte has announced for the nomination.



Sen. Arnold to seek third term

State Sen. Jim Arnold, D-LaPorte, said he will run next year for a third term representing most of LaPorte County, northern Starke and western St. Joseph counties at the Statehouse (Carden, NWI Times). "I am asking for Hoosiers' support because I believe there is still more work to be done," Arnold said Wednesday. The former LaPorte County sheriff, known for never having missed a session day since taking office in 2008, said he prides himself on seeking bipartisan solutions at the Republican-controlled Legislature. Looking ahead, Arnold said he wants to bring that same approach to ensuring adequate support for state and local road construction through his role as the

top Democrat on the Senate's transportation committee. "Crumbling roads and bridges are not a Democrat or Republican issue, they are an Indiana issue," Arnold said. "I am ready to work with colleagues in both parties to find a long-term solution that boosts the Hoosier economy and puts Hoosiers to work." Arnold was re-elected in 2012 with 58 percent of the vote. So far he is unopposed in his 2016 campaign for another four-year term.

Oesterle forms business PAC

Republican politicians in Indiana who'd rather compare themselves to Mitch Daniels than Mike Pence, and who fear primary challenges from social conservative groups, may be in for a little extra campaign cash in future election cycles (Colombo, IBJ). Former Angie's List CEO Bill Oesterle filed paperwork Friday to create a political action committee called, "Free Enterprise Indiana," which aims to recruit and support economy-focused candidates, get them through primary challenges and, ultimately, into elected office. Oesterle says he's "tired of distractions" like the Religious Freedom Restoration Act championed by Pence earlier this year, which opponents said could legalize discrimination of gay Hoosiers. "I'm concerned that economic development focused candidates don't have adequate support in the state," Oesterle said. "We have big issues in front of us. We have to raise incomes. We have to build, retain and attract talented people, and we need entrepreneurial growth. People in office today have to be concerned about challenges from extreme elements in the party."

The announcement comes on the heels of a political renaissance from Oesterle, an outspoken Daniels ally and recent critic of Pence for his positions on gay rights, and in advance of what's sure to be an intense legislative battle between advocates of LGBT rights and religious freedom. Oesterle said the group, which he says will be backed by Daniels supporters and up-and-coming Republicans, will primarily target candidates in legislative races first. There's also the possibility it could step into mayor's races. At this point, the group is not poised to try to find a primary challenger for Pence. "That is not a focus of this group," Oesterle said. "His actions over the course of the next two months are going to be highly critical to answering that question. This is an important session for him. Last session, obviously, didn't go well."

Indiana political analyst Brian Howey said the timing of Oesterle's announcement makes sense since a legislative debate looms over whether sexual orientation and gender identity will make it into the state civil rights code. Some social conservatives have already promised political retribution to Republicans who vote for a measure that would strengthen LGBT rights. This may be a way to combat that, said Howey, who runs the Howey Politics Indiana site. "That can really make a difference," Howey said. "He probably knows some [legislators] who might be inclined to vote for that expansion but they may have a primary challenge."❖

Tax cap frustrations echo in city halls

By MAUREEN HAYDEN
CNHI Statehouse Bureau

INDIANAPOLIS – Reports that say Indiana’s aging industrial cities are hit hard by a state-imposed limit on local property taxes don’t surprise Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott. He sees the impact every time a snowstorm hits his city in the Chicago snow-belt.



Working with \$20 million less in annual revenue since the limits went into effect in 2009, the four-term McDermott has cut the city’s public works department in half. That means

a smaller snow removal crew and a lot more complaints from citizens.

“It makes you want to scream,” said McDermott, who’s seen his city, and its tax revenue, shrink with closing steel mills. “Residents are happy paying lower property taxes, but they still expect local government to provide the same level of services as though the caps weren’t in effect.”

Those frustrations echo in city halls across the state. Local governments and schools have lost \$4.2 billion in property tax revenues, though some communities are more affected than others. Two new reports released Tuesday by the non-partisan Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute show a double-whammy sapped the financial health of the state’s aging, manufacturing-dependent cities, Hammond, Gary and Terre Haute among them. Caps on property taxes drained millions from local budgets each year, and a recession sent property values, and population, into a nose-dive.

Meanwhile, suburban cities in the “doughnut” around Indianapolis, affluent and fast-growing, are deemed among the healthiest. For example, in Fishers, just north of Indianapolis, property values are up 20 percent. The population is 86,000, which is 10,000 more than five years ago. Median income is \$90,000, almost twice the state level.

