



## McIntosh seeks to defend the 5th CD

Acknowledges a tight race between Hale and Spartz; believes Republicans will come back home

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

CARMEL – Absent a national wave, the only competitive statewide federal race in Indiana is the open 5th CD, with Democrat Christina Hale and Republican State Sen. Victoria Spartz poised for a showdown likely to extend to Election Day.

David McIntosh knows the 5th CD. When he ran for governor in 2000

it was a conservative GOP bastion. When he sought the 5th CD Republican nomination in 2012, he was edged out by U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks. Now the Club For Growth president is poised as a potential queenmaker.



It was the Club's decision to back Spartz in the crowded, 15-candidate Republican primary that proved to be the crucial factor in her winning the nomination with

**Continued on page 4**

## Pence talks law, order

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – As Vice President Pence prepared to take the stage at Fort McHenry for his Republican National Convention acceptance speech Wednesday night, America was in turmoil.

The Democratic governors of Wisconsin and Minnesota had called out their national guards to quell violence after police shootings, the latest this week in Kenosha. The NBA had cancelled its playoff schedule as players protested. Category 4 Hurricane Laura was taking aim at the Louisiana-Texas border. And the United States was closing in on its 180,000 death toll from COVID-19, including 56 in Pence's home county of Bartholomew.



**“I want to make it clear that we are going forward with a normal election process here in Indiana. We will not be making changes like we did in the primary since the stay at home order has been lifted.”**

- Secretary of State Connie Lawson, who expects 1.3 million absentee votes



**Howey Politics Indiana**  
**WWWHowey Media, LLC**  
**c/o Business Office**  
**PO Box 6553**  
**Kokomo, IN, 46904**  
**www.howeypolitics.com**

**Brian A. Howey**, Publisher  
**Mark Schoeff Jr.**, Washington  
**Mary Lou Howey**, Editor  
**Susan E. Joiner**, Editor

**Subscriptions**

HPI, HPI Daily Wire \$599  
 HPI Weekly, \$350  
**Lisa Houchell**, Account Manager  
 (765) 452-3936 telephone  
 (765) 452-3973 fax  
 HPI.Business.Office@howeypolitics.com

**Contact HPI**

bhowey2@gmail.com  
 Howey's cell: 317.506.0883  
 Washington: 202.256.5822  
 Business Office: 765.452.3936

© 2020, **Howey Politics Indiana**. All rights reserved.  
 Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, whole or part, is a violation of federal law without permission from the publisher.

**Jack E. Howey**  
 editor emeritus  
 1926-2019



Pence struck a law and order theme that is expected to be the hallmark of President Trump's reelection bid this fall. "Joe Biden said America is systemically racist," Pence said. "You won't be safe in Joe Biden's America. Under President Trump ... we're not going to defund the police, not now, not ever. We will have law and order on the streets of this country."

"**Last week**, Joe Biden didn't say one word about the violence and chaos engulfing cities across this country," Pence said. "Let me be clear: The violence must stop, whether in Minneapolis, Portland, or Kenosha. Too many heroes have died defending our freedoms to see Americans strike each other down. We will have law and order on the streets of America."

President Trump is framing this urban unrest on what he has called liberal Democratic rule in the cities. He called out the National Guard on Wednesday as he criticized Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers, who had deployed his guard on Monday. "Governor should call in the National Guard in Wisconsin. It is ready, willing, and more than able. End problem FAST!" Trump tweeted on Tuesday. "My team just got off the phone with Governor Evers who agreed to accept federal assistance. TODAY, I will be sending federal law enforcement and the National Guard to Kenosha, WI to restore LAW and ORDER!"

**Politico:** As this battleground state grapples with social unrest, some Democrats fear that the looting and rioting and clashes are feeding Trump's argument that this is what life would be like under the so-called "radical left." The worry is that especially among suburban swing voters, the more upheaval and violence they witness, the more their sympathy for peaceful Black Lives Matters protesters will wane.

Or as Pence put it in Baltimore, "The American people know we don't have to choose between sup-

porting law enforcement, and standing with African American neighbors to improve the quality of life in our cities and towns. From the first days of this administration, we have done both. And we will keep doing both for four more years in the White House."

Pence began his speech, saying, "The heroes who held this fort took their stand for Life, liberty, freedom and the American flag. Those ideals have defined our nation. Yet they were hardly ever mentioned



during last week's Democratic Convention. Instead, Democrats spent four days attacking America. Joe Biden said we were living through a 'season of American darkness.'

"**But as President** Trump said, "where Joe Biden sees American darkness, we see American greatness.' In these challenging times ... our country needs a president who believes in America. Who believes in the boundless capacity of the American people to meet any challenge, defeat any foe, and defend the freedoms we all hold dear. America needs four more years of President Donald Trump in the White House!"

Trump, who joined Pence onstage after his address, said in a introductory video that Pence has been "solid as a rock; he's been a fantastic vice president."

Pence was laudatory of Trump. "Over the past four years, I've worked closely with our President. I've seen him when the cameras are off. Americans see President Trump in lots of different ways but there's no doubt how President Trump sees America. He sees Amer-

ica for what it is ... a nation that has done more good in this world than any other . . . a nation that deserves far more gratitude than grievance . . . and if you want a president who falls silent when our heritage is demeaned or insulted, then he's not your man.

"We came by very different routes to this partnership and some people think we're a little bit different," Pence continued. "But I've learned a few things watching him deal with all we've been through these past four years. He does things his own way, on his own terms. Not much gets past him and when he has an opinion, he's liable to share it. He's certainly kept things interesting, but more importantly, he's kept his word. In a city known for talkers...President Donald Trump is a doer. Few presidents have brought more independence, energy, and determination to that office."

Pence acknowledged second and third crises hitting America, the pandemic and economic meltdown. "In our first three years, we built the greatest economy in the world. We made America great again," Pence said. "And then the coronavirus struck from China.

"Before the first case of coronavirus spread within the United States, President Trump took the unprecedented step of suspending all travel from China," Pence said. "That action saved an untold number of American lives. And bought us time



to launch the greatest national mobilization since World War II. President Trump marshalled the full resources of the federal government and directed us to forge seamless partnerships with governors across America in both parties. We partnered with private industry to reinvent testing and produce supplies and we're now conducting 800,000 tests per day... have coordinated the delivery of billions of pieces of Personal Protective Equipment ... And we saw to the manufacture of 100,000 ventilators in 100 days. And no one who required a ventilator was ever denied a ventilator in the United States. We built hospitals, we surged military medical personnel and enacted an economic rescue package that saved 50 million American jobs."

Pence headed the White House Coronavirus Task Force, which has come under fire for mishandling the pandemic. Most people in his audience were not wearing masks or socially distanced. Pence is attempting to shift the focus of the pandemic, telling Griff Jenkins of Fox News, "You have President Trump, who said 'we are not going to shut this country down again', And to hear Joe Biden actually talking about shutting down our country again shows how out of step he is with the progress we've made in this country."

"As we speak we're developing a growing number of treatments, including convalescent plasma that are saving lives all across the country," Pence added. "Last week, Joe Biden said 'no miracle is coming.' What Joe doesn't seem to understand is that America is a nation of miracles and we're on track to have the world's first safe, effective coronavirus vaccine by the end of this year."

Politico's Ryan Lizza observed: Pence's personal rectitude, lack of pizzazz, religiosity and modest finances, have also made him the most un-Trumpian person in the administration. It was exactly this contrast that attracted Trump's advisers to Pence as a running mate in the first place. Pence is the ultimate avatar for this strategy. He is simultaneously the most and least Trumpian man in America. Pence is famously subservient, obsequious and loyal to the president. Putting aside the merits of Pence's character assessment of Trump, his argument for a second term on Wednesday night was the best distillation of what the GOP is trying to accomplish this week. First he laid out the best case possible for the Trump administration's achievements:

an improved military (he "created the Space Force"), a (once) roaring economy, the defeat of ISIS, a reformed Department of Veterans Affairs, the Senate approval of more than 200 federal judges.

"The conventional wisdom is that Trump is doomed. Many swing voters think he is obnoxious and unfit to be president. His bungling of the Covid catastrophe is not something that can be overcome with P.R.," Lizza continued. "Attitudes on race of many Americans, who he was hoping would

turn against Black Lives Matter, are more progressive than he understood. Biden and Harris have successfully defined themselves in the center and avoided unpopular stands on immigration, defunding the police and doing away with private health insurance.

"Pence's speech tried to tackle all of that. Could it work? At this point in 2016 Trump was similarly thought to be unelectable."

Pence acknowledged the furor and frenzy of the times and contrasted them with the British attack on Fort McHenry in 1814. "Against fierce and sustained bombardment, our young country was defended by heroes, not so different from those with us tonight," Pence said. "The enemy was counting on them to quit. But they never did. Fort McHenry held. And when morning came our flag was still here. My fellow Americans, we are going through a time of testing. But if you look through the fog of these challenging times, you will see ... our flag is still there."

The political question of our time is now this: After the next 10 weeks in what is expected to be one of the most savage campaigns in history, once voters render a verdict, will President Trump and Vice President Pence still be there at the White House? ❖



# McIntosh, from page 1

40% of the vote in the June 2 primary.

