



Donnelly won't rule out 2022 run

Calls successors' stance leading up to Capitol insurrection 'a stain'

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Former senator Joe Donnelly watched in horror the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 and said that the “big lie” perpetrated by his successors’ in the

Senate and House will be a “stain” on their careers.

But it isn't enough to compel

him to resume the political career that went on hiatus in 2018 with his upset loss to U.S. Sen. Mike Braun. Asked during a Zoom HPI Interview on Tuesday whether he will challenge U.S. Sen. Todd Young in 2022, Donnelly took a wait and see attitude. “We’ll see what the future holds,”



Donnelly said. “I’ve not made any kind of decisions on those types of things.”

Donnelly said that he is focused on teaching at his alma mater Notre Dame, and practicing law from his Granger, Indiana, home. He raised \$18 million in his race against Braun in an election that drew more than \$110 million, so there will be the financial calculation in his coming decision. “I spent six years raising \$18 million and then there was a candidate who can write a check for \$20 million in an afternoon,” Donnelly said. “Those are always things that have to get considered as well.”

Donnelly believes that Trump should be convicted in his second impeachment trial

scheduled to begin on Feb. 8. “I was asked earlier today, do you believe the (former) president would be convicted

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Trump vs. Pence

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The fissure snaking through the Republican Party at this point in time comes down to what appears to be Donald Trump’s chaos wing, and Mike Pence’s constitutional GOP. And in Pence’s hometown of Columbus, Ind., the party loyalty appears to be divided.



As Donald Trump faces his second impeachment trial beginning Feb. 8, this much has come to light: Beginning in early October through the Nov. 3 election, Trump plotted with key aides. Once the “red mirage” of an early Trump lead had been forecast before much of the mail-in vote was counted, Trump planned to declare victory Election Night



“We are trending in the right direction. We are on a path where we can see our way out. In early January our positivity rate was 16.5%. Today it came it at 9.1%.”

- Gov. Eric Holcomb, during his weekly COVID presser on Wednesday.



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Jack E. Howey
 editor emeritus
 1926-2019



until Fox News called Arizona for Joe Biden according to "fly-on-the-wall" reporting from Axios's Jonathan Swan and Zachary Basu. This would become known as "the big lie."

In late December, a TV ad by the Lincoln Project aimed at Trump suggested that Pence would essentially be the one who would terminate his presidency. "The end is coming, Donald. ... On Jan. 6, Mike Pence will put the nail in your political coffin," the ad's voiceover said in the ad aimed at an audience of one.

Trump's efforts to, as he put it, "overturn" the election reached a crescendo on Jan. 6. According to Axios, Trump called Pence late that morning to take one last shot at bullying the vice president into objecting to the certification of Biden's victory. Unsuccessful in

convincing Pence to join this conspiracy, President Trump goaded his supporters at a "Stop the Steal" rally on the Ellipse that he had promised would be "wild" into a march on the U.S. Capitol. Pence was presiding in the Senate over what had been a perfunctory congressional counting of Electoral College ballots.

"Mike Pence, I hope you're going to stand up for the good of our Constitution and for the good of our country. And if you're not, I'm going to be very disappointed in you," Trump said, egging his supporters on. "I will tell you right now, I'm not hearing good stories. I hope Mike is going to do the right thing. I hope so. I hope so, because if Mike Pence does the right thing, we win the election. All Vice President Pence has to do is send it back to the states to recertify, and we become president."

By the time they reached the Capitol, Trump supporters had become a "mob" that would be later described by former President George W. Bush and U.S. Sen. Mitt Romney (2000 GOP presidential nominee) as

an "insurrection." Part of this mob was chanting "Hang Mike Pence!"

In the ultimate split screen moment, Pence had arrived in the Senate and his office indicated he would play no extra-constitutional efforts to thwart the will of the people, while the mob descended on the Capitol, where six people, including a Capitol police officer, would die. Pence and family were evacuated from the Senate chamber, minutes before the mob arrived, and taken to a secure site, where the vice president remained for hours. According to Axios, Trump, sequestered in his



private dining room to watch the TV coverage, placed no calls to check on Pence's safety, instead tweeting, "Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done to protect our Country and our Constitution."

U.S. Rep. Tom Rice, R-S.C., told ABC News, "I'm convinced these people outside, tens of thousands shouting 'hang Mike Pence', if they had gotten their hands on Mike Pence they would have killed him. I'm convinced of that."

Axios: "After all the bullying, the abuse, the Twitter tirades, the calls to violence, Pence assessed his options. He'd stood with Trump – not complaining, not explaining – through four years. On the eve of the transfer of power, Pence's team made clear he'd not be able to attend Trump's final sendoff at Joint Base Andrews, choosing instead to attend Biden's swearing-in. Many believe Pence intends to run for president in 2024. He's likely to preserve his bridge to Trump beyond Jan. 20, at least long enough to understand

whether it's needed."

After watching President Biden's inauguration, Pence, wife and daughter flew to Columbus, Ind., where a small, socially distanced, masked crowd met him at the airport. Pence said he told his wife, Karen, they would move back to Indiana in the summertime. Our bet is that they'll end up in a gated community in Indianapolis or Carmel.

On Wednesday, "Morning Joe" host Joe Scarborough described Pence as "in hiding back in Indiana," because "there are people who have Mike Pence on their hit list because of Donald Trump."

In a story by [Columbus Republic](#) reporter Andy East in Pence's hometown, the end of the Trump/Pence administration has divided Bartholomew Republicans. Allies of Pence say it was an upsetting ordeal that put the vice president's life in danger after years of unwavering loyalty to the president. But Pence's decision to defy the president also alienated some Trump supporters.

Republican Chairwoman Barb Hackman said while there are "strong Trump supporters" in Bartholomew County, "there could be a lot of hurt" among some local Republicans. "All the support and loyalty that Mike showed the president and then for him to do that has really upset a lot of local Republicans," Hackman told the Republic. "And there have been some local Republicans that are upset that Mike didn't go along with what Trump was wanting him to do. So there might be some differences of opinion, but it will not cause any rift, I don't believe, going forward with the Republican Party."

East reported: "The 'differences of opinion' come as Republican officials across the country confront profound questions about what the GOP stands for in the wake of the Capitol riot and with Trump out of office. Over the past four years, the GOP's values were inexorably tied to the whims of a president who regularly sought to undermine democratic institutions and traded the party's long-standing commitment to fiscal discipline, strong foreign policy and the rule of law for a brash and inconsistent populism. The party now faces a decision about whether to keep moving in that direction, as legions of Trump's most loyal supporters demand, or chart a new course."

In the party's 2020 virtual national convention, the GOP failed to forge a party platform for the first time since 1856. It was a key indicator that the national GOP had been transformed into Donald Trump's party.

Polling has revealed a GOP chasm. On Wednesday, a Politico-Morning Consult poll revealed more than half of Republican voters (56%) believe that Trump should either probably or definitely run for president again in 2024. Just



over a third of Republican voters (36%) think he probably or definitely should not. Trump's approval rating among self-identified Republicans dropped to 70% after the Capitol riot, the lowest since he took office in January 2017, according to a Jan. 8-12 Reuters Ipsos poll, East reported. That is an 18% drop since mid-August and a 7% decline since the day before the riot. About 20% of Republicans said they would "strongly" or "somewhat" approve of the

Senate convicting Trump for incitement of insurrection, according to a Jan. 15-17 Politico/Morning Consult poll, up from 14% the week before.

Research by GOP pollster Frank Luntz revealed 43% of Republicans said they will definitely vote against any House Republican who

supported impeaching Trump. And that is why Republicans like U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski and U.S. Sen. Mike Braun backed the Jan. 6 challenge to the Electoral College vote.

Walorski has dominated her 2nd CD over the past three general elections. It would be hard to believe she would be vulnerable to a primary challenge, particularly if Trump wanes in popularity. That is likely to occur if Twitter continues to ban Trump, he becomes engulfed in legal and business troubles, the Biden administration orchestrates a successful vaccination of the population, and stories of rampant power abuses by the Trump administration continue to come into the public light.

Having said that, actions by the Arizona, Wyoming, Washington and Oregon Republican parties to censure those not aligned with Trump (i.e. in Arizona this includes Gov. Doug Ducey, Cindy McCain and Jeff Flake) indicate a significant segment of the party is not ready to move on from Trump. Will the GOP be the party that accepts QAnon supporting Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (who advocated on Facebook for the execution of Speaker Pelosi) while expelling Rep. Liz Cheney for voting for Trump's impeachment?

On Tuesday, Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel vowed the RNC would stay "neutral" in the 2024 race and described QAnon as "dangerous."