But Fishers Mayor Scott Fadness said tax caps affect his city, too. About 10 percent less revenue is coming than it would have without the caps. To boost the city budget to pay for more demand in services, Fishers leaders have aggressively sought more commercial development and more employers. The result

is more money from commercial property owners that pay higher tax rates, and more from a local income tax levied on residents.

“It marks a fundamental change for what used to be bedroom communities, those places where you could just build homes and grow the revenue ‘well’ off the property taxes,” Fadness said.

The tax caps came after more than a decade of rollercoaster rises and falls in local property tax rates. Pushed by then Gov. Mitch Daniels in 2008, the caps were locked into the state Constitution by voters two years later. They limit tax bills to 1 percent of assessed value on homes, 2 percent for rental property and agriculture, and 3 percent for commercial business. The caps now reduce tax revenues by more than \$700 million a year for local governments and schools.

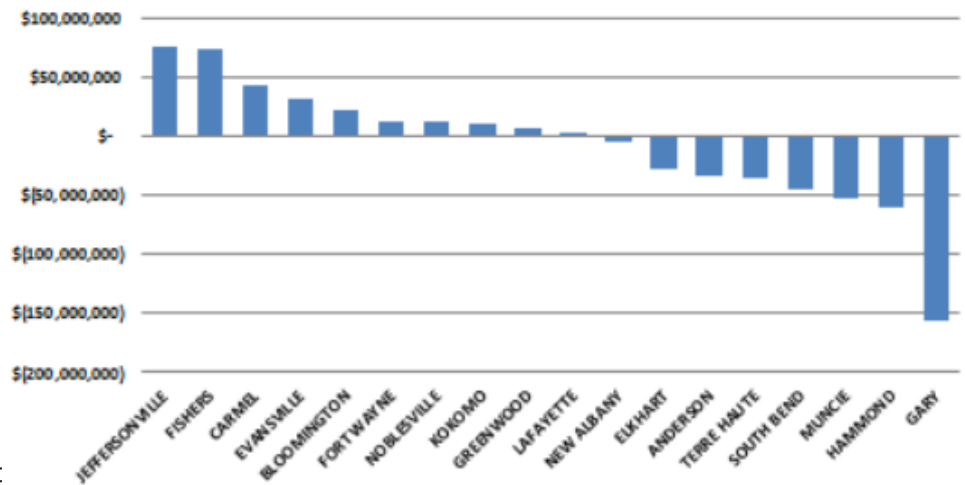
The cap system also includes a “circuit breaker,” which gives further relief to property owners by restricting the money from property taxes that flows to local governments. Those circuit breakers alone cut about \$160 million a year from local budgets around the state, said Larry Deboer, a Purdue economist and author of one of the reports.

Those circuit breakers hit some of the state’s aging, industrial communities hardest. John Stafford, retired director of the Community Research Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne, author of the companion report, said it won’t be easy for those cities that have lost their industrial base to recover to tax revenues they once enjoyed. “You can’t turn the tax base around on a dime,” he said.

The reports released Tuesday take a deep dive into the wide-ranging effects of the limits on communities. A report that graded the fiscal health of local governments focused exclusively on the state’s 18 biggest cities, sans Indianapolis, which is seen as an outlier, given its merged city and county government.

Both reports are available on the Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute website, www.indianafiscal.org. ❖

CUMULATIVE GAIN OR LOSS OF “CORE REVENUE” BETWEEN 2009 AND 2015 COMPARED WITH 2008 CORE REVENUE FOR SELECTED INDIANA MUNICIPALITIES



An epic HPI Power 50 for our Bicentennial

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Looking back on the 2015 Howey Politics Indiana Power 50 list, we didn't have too many misses.

U.S. Sen. Dan Coats had the biggest impact when he announced he wouldn't seek reelection, setting off a political chain reaction that cut across the statewides and two congressional Districts.



U.S. Rep. Luke Messer ascended to the No. 5 spot in the House hierarchy. U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks' role on the Benghazi panel had her questioning Hillary Clinton. Joe Hogsett became mayor of Indianapolis.

John Gregg, Baron Hill, Eric Holcomb and U.S. Reps. Marlin Stutzman and Todd

Young, and Attorney General Greg Zoeller all worked 2015 to set up statewide races in 2016.