When Hale launched a bio TV ad in early August, it was the Club For Growth that responded with a \$215,000 two-week TV ad buy designed to prevent Hale from forging a big early lead.

Howey Politics Indiana conducted this interview with McIntosh on Tuesday morning. HPI and McIntosh have a long history, going back to 1994 when the Howey Political Report began publishing and McIntosh won the open 2nd CD against Democrat Joe Hogsett. After McIntosh left Congress for his unsuccessful gubernatorial run, he wrote a column for HPI until he took the Club For Growth position, following former Hoosier congressman Chris Chocola.



part of the reason we decided to define who Christina really is, which side she'll be on in Washington."

There hasn't been an independent poll this cycle in the 5th CD. A Club For Growth Poll released earlier this month had Spartz leading Hale 47-40%. A Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee poll last week had Hale up 50-45%. And an internal Hale campaign poll had the Democrat up 51-45%, with President Trump trailing Joe Biden by double digits.

McIntosh acknowledges the 5th CD is "competitive" but believes if the presidential race narrows nationally, Republicans will "return home" and pull in Spartz. Should Joe Biden ride a national wave to the White House, that is the kind of development Democrats believe can give Hale a ticket to Washington.

Here is the HPI Interview with David McIntosh:

**HPI:** How did Club For Growth settle on backing Sen. Spartz in the

primary?

**McIntosh:** Let me give you a little context. With the Club For Growth PAC, part of our model is to work in Republican seats where we can find candidates who are really strong champions for lower taxes, less spending and free market policies. When Susan Brooks announced her retirement, we immediately added the 5th to our list we were interested in. We interviewed a lot of the different candidates in the primary. I actually met Victoria before she was a candidate when she was thinking about running. She decided for awhile she wouldn't run, would stay in the Senate, but then she called back and said she was going to run for Congress. We have a process where we interview people, find out their main priorities, research their record, learn about each of her votes in the

The Hale campaign characterizes Club For Growth as a "dark money" force. She is not the first Hoosier politician to feel that way. Former Sen. Richard Lugar fell to Richard Mourdock in the 2012 Republican Senate primary, with the seat eventually captured by Democrat Joe Donnelly. Some Hoosier Republicans blamed the club for losing the seat Lugar had held for 36 years as he became the state's largest votegetter in history.

McIntosh told HPI on Tuesday that his primary loss to Brooks and Donnelly's victory over Mourdock in 2012 were lessons learned by Club For Growth. "With the Lugar one, you can't assume that just because it's a historically Republican district or state that swing voters won't swing or won't switch to the other side," McIntosh said. "That's



Indiana  
at your finger tips  
**Download it today!**  
**howeypolitics.com**

## HPI Mobile Offers...

- The Daily Wire - 6 Days a Week*
- Photo & Video Galleries*
- Access to HPI Columnists*
- News Alerts*
- and more for*

**\$0.96**  
per day

Now available for IOS and Android devices

Senate, and we realized a couple of things. One, in her heart she is passionate about freedom, free markets and the economy. She draws a lot from her background having grown up in a communist country, leaving there as a little girl, but realizing the deep, deep contrast between socialism and free markets and our economy. Her record backed that up. She had been willing to push Republican leadership to be more consistent in their limited government principle. One of the things we look for is people who will stand up for their principles instead of going along with a majority of Republicans out here in Washington. Then we tested it with some polling to make sure she had a path to victory. And she did. We endorsed her and got very involved in the race.

**HPI:** You ran in the 5th District in 2012. So you know this district better than most the Club gets involved in. How did that impact your decision making?

**McIntosh:** That personal knowledge told me she is somebody who will reflect the values of that district. It is a diverse district. You've got parts of Indianapolis, you've got the more suburban area of Carmel, and then you've got classic rural Indiana around Anderson and Marion and three or four counties to the north. To win that district you have to be able to do well in each of those areas. It comes down to a real core limited government Republican; someone who the social issues are important. Now the Club For Growth is neutral on those, but those are important for people in Madison County and rural areas, as well as people in Hamilton County where there are a lot of church goers. But they don't want someone just to be about social issues. They want someone who cares deeply about the economy. Which is what we care about.

**HPI:** The Democrats believe the 5th is turning purple. Do you see it that way? Are you expecting this to be a competitive race? Can a Democrat like Christina Hale win it?

**McIntosh:** I do think it will be competitive. In the end, I think it will stay Republican. But it's like a lot of areas we're seeing in the Trump era, essentially, where traditional voters who are higher educated, higher income aren't necessarily favoring Donald Trump, so they are open to voting for the Democrat. We're seeing that in some of the Indianapolis parts of the district as well as Carmel and some of the suburbs. But I think when it comes to who's going to represent them in Congress, they're going to end up sticking with their traditional habits. Do I want some Republican who will actually fight for lower taxes? Fight for economic policy?

**HPI:** What will President Trump's likely impact be on the 5th this fall?

**McIntosh:** We're seeing right now when he's behind in the polls it means all Republicans are lower in the polls than they were in 2018 or 2016. As the (presidential) race gets closer, and I think it will, that will mean the environment will come back to a normal one, and when it does that will help Victoria. She'll see the Republican vote return back home. We've done some polling in the presidential race in the battleground states like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania and what we've found is Biden and the Democrats are getting 95% of their base vote. For Trump and the Republicans, it was only 80 to 85%. That's why he was behind. So as the race gets closer, that means the Republican vote will come back and that will help the ticket in races like Victoria's.

**HPI:** Do you see Vice President Pence playing a similar role that he did in the closing weeks of the 2016 campaign, beseeching Republicans to "come home"?

**McIntosh:** I think so. And I also think he will be the one to provide contrast; this election is not just a referendum on whether you like Donald Trump. It's a choice between two radically different views of how we recover

in the economy, how do we fight our battles with enemies overseas, and how that crystalizes that decision.

**HPI:** Your first poll in the 5th was pretty much on target; you had Victoria Spartz at 40% and she won 40% of the vote. I was skeptical. As Dick Lugar would say, was anybody famous enough at that early point to be getting 40%? I was questioning whether she had that kind of name ID. Talk to me about that first primary poll.

**McIntosh:** That first poll was with primary voters, and with us, was

actually the second one. In our first poll, we were seeing what you were describing. People didn't know her that well. That prompted us to do different advertising. It helped her get that name ID in the primary. Fast forward to today, what we're seeing is that the race is closer than it was in 2012, the last time it was an open district, between Republican and Democrat. Part of that is the shift that occurred in 2016 and 2018. For example, we decided it was necessary to make sure that as the Democrat started her advertising that we were there to counter message, so she didn't gain a big lead in the race. Traditionally in Indiana you would wait until Labor Day and then start the campaigning. But it got launched in mid-August this time. We at Club For Growth have to be independent with Victoria



**Mike Pence with David McIntosh when the former ran for Congress and the latter, governor. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)**



and her campaign. But we watched it and we realized she's not advertising and Christina is so we can come in now and balance that out. And then we're assuming Victoria and her campaign will start advertising in September. So we develop our strategy based on what other people do. We're never 100% sure what the candidate is going to do, and legally can't be. But we've gotten pretty good at it. We won 85% of our races in '18 because we knew what needed to be done exactly when. We're continuing, in a tough environment this year, to do that.

**HPI:** In 2012, Club For Growth backed Richard Mourdock over Sen. Lugar in the Republican primary, which Mourdock won. Of course Mourdock faded at the end in the general election, but our post-primary polling showed Joe Donnelly was very competitive. Was that a learning experience?

**McIntosh:** You're exactly right, there were a couple of lessons. One, when I came on board they were laughing and telling me, "We kind of developed rules: Don't assume because they have a lead they're going to end up winning." So we've learned to go in and poll races closer to Election Day and we have to come in and help the candidate. If you remember, I had a lead in the polls, but then Susan (Brooks) had a real effective campaign and took over the lead that she was able to hold through the end. With the Lugar one, you can't assume that just because it's a historically Republican district or state that swing voters won't swing or won't switch to the other side. That's part of the reason we decided to define who Christina really is, which side she'll be on in Washington.

**HPI:** You took the reins at Club For Growth in 2014?

**McIntosh:** 2015. For that presidential cycle.

**HPI:** Are you planning on staying with the Club for a while or do you ever expect to run again?

**McIntosh:** Absolutely staying at the Club. My faith is really important to me. My purpose in life is to help new people get elected, a new generation of leaders for the country and not to be the candidate myself. I've become very content with that and really like my job, the people I work with and it's fulfilling. It's like having a bunch of people I get to nurture and mentor and then watch them launch and be successful.