McDaniel told the AP, "The party has to stay neutral. I'm not telling anybody to run or not to run in 2024. If we're fighting each other every day and attacking each other and brandishing party purism, we're not going to accomplish what we need to to win back the House and take back the Senate, and that's my priority." As for QAnon, McDaniel said, "I think it's really important after what's just happened in our country that we have some self reflection on the violence that's continuing to erupt in our country. I think QAnon is beyond fringe. I think it's dangerous."

For now, the national Republican Party appears to be headed for this divide: Trump Chaos v. Pence Constitutionals. ❖

Donnelly, from page 1

on charges that he was responsible for the violent attack against the United States Capitol where a police officer was killed and five individuals died?" Donnelly said. "That sums up just how close we came. The president is undergoing these charges because he incited an attack upon our Capitol."

He added that former president Trump played a huge role in his loss to Braun, even though Donnelly visited all 92 Indiana counties for six years while serving in the Senate. He said that part of Trump's attraction to Hoosier voters is that he and Fox News told them that no one was listening to them. "Every night on Fox News, grievances were being put forward and folks who worked very hard were being told 'Nobody's listening to you,' Donnelly said. "I would go to all 92 counties and listen to every single one of you and my microphone wasn't as big as theirs."

Young is expected to seek a second term in 2022. No Democrat has declared for the seat. Donnelly would be the most formidable challenger, though running in a first mid-term under President Biden would put him at a potential disadvantage, as history has shown that parties which control the White House don't fare well in such elections.

Here is the HPI Interview with Donnelly:

HPI: Put the last four years of the Donald Trump era in perspective, and, in particular, since the election last November.

Donnelly: I was asked earlier today, 'Do you believe the (former) president should be convicted on charges that he was responsible for the violent attack against the United States Capitol where a police officer was killed and five individuals died?' That sums up just how close we came. The president is undergoing these charges because he incited an attack upon our Capitol, that when it began, and this was said by people in the White House, he watched almost gleefully; when he was asked to send in the National Guard that did not happen. His staff within the White House pleaded with him to get on TV ... "tell them to leave; tell them to get out now." He did not do it. And a vice president from our own state, who has been so loyal to President Trump, was in danger and he still didn't say anything.

HPI: How do you think Vice President Pence handled Jan. 6 and the events leading up to that?

Donnelly: My reaction was that the Mike Pence on Jan. 6 was the Mike Pence I knew for a long time in my

life. For many years as vice president, he had to almost become a carbon copy of Donald Trump; he had to follow whatever President Trump said. On Jan. 6, the vice president, Mike Pence – and I called him Mike Pence just then because I've known Mike for so many years – the vice president did the right thing. I watched that whole thing in horror because they were in the Senate chamber, and knowing every in and out of the place and knowing exactly where the vice president's office was off the floor of the Senate, to see these people stampeding around the Senate, and knowing the vice president was literally 15 to 20 feet away, just across the hallway ... it was something I was very concerned about; it was very heartbreaking. But here's the thing, I always know that America is so good and so strong, just like we are in Indiana. These people are just domestic terrorists. For every one of them, there are 10,000 really, really awesome Americans who would do anything they could for their country. All you have to do is go across the river, and Arlington Cemetery is right there, to show you who the real heroes of America are.



HPI: You experienced the

Trump phenomenon during your reelection bid in 2018. I've written that we experienced the kind of reaction to Barack Obama in 2008, Robert F. Kennedy in 1968, and perhaps D.C. Stephenson in the 1920s. What are your thoughts after watching Trump pack fieldhouse after fieldhouse in the summer and

fall of 2018?

Donnelly: Indiana voted for Donald Trump by 19 points in 2016 and by 18 points in 2020. In 2018, you do data analysis when you're running. In analyzing the data, if you look at Democratic candidates in previous mid-terms and look at what Republican candidates and officeholders got, I always figured it would be significantly higher because of the Donald Trump phenomenon. The data analysis done before the race showed if I ever had a million votes, it would have been far more than any Democrat had ever got in memorable history in a mid-term. I'm a student of history and looked and 850,000 was the high water mark. Typically it would be somewhere 700,000 or 750,000 and the Republican would be about 1 million. Data analytics said if I hit 1 million, I would win by 5% or 6%. We always knew it would be tough because of Donald Trump; we were basically running against Donald Trump. We just worked and worked and worked to get to that number. People said, "You'll never get that high." We ended up with 1,000,250, and it was 100,000-plus short. Every time Donald Trump came out – five or six times in the last month and a half, three times in the last nine days – Peter Hanscom, who was the best campaign manager you could ever have, and I looked at each other and

said, "Please take that plane somewhere else." You could measurably see in the next few days another point or two drop. They knew that as well.

HPI: At the Evansville and Southport rallies, Trump not only packed the fieldhouse, there were thousands standing outside. I don't think I've seen a political figure have such a sway on people. What do you think it is? Did he just learn the lingo that appealed to voters?

Donnelly: He spoke to folks who felt, in part, that nobody was listening to them. As you know, I went to all 92 counties every single year, in every corner of the state, to make sure they were being listened to. But Donald Trump told them time after time after time they weren't being listened to. Every night on Fox News, grievances were being put forward and folks who worked very hard were being told "Nobody's listening to you." I went to all 92 counties and sat and listened to every single one of you and my microphone wasn't as big as theirs.

HPI: So we have Sen. Todd Young up for reelection in 2022. Are you considering a challenge to him?

Donnelly: I've been teaching national security at Notre Dame and I've been practicing law. It's been really nice. Being part of public service was the greatest honor I could have had, certainly in Congress and in the Senate. So that was a great privilege. So we'll see what the future holds. I've not made any kind of decisions on those types of things.

HPI: What kind of time frame ...

Donnelly: And the second semester starts in a week.

HPI: We've seen U.S. Senate races double every two years in spending. I can remember Evan Bayh and Dan Coats running in the 1990s and having to raise \$3 million to \$5 million. The last Senate race was more than \$100 million.

Donnelly: It was \$110 million.

HPI: So there's the financial component of this. When do you have to make a decision?

Donnelly: I'm focused on teaching and practicing law right now. I haven't really given any deep thought to that. At the start of my last race, people said, "You have to raise at least \$10 million. We don't know how you'll do it but you'll have to raise \$10 million." I ended up raising \$18 million and it was just a drop in the bucket. Individual wealth of candidates is something, too. Because I spent six years raising \$18 million and then there was a candidate who could write a check for \$20 million in an afternoon. Those are always things that have to get considered as well.

HPI: When we met at Notre Dame last year you mentioned a single donor contributed more than \$20 million against you. Can you say who that was?

Donnelly: (Laughs). I'll tell you some other day. But it was \$25 million in what they gave to Mitch McConnell, in what was earmarked for the Indiana Senate race. I don't think they could have found Indiana on a map if it was circled and pointed out to them.

HPI: OK. Give us a critique of Sen. Young, Sen. Braun and, perhaps Rep. Walorski and how they've handled the post-election period in 2020 and this year.

Donnelly: I don't want to get too much into individuals. Our obligation is to tell the truth to the people we represent. When it's easy it's much more fun than when it's hard. I thought the ACA was the right thing to do back in 2010. I told everybody in my district I thought this was the opportunity for more health care. You were



there in Kokomo (for a 2010 town hall) and you knew it was a challenge. But I told them the truth of what I wanted to do and what made sense for the country. I think over the years it's been borne out. But if you look at what happened with the election of President Biden, Sen. Braun knew that Joe Biden was elected president and that the election was fair. Jackie Walorski knew that Joe Biden was elected president and the election was fair. Obviously their base did not want to hear that. But that's not what they're hired to do. They have an obligation to tell the truth. Part of being a senator or congressman is telling the hard truths. For them to participate in trying to overthrow of the election of Joe Biden, there's no other way to put it. It was an effort to overthrow the election of Joe Biden. It's important to remember, Brian, folks like Rudy Giuliani would say stuff on television, but every time they went into court they never claimed fraud, once. Not one time. There were hand recounts; there were machine recounts; there were all kinds of recounts. There was never any indi-

cation there was any foul play involved in that. These folks knowing this, continued on doing this and I actually think it's a stain on their name.

HPI: The Indiana Democratic Party is not very competitive right now. What do you believe Indiana Democrats need to do to regain that competitive edge? And are you backing any candidate for chair?