Prominent mayors on the list – Lloyd Winnecke, Duke Bennett, Tom Henry, Peter Buttigieg, Tom McDermott and Greg Goodnight – all won reelection in November.

And there are a number of names on the 2015 list – Pat Kiely, Greg Ballard and Tim Berry – who have moved on.

As we do every December, we ask Howey Politics Indiana subscribers to craft the 2016 list of Hoosiers likely to have the greatest impact on the coming year. Not only is 2016 our Bicentennial year, but it promises to be an epic election sequence with the gubernatorial, U.S. Senate and at least two congressional districts in play.

Look for a SurveyMonkey survey coming your way later this month. Don't hesitate to shoot me an email or create your own list and send it to bhowey2@gmail.com.

We'll publish the 2016 list on Jan. 7, 2016.

2015 HPI Power 50

1. Gov. Mike Pence
2. House Speaker Brian Bosma

3. U.S. Sen. Dan Coats
4. Joe Hogsett
5. Senate President David Long
6. U.S. Rep. Luke Messer
7. State Sen. Luke Kenley
8. Ways & Means Chairman Tim Brown
9. U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly
10. Lt. Gov. Sue Ellspermann
11. John Gregg and Baron Hill
12. Evansville Mayor Lloyd Winnecke
13. State Rep. Gail Riecken
14. U.S. Rep. Todd Young
15. U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks
16. Supt. Glenda Ritz
17. Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry
18. U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita
19. Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr.
20. Purdue President Mitch Daniels
21. State Sen. Brandt Hershman
22. FSSA Commissioner John Wernert and Deputy Commissioner Michael Gargano
23. Pence Chief of Staff Jim Atterholt
24. State Sen. Dennis Kruse and State Rep. Robert Behning
25. State Rep. Tom Dermody and Sen. Ron Alting
26. U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon
27. U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski
28. Terre Haute Mayor Duke Bennett
29. South Bend Mayor Peter Buttigieg
30. Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard
31. U.S. Rep. Marlin Stutzman
32. Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight
33. State Sen. Jim Merritt
34. Democratic Chairman John Zody
35. Pat Kiely

36. State Rep. Jud McMillin
37. DWD Commissioner Steve Braun
38. Attorney General Greg Zoeller
39. Eric Holcomb
40. Bill Smith
41. Republican Chairman Tim Berry
42. Dean White
43. John Hammond III
44. U.S. Rep. André Carson
45. Bob Grand and Brian Burdick
46. Lacy Johnson
47. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky
48. Betsy Wiley
49. State Rep. Greg Steuerwald and Sen. Brent Steele
50. House Minority Leader Scott Pelath



Power 50: Budgets, mayors, presidents

Pence's 2016 decision, mayoral races and biennial budget dictate this year's annual list

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**, **MATTHEW BUTLER** and **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

INDIANAPOLIS – It's a budget year. And a municipal election year. And for the second time in a quadrennial cycle, a presidential speculation year.

These are the components that helped shape the 2015 Howey Politics Indiana Power 50 list. As we've been doing since 1999, the Power 50 is designed to calibrate clout and forecast who in our political/public policy complex is most likely to impact events in the coming year from Washington, D.C., to Indianapolis, and from Evansville to



Elkhart. With the help of our Survey Monkey application, more than 400 of our subscribers and readers weighed in for this edition. Thus, for the year at hand, we focus on the budgeteers, the mayors who will headline the municipal

Continued on Page 3

The Powerless One

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Going rogue in the Indiana General Assembly is not a new concept.

We've had our Jerry Bales and Dan Stephans who were perennial thorns in the sides of their leadership, frequently refusing to get with the program. There were trips to the woodshed, the back bench and sanctioned primary challenges.

There have been others, like Eric Turner, who switched parties. And there have been establishment politicians of today who were banished to the backbench a generation ago, with Sens. Luke Kenley and Murray Clark having the gall to challenge then Senate President Pro Tem Bob Garton.



"2014 may be judged a year of progress at our university, but to rise above the threatening environment which now envelops our whole educational sector, much more decisive action will be required."