**HPI:** Because of your faith, how comfortable were you embracing Donald Trump? Was that problematic for you?

**McIntosh:** That's a good question, Brian. As you know in 2016 we were opposed to him in the primaries, in large part because we had candidates like Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio who Club For Growth had supported earlier

| RealClearPolitics Election 2020 |              |              |                 |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| President                       | Senate       |              | House           |
| <b>Election 2020</b>            | <b>Biden</b> | <b>Trump</b> | <b>Spread</b>   |
| RCP National Average            | 49.6         | 42.5         | Biden +7.1 ↕    |
| Top Battlegrounds               | 48.4         | 44.8         | Biden +3.7 ↕    |
| Latest Betting Odds             | 54.2         | 46.0         |                 |
| <b>Electoral College</b>        | <b>Biden</b> | <b>Trump</b> | <b>Toss Ups</b> |
| RCP Electoral Map               | 212          | 115          | 211             |
| No Toss Up States               | 337          | 201          |                 |
| <b>Battlegrounds ● ○</b>        | <b>Biden</b> | <b>Trump</b> | <b>Spread</b>   |
| Florida                         | 49.0         | 45.3         | Biden +3.7 ↕    |
| Pennsylvania                    | 49.8         | 44.3         | Biden +5.5 ↕    |
| Wisconsin                       | 48.0         | 44.5         | Biden +3.5 ↕    |
| Minnesota                       | 49.3         | 44.0         | Biden +5.3      |
| North Carolina                  | 46.5         | 46.5         | Tie ↕           |
| Arizona                         | 48.0         | 45.8         | Biden +2.2      |
| <b>2020 vs. 2016</b>            | <b>2020</b>  | <b>2016</b>  | <b>Spread</b>   |
| Top Battlegrounds               | D +3.7       | D +4.8       | Trump +1.1      |
| RCP National Average            | D +7.1       | D +4.0       | Biden +3.1      |
| Favorability Ratings            | D +13.2      | D +17.0      | Trump +3.8      |

in their careers. They were viable candidates for president. The other thing that helped me was he picked Mike Pence to be his vice president. That's a great choice and showed he had good judgment in people. We supported his economic agenda and this cycle early on, he has basically governed as a free market, limited government conservative and the choice is going to be dramatically different, so we need to be supportive. Part of that came when he was under fire. During impeachment, we did an ad criticizing Mitt Romney which ran in Utah when he said he might vote for impeachment. In terms of my faith, what you see in Donald Trump is he's unvarnished. He can easily be goaded into responding. But at the same time,

in his heart he really does love the country. He does it in his own way, but I think it's sincere, and I think Mike has had an effect on him realizing it's not all about him. There's a greater force of God that is bigger than all of us and that's been a little bit humbling for Donald Trump.

**HPI:** A humbled Donald Trump?

**McIntosh:** You see it in interesting ways. We didn't communicate much initially. He didn't like some of the things we did, like Paul Ryan's version of the health care bill. I thought, "Oh boy, I'm off to a bad start with the new president." But over the last year or so, he'll call and ask, "What's going on with this race? Who do you think the good candidate is?" I told him about Victoria when we were running in that race. And I've seen a personal side in him that is more genuine. That's given me peace he's the right person to support.

**HPI:** You say President Trump is for free enterprise; free market. Yet we've witnessed the trade wars. I know you had trepidations initially. Walk me through how you've evolved.

**McIntosh:** In two ways. One, we still oppose the tariffs ... because they are taxes on the American people. But we have shifted the Club For Growth view. We recognized we had a free trade agreement, but it wasn't perfect. We let China get away with taking property rights; they didn't believe in property rights, the ownership of corporations. It was a good thing the president was pressuring them to come around to acknowledge those elements of free markets that you need in a trading partner to have a fair arrangement. So we've kind of shifted; we don't like the tariffs, but we understand using them to get a better trade agreement, and that's what we want in the end, a better, fairer trade agreement. That's some nuanced changes on our part, but we still stand up against the tariffs, probably one of the few in Washington that still puts out a press release when they talk about it, saying that's a bad idea. ❖

# HPI Horse Race moves 5th CD to ‘tossup’

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

CARMEL – With Club For Growth and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee now in a full opt-in for this open 5th CD race, the HPI Horse Race is moving this showdown between Democrat Christina Hale and Republican Victoria Spartz into “tossup.”



Hale began her second round of general election TV advertising on Wednesday centered on the issue of health care. The Club For Growth responded to her first spate of advertising with the first attack ad of the cycle.

The Club has put in \$215,000 in its first fall expenditure on behalf of Spartz while the DCCC has made a \$400,000 Indianapolis DMA buy this past week. There have also been dueling polls, with the DCCC dropping a poll on Aug. 20 showing Hale with a 50-45% lead following a Club poll a week earlier showing Spartz up 47-40%.

So this showdown has all the markings of a tossup race. Club For Growth President David McIntosh told HPI on Tuesday, “I do think it will be competitive. In the end, I think it will stay Republican. But it’s like a lot of areas we’re seeing in the Trump era, essentially, where traditional voters who are higher educated, higher income aren’t necessarily favoring Donald Trump, so they are open to voting for the Democrat. We’re seeing that in some of the Indianapolis parts of the district as well as Carmel and some of the suburbs.”

Hale’s second TV ad is a pitch to those suburban voters of Carmel, Fishers and Noblesville. “As a young single mom, I worked hard at multiple jobs to support my son and me. And while I always made sure he had health insurance, I couldn’t afford it for myself, no matter how many hours I worked,” Hale says. “My story is similar to that of so many other families living in Indiana today. That’s why I’m running for Congress. Too many Hoosiers face those same stressful challenges when trying to access affordable coverage. And they’re tired of partisan politics and special interests getting in the way of their health care. People expect results. In Washington, I’ll fight to ex-

pand access to affordable health insurance by supporting a public option, protect people with pre-existing conditions, and lower the price of prescription drugs – because I’ll never forget what’s at stake.”

Health care is a potent issue, as the recent referendum in Missouri on Medicaid expansion reveals. It passed 53-47% in this year’s primary. Suburban Platte County, which narrowly backed Republican Sen. Josh Hawley over Democrat Claire McCaskill in 2018, backed the expansion with 61% of the vote. Indiana expanded Medicaid under then Gov. Mike Pence’s HIP2.0 in 2014.

“While Trump still has a substantial lead with small-town and rural White voters, it is significantly less than he won in 2016,” Democratic pollster Geoff Garin told the Washington Post. “And his failure to deliver on affordable health care is the number one reason driving those voters away from him. When Trump promised in 2016 to deliver more affordable health care to more people, his voters took that seriously.”

The Club For Growth ad is based on classic opposition research, saying that as a member of the Indiana House, Rep. Hale had voted for 11 tax and fee increases.

The Club’s documentation includes Hale’s vote against the 2013 biennial budget that includes Gov. Mike Pence’s income tax cut and an expedited repeal of the death tax. It also includes a 2013

vote raising the Vigo County innskeeper’s tax; and a 2015 vote raising sheriff processing fees from \$13 to \$25.

The ad also claims, “Like Nancy Pelosi, Hale backs a public option plan that would radically expand government’s role in health care.” It cited a March 18, 2020, IndyStar article which reported “Hale ... believes everyone should have a public insurance option if they prefer it over private insurance.” **Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

## Election

### Lawson expects up to 1.8M absentees

Secretary of State Connie Lawson gave an election update at Gov. Eric Holcomb’s coronavirus press conference on Wednesday. “I want to make it clear that we are going forward with a normal election process here in Indiana,” said Lawson, who is not granting press interviews due to litigation. “We will not be making changes like we did in the primary since the stay-at-home order has been lifted.”

Lawson said 99,146 absentee ballots have been requested for the general election, compared to 53,818





that were requested for the the entire 2016 election. "We still expect an influx of absentee vote by mail ballots. We have a forecast that predicts that between 1.3 million and 1.8 million will vote absentee by mail this general election. We are working with the Post Office to ensure that ballots are prioritized by the Postal Service and are received in a timely manner. The Post Office is helping counties design envelopes so mail sorters or carriers can easily identify election mail and prioritize its delivery to voters and to the counties when a voter returns a ballot."

Lawson urged Hoosiers to request absentee ballots by Oct. 19 and return them by Oct. 27. But, she added, "My sage advice would be don't wait. If you know you're going to vote by mail, apply today."

Indiana Democratic Party Chairman John Zody reacted, saying, "The Indiana Election Commission must meet to define clearly which Hoosiers at high risk from COVID-19 can vote by mail. This is a matter of potential life or death for some. It's reckless and cowardly to fail to provide vital clarity to Hoosiers. That Secretary Lawson would so flippantly refuse to clarify eligibility signals Republicans' true intentions: Deny the ballot box to as many Hoosiers as possible and force them to make a risky choice to exercise their constitutionally-protected right."