Donnelly: What we need to do is to continue to fight in all 92 counties. If you go back and look at the 2018 election, we didn't end up winning. And I do want to say that in 2016, Donald Trump won with the same exact Electoral College vote count. He actually received less popular votes than Hillary Clinton. When the time came, as the U.S. senator from our state I showed up and I certified the election of Donald Trump as president, because that was my job, just as Todd Young did this past year. As Democrats, we need to compete in all 92 counties. Obviously we can't win in all 92 counties, but we have to win every last vote that we can. Our message is about jobs, it's about opportunity, it's about the chance for people to get health care, a decent education,



and for our rural communities, to get solid broadband to every corner; to work to make sure that prosperity goes to every town. That's who we are as Democrats; we fight for every family. We don't fight for that tax cut bill of 2017 that took \$2 trillion out of our treasury and just handed it to the wealthy.

HPI: Are you backing anyone for chair of the party?

Donnelly: I don't think anyone has even announced yet, so I'll wait and see who we have. ❖

Schmuhl, Whitcomb in INDem chair race

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Mike Schmuhl and Trish Whitcomb are in the race for Indiana Democratic Party chair, while Karlee Macer is out.

These developments come as the party seeks to become relevant again after being shut out of power at the local, state and federal levels.

The party hasn't won a statewide race since 2012, and holds just 12% of county offices, less than 40% of city halls, only two of 11 federal offices, none at the Indiana Statehouse, and has been in super minority status in the General Assembly since 2014.

Whitcomb told *Howey Politics Indiana* on Wednesday, "Our party needs leadership and dedication to our values, which my years of service exemplify," said Whitcomb. "As state party chair, I will work closely with county, district, and caucus leaders; I will listen to those who work tirelessly on the front lines; and I will ensure state party support of their work."

Whitcomb entered the race as Schmuhl decided to get back in after declaring he wasn't interested in late last year. Schmuhl is a former campaign aide to Joe Donnelly



and managed the meteoric presidential campaign of Pete Buttigieg last year.

Last November, Schmuhl released this statement to HPI: "Since I moved back home to Indiana in 2009 to work for Joe Donnelly, electing Hoosier Democrats has been at the heart of my career, and it culminated in the his-

toric 2020 Pete for America campaign. While I won't be a candidate for chair of the state Democratic Party next year, I will do everything I can to help our Indiana party to gain strength and secure victories in the years ahead."

Last week, informed and reliable Democratic sources began telling HPI that Schmuhl was reconsidering.

Whitcomb said she had reached out to Schmuhl, then sent a text to Donnelly, "and miraculously I heard back from Mike Schmuhl," who she said is "in the race."

On Wednesday morning, the only previously declared candidate, former Indianapolis legislator Karlee Macer, announced on Facebook she was exiting the race. "Over the past few months I've had great conversations with Democrats across the state about the future of the party," Macer said. "We know that the road ahead will require hard work, energy and a passion for rebuilding our



infrastructure. Unfortunately a family medical emergency has taken precedence, and I will no longer be seeking the position of party chair."

Macer followed John Gregg, former speaker and gubernatorial nominee, who made calls in December before bowing out on New Year's Eve, saying in a tweet: "Today I am announcing that I will not be a candidate. While I am a proud Hoosier Democrat, for me this work has always been more about people, policy and progress than partisan politics."

Another not running is former St. Joseph County Chairman Jason Critchlow, who tweeted Wednesday, "I would like to make it clear that I will not be running for @INDems Chair. I appreciate the encouragement from around the state and to have my name discussed as a good fit for this position. But, I do not believe it to be the right thing for me or my family."

Whitcomb said that Hoosier Democrats have been hurt by negative messaging from the national party: "The focus of national Democrats has damaged local and legislative party candidates. I want to start by building up from the ground." She added that actions at the local level are important. "If the Save the River group is going to have a day picking up trash, let's have local Democrats go with them and listen to them."

Whitcomb insists she has the "skills" when it comes to messaging and fundraising. After working on the 1980 campaign of U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh, Whitcomb moved to California where she picked up direct contact skills for targeting voters. She has played key roles in a number of victorious Democrat campaigns, including those of State Rep. Win Moses in 1983, U.S. Rep. Jim Jontz in 1986, Gov. Evan Bayh in 1988, U.S. Rep. Jill Long Thompson in 1989 and Supt. Glenda Ritz in 2012. She said when she was president of the Indiana Federation of Democratic Women, "We supported Melanie Wright for state representative in 2014 and she won."

"I've been doing this since we've sent data with modems," said Whitcomb, who is the daughter of the late Republican Gov. Edgar Whitcomb. She would be only the second female Democratic chair if elected. Ann DeLaney held the post under Gov. Bayh.

Democrat National Committeeman Shaw Friedman told HPI on Wednesday that Schmuhl was widely encouraged to take another look at the chair. "There was strong encouragement from many of us asking him to reconsider, which he did," Friedman told HPI. "His potentially serving as our state chair is a game-changer for us. His organizing skills are second to none (i.e. setting up a statewide precinct organization that won the Iowa caucuses for Pete) and his ability to tap the right expertise for messaging and fundraising is exceptional."

The decision for Democrats will come on March 20, following county party reorganizations on March 4-6, congressional districts by March 13. With 27 votes on the Indiana Democratic Central Committee, Whitcomb added, "I need 14 votes." ❖

An open letter to a Democrat activist

By **DAVE GALVIN**

INDIANAPOLIS – A letter to a Democratic activist: I appreciate your letter regarding the current status of the Indiana Democratic Party and your determination and openness to changing the way the party engages voters. It's also notable that you wish to restructure the party in ways that are, as you put it, "less Indianapolis and more Indiana."



I couldn't agree more. I understand your zeal for our party and longing to get into the fight; we are not alone in our desire to see pro-science and pro-working family leaders governing our communities and state. However, to begin the process of building the political infrastructure and the army of activists required to win local and statewide elections

(See Obama's 2008 and Stacey Abrams' 2020 playbooks) will require patience, honesty, and a little Sun-tzu (stop rolling your eyes).

As we have discussed ad nauseum, the state of the Indiana Democratic Party is, at best, in disarray. While it is a complete waste of our time to point fingers at its past and current leadership, I believe you should consider taking the donkey by the ears and reorganizing the party with the following thoughts in mind.

Patience is a virtue.

Like me, you're short on patience. While you and I have adhered to wearing masks, as per the guidance of doctors and scientists, the leadership-fearing GOP has played silly patriot games while 20% of our state's restaurants have closed for good and thousands of our fellow Hoosiers have died. I, too, am anxious to see many of them vacate our beautiful Statehouse but we need to gather resources and cultivate strong and capable candidates to run, and win, in strategic locations and offices. This will take some time to accomplish.

You must be patient with those who want to thrust the party left, for they want to see every American enjoy the right to good health care, and they seek to demilitarize local police departments – we agree with them – however, you and I know that these messages aren't convincing independent voters to vote for Democrats. You'll have to be patient with our friends who are anti-choice. This group of Democrats is judged harshly by our friends on the left, and they are leaving our ranks because they no longer feel welcome in our party.

Honest leadership.

We need leadership that is honest and pragmatic at the helm of our party. I know you're busy so I'll get

right to it. When someone from a bright red Republican district tells you that they're thinking about running for – fill in the unwinnable office – kindly advise them to reevaluate their decision. There is nothing wrong with telling people the truth even if it's not popular; this is a characteristic of being a good leader.

I strongly recommend that you take to heart this aspect of being a good leader, as uncomfortable as it will make you feel, because there's one hard truth all Democrats need to come to terms with; the political infrastructure that made it possible for Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon to win and hold statewide offices is long gone. Simply put, there are not enough resources available to support every Democrat who wants to run for office. You must focus on the races you can win, period.

While you are being honest and unraveling the political dreams of many well-intentioned Democrats, you should be visiting union halls, churches, building a volunteer network, and scanning voting data for weak points in the ranks of Republican mayors and city council members. I recommend taking a deep dive into the voting habits of high fidelity Democrats in cities recently taken over by the party of the twice impeached, one-termer... Oh, you know who I mean.

Focus on winning more mayoral campaigns; communities and future statewide candidates will thank you.

Now, about Sun-tzu...

In Indiana, thanks to some crafty draftsmanship with the boundaries of state House and state Senate seats, it is nearly impossible to defeat 90% of incumbent Republican legislators. This being the case, I advise you to crack open the "Art of War" and, while enjoying your favorite beverage, contemplate the Sixth Century Chinese general's advice detailed in the sections titled "Vacuity and Substance, Configurations of Terrain, and Nine Terrains."



You, my friend, need to think like a general leading a small army against a superior force; you need to harass your opponents, expose their flanks, poison their wells (their sources of

money not their actual drinking water), and, like a strategically-minded predator, single out the lamed and weak and defeat them.

One last point before I close. You need to develop a message that speaks to our friends in Richmond and Clinton. You must listen to them and know their hearts, for I believe that many of them are being bamboozled by political lemmings that are following a cult off the edge of reason. ❖

Galvin is founder and CEO of Colfax Communications LLC.