- Purdue President Mitch Daniels



Tim Swarens, IndyStar: It's time to make a decision, governor. Time to take a stand on an issue that has divided Hoosiers for most of this year. Time to lead. For nearly nine months, Mike Pence has been busy, according to those close to him, studying what position to take on the proposal to add sexual orientation and gender identity to Indiana's civil rights law. Nine months is a long time. Since late March, when the RFRA storm raged, until today, thousands of Indiana's high school seniors have graduated, left home for college campuses, and are now wrapping up their first semester of university studies. An entire 162-game Major League Baseball season has come and gone. Expectant parents have celebrated the news of a pregnancy and are now bringing home, or are close to bringing home, their newborns. But Mike Pence has not made a decision. In recent months, other elected leaders — in Columbus, Carmel, Terre Haute, Whitestown and Zionsville — have adopted local laws that expand civil rights in their communities. Hundreds of Indiana's top business leaders have banded together to push for stronger statewide protections against discrimination. Scores of religious leaders also have stepped forward to voice their support for the same. Still, Mike Pence has not made a decision. Almost a month ago, Republicans in the Indiana Senate introduced legislation that would bar discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodation. The bill certainly has its flaws, but Senate leaders have put forward a good-faith effort to address an issue of statewide significance. Even now, after the General Assembly has taken the lead, Mike Pence has not made a decision. Often in life, especially in today's fast-changing world, we have to move outside our comfort zones to confront our fears. That's especially true for leaders, and in particular leaders who have the awesome responsibility of serving 6.6 million people from diverse backgrounds and with divergent beliefs. ❖

Dave Bangert, Lafayette Journal & Courier: Donald Trump earned a round of condemnation from fellow Republican presidential candidates and the Washington, D.C., establishment — not to mention fine, spit-taking Americans, everywhere — when he called for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on." Not as if that's done much to Trump in the past. The billionaire's stock continued to rise proportionately with every attempt to say he and his campaign had reached the last straw. Has it really been since July that Trump stepped up a feud with John McCain, calling out the U.S. senator and former prisoner of war for his service to the country? ("He's not a war hero," Trump said then. "He was a war hero because he was captured. I like people who weren't captured.") Since then, Trump's bits of the outlandish have stacked up along campaign stops, the

billionaire's red-meat trail for the disenfranchised to follow. Since then, his poll numbers have refused to fade, adding fuel to an outrageous, reality TV parade. Just Trump being Trump. As he said Wednesday: "Probably not politically correct." Followed by: "I. Don't. Care." The cheers in the crowd were strong. (Perhaps rivaling the ones Trump imagines thousands of Muslims doing in New Jersey on 9/11.) So at what point does Trump hit a wall, a human corollary to Godwin's Law of Nazi Analogies? You know the law — maybe not by name, but at least in practice. Conceived by Electronic Frontier Foundation attorney Mike Godwin in the early days of the Internet, it's the idea that the longer an online discussion goes, the more likely it will wind up with a comparison involving Hitler or the Nazis. And when that happens, the conversation is over — and the one making the Nazi reference is the automatic loser for resorting to a comparison that simply is too outlandish in any context. At some point, when your ideas start resembling those of the Nazis, your campaign is done. Trump has to be getting close, as he singles out an entire faith for exclusion. This has to end sometime. No really, it does, right? Then again, it's Trump being Trump. He might just be getting started. Pray for us. How and where, that's your call — for now. ❖



Doug Ross, NWI Times: If there's one sure way to bring attention to domestic violence, it's to arrest a county councilman on charges of strangulation. Domestic Violence Awareness Month was in October this year, but the need for awareness isn't limited to just one month. Nor is the need for awareness of ethics in government limited. There are six public officials who have tough choices to make — five of them to comply with a state conflict-of-interest law — and they all hopefully will make the right one. But let's begin with the domestic violence case. We all have heard by now of the arrest of Lake County Councilman Jamal Washington last week. We'll skip the details, except this one. Washington's wife told police these abuse incidents have occurred several times in front of the couple's children. Jamal Washington is to be presumed innocent unless found guilty. That's our legal standard in this country. But this case should spread the word to men and women everywhere that domestic violence does not have to be — should not be — tolerated. Washington's arrest came right on the heels of a judge's ruling in an important conflict-of-interest case involving elected officials in Lake County. Hobart Councilman Matthew Claussen, New Chicago Councilwoman Susan Pelfrey, Hammond Councilman Michael Opinker, Hammond Councilman-elect Scott Rakos and East Chicago Councilman Juda Parks had asked U.S. District Court Judge Philip Simon to declare unconstitutional a 2012 state law forbidding municipal employees from holding elective office in the same city or town. Judge Simon dismissed their case on Thursday. ❖