**Congress**

**4th CD: GOP mails Lake FEC guide**

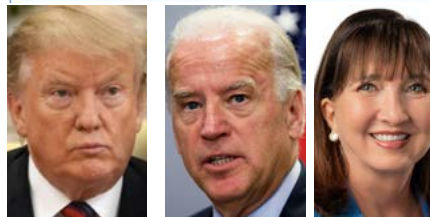
Indiana Republican Party Executive Director Matthew Huckleby mailed via the United States Postal Service a copy of the Federal Elections Commission's (FEC) candidate guide to the Indiana Democrat Party. This action was spurred when Rep. Greg Pence's Democrat opponent, Jeannine Lee Lake, solicited campaign donations from the audience of MSNBC, even though she wasn't a registered candidate



**HOWEY**  
POLITICS INDIANA



**President (U.S. & Indiana)**



**President Donald Trump (R), Joseph Biden (D), Jo Jorgensen (L)**

**HPI Horse Race:**

National: Leans D; Last week: Leans D  
Indiana: Safe R; Last week: Safe R

**Indiana Governor**



**Gov. Eric Holcomb (R), Woody Myers (D), Donald Rainwater (L)**

**HPI Horse Race:**

This week: Safe R  
Last week: Safe R

**Indiana Attorney General**



**Todd Rokita (R) Jonathan Weinzapfel (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**

This week: Leans R  
Last week: Leans R

**Congressional 2nd**

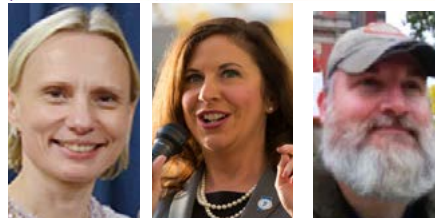


**U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorki (R) Pat Hackett (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**

This week: Likely R  
Last week: Likely R

**Congressional 5th**



**Victoria Spartz (R), Christina Hale (D), Kenneth Tucker (L)**

**HPI Horse Race**

This Week: **Tossup**  
Last week: Leans R

**Congressional 9th**



**U.S. Rep. Trey Hollingsworth (R) Andy Ruff (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**

This week: Likely R  
Last week: Likely R



with the FEC. Claiming she's raised six figures from her media appearances, Lake has yet to file a personal financial statement or second quarter fundraising reports with the FEC, so it is not clear where the money she solicited has gone. What is clear is that Indiana Democrats need to review the FEC rules and provide guidance for Lake's desperate campaign. "The Democrats' 6th District candidate's strategy for November is to lie about Greg Pence and ignore federal fundraising laws. That's not a winning formula in Indiana," said Huckleby. "This candidate guide can at least address the fundraising. The FEC guide is easily accessible and free online and I hope this special delivery causes the Democrats to hold a training session for their candidate." Lake told the Muncie Star Press, "I'm not a career politician with a large paid staff; our donations ebb and flow and we do not always have thousands of dollars to purchase costly FEC software or hire costly certified accountants. We informed the commission of circumstances involving the problems we were having with our new software and they told us to file when we could. A delay is not an impropriety." **Horse Race Status:** Safe Pence.

**1st CD: McDermott sounds off**

Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. held his tongue for more than two months following his unexpected defeat June 2 in the 14-candidate Democratic primary to represent Northwest Indiana in the U.S. House (Carden, NWI Times). But the five-term leader of Lake County's most populous city isn't holding back any longer on the congressional nomination won by North Township Trustee Frank J. Mrvan, or seemingly any other issue – political, national or municipal – that catches his attention. More than anything else, however, McDermott credited Mrvan's twin endorsements by U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky and the United Steelworkers union for helping his political rival rise to the top of the crowded field of candidates. "Let me tell you something, the Steelworkers are freaking superstars," McDermott said. "Man, the Steelworkers kicked (expletive). They did. There's no comparison with any union that I've ever been supported by compared to what the Steelworkers did for Frank Mrvan." McDermott also attributed his defeat to dislike from Gary residents for decisions he made as mayor in Hammond's best interest, the lack of an endorsement in the race by The Times, and his constantly getting "beat up" by WJOB-AM radio hosts, which prompted McDermott to terminate his weekly program on the Hammond station for which he said his campaign paid \$25,000 a year. "Just because I'm going through reasons I lost the election doesn't mean that I don't think Frank Mrvan was a bad candidate. He's going to win the general election and he's going to be our next congressman. There's no doubt in my mind, and I'm going to vote for him." McDermott said he sees nothing positive about his defeat, and given the number of people he thought were his friends who have stopped calling, he thinks, "I have a stench, like a dead man's stench. I think it ruined my



**Indiana General Assembly SD8**



**Sen. Mike Bohacek (R)  
Gary Davis (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

**Indiana General Assembly SD30**



**Sen. John Ruckelshaus (R)  
Fady Qaddoura (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

**Indiana General Assembly HD5**



**Rep. Dale Devon (D)  
John Westerhausen (R)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

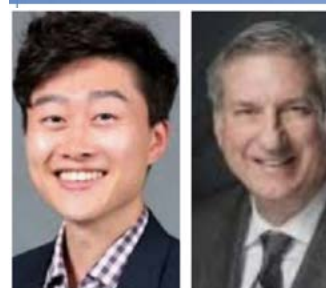
**Indiana General Assembly HD7**



**Rep. Ross Deal (D)  
Jake Teshka (R)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

**Indiana General Assembly HD15**



**Rep. Chris Chyung (D)  
Hal Slager (R)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

career. I do. I think my (expletive) career is ruined. My political career is over. Which is why I'm doing a (expletive) podcast. Because I'm going to do a podcast, and I'm just going to be honest and tell people what's going on. And I'm going to piss people off," McDermott said. Mrvan faces perennial Republican nominee Mark Leyva. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Mrvan.

**Governor**

**I-PACE passes on Myers**

The Indiana State Teachers Association's political PAC is passing on the governor's race. "With the importance of the coming legislative session, members of I-PACE have made the strategic decision to focus time and resources on state legislative races," said I-PACE Chair Randall Studt. "Funding for public schools, increasing teacher pay and restoring bargaining rights will all depend on bringing more balance to the Indiana General Assembly. The legislature has been a continuous roadblock for positive change in Indiana's public schools and this will be the majority focus of our limited financial resources this election. We have a number of ISTA members running viable campaigns in several state legislative races. These members need both our financial and volunteer support. For these reasons, I-PACE does not plan to invest financial resources in the race for governor as I-PACE has done in the past through our endorsement process." I-PACE has long endorsed Democratic gubernatorial campaigns.

In the mid-year finance reporting, Democratic nominee Woody Myers posted just \$72,300 cash on hand, compared to \$8 million for Gov. Eric Holcomb. Myers has filed just two large contribution reports since the mid-year report. He received \$50,000 from Mary Bookwalter of Indianapolis on July 16, and a \$9,901 loan from the candidate on July 14. Gov. Holcomb is now on his second TV ad of the general election titled, "A different kind of campaign."

**Horse Race Status:** Safe Holcomb.

**General Assembly**

**HD88: Jeter to serve rest of Bosma term**

Fishers attorney Chris Jeter is the newest member of the Indiana House of Representatives (Smith, Indiana Public Media). Jeter was voted in by a private Republican caucus to fill out the last few months of former House Speaker Brian Bosma's term. Jeter, who was unopposed in the caucus, won the GOP primary for Bosma's seat earlier this year and will face Democrat Pam Dechert this fall. In a speech to the Republican precinct committee, Jeter said he ran because he believes Indiana needs "unapologetic, principled, strong, conservative" leadership. More than one-fifth of the entire General Assembly first won their seats via private caucus, rather than a vote of the public in a general election. And Jeter is the seventh lawmaker caucused in since the 2018 election. ❖



**Indiana General Assembly HD19**



**Rep. Lisa Beck (D)**  
**Julie Olthoff (R)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

**Indiana General Assembly HD35**



**Rep. Melanie Wright (D)**  
**Elizabeth Rowray (R)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Tossup  
Last week: Tossup

**Indiana General Assembly HD37**



**Rep. Todd Huston (R)**  
**Aimee Cole Rivera (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Likely R  
Last week: Likely R

**Indiana General Assembly HD88**



**Chris Jeter (R)**  
**Pam Dechert (D)**  
Open: Brian Bosma

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Likely R  
Last week: Likely R

**Indiana General Assembly HD89**



**Rep. Cindy Kirchhofer (R)**  
**Mitch Gore (D)**

**HPI Horse Race**  
This week: Likely R  
Last week: Likely R



# What to expect in a second Trump term

By **JIM BANKS**

COLUMBIA CITY – Last week Dr. Michael Hicks, Ball State University economist and oft quoted pundit, tweeted, “For the GOP this is essentially 1932. The party is stale, devoid of ideas and bumbling a national emergency (Hoover actually did better). They are headed to the wilderness. There remains a very strong cadre of conservative thinkers, they just aren’t in the GOP anymore.”



Hicks seems to have missed the mark by five to 20 years, at which point I might have agreed with him. President Trump’s GOP is just the opposite, and the president’s tenacious pursuit of his and our party’s agenda

these past four years has been anything but “stale.” In fact, President Trump and the GOP is the only game in town. We have a clear, pragmatic agenda. That more than anything gives me more hope than ever that President Trump is sailing toward a historic reelection in November.

On the other hand, Joe Biden hardly exists. After hiding in his basement since March, we finally saw a glimpse of him during the Democratic National Convention last week. And he didn’t generate much excitement. Only 21.8 million people watched his acceptance speech last Thursday, which is 38% lower than President Trump’s acceptance speech in 2016. Plus the RNC had over six times the number of C-SPAN viewers on the first night compared to the DNC’s start a week before. The momentum and excitement in 2020 is very much one-sided, and it’s not for Joe Biden.

That’s because no one is voting for Joe Biden. I don’t think there’s a single person I’ve met who has spoken excitedly about casting a ballot for Biden. He’s merely a protest candidate. This election comes down to one simple calculation: Are you voting for or against Donald Trump? You’re either for Trump or you’re against him. It’s why northern Indiana lakes are filled with Trump boat parades on the weekends. I have yet to see a Biden boat parade on Lake James or Lake Wawasee.

**Here’s why I’m bullish** on a Trump reelection.

First and foremost, we have the most absurd juxtaposition in political history. President Trump is successfully rebuilding America’s economy while we navigate a pandemic, and Joe Biden is running on his promise to shut America down if he’s elected. One of Republicans’ talking points for this election was to explain that we are the party of freedom vs. the Democrats who are the party of socialism, but we never could have dreamed up such a visceral example!