Biden strives for a difficult unity

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND – "There is truth and there are lies," President Joe Biden said in calling for national unity. "Lies told for power and for profit."

Unity is possible, even as different governmental approaches are debated, as they should be. It will be very difficult, however, to bring much unity, much civility, if there is an inability of so many, too many, to differentiate between truth and lies, between facts and whacko conspiracy theories.



Former Vice President Mike Pence was at the inauguration. The Republican and Democratic leaders of Congress were there. Three presidential predecessors, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, were there. That was good.

Donald Trump wasn't there. That also was good.

Trump has made himself a symbol of disunity and persisted, despite the truth, with claims that he didn't really lose. He promoted the conspiracy theories on which false claims were based. He wouldn't have fit in with the other former presidents. He no doubt would have shown disdain for the transfer of power that the others were there to celebrate.

An example of how tough it will be to bring a sense of national unity and end what Biden called an "uncivil war" can be found here in Michiana. Fred Upton, the 18-term Republican congressman from Michigan's 6th District, had the courage to act in a way to be called a coward and a liar.

Upton voted to accept certification of presidential election results, including the 154,000-vote victory by Biden in Michigan, where, as Upton said, "The voters have spoken."

After Trump incited a mob for the deadly storming of the Capitol to prevent transfer of power, Upton broke with the majority of House Republicans to vote to impeach Trump. He became the first House member in congressional history ever to vote for two impeachments, of Clinton and now Trump.

The Trump vote brought a fierce response on Upton's official Facebook page: "COWARD!!" "!!TRAITOR!!" "You should be recalled and lose your pension and convicted of (of) treason." He also was denounced for perceived lies about need to wear a mask.

Oh, there were of course positive exclamations such as: "Thank you, Fred, for supporting the constitution, truth and responsible leadership!!!"

But it's the angry insults and threats of those who

actually believe that Biden didn't win fair and square and decisively – as all the recounts and the courts say – that roar loudest on social media, as loud as mobs at the Capitol shouting to "Hang Mike Pence."

Why do those who railed against Upton for failing to "Stop the Steal" actually believe that Trump didn't lose? Well, most certainly aren't fervent believers in the QAnon dogma about Democrats being pedophiles who eat children. But they believe in some of the vote conspiracy theories spread by QAnon and other sources of disinformation.

It's about where they turn for information. They rely on social media and the type of TV and radio that tells repeatedly of conspiracy theories about election fraud and reporting only Trump's contentions that the election was rigged, never reporting the decisions of 60 courts and

results of every recount. They believe the lies, lies told for power and for profit.

Can they be convinced of the truth? Biden argued that many of them can be reached, convinced, in his efforts to bring America together. He acknowledged that this also is labeled as "a foolish fantasy." Yes, some Democrats do think it's foolish of him to seek unity, promising to fight for those who didn't vote for him as well as for those who did. Fight political fire with fire, they advise.

Biden avoided that tactic. He never mentioned Trump by name. He spoke in more lofty terms of honoring the Constitution and accepting a duty and responsibility "to defend the truth and to defeat the lies." ❖

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

Biden will need bipartisan support

By KELLY HAWES
CNHI News Bureau

ANDERSON – Millions of Americans woke up Thursday morning joyous at the realization that Donald J. Trump was no longer president. Others had a different view.



One video making the rounds on social media featured a woman who appeared to be hysterical over the inauguration of Joe Biden. She apparently believed those who had insisted Trump would find a way to stay in office. "President Trump, if you see this, please save us, ..." she cried. "Please, President Trump. Please, I hope you have a

plan. God, please, save us. Save us from the devil, please!"

Biden has issued a call for unity and pledged to be a president for all Americans, but some, like that woman in the video, are not quite ready to embrace him. Perhaps they never will. Though a Gallup survey found his approval rating at an all-time low in his final days in office, Trump still enjoys significant support within his own party. According to a Morning Consult poll in the waning days of his presidency, almost 80% of Republican voters at least somewhat approved of his performance. Half strongly approved while only 11% strongly disapproved.

In a survey taken just after some of his supporters stormed the Capitol and just ahead of a House vote to impeach him for an unprecedented second time, the Pew Research Center found that 64% of Republican voters still believed the former president's claim that he won the election. That works out to about 34% of the overall elector-

ate. For those folks, unity might be out of the question.

Still, the news for Biden is not all bad. That same survey found that 58% of Americans approved of the job he had done in laying out his vision for the country. When it comes to making that vision a reality, 74% of respondents said the new president should do his best to compromise with Republicans in Congress even if it meant disappointing some of his supporters. At the same time, 66% of respondents said congressional Republicans ought to do their best to find common ground with Biden even at the risk of upsetting their base.

The picture looks a little different, though, when you break down those answers by party. Nine out of 10 Republicans and more than six out 10 Democrats say Biden should seek common ground, but the parties are far more divided when it comes to congressional Republicans. Republicans support their representatives standing firm by a margin of 59% to 38%, while Democrats say they should compromise by a margin of 89% to 9%.

It's not surprising, I guess, that supporters of both parties are more likely to favor the other side giving ground in a negotiation. Still, it's worth noting that nine out of 10 Republicans support the Democrats backing away from a position while fewer than four in 10 support their own side doing that. Democrats, too, strongly favor the other side giving ground, but most also support the idea of their side taking part in the give and take.

The reality, of course, is that neither party will get everything it wants. With an evenly divided Senate and a requirement that most measures gain bipartisan support, neither party will be able to force its will on the other. Nevertheless, that Pew survey tells us that Americans are fed up with gridlock. They want their new president to get things done.

Of course, they won't be surprised if he doesn't. The survey found 46% of respondents saying he'd make things better, 28% saying he'd make things worse and 24% saying he wouldn't have much of an effect one way or the other. Let's hope he beats expectations. ❖

Our path forward

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – With the handoff of power from one president to another, we enter this new phase of our national life in deep distress. We are divided and polarized, struggling to communicate reasonably with one another, and seemingly unable to find common ground on basic issues. Yet the path forward is neither new nor, really, difficult. We all know what needs to happen. We just need to do it.



To heal as a nation, we need to return to our traditional ways of doing business. We need to rediscover our skills at negotiation and compromise. We

must rekindle our understanding that many people contribute to our progress as a nation and that no one has an exclusive on wisdom. And perhaps more than anything, we need to reassure ourselves that we have the confidence and ability to solve our problems. We have done it in the past. We can do it again.

I count myself among those who believe that President Trump’s misconduct should not be ignored, that healthy democracies hold public officials accountable for their actions and do not just sweep them under the rug in the name of moving on. Representative democracies cannot function if political leaders try to overturn the results of a free and fair election when they do not like the result.

At the same time, though, we badly need to focus on the tasks of governing. And by “we,” I mean all of us. Most of us will not have much impact on the future of Social Security or finding ways to provide affordable health care to every American, but we do bear responsibility for making our own little corner of the country work. We can look around our neighborhood, our community, our region, or our state, and do our best to make our system live up to its promise.

For starters, this means that we resolve our differences without resorting to violence or trying to overthrow the system. Our representative democracy has its faults, but over the long sweep of our history it has served us well, evolving as public understanding evolves. In our system, we work to reform it, not to jettison it altogether.

Binding up our wounds will take recognizing that we can work together to resolve our differences. We will be helped on this score by electing principled, practical, and pragmatic leaders. I have had the privilege in my time in politics of watching hundreds (if not thousands)



who expect their elected representatives – and the media they consume – to level with them, tell them uncomfortable truths, explain the facts, repudiate conspiracy theories, and put forward workable policies for a complex, ever-changing country.


We face tough problems. And while Americans do not expect miracles, they do expect their leaders to work together to solve them. That is how we move forward. The Jan. 6 insurrection was a very dark moment in our history. We have a long way to go to move past it, but we have a chance to revitalize our democracy by showing that it can work to improve the lives of all Americans, regardless of their beliefs. We have done it in the past. We can do it again. ❖

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

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Black caucus pleased agenda is moving

Howey Politics Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana Black Legislative Caucus says it's pleased with progress so far this session on its justice reform agenda (Smith, [Indiana Public Media](#)). The major police reform bill of 2021 is well on its way.



Supported by law enforcement, public defenders and key organizations in Black communities, the measure requires de-escalation training for all police officers. It treats chokeholds as deadly force. And it allows the state

training board to "decertify" officers who commit misconduct. Other parts of the Black Caucus's agenda gaining traction: A bill to create a law enforcement misconduct database and an extension of the state's current traffic amnesty program, allowing drivers to more easily get their licenses back. Black Caucus Chair Robin Shackelford (D-Indianapolis) said conversations with Republican leaders have been productive. And she's pleased to see Gov. Eric Holcomb's administration working behind the scenes on the issue, though she wishes he were more out front, too. "To help put a face on the issue and let people know that the leader of the state is behind most of this agenda and wanting to help out, I think that would greatly help," Shackelford said.