FW Councilmen blast intolerance

FORT WAYNE — Two Fort Wayne city councilmen took time Tuesday night to briefly discuss state and national discussions relating to discrimination (Gong, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Council President John Crawford, R-at large, spoke out in favor of efforts to include sexual orientation in the state's anti-discrimination statute next year, noting that Fort Wayne included sexual orientation in its own civil rights ordinance in 2001. "I want the people to know that the city of Fort Wayne has been ahead of this curve since 2001, the attitudes in Indiana have markedly changed since that time," Crawford said. "The last survey I saw polled about 57 percent of people in Indiana are in favor of adding sexual orientation to the civil rights act next year in the legislature." Crawford encouraged residents to contact their state legislators about the issue. Councilman Glynn Hines, D-6th, condemned recent statements from Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who recently called for a ban on all Muslim immigration into the U.S. in the wake of terrorist attacks in Paris and San Bernadino, California. "Hitler, when he first started out, on a serious note, he had a lot of people that supported him and the end result, his target was the Jews," Hines said. "Here, Donald Trump is saying Muslims, it's a blanket statement, Muslims. I think we cannot have religious persecution because as we said in the Pledge of Allegiance, we said 'With liberty and justice for all.'"

Indiana ranks 41st in health

INDIANAPOLIS — Hoosier waistlines continue to expand, many of us still can't shake the smoking habit, and we live in a state with some

of the lowest public health funding in the nation. That's some of the bad news from the latest United Health Foundation's state health rankings released today. The good news: Indiana has a reduced rate of diabetes, fewer of us drink excessively, and our efforts to be more physically active have improved. Overall, Indiana is 41st among states in the health rankings, unchanged from last year. Hawaii is the healthiest state, and Louisiana is least healthy, according to the foundation's findings.



ACLU to press refugee suit

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Gov. Mike Pence retreated further from his recent efforts to bar Syrian refugees from the state, saying that he would allow federal money such as food stamps, temporary monetary assistance and health care benefits to go to refugees settling there (Associated Press). In the clearest statement yet of exactly how much restrictions Indiana would place on refugees, Pence's administration also said Wednesday that the governor's order blocks only a limited amount of state funding for refugee organizations resettling Syrians- an amount that is just a fraction of the overall cost of resettling a refugee. The statements mark a softening of Pence's stance after he was one of more than 30 governors, all but one a Republican, who sought to block the resettlement of Syrian refugees over security concerns following the deadly Paris attacks last month. The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana said Wednesday that it will continue to press a lawsuit against Pence despite his change of tone. Ken Falk, legal director of the ACLU's Indiana chapter, said it's difficult to reconcile Pence's current statements with the governor's initial order. Falk filed suit on behalf of Exodus Refugee Immigration, which sent a Syrian family bound for Indiana to Connecticut due to Pence's objection. "If there was going to be no interruption, suspension or revocation

of aid, I suspect it would have been mentioned at this point as we litigate the case," Falk said. "They (Exodus) have never been told anything to the contrary." A federal judge on Tuesday set a January court date for an initial hearing on the lawsuit, and attorneys for the state must respond in writing to the ACLU legal filing later this month.

Prosecutors seek PSE prescriptions

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana's prosecutors say that a ban on over-the-counter sales of a common cold medicine used to make methamphetamine will be one of their top priorities in the coming legislative session. The Association of Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys announced Wednesday they would like a change in state law requiring a doctor's prescription to purchase pseudoephedrine. Washington County Prosecutor Dustin Houchin says restricting pseudoephedrine sales would help crack down on the number of meth labs in Indiana. Critics say the measure is punitive and would force those who are sick to visit a doctor just to fight a common cold. The ban is one of two items on prosecutors' agenda. They also are asking lawmakers to stiffen penalties for drug dealers..

ISP to probe brawl at Hymera Council

HYMERA — Indiana State Police say they'll turn over the results of their probe of the Hymera Town Board meeting brawl to the Sullivan County Prosecutor by late next week (WIBC). The brawl broke out when town board members voted to make Daryl McCullough their new town marshal. McCullough replaces Darrick Cullison who filed suit against the board saying he was wrongly fired. After the vote, two men attacked McCullough and the entire room fell into chaos. McCullough is expected to recover. Hymera is about 90 miles southwest of Indianapolis.