But long before COVID-19 came to our shores, President Trump showed us he’s earned four more years. President Trump is the jobs president. Not only has he enacted the same fiscal policies as Reagan that led to the economic boom in the 1980s, he’s fought to protect the American worker from bad trade deals and fought to stop illegal immigration. During Trump’s first three years, 6.58 million jobs were created. Barack Obama said you’d need a magic wand to bring jobs back, and it seems President Trump found it.

President Trump is the first president in my lifetime to stand up to the United States’ single biggest existential threat, China. He’s protecting American consumers from malign Chinese tech companies like Huawei and TikTok. He’s cracking down on Chinese spy rings, Chinese propaganda outlets and throwing the CCP abettors in prison for selling out American interests. And he’s issued sweeping sanctions on members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for overthrowing democracy in Hong Kong and hurting our American financial interests.

**As someone who has** devoted his career in Congress to addressing the China threat both economically and militarily, I can assure you this president has been strong when every other president in my life has turned a blind eye. And no one believes Joe Biden is going to be tough on China; his nearly 50-year record has been just the opposite as a key abettor and appeaser toward our greatest threat.

President Trump has been a successful commander-in-chief. He’s kept us out of war and rebuilt a military Obama and Biden laid to waste. He was able to deescalate a conflict with Iran, keep North Korea at bay, strike a historic peace deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and negotiate a ceasefire between the Kurds and Turkey. He sanctioned Russia, gave Ukraine Javelin missiles and had Germany pay more NATO funding. This president has adopted Reagan’s “peace through strength” mantra in a way that would make the Gipper proud.

President Trump is the law-and-order president. He stood by our law enforcement officials when they were under attack from the radical left who wanted to defund them and strip them of qualified immunity. The Trump administration prosecuted the deadly gang MS-13 under terrorist charges and added Antifa to the list of domestic terrorists after they spurred riots and looting in major U.S. cities. And he vowed to protect national monuments to our veterans and former presidents when they were under attack. In term two, President Trump promises to continue these efforts.

Contrast that to the paltry agenda Biden is running on. If you watched the Democratic National Convention speeches, the Democrats’ sales pitch seems to amount to nothing more than “orange man bad” and “we should be the ones in charge.” Wanting power doesn’t mean you deserve it. And if you want to earn power, you should tell Americans what you’ll do with it when you get it.

President Trump made his promises in 2016. We elected him. And then despite unprecedented obstruction, he fought like hell to achieve them. To me, this is the perfect recipe for a Donald Trump victory in November. So, I scoured Ball State's Michael Hicks' twitter feed for the powerful Democrat platform and Joe Biden's visionary ap-

proach to America's future that is going to send us Republicans into the wilderness, but I couldn't find it. ❖

**Banks is the 3rd District Republican congressman. He wrote this specifically for Howey Politics Indiana.**

## This GOP mayor, chair wrestling with his vote

By LEIGH MORRIS

LaPORTE – As a lifelong Republican and former county party chairman, I resonated positively to the plans that Donald Trump outlined for his first four years. I agreed with the concepts he was talking about: Limited government, balanced budget, strong military, economic growth, to name a few. I didn't care much for his personality and his egotistical attitude, but I thought he'd probably become more presidential once he was in office.



So now, almost four years later, I'm again wrestling with the choice I'll need to make when I vote for president this November. Mr. Trump gets high marks from most commenters about the

economy, and he probably deserves them even though he came to office as economic recovery efforts of his predecessor were proving very effective.

I'm much more concerned about some of the other pledges he made. I looked at 10 of them:

**1. Impose a hiring freeze on federal employees:** No movement on Trump's promise to reduce federal workforce with federal hiring freeze since April 2017.

**2. Build a wall, and make Mexico pay for it:** Donald Trump promised to build a border wall and make Mexico pay for it. That didn't happen.

**3. Remove all undocumented immigrants:** Donald Trump does not keep promise to deport all immigrants illegally in the U.S. nor has he enunciated a cogent immigration policy.

**4. Eliminate gun-free zones at schools and military bases:** Trump has made scant progress on eliminating gun-free zones. He said he's in favor of closing loopholes in gun laws that are already on the books and he worries any new laws could create a "slippery slope" that could lead to a total handgun ban.

**5. Bring back manufacturing:** No overall improvement for manufacturing sector under Trump.

**6. Invest \$550 billion in infrastructure and create an infrastructure fund:** No action evident on

creating infrastructure fund.

**7. Balance the federal budget 'fairly quickly':** Federal deficit isn't shrinking; it's growing.

**8. Release his tax returns after an audit is completed:** Trump says he might release returns "when I'm out of office."

**9. Enact term limits:** No progress on implementing congressional term limits.

**10. Increase the size of the U.S. Army to 540,000 active duty soldiers:** Number of soldiers unchanged at 475,000.

I spent most of my working life as a chief executive officer, and I know how important it is for a CEO to build and support a leadership team that adds competence and continuity.

I thought Mr. Trump put together a strong team when he took office, but over the past three and a half years, the turnover rate among his top appointees is 89%, with 40% of the positions turning over multiple times. That could be a major contributing factor to why so many of Mr. Trump's promises have gone unfulfilled.

In addition to recruiting and retaining a top leadership team, a president also needs to listen and respect them. Mr. Trump has been short of that mark in his dealing with scientists who have tried to work with him in more effectively managing the pandemic. Stronger advisors could have helped him understand the racial issues we're facing and be a more positive force in addressing them.

As concerned as I am about those factors, I am bothered much more about what I perceive to be an erosion of trust. The Washington Post fact checker has compiled a list of over 20,000 lies attributed to Mr. Trump. How do you maintain trust when people can't rely on you to tell the truth?

All this weighs heavily on my mind as I look at the choices before us in the upcoming election. Will the Trump-Pence team perform differently in a second term? Would a Biden-Harris team be any better? Or will they be dragged to the far left of the political spectrum and do more harm than good? Tough questions that cry for an answer.

They're questions that have enormous implications for our great nation. ❖

**Morris is the former Republican mayor of LaPorte. This originally appeared on the "What'sNewLaPorte.com" website.**



# Are Biden's political strengths also his governing weaknesses?

By PETE SEAT

INDIANAPOLIS – Having sat through four nights of the Democratic National Convention, we heard plenty about Joe Biden's strengths. He's up in the polls (but don't expect a bounce). He's not Donald J. Trump (haven't you noticed?). Youngsters on rope lines, his grandkids and U.S. senators – everyone has his cell phone number (except me).



But now is a good time to ask the next natural question: What are his weaknesses?

We're being bombarded with a list of Biden's faults during the Republican National Convention's primetime programming,

but what if those political and personal strengths of Biden's we heard about last week are harbingers of governing weaknesses?

## He's not Donald Trump

In speech after speech after speech, supporters reminded us that Biden and Trump are in fact two different people and they will appear on the ballot as two separate choices (it's called DEMOCRACY, people!).

"Donald Trump hasn't [insert attack]..." – Barack Obama.

"Donald Trump pretends... Joe's moral compass..." – John Kerry.

"Donald Trump says [insert attack]... Our choice is Joe Biden." – Bill Clinton.

Message received. But at some level, that was the only message received. As Politico scribe David Siders put it: "For more than a decade, Joe Biden had been defined by association, to the president he worked for and, in its contrast, to the one he is trying to unseat."

Perhaps that's why a Michigan focus group could not name a single accomplishment of his aside from having been vice president.

Why is this supposed strength (not being Trump) a potential governing weakness?

It's simple. Americans who cast a ballot for Biden are not voting for Biden but rather against Trump. Therefore, Biden is weak insofar as his greatest attribute among hard and soft supporters alike is not being Donald J. Trump. This makes it near impossible to cobble together a governing coalition.

With no correlated affinity between the personal-

ity and the politics, his road to governing becomes rocky and riddled. Before finishing that thought, let's jump to the next supposed strength as it goes hand in hand with not being Trump.

## An opposite day vision for America

The lack of definition goes beyond personality. It extends to policy and this is where Biden's governing weaknesses come into clear view. Sure, we were given a precise window into the charming persona and empathetic heart of Biden during the Democratic National Convention. But do we have that same window into his impending plans for the nation?

Here's National Journal's Josh Kraushaar with his astute analysis: "The missing piece from the convention is any semblance of Biden's governing agenda. He's the working class Joe without the policies designed to appeal to the average voter from his hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania. Take away Trump from the Democratic message, and the party would be left speechless."

Biden in effect is running a Seinfeldian campaign. "If every instinct you have is wrong," Jerry once told George, "then the opposite would have to be right."

Trump says up, Biden says down. Trump says go, Biden says stop. You get the picture. What's right side up today is upside down tomorrow and vice versa.

In that vein, Biden declared in his acceptance speech that he will be "an ally of the light, not the darkness." OK, but what about education, the environment and the economy? Will he be an ally for those? And how will he combat the coronavirus, tackle drug addiction, curb violence in our cities and manage the rise of China's domestic authoritarianism and global bribery schemes?