\$70M added to police reforms

Indiana lawmakers have added \$70 million to a law enforcement reform measure to pay for upgrades at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy in Plainfield. The Indiana House Ways and Means Committee on Wednesday amended House Bill 1006 to add the funding to the legislation before unanimously voting to send it to the full House for consideration (Erdody, [IBJ](#)). The bill, which has support from police and minority groups, would largely ban the use of chokeholds, penalize officers for intentionally turning off body and vehicle cameras, and make it easier for the Indiana Law Enforcement Training Board to decertify bad-acting officers. Decertifying a police officer means he or she can no longer serve in law enforcement in the state. The bill would expand the conditions for decertification, making it possible when an officer is convicted of just one misdemeanor (current law requires it to be two or more or for it to be a felony conviction) and adds language that would allow for decertification if the officer has simply "engaged in conduct that would be a criminal offense" even if he or she has not been convicted of a crime. The legislation, authored by Republican Rep. Greg Steuerwald of Avon, would allow the decertification process to continue even if the officer has resigned or retired from his or her position.

Ways & means OKs COVID grant programs

The Indiana House Ways and Means Committee has advanced legislation that would create a small business grant program and a learning loss grant program for educators (Erdody, [IBJ](#)). The committee on Wednesday unanimously voted to approve House Bill 1004, which would allocate \$30 million to help small businesses struggling from the pandemic, and House Bill 1008, which would allocate \$150 million to help students struggling from learning loss caused by the pandemic. The grant program outlined in House Bill 1004 would provide grants of \$10,000 per month with a maximum award amount of \$50,000. The funding could reimburse businesses for up to 80% of non-payroll expenses and 100% of payroll expenses incurred between March 1, 2020, and April 1, 2021. To be eligible, a business must have fewer than 100 employees, gross revenue of less than \$10 million in 2019 and be able to prove a monthly gross revenue loss of at least 30%.

Indiana Vote By Mail pushing reforms

With the advent of the 2021 legislative session, Indiana Vote By Mail applauds efforts by legislators to make elections more accessible to all voters, while keeping our elections safe. A range of bills advocate for full vote by mail as an option for voters, eliminate straight-ticket voting, expand the use of vote centers, streamline the process of registering to vote through BMV offices, allow 16- and 17-year old students to serve as election workers, expand early voting locations, remove the absentee ballot excuses, require tracking of ballot mail using bar codes, and many more initiatives. The organization said, "These bills help to move the cause forward to realize increased voter engagement rates in Indiana, historically in the bottom 10 states for turnout, including for the 2020 General Election. The Indiana General Assembly can and should help to create a climate of citizen participation in our democracy."

Microchipping law may be updated

A year after becoming one of the first states in the nation to enact a law prohibiting businesses from requiring their workers be microchipped as a condition of employment, Indiana legislators already want to update the statute to similarly protect Hoosiers from the government (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). There are no governmental entities in Indiana currently seeking to implant rice-size microchips in their employees, and only one Wisconsin company is doing it on a voluntary basis for both security and convenience, such as being able to wave your arm in front of a sensor to make a vending machine purchase. But state Rep. Alan Morrison, R-Brazil, said omitting the government from the list of employers barred from forcibly implanting a microchip in their employees' bodies was a mistake on his part last year. "I had a couple conversations with some folks over the summer, and I really kind of thought about

it and figured we should probably include government employment as well," Morrison said. State Rep. Cindy Ziemke, R-Batesville, did not disagree with Morrison's proposal in House Bill 1156. But she said during Wednesday's meeting of the House Committee on Employment, Labor and Pensions that "it seems a little conspiracy to me at this point."

Bill aims at failed septic costs

It may get easier for underserved communities with failing septic tanks to get water and sewer systems. A state House bill addressing that issue passed out of committee by a unanimous vote on Tuesday. But the bill doesn't cover everyone who needs help (Thiele, [Indiana Public Media](#)). According to the Indiana Department of Health, every year more than 20,000 septic systems need to be repaired or replaced. Failing septic systems can leak wastewater into local streams and lakes. It can also get into drinking water wells and make people sick. "We regularly receive requests for main extensions. We'll do the numbers. Unfortunately it's too expensive for those individuals to be able to afford to pay those in developed areas where the costs are often high," said Justin Schneider, director of consumer affairs for Indiana American Water. This bill would allow a utility to waive that cost for underserved communities and raise rates on its existing customers instead. The utility would have to show that adding these new customers would bring rates back down in the long run.

Lake magistrate bill moves

State lawmakers appear to agree Lake County requires a new judicial magistrate. Two measures establishing a new magistrate in Lake Superior Court 4 each won unanimous approval Wednesday by separate committees in the Indiana House and Senate (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). Last summer, Lake Superior Judge Aleksandra Dimitrijevic told state lawmakers a magistrate is needed to help her tackle a court workload that grew 40% from 2016 to 2019, according to data compiled by Lake County Court Administrator Martin Goldman. She then picked up an extra 8,300 cases after Hammond and Whiting shuttered their city courts and transferred those cases to her county courtroom that's also located in Hammond. "We are the only court, of the four courts in Lake County in the county division, that for the entire 20 years of our existence has never had a magistrate. The other three courtrooms all have that position. We do not," Dimitrijevic said.

Holcomb says 'we're not out of woods'

Indiana's crowd size limits will be relaxed starting next week following recent improvements in the statewide COVID-19 infection and hospitalization rates, the governor announced Wednesday (Davies, [AP](#)). State health officials, however, are not expanding COVID-19 vaccine availability to those younger than 70 because of limited dose availability, and will continue with a plan to expand shot eligibility

based on age rather than moving up teachers and other essential workers as other states have done. The new rules will allow gatherings at up to 25% capacity at venues in counties with the two highest risk levels of coronavirus spread on the state's four-level rating system, Gov. Eric Holcomb said. The revised rules starting Monday under Holcomb's new executive order will replace the current 25-person crowd limit for the highest-risk counties that has been in place since mid-November. Holcomb said residents and businesses must still follow precautions including mask wearing and distancing to stem the virus spread. "We can manage our way through this," Holcomb said. "We know what works, but it is a constant balance of our lives and our livelihoods." All 92 Indiana counties remain in the highest restriction categories according to the state Department of Health's coronavirus risk tracking map. But that number could drop in coming weeks as Wednesday's updated map labels five of Indiana's 92 counties in the most dangerous red category, down from 34 counties last week and 73 two weeks ago. A county can move to a lower-risk rating after two weeks of improving per capita numbers of new infections and percentage of tests confirming those infections. The health department has added 316 coronavirus deaths in the past week to the state's pandemic toll, which has reached nearly 9,850 fatalities including confirmed and presumed COVID-19 cases. The state's seven-day rolling average of COVID-19 deaths has declined to less than 50 per day after peaking at 86 a day in mid-December.

National Guard to leave nursing homes

Indiana National Guard members tasked with helping nursing homes respond to the coronavirus pandemic will return to their normal lives over the next several weeks (Hopkins, [IndyStar](#)). More than 1,500 National Guard soldiers were deployed to Indiana nursing facilities in November to help an "exhausted" staff care for residents. Guard members are scheduled to leave nursing homes about seven days after the date of the second round of COVID-19 vaccinations at the facilities, though some will leave a few days before or after that date.

Kroger, Meijer, Walmart vaccines

Kroger, Walmart and Meijer will begin administering the COVID-19 vaccine across Indiana with the guidance of the Indiana State Department of Health, officials announced Wednesday ([CBS4](#)). The stores' pharmacies will follow the eligibility guidelines set by the Indiana State Department of Health, which currently offers vaccinations to any Hoosier age 70 and older, long-term care residents, first responders who have in-person contact with the public and healthcare workers who have in-person contact with patients or infectious material in any healthcare setting. Kroger and Meijer are using their own online systems to sign up for the vaccine. Walmart is using the state system through [ourshot.in.gov](#) or by calling 2-1-1. ❖

The most meaningful proactive environmental legislation in years

By ANNE LAKER

INDIANAPOLIS – On Feb. 1, the Senate Natural Resources Committee will hear SB 373, arguably the most meaningful, proactive environmental policy to emerge from the Indiana General Assembly in years. Yes, you read that right.