Biden's candidacy is not one grounded in a cogent governing philosophy. Rather, it is a transitional candidacy aimed toward partisan realignment. New York Times reporters Alex Burns and Katie Glueck, writing the paper's definitive diary of Biden's night of coronation, explain: "[Biden] has campaigned as an apostle of personal decency and political conciliation, and as a transitional figure who would take on some of the worst American crises ... before handing off power to another generation."

Implicit in that hand-off is that the next generation of Biden-approved public servants be Democrats, not Republicans. And for some ambitious Democrats, that's welcome news as many of those who seek his employ lack political paths to power in their respective states. Pete Buttigieg and Stacey Abrams immediately come to mind. In that regard, Biden's relative weakness will be determined by those who come in with him and last beyond him, and not necessarily by Biden himself.

Furthermore, in lacking his own concrete vision for governing, Biden gives outspoken liberals license to shape the contours, if not color completely within the lines of, a Biden presidential agenda. Their ideas will not function as an aspirational ceiling but serve as a baseline for reform. Anything less and Biden pays a short-term political price.

Anything more and his long-term plans of partisan realignment are foiled.

### A cornucopia of relationships

The third and final strength turned weakness comes at the core of Biden's story – relationships. As we learned during the four nights of the Democratic National Convention, he's got all the relationships. All of them.

He's got the stuttering 13-year-old (awesome moment, by the way). His aforementioned granddaughters. And the late Republican Sens. John McCain and Indiana's very own Dick Lugar. But who did he not have? Anyone on the other side of the aisle who is actually in elective office today.

To illustrate the point, we turn to the floor of the United States Senate where only 34 of the body's 100 members served during Biden's time in the chamber. That means a near-two-thirds majority of 66 were appointed

or elected post-Biden. And of those, 36 are Republicans, making his claims of bipartisan bromances fall flat.

These strengths may be enough to get Biden across the finish line first, but electoral success can mask the onset of a weak presidency. If Americans only pick Biden to get rid of the other guy, are they prepared to rally around his still vague agenda of contrasting banalities? Expect this week's Republican National Convention to help fill in some of the gaps, and turn those strengths into weaknesses. ❖

**Pete Seat is a former White House spokesman for President George W. Bush and campaign spokesman for former director of national intelligence and U.S. Sen. Dan Coats. Currently he is a vice president with Bose Public Affairs Group in Indianapolis.**

## Fergus & Harrison

By MORTON MARCUS

EVANSVILLE – This column has featured many fictional characters during the past three decades. They have been the writer's device to ease the burden of reading economic information and unpopular ideas. This week is different. Let me introduce you to Nervous Fergus and



his buddy, Harrison. Both dogs live and travel with us.

Nervous Fergus is a 15-pound mix of poodle and bichon who is easily startled and terrified by fireworks. Harrison is a 60-pound foxhound, a traffic accident survivor with three legs, a determined adventurer, destroyer of squeaky toys, and food vacuum.

Neither of our friends is dissuaded from seeking the best that is available in their lives. Nor

should they be. Their distinct, but not unique, characteristics can be acknowledged and, if necessary, accommodated. (Fergus is given a small sedative in the evenings before July 4.) None in the canine world cares about their disabilities or handicaps.

Our children, grandchildren, relatives, neighbors, friends, co-workers, fellow citizens have similar distinct, but not unique, characteristics. Some were born with these characteristics, others acquired them from their earliest influences, still others acquired or recognized them as they aged and interacted with a discriminating world.

To discern differences is natural and necessary. How we respond to those differences is critically important. Some we take for granted and ignore if we perceive

no functional value for them in our society. A mole on the lip (as I have) is not a significant disfigurement, although it has probably prevented my appearance on the covers of several influential magazines.

Lighter or darker skin, place of birth, gender and religion, however, have been major factors in the lives of millions, over centuries, in many societies. Although not labeled a disability or a handicap, these characteristics have been just that in economic and social terms. Physical and mental differences, genetic or acquired, are sometimes, in some places, dismissed as quirks. At other times and places, they are cause for exclusion, segregation, even execution.

At this point, I can hear the thoughts of some readers, "He's comparing me with his dogs. My differences, my distinct characteristics are being dismissed and denigrated."



To which, I reply, "No. I am urging acceptance by those who would dismiss and denigrate us for who we are. Our heritage should not be considered a handicap deserving special treatment.

Neither should our life experiences, age, nor place of residence disqualify us from being participants in forging our individual and collective futures.

"Fergus and Harrison get along with each other and our two cats. All four warm quickly to strangers. Shouldn't people do so as well?" ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an economist. Reach him at [morton-jmarcus@yahoo.com](mailto:morton-jmarcus@yahoo.com). Follow his views and those of John Guy on Who gets what? wherever podcasts are available or at [mortonjohn.libsyn.com](http://mortonjohn.libsyn.com).**



# ‘Stinky DePew’ surveys Democratic governance

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO – Last week I bumped into one of my Ball State University classmates, Charles L. DePew, while I was having a Mt. Olympus, ultra-liberal, hops-infused IPA down at the local Brew and Books on Main Street. Charles, who we all called “Stinky” in the frat house, was quick to expound on why he can’t wait for Thanksgiving this year because he has a long list of people and organizations to thank for President Trump’s reelection.



When I questioned Stinky if he was referring to people like Sen. Lindsey Graham and the NRA, he replied that those people were helpful but the gift of reelection was given by a group of people who you never would

have expected, out-of-control Democrats and their sympathizers from coast to coast.

I tend to live in a world of common sense and reason so I was taken aback by Stinky’s assertion that the Democrats would contribute the most to undoing of Joe Biden’s slipshod, cobbled-together lovefest campaign in a basement. I asked Stinky to expand on his theory.

Mr. DePew said he was simply giving credit where credit is due. “What better way is there to scare the be-jeebers out of the average American voter than to give the Democrats a fair audition. We have and what a whopper of a failure. Let’s start west and work our way east.”

**“In California, you have** a completely Democrat state bankrupted by a flood of illegal immigration and a laundry list of government-supplied freebies given to the non-productive class. Things are so bad that the state is going to greatly increase the highest state income tax in the United States and, in addition, add a wealth tax on your savings. If that isn’t bad enough, they even propose taxing you after you leave the state because you built your wealth in their state. Now you might expect that with all of the government giveaways that everyone would be rolling in clover, but the truth is, you can walk all the way from Los Angeles to San Francisco without touching the ground because of all of the street people lying around. If it wasn’t for the accumulated dog doo-doo and trash, the landscape would never change. Of course, you’d have to walk during the day because the Democrat governor has so screwed up the utility industry that just about one third of the state has its lights shut off at any time.”

“Wow”, I said, “that seems to be a heap of cherry-picked anecdotal evidence. Do you have any more examples?”

Stinky thought for a moment and then said, “Let’s move one state north and look at the disaster in Portland, Oregon. In Portland, where every inch of government is controlled by the Democrats, there is nothing but anarchy. People are dragged out of their vehicles and killed, government buildings are torched and the police are attacked. All the while, the Democrats in charge do nothing. And we get to see it all on television all day long.

“Then there is always the Democratic People’s Republic of Washington. There, Antifa and Black Lives Matter took over the entire downtown and declared a separate country. Once again, police were attacked, innocent civilians were attacked, the downtown business district was trashed and nice and decent neighborhoods were put on notice that the rabble was coming for their homes next.”

I told my old frat buddy that those things would certainly bother people out on the west coast but would it play in the Midwest?

**Stinky thought for a moment** and then pointed out the state of Minnesota. “In Minneapolis, you took a bad situation with George Floyd’s death and then the mob blew it into a full-fledged excuse to steal televisions and furniture and to burn down an already struggling neighborhood. A genius Democrat councilman got the bright idea to defund the police and turn everything over to social workers. The rest of the Democrat sheeple on the council went along with the nut job and even the mayor signed on to castrating the only group standing between innocent people and the rabid mob. The average American began to think about a world where someone breaks into your home and you dial 911 only to be told that someone will get back with you next week.”

I asked Stinky if he thought that the great Democrat leadership in Illinois might serve as a bastion against a silent majority upheaval.

“Are you talking about Illinois, where the Democrat speaker of the House is on a sinking ship of governmental corruption or the billionaire Democrat governor who wants to change the state constitution to allow for a soak-the-rich graduated income tax? Or maybe you’re referring to Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot who is redefining the word “hypocrisy.” She hates the police until demonstrators wander into her neighborhood and then she thinks she is entitled to protection. All the while Michigan Avenue burns while “peaceful” protesters riot against police brutality by looting Ralph Lauren, Ferrigamo and Nike. Heck, thanks to the Democrats, the Illinois state slogan is, “Will the last one in Illinois please turn the lights off.”

**But Charles, I asked,** what about the book that Andrew Cuomo just wrote on how well he handled the pandemic?

“Andrew Cuomo wouldn’t know the truth if it crawled up his pant leg and bit him where the sun don’t shine. He’s the guy who sent active Covid-19 cases into nursing homes. He’s as close to a walking talking version of Typhoid Mary that you can get. It turns out that all the while that he was beating on President Trump for more

ventilators, the ugly fact leaked out that he had ordered about 16,000 surplus ventilators destroyed because they were surplus. Frankly, the Democrat Cuomo should be darn thankful for Democrat Bill DeBlasio, because the mayor of New York City makes just about everyone look sane. How do you think people financially struggling because of the mayor's abusive lockdown orders look at his wife's \$2 million domestic staff of 14? With \$150 million cut out of the New York City police budget, his wife is getting served up vichyssoise by her own personal chef. DeBlasio's "Let them eat cake" attitude is driving people away in droves."