Tim Maloney of the Hoosier Environmental Council described the magic bill this way: "It's based on the idea that Indiana businesses – who are interested in reducing their carbon footprint and in the market to buy carbon offsets – should be able to buy these offsets in Indiana, offsets that are generated by Indiana farmers and

woodland owners, and by state-run forest conservation projects. If enacted, the bill will leverage new private investment for land, water and wildlife conservation in Indiana and reward farmers and woodland owners for stewardship practices that sequester carbon."

That's right, folks. Indiana's ready to jumpstart a carbon market, incentivize sustainable agriculture and forestry, and implicitly acknowledge the climate crisis! Predictably, and in true Hoosier fashion, the bill contains no mandates, only a set of dangling financial carrots. Also in true Hoosier fashion, it's low-risk, and not a new idea.

No matter. SB 373 is an elegant triple win: For state government coffers, for the pocketbooks of forest and farm owners, and for Indiana's corner of Planet Earth. "What's most exciting is to see the strong bipartisan support for it led by Sen. Sue Glick (R-LaGrange), which means it actually has a good chance of being enacted," said Jeff Stant of the Indiana Forest Alliance.

The bill's origin story is interesting. Before his retirement last spring, Sen. Mark Stoops (D-Bloomington) proposed a study of carbon sequestration opportunities and carbon markets in Indiana. A working group of environmental and economic partners formed. As Stoops transitioned out, the group worked with Sen. Glick to craft SB 373, a bill that's as green as a May hike in the Hoosier National Forest.

Greening Hoosier farming and forestry means planting trees, avoiding lots of logging, controlling fertilizer runoff, restoring wetlands (ironic in light of SB 389), or committing to other sanctioned practices that reduce carbon emissions. These actions generate carbon credits

– and cash. The state can get into the moneymaking act, too. The bill expands the roles of the existing Benjamin Harrison Conservation Trust and Clean Water Indiana fund to include carbon credit banks.

Who wants to buy carbon credits? Big corporations feeling green pressure from stockholders. Take FedEx, for example. To voluntarily lower its carbon footprint at its Indiana facilities, FedEx wants to pay Indiana farmers to pull carbon out of the air. All they need is a mechanism to invest in local carbon-farming projects. Enter SB 373.

Advocates from all corners are lining up to adore the bill. Vincennes-area farmer Ray McCormick, who already practices the symbiotic, common sense methods of regenerative agriculture, spoke in favor of the carbon credit program at a committee hearing last fall.

So did Rae Schnapp of the Indiana Forest Alliance, who testified how the bill would "help private woodland owners and farmers who own 85% of the state's forests conserve and expand their forests and restore soil health while giving the state a means for acquiring more greatly needed public forest land at the same time."

Even the Ruffed Grouse Society weighed in, noting that carbon farming is "well aligned with the practices necessary to also sustain overall healthy forests and habitat upon which many wildlife species and Hoosier sportsmen and sportswomen depend."

Conveniently, SB 373 dovetails with U.S. Sen. Mike Braun's Growing Climate Solutions Act, proposed last spring. That act would authorize the U.S. secretary of agriculture to provide technical assistance and a verification process to farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners ready to play the carbon credit market.

Daniel Poynter, founder of Carbon Neutral Indiana, said it best about SB 373: "Everybody wins. Companies reduce their carbon footprint, new money flows into Indiana, farmers get paid, our soil gets richer." And Indiana gets more forested. Poynter also noted research showing that 20% of Hoosier households are willing to pay \$40 a month to "clean up their carbon trash." If even just 5% of the 20% participated, that represents \$12 million worth demand for carbon-sucking projects.

All told, SB 373 is the political permission Indiana's industrial farmers need to act on climate. And it offers one answer to the eternal question, when will conservatives conserve nature? When they stand to profit from conservation. ❖

A consultant and grant writer, Laker is principal of Laker Verbal LLC. She is the former director of communications at Indiana Forest Alliance and hosts a movie review show, Flick Fix, on WQRT 99.1 FM.

Initial 2022 Senate ratings unveiled

By **J. MILES COLEMAN**
Sabato's Crystal Ball

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — A few weeks after the 2020 election, the Crystal Ball put out an early look at the 2022 Senate races. Since then, President Biden has been sworn in, and with dual wins in Georgia, Democrats went on to claim a 50-50 majority in the chamber, via Vice President Kamala Harris' tie-breaking vote. As the 2022 election cycle begins in earnest, we're putting out our initial Senate ratings.

The last time 2022's Senate map, known more formally as the Class III map, was up in a midterm year, voters were rendering judgement on another Democratic president who had just taken over after replacing a Republican. In 2010, Democrats, during President Obama's first midterm, were on the defensive, as they had a hefty 59-seat majority in the chamber. While Republicans ended up netting six seats that year, and reducing Obama's majority in the chamber to 53-47, Democrats were overexposed: Three of their losses were in Arkansas, Indiana, and North Dakota – by today's standards, it may seem baffling that they held those seats in the first place.

For 2022, the playing field should be much narrower. Republicans will hold 20 of the 34 states up to Democrats' 14 – both sides have a few offensive opportunities, but a six-seat gain for either side, like we saw in 2010 with this class, seems unlikely.

Democrats have not had a truly good year with the Class III map since 1986, when they netted eight seats, to take the majority, during Ronald Reagan's second midterm. With the chamber tied at 50-50, both sides have little room for error.

With that, here are our initial ratings: We'll start by getting the biggest news of the week out of the way: With the retirement of Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), we see the Buckeye State's Senate race as more competitive, but Republicans still start off as clear favorites. Had Portman run again, we would probably rate his race as Safe Republican. When he was last up, in



2016, Portman was one of the strongest overperformers in the nation – he won by a 21% margin as Donald Trump carried Ohio by 8%.

The problem for Democrats? In last year's presidential contest, Ohio barely budged. Though there was some internal movement from 2016's result – the suburbs generally shifted more Democratic while working class and rural areas continued to redden – Trump held the state by a 53%-45% vote. In an era where senatorial results are increasingly tied to a state's presidential preference, Trump's margins bode well for GOP prospects in Ohio, particularly with a Democrat in the White House (the president's party often loses ground down-ballot in midterm elections). There is no shortage of potential Republicans who could run to replace Portman. Aside from Sen. Sherrod Brown's (D-OH) Senate seat, the GOP holds all of Ohio's partisan statewide offices, and has enjoyed a 12 to 4 advantage in the state's House delegation since 2012.

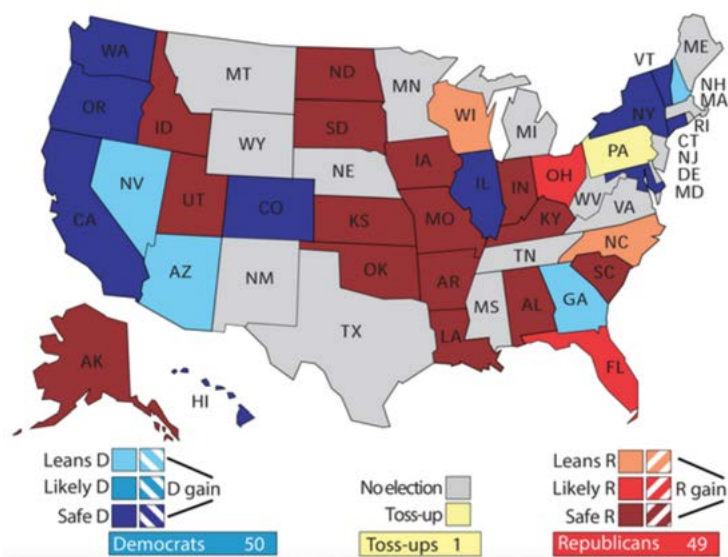
For years, state Democrats have been waiting for Youngstown-area Rep. Tim Ryan (D, OH-13) to take the plunge and run statewide. This cycle, he may be forced into it, and he announced that he was considering running on Wednesday. With the state set to lose a House seat, Ryan could soon find himself without a constituency. For 2012, Republican mappers drew Ryan into a safe seat – but his district has since become much more marginal, and it could easily take in more GOP-leaning areas or be dissolved entirely. With Portman out, we rate Ohio as Likely Republican.

Democrats look to PA, WI, NC

The sole Toss-up Senate race to start the 2022 cycle is Pennsylvania. A reformist conservative with an interest in fiscal issues, two-term Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA) has long advocated for term limits. In the House, he stuck to his pledge to serve only three terms (he went on to lose a Senate primary in 2004), and he's called for a two-term limit for senators -- in October, he was again true to form and announced he'd retire.