**Stinky summed up his** hypothesis by saying, "Folks may hate Trump, may dislike what he says and what he tweets, but when it gets down to the privacy of the polling booth, they will vote for their own security, health and economic well-being. You don't like the Republicans until the crazies start down your street. When that

happens, you ain't calling a Democrat politician to come and save you."

With that, Stinky and I clinked beer glasses and had another for the road. Maybe, just maybe, a guy who doesn't watch CNN, MSNBC or read the New York Times or the Washington Post could figure out something that the talking heads haven't. Well, they say that all politics is local and the local stinks in virtually all of the Democrat-led localities.

Fact check: There is no Charles L. DePew from the Ball State University class of 1975. His nickname was not "Stinky." The author was not drinking an IPA. He dislikes IPA. However, all the stuff about Democrat-controlled governments is true. ❖

### Dunn is the former Howard County Republican chair.

## Will it be 'you're fired' or 'you're hired'?

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND — Never before was a state delegation's vote cast from South Bend. It was when former Mayor Pete Buttigieg, the recent presidential nomination candidate, announced: "Here in South Bend, we once feared our best days were behind us. But then we reimagined our economy."



The city's economy wasn't the only thing reimagined. The whole Democratic National Convention was. Buttigieg announced the delegation's overwhelming support for Joe Biden as the unprecedented roll call of the states took place from sites in the states, not as was traditional in a packed convention hall.

Now, this week on TV, "The Trump Show." The Republican National Convention also will be a virtual event, reimagined, but with a far different message. It will be all about praise for President Donald J. Trump, who controls everything at this convention. It's his show. His party.

**Trump is of course** no stranger to starring in a television show. "The Apprentice," the program that made Trump a national figure, was billed as a reality show. This show will portray what Trump sees as reality in America.

"You're fired!" That's the signature message Trump popularized on "The Apprentice." It sent away some hopeful contestant, "fired" by Trump. That message now could be directed at Trump by voters on Nov. 3. So, Trump's convention is designed to show that he shouldn't be "fired,"

that instead he deserves a second term.

Some voters wanting to mail a "You're fired" ballot now fear what's happening to the U.S. Postal Service. Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat nor gloom of night can stop mail delivery. Can the president?

Democratic speakers last week promoted two messages: One for Trump, "You're fired." The other for Joe Biden, "You're hired." The first was an easier sell, with Trump's approval lagging. But even if voters are down on Trump, that doesn't mean they automatically will vote for Biden. So, the second message was also important.

**Both conventions had** to be virtual because the pandemic still rages through many parts of the country. Democratic speakers cited that again and again, blaming a slow and inadequate response by Trump as causing failure to bring the coronavirus under control and prevent so many deaths, job losses and disruptions of lives.

The pandemic won't be front and center in the convention this week. But some of what the Democrats said will be. Remarks of Democrats such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Bernie Sanders and the numerous speakers who used a "Black lives matter" theme will be cited as a reason why Biden shouldn't be trusted with the presidency. Is he a captive of the left wing of the Democratic Party, being led down a path of socialism and tolerance of rioting and looting? Yes, speakers will assert, contending it would be dangerous to "hire" Biden.

Democrats focused on presentations by and appeals to members of diverse groups.

Trump's appeal this week won't be so much to diverse groups, but instead to one solid group, the Trump base, where the Democratic diversity stuff isn't appealing.

Democrats hammered on a theme that Trump isn't up to being president. Hammering this week by Republican speakers will be on Biden, that he wouldn't be up to the job. They must, as the political consultants say, "build negatives" to weigh Biden down. They want the race to be viewed by voters as one of comparison, with Biden com-



pared unfavorably, not just a referendum on whether to approve of Trump.

**Trump, with a chance** to catch up and win in the Electoral College, can do so if enough voters in the key states look critically at Biden and decide they just can't say, "You're hired."

Trump, however, could be sent off like a losing

contestant on "The Apprentice" if a majority of voters in those battleground states decide to tell him, "You're fired."

❖

**Colwell covers Indiana politics for the South Bend Tribune.**

## Can Biden beat the Democrat veep jinx?

By **ROBERT SCMUHL**

**SOUTH BEND** — With Joe Biden securing formal nomination as his party's presidential candidate this week, he became the latest in a parade of Democratic vice presidents to seek America's ultimate political prize.

Despite the hoopla of the virtual convention, a nagging question dogs the Biden campaign: Can the two-term Number Two buck the losing trend set by his recent predecessors?

Since the 1960s, four Democrats have won races for president: Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. Each served with a vice president later nominated for the top job.

Three of these veeps — Hubert Humphrey in 1968, Walter Mondale in 1984 and Al Gore in 2000 — lost in their attempt to move from second fiddle to chief conductor. Biden is the fourth to face that challenge.

The office of vice president, referred to as "a heartbeat away" from untold power, is difficult to define because each occupant, besides breaking tied votes in the Senate, does whatever a president wants, no more, no less.

America's first vice president, John Adams, called his job "the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived."

More than a century later, Franklin Roosevelt's first running mate, John Nance Garner, assessed his role more colorfully: "The vice presidency is not worth a bucket of warm piss." Garner was so despairing of second-banana status that he sought to replace his boss at the top of the Democrats' ticket at the 1940 convention. Roosevelt received 946 votes to Garner's 61.

Until recent decades, a chief concern in choosing a political sidekick was trying to achieve balance — geographically or generationally — in voters' eyes.

### Concern for balance

That is why John F. Kennedy, a Irish Catholic from New England, picked a running mate in 1960 with strong appeal to Southerners in the Bible Belt: Senate majority leader Johnson.

In the popular vote, with 68 million votes cast, JFK beat Richard Nixon by a margin of just over 100,000. Johnson's home state of Texas ended in the Democratic column, as did several other states in the South, for an Electoral College advantage of 84 votes.

Since 1992, the concern for balance has shifted to practicalities of day-to-day governance. In most situations, a potential president is looking for someone to assume executive responsibilities rather than be merely a liaison with legislators, especially senators.

When Clinton chose Gore 28 years ago, a Southerner in his mid-40s was picking another Southerner of about the same age because Clinton wanted to project a team approach.

Clinton and Gore won in 1992 and 1996. During eight years as the Number Two, Gore guided the administration's work in protecting the environment, developing information technology and streamlining government.

Rather than being slighted as "standby equipment" — another derisive term for the post of vice president - Gore played substantive roles in key areas and served as all-purpose White House adviser. (This arrangement was a far cry from his predecessor, Dan Quayle, George H.W. Bush's veep, who became a running joke.)

The two vice presidents after Gore, Dick Cheney and Biden, continued the pattern Gore set in their active involvement in policy issues. Yet, unlike Gore, both entered the second office as Washington-wise senior figures to younger, less seasoned chief executives.

George W. Bush, who had been governor of Texas for just five years, selected Cheney, a former congressional leader and secretary of defense. Obama had been in the Senate only four years when he picked Biden, a six-term senator. Bush and Obama wanted advice, if not guidance, based on their sidekicks' experience.

Though understandable, the danger of bringing a veteran on to the ticket is that some observers accuse the older figure of having Svengali-like influence, the greyhair manipulating the greenhorn. Cheney, in particular, received criticism during Bush's first term for clout he wielded both overtly and behind the scenes.

By contrast, in today's White House, only one per-



son counts: Donald Trump.

That doesn't mean Mike Pence twiddles his thumbs as vice president. Politically, the former Indiana governor and six-term member of Congress serves as a bridge to conservative Republicans, especially religious evangelicals. He is a conspicuous cheerleader for the Trump administration, with a travel schedule that would intimidate a nomad, and he is also head of the White House Coronavirus Task Force.

Pence makes sense for Trump, as does Sen. Kamala Harris as Biden's vice presidential candidate. Both come across to voters as serious, appropriate second-place choices.

That has not always been the case. The last woman to run for vice president was Sarah Palin in 2008. At that time, she was the largely unknown Republican governor of Alaska. John McCain thought she would add energetic, political pizzazz to the Republicans' campaign against Obama and Biden.

Roundly ridiculed at appearances on the stump and during broadcast interviews, Palin generated more worry than assurance. Before too long, she drifted back into obscurity.

This year is different. Harris, California's attorney general before going to the Senate in 2017, is 22 years younger than Biden and has endured media scrutiny over the past decade, including during her ill-fated bid for this year's presidential nomination. With a father from Jamaica and a mother from India, she is the first woman of color chosen to compete for the vice presidency, and her selection has additional importance in the realm of governing. Should he win in November, Biden will be 78 on Inauguration Day next January. There are whispers already that he might serve just four years.

Conventional wisdom in political science suggests that a Number Two doesn't mean that much to an election's outcome. In most cases, that's true. But the Kennedy-Johnson triumph 60 years ago did prove otherwise.

If Biden and Harris prevail, the president-elect will break the 52-year jinx of Democratic vice presidents losing White House campaigns, and his running mate will become the first woman in history to be a



"heartbeat away."

But winning won't be easy. The Trump-Pence ticket that will be on display at (this) week's Republican convention will noisily vaunt their own case for reelection. Their quest to become the fourth consecutive two-term administration could be groundbreaking too. Four-in-a-row has never happened in U.S. history. ❖

**Robert Schmuhl is professor emeritus of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame and adjunct professor at Dublin City University. He is the author of "The Glory and the Burden: The American Presidency from FDR to Trump." The article was originally published in the Irish Independent Review.**

## ANTELOPE CLUB

615 N. DELAWARE ST. - DOWNTOWN INDY

antelopeclub@hotmail.com



>> Lunch & dinner 6 days a week

>> Cigar lounge

>> Beautiful view of Downtown from our 2nd floor patio

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



**David Faris, The Week:** The Republican National Convention is lousy with Trumps. It's not just that the president will apparently be free associating for nearly an hour every evening ("Air Force One has more televisions than any plane in history. They've got them in closets, they've got them on ceilings, floors."). It's not just that his children and even some of their girlfriends and spouses have been given prominent speaking slots. It's that as an institution, the GOP has chosen to undergo a process of self-erasure, taking hours of free advertising that could have been anchored in touching up the party's brand or appealing to wavering Republicans and instead handing them heedlessly over to the president for him to butcher. That's an enormous mistake for a very simple reason: The Republican Party is more popular than Donald Trump and it will continue to exist long after he leaves office. Every minute that the party submits to his untreated logorrhea and his manic determination to showcase the central roles that nepotism and incompetence play in his administration is not only completely and inexplicably wasted but one that actively contributes to the looming possibility of an across-the-board walloping at the hands of Joe Biden and the Democrats in November. To understand why, you have to know what these conventions are for. In the distant past, they were where the difficult, behind-the-scenes work of selecting the nominee was done. In the post-reform era of binding primary and caucus results, the party conventions are mostly a long infomercial, designed to introduce the presidential and vice presidential nominees to the public, to showcase up-and-coming political stars, to haul out past presidents and losing nominees whose popularity generally grows with the passage of time to remind fence-sitters of what they like and admire about the party, and for incumbents to tout their policy achievements and second-term agendas. These are party affairs. The goal is not just to win the presidency but to boost the organization's fortunes in races up and down the ballot. They are supposed to be the first thing that voters who lean toward a party and are just tuning back into politics in time for the election to see. The president's achievements in office, such as they were, have been obliterated by the coronavirus pandemic, the attendant economic collapse, and the general climate of extraordinary misery. So you can see why the RNC's organizers might have struggled a bit filling time with productive content. And you can't hide an incumbent president. ❖



**Eugene Robinson, Washington Post:** What 176,000-plus deaths from covid-19? What devastating shutdown and recession? What double-digit unemployment? What mass uncertainty over whether and how to open the schools? What shocking police killings of African Americans? What long-overdue reckoning with systemic racism? Let me put it another way: What country does Vice President Pence live in? During his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention on Wednesday, Pence sounded as though he lived in some kind of fantasy-

land that perhaps had encountered a few tiny little bumps in the road. His party has spent the week claiming to represent "the common man," but Pence spoke as though he knew next to nothing about the daunting challenges that Americans are having to deal with every day. The most he could muster was an acknowledgement that "we're passing through a time of testing," as though he were consoling a motorist after a fender bender. ❖

**Jon Webb, Evansville Courier & Press:** When Mike Pence flew into Evansville on Aug. 17, few people knew why he was here. Anonymous sources eventually told the Courier & Press the vice president came to the area to film a TV ad at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Spencer County. And while it was obvious the spot would have something to do with President Trump – it would be weird if Pence came here to shoot a hip-hop video – no one knew what the end product would look like. That answer came on Tuesday night when the ad played during the second day of the Republican National Convention. Trump eventually tweeted it out as well. Titled "Lincoln," it showed Pence hob-knobbing with everyday Americans while Abe's childhood home loomed in the background. Trying to cast Trump as a continuation of Lincoln's legacy (somewhere in a faraway realm, Carl Sandburg is bashing his hand with a hammer), Pence spoke with a roster of people who said the Trump administration's policies had helped them. ❖

**William Galston, Wall Street Journal:** Some Republicans are looking to 1988 as a model for turning around a sinking candidacy and surging to victory. George H.W. Bush, who trailed Michael Dukakis by as much as 17 points after the Democratic convention, ended up beating the Massachusetts governor by more than 7 points in November. The parallel is less than perfect. Mr. Bush was not an incumbent president with a record to defend, and Mr. Dukakis was not well-known to the electorate. The Bush campaign defined Mr. Dukakis before he could define himself. By contrast, Mr. Trump has a substantial and controversial record, and former Vice President Biden is a familiar figure. Then-Vice President Bush was liked and respected across party lines; Mr. Trump's character and conduct has raised concerns among even some of his supporters. Mr. Biden's campaign is gaining momentum. A CBS/YouGov survey conducted right after the Democratic convention suggests that it strengthened Mr. Biden's hand. Before the convention, some 49% of Biden voters said they were voting for him to oppose Donald Trump. That figure has fallen to 42%. Meanwhile, some 38% said they were supporting Mr. Biden because they liked him, up from 29% before the convention. As President Trump prepares to address the Republican convention on Thursday, he trails the Democratic presidential nominee by about 9 points. No incumbent in the past half-century has been so far behind at the start of the conventions. ❖

## Holcomb extends mask mandate

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb has announced that an executive order making face masks mandatory across the state has been extended at least another 30 days ([IndyStar](#)). The mandate went into effect July 27 and was originally slated to expire at 11:59 p.m.

Wednesday. Holcomb said Indiana would also stay in Stage 4.5. The policy came at a time when reports of new coronavirus cases continued to trend higher than in months prior, including Indiana passing more than 1,000 new cases in a single day for the first time. Since then, Indiana has initially reported more than 1,000 new cases in a single day a total of 10 times. The executive order requires all Hoosiers 8 years and older to wear face coverings in indoor public spaces, while using public transportation and outdoors when social distancing isn't possible.

## IU tests 39k; has 0.91% positivity

BLOOMINGTON — Since launching a new, centralized check-in process this month, Indiana University has tested more than 39,000 students for COVID-19 upon their arrival to one of four residential campuses. With 81 percent of those on-arrival tests processed, the university had a 0.91 percent positivity rate -- a prevalence in line with the university's expectations and also with two statewide studies, led by IUPUI and the Indiana State Department of Health, that have been performed in Indiana. As students have tested positive, they have either returned home with their families to isolate, are isolating off-campus, or have been isolated in housing reserved for that purpose; their close contacts are in quarantine.



## Glass to resume law career at Taft

INDIANAPOLIS — Former Indiana University Director of Athletics Fred Glass plans to resume his law career in October, joining the Indianapolis office of Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP as a partner ([IBJ](#)). Glass, 61, will operate a general business law practice, while also handling matters related to higher education, employment, government matters, and the sports, media and entertainment industries. He is expected to join the firm Oct. 30. "I think it'll just be fun there," he told IBJ. "That was the most important thing for me at this stage of my career—find a place that I thought would be fun. This is my final chapter and I want it to be probably about 10 years. I think that's enough time to build a robust practice, and I [think] Taft could be a great place to do that."

## Sports grinds to a halt in protest

NEW YORK — The NBA's restart inside a restricted bubble at Disney World, which has proceeded smoothly for more than a month without any positive coronavirus tests, came to a screeching halt Wednesday when the Milwaukee Bucks refused to take the court for a playoff game against the Orlando Magic to protest the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis. The league announced the cancellation of all three games scheduled for Wednesday evening as a result. The unprecedented decision to postpone the games was quickly followed by a similar decision by the Women's National Basketball Association, which canceled its scheduled games across the state in Bradenton. In Milwaukee, the Brewers announced they would not play their Major League Baseball game Wednesday night against the Cincinnati Reds. The Seattle Mariners' game against the San Diego Padres also was postponed.

The cancellations underscored an emerging new reality in big-time sports in which athletes are increasingly emboldened to express themselves on racial injustice and other social issues, and leagues are finding ways to accommodate their views.

## Solar advocates oppose Vectren plan

INDIANAPOLIS — Solar advocates have come out against the Indiana utility Vectren's plan to pay customers with solar panels less for the energy they generate for the grid. Republican state lawmaker and solar customer Rep. Ron Bacon ([R-Chandler](#)) is one of those critics ([Indiana Public Media](#)). Starting in 2022, Indiana residents with solar panels will get the lower rate for energy they deliver to the grid. But Vectren wants to switch new customers to a lower payment rate earlier. The company said people with solar panels get unfairly high prices for that energy, which shifts costs to its other customers. Bacon said the change wouldn't affect him because he installed solar panels before 2017. But if he did get those lower rates, he said his bills would be much higher. The payments solar customers get for their excess energy can be deducted from their energy bills. "We wouldn't want to do it anymore. It wouldn't be cost-effective," he said.

## Trump urges Goodyear boycott

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (WLFI)-Local State Rep. Chris Campbell is urging the governor to extend the length of time Hoosiers have to apply for the rental assistance program. Wednesday is the last day that tenants can apply. One local property management company that says they would be in favor of the extension. "We have had many people reach out via email via phone calls," said Nakota Harris a Leasing specialist at Consolidated Property Management. "I think since March our phones haven't stopped ringing."