Almost immediately after Toomey's retirement news, Democrats began mentioning Lt. Gov. John Fetterman (D-PA). A towering figure who looks uncomfortable in a suit (to the extent one would ever see him wearing one), he ran for Toomey's Senate seat in 2016, but lost the primary. With a base in the Pittsburgh

Map 1: Crystal Ball 2022 Senate ratings



area -- he was mayor of Braddock, a borough just east of the Steel City -- he had better luck in 2018. Fetterman, along with four other Democrats, took on the then-embattled lieutenant governor, Mike Stack, in the primary. Stack finished a poor fourth place, but geography was decisive.

Fetterman likely won't have the Democratic field to himself, and he may lack the geographic advantage he had in 2018. Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (D, PA-6), from the Philadelphia suburbs, is considering a Senate run; if she were the only candidate from that populous metro, she'd seem well-positioned. Meanwhile, on either of the state's geographic extremes, Reps. Matt Cartwright (D, PA-8) and Conor Lamb (D, PA-17) could get tougher districts for 2022 -- something that could push them to run statewide.

On the GOP side, Houlahan's predecessor, former Rep. Ryan Costello (R, PA-6) is looking like a senatorial candidate. Though any number of other Republicans could run, Costello's biggest obstacle is that the Philadelphia area is making up a declining portion of the state Republican electorate. According to historical voter registration data, in 2000, about one-third of registered Republicans in Pennsylvania lived in the Philadelphia metro area.

Wisconsin is the only other Biden state that Republicans are defending this cycle. Originally elected in 2010 with support from the Tea Party movement, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) defeated then-Sen. Russ Feingold (D-WI), a progressive icon in the state. Johnson then, rather impressively, survived a 2016 rematch. In the heat of that rematch, he told voters he was running for his final term. Then, in early 2019, Johnson began backtracking on his pledge and now seems outright non-committal. If he retires, Republicans from the state's House delegation or legislature will likely look at the race -- though Johnson himself first won by running as a businessman with no prior elected experience, a template others could follow.

Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, who is Black and has a base in Milwaukee, is seen as a top Democratic prospect and Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson is running. As with Rep. Ryan in Ohio, if longtime Rep. Ron Kind (D, WI-3) is dealt an unfavorable hand in redistricting, he could finally launch a statewide run. Kind had the closest race of his career in 2020, and his western district could easily absorb redder turf. Until the playing field here is more certain, we're giving the incumbent the benefit of the doubt in Wisconsin, and keeping it at Leans Republican.

Though it's an open seat, North Carolina joins Wisconsin in our Leans Republican category. In presidential and senatorial contests, the results in this light red state have often been close, but it's wound up on the GOP side since 2010.

Former Rep. Mark Walker (R, NC-6), who was squeezed out of Congress due to a court-ordered redistricting last cycle, was the first major Republican in the race. A pastor who rose to chair the large Republican Study Committee during his time in Congress, Walker seems like a candidate who could be broadly acceptable to all factions of his party. Former President Trump's

daughter-in-law, Lara, is originally from the coastal city of Wilmington and is reportedly weighing a senatorial campaign. As an aside, Trump's daughter, Ivanka, has also been mentioned as a senatorial candidate, in Florida -- she'd be running in a primary against Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), though we don't expect it to be one of the cycle's marquee races.

On Tuesday, Jeff Jackson, a media-savvy state senator from south Charlotte, entered the Democratic primary. Jackson has been a fixture in state Democratic politics for several years, but his biography as a white male veteran with legislative experience may trigger comparisons, fairly or not, to the party's most recent senatorial nominee, Cal Cunningham. During the 2020 campaign, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) was criticized for the optics it created by heavily-handedly backing Cunningham over his main primary opponent, then-state Sen. Erica Smith, a Black woman. Smith is running again.

GOP Sunbelt prowess

Republicans will be defending more Senate seats than Democrats in 2022, but they still have several pickup opportunities. Though the Crystal Ball doesn't currently see any races as sure-fire flips, the four states that we rate as Leans Democratic seem like the GOP's most realistic targets.

Fresh off of overseeing the DSCC's successful effort to win back the chamber's majority, Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) is running for a second term. In recent cycles, Democrats have generally won Nevada by slight, but consistent margins.

Sen. Raphael Warnock (D-GA), who's just now unboxing materials as he moves into his new office, will be up again next year. During the first phase of his 2020 campaign, Warnock had to navigate an all-party jungle primary (Georgia uses that method for special elections). This time, the race will feature the usual partisan primaries. Former Rep. Doug Collins (R, GA-9), who ran in the special Senate primary but was squeezed out of the runoff, may run again.

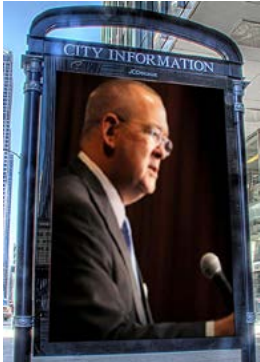
Another Democratic winner of a 2020 special election who must now run in back-to-back cycles is Sen. Mark Kelly (D-AZ). As the husband of former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D, AZ-8) and with a background as an astronaut, he was arguably Democrats' best Senatorial recruit of the 2020 cycle. Kelly defeated then-Sen. Martha McSally (R-AZ) to finish out the term of the late John McCain, who was last reelected in 2016.

Arizona Republicans also censured their sitting governor, Doug Ducey (R-AZ), for some measures that he put into place to contain the COVID pandemic. At this time last year, the term-limited Ducey was seen as a leading potential Senate candidate. In 2018, as Democrats made gains across the board in Arizona, he was reelected by a comfortable 56%-42%. ❖

How this recession is unfolding

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – We approach a full year since the start of the COVID recession. So, it is timely to assess where the recession has turned out differently than seemed likely at the start. Some of the developments are happy, while others are not.



I begin by noting that employment in Indiana fell throughout 2019. For much of the Midwest, 2019 was effectively a recession year, even if that downturn was masked by the cataclysm of COVID. However, the forces that slowed our economy in 2019 were entirely different from the COVID effects of

2020, and these forces befell a different set of people and businesses.

Most economic forecasts in March and April projected the deep GDP losses in second quarter and rapid recovery in third quarter. I think these forecasts were right enough about the depth and dynamics of the COVID downturn to have been helpful for policymakers and businesses. It appears now that we'll end 2020 with a downturn that ranks in the top five to seven worst years since the 1920s.

At the beginning of the COVID downturn, most economists argued that the effects of the disease were the causal factors in the recession. With more research we might find that long-term government restrictions slowed recovery, accounting for a small fraction of lost jobs and businesses. But, the emergence of extensive data on the timing of disease, government actions and business revenue, it is now clear that individual responses to COVID caused the downturn. Government 'shutdowns' played no more than a minor role in the depth or duration of the recession. It was always the pandemic.

The economic projections of a deep downturn were accompanied by several estimates of a sustained fiscal catastrophe affecting state and local governments. For many states and local governments, that is turning out to be the case. Local government has lost a whopping 1 million jobs nationally and schools another million. But, two factors have worked together to mitigate the worst likely effects.

The CARES Act combined to actually boost personal income in second quarter. Most of this boost in spending appears to have been dedicated to taxable sales, and it was all subject to income taxes. At the same time, household spending shifted more heavily to taxable items, like home improvement products, than most economists expected. While the COVID losses are likely the worst post-war shock

to state and local governments, the direst potential outcomes may have been averted.

The most remarkable aspect of the COVID recession is the unequal and hidden impacts on labor markets. Too much of the policy discussion has failed to acknowledge how deeply unequal this recession has been. I think the problem lies in over reliance on anecdotal evidence to judge the world around us. This appears to have allowed too many policymakers to ignore deep problems in the official estimates of unemployment in assessing the state of the economy.

The current unemployment rate understates the real level of job losses. A full explanation is too lengthy for this column, but suffice it to say that job losses have displaced maybe three times the number reported in the official unemployment rate. As of mid-November, more than 600,000 Hoosier workers had hours cut so low that they were eligible for benefits. The low information content of the traditional unemployment data means that the seriousness of the labor market disruptions were too easily ignored. But, I think the real problem is that the workers facing the deepest distress are largely invisible. The truth about their plight is startling.

Nationwide, from January to late October, employment in the top third of workers – those who earn more than \$60,000 per year – grew by 1.2%. This is slower than normal, but hardly a recession. Among middle-income workers, those who earn \$27,000 to \$60,000, employment declined by 4%. That is roughly the national experience annually of the Great Recession, in other words, pretty bad. But, among low-wage workers, job losses were at 19%. This is matched only by one year of the Great Depression, and it took four years to reach that share of joblessness.

So, for the most affluent American workers, 2020 was a slow growth year. For middle-income workers, it was the worst year in a lifetime. For the poorest third of American workers, 2020 was a catastrophe akin to the darkest days of the Great Depression. The inequality of this downturn is the most shocking effect of this kind I have ever seen in data. This pattern plays out nearly identically across individual states.

Many of these jobs won't return. Even if household spending returns to pre-COVID patterns, the acceleration of automation and productivity changes in services has been large and permanent. The only silver lining for workers is that these jobs are geographically distributed across every community. This means we won't have the concentrated job losses of the 2000s.

Another aspect of the COVID downturn is its risk of exacerbating already worrisome levels of inequality. Most particularly, the impacts to education appear to be more than a transient inconvenience. Between 5 and 7% of incoming students elected to skip college. Most of these young adults will not continue their education, making the individual and regional impacts of this profoundly damaging.

Within schools, the effects of COVID are likewise unequal. Broadband access is highly uneven, and as many as one-third of kids have real problems with remote learning. And, yes, that is an argument for keeping schools open. But many schools, like the one my son attends, had to shift to online learning because they could not staff the school due to COVID quarantine and isolation.

The effects of this are already obvious in the data. There are a few sources for student learning in online math classes last year. By the end of the year, when final tests were given, students from families in the top one-third of income made steady progress, with growth of 37%. Middle-income students had almost no measurable change, while low-income students saw their progress down 11%. This worsened over the fall, with low-income

kids seeing a 13.7% drop. These effects on students will continue to affect individual and economic performance for a half century.

Doubtless there are many unknown challenges awaiting Congress and state governments consider how to deal with the remainder of this downturn. One emerging certainty is that dealing with the unequal effects of labor market and educational experiences need to be a top priority. ❖

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The arts and MMT

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – “This legacy is at risk” wrote Campbell MacDonald, principal clarinetist of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and chair of the Philharmonic Players’ Association, last week in the Journal Gazette. That legacy of the 77-year-old orchestra is now endangered by COVID and the resulting dispute between management and its 65 musicians.



We all know many restaurants have closed. In some cases it is like losing a valued friend. How do those closings compare with the loss of a symphony orchestra?

Many community leaders are now realizing Indiana’s chief economic problem is a scarcity of cultural assets; Indiana’s 26 orchestras are among our vital community assets. They might be impossible to rebuild once gone. Assembling even a decent orchestra, let alone one of established character, is a virtuoso task.

The Indiana Arts Commission (IAC) reported receiving \$473,900 from the \$75 million Congress allocated in 2020 to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). IAC then spent \$504,000 from the Indiana Arts Emergency Relief Fund. How much did the FW Philharmonic get? I don’t know, but, as with many enterprises, it wasn’t enough to survive. Hence the conflict between management and labor.

Some people don’t focus on symphonies or restaurants. They fixate on the federal debt, without understanding the difference between personal or household debt and federal or sovereign debt. They see rapid expansion of the money supply as the cause of inevitable inflation and

hardship passed to succeeding generations.

However, modern monetary theory (MMT) holds governments can print money to prevent economic collapse without fear of inflation or kicking the can down the road to our kids. That idea is well expressed in a currently popular book, “The Deficit Myth,” by Stephanie Kelton. For some readers, MMT is a new economic gospel. Others denounce MMT as heresy and a recipe for economic disaster.

Simply put, MMT contends governments can run a deficit (increasing the debt) without stimulating inflation when there are idle resources. MMT requires un- or under-utilized resources. In the labor force, it means either unemployment or unwillingness of people to work for pay. With more money in circulation, wages can be raised to attract people into the market economy. Simultaneously, underutilized buildings, land, and machinery could produce more, and new investment will increase productive capacity.

However, there are concerns. If these under-utilized people are retired workers, students, caregivers, or artists/hobbyists with adequate economic support, why should they be “at work?” Will more money in the market economy draw labor from the unmeasured economy (either legal or illegal)?

Today we do have many under-employed people and workplaces that are running well under capacity. These are exactly the conditions MMT could resolve with targeted government stimulus. Money, however, should be distributed not only to persons in need, but also to those institutions, like the FW Philharmonic, that sustain community strengths. Our legacies are at risk. ❖

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There are boundaries in America's political discourse—or at least there were until Donald Trump's presidency. There were still taboos: One simply didn't say that the president of the United States is a Russian asset. And yet according to Bob Woodward's *Rage*, no less than former Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, a Republican, had "deep suspicions" that Putin "had something" on Trump, seeing "no other explanation for his behavior." And Coats wasn't the first highly placed intelligence officer to make such assertions. In a *New York Times* op-ed published three months before Trump's 2016 election, former CIA director Michael Morell wrote, "In the intelligence business, we would say that Mr. Putin had recruited Mr. Trump as an unwitting agent of the Russian Federation." In January 2017, just before Donald Trump's inauguration, Michael Hayden, former head of both the CIA and the National Security Agency, called Trump "a clear and present danger" to America and "a useful idiot," a term often attributed to Vladimir Lenin that refers to naïve Westerners who could be manipulated for propaganda and other purposes.

In December 2017, the former director of national intelligence James Clapper asserted that Trump was, in effect, an intelligence "asset" serving Russian president Vladimir Putin. And in 2019, former CIA director John Brennan declared that Trump "is wholly in the pocket of Putin," and went further on "Meet the Press," adding that he had called Trump's behavior "treasonous, which is to betray one's trust and aid and abet the enemy, and I stand very much by that claim."

Yet somehow, these extraordinary allegations — that the president of the United States is an operative for a hostile foreign power — have not become part of the national conversation. It's as if the entire country is in denial, even now, after Russian cyber warriors were discovered amplifying claims by Trump and his allies that the election was being "stolen" from them. So let me try to answer the question: Is Donald Trump a Russian asset? I believe the answer is yes, and that what happened between Trump and the Russian state is best understood as a series of sequential, and sometimes unrelated, operations that played into each other over more than four decades. "When people start talking about Trump's ties to the KGB or Russian intelligence, some are looking for this super sophisticated master plan which was designed decades ago and finally climaxed with Trump's election as president of the United States," said Yuri Shvets, a former KGB officer who quit before the fall of the Soviet Union, moved to the United States in 1994 and now lives outside Washington, DC. But that's not how it happened. According to Shvets, standard Soviet practice was to develop assets and data that might

have not have an immediate payoff, but could offer far more value years in the future. "That's a big difference between the KGB and some Western HUMINT [human intelligence] agencies," Shvets told me in an extended series of interviews. "The KGB is very patient. It can work a case for years. Americans want results yesterday or a maximum today; as a result, they have none. They don't get that if you round up nine pregnant women, the baby would not be born within a month. Each process must ripen." In Trump's case, it appears that the results took roughly 40 years to ripen. "Then," Shvets added, "it paid off much, much more than anyone could possibly have imagined." ❖

Gary Truitt, *Hoosier Ag Today*: The new kids are in town (Washington, DC), and they are armed with a lot of priorities and policies that they are eager to adopt. They are also eager to do away with some of the policies that the last gaggle put in place when they came to town. This is the way the American political process works.

Meanwhile, farmers farm the land; try to produce the food, fiber, and fuel we need; and adjust to changes which can have a big impact on their profitability. Last time around, it was trade that had the front seat. This time it is the environment and climate change. President Biden, Ag Secretary Vilsack, and Senate Ag Chairperson Debbie

Stabenow, all have stated that environmental issues are at the top of their list. This is an area that will have an impact on agriculture and may drastically change the way farmers farm. It is also an area where agriculture has a great story to tell and can offer some real solutions to our environmental issues. The challenge, however, is that extremists on the environmental and organic sides are not farmer-friendly and have agendas that are at odds with modern agriculture. Thus, agriculture must present a strong message as the climate debate begins. The good news is farmers have a great story to tell. The environmental record of agriculture is far better than that of the manufacturing, oil, steel, and high tech industries. Yes, there have been disasters, bad actors and misguided policies in agriculture; but, when it comes to addressing greenhouse gases, carbon sequestration, water conservation, and soil erosion, farmers have made more progress and more personal investment than the CEOs of big food brands who like to call for more sustainable food production methods. For the most part, these improvements have been made without heavy-handed, regulatory controls. An area to pay special attention to and to guard against is a return to the Waters of the U.S. rules and other state or federal regulations that mandate certain practices or land use. A point often lost in this argument is that farmers and landowners are more than willing to be outstanding environmentalists with some incentive. I attended a roundtable discussion with leading farmers and then Ag Secretary Perdue who asked the producers which was a more effective approach — a carrot or a stick. The farmers unanimously said the carrot would be more effective. ❖



Buttigieg advances to full Senate

WASHINGTON — A Senate panel on Wednesday easily advanced President Joe Biden's nomination of Pete Buttigieg to be transportation secretary, setting up a final confirmation vote for a key role in Biden's push to rebuild the nation's infrastructure and confront climate change (AP). The Commerce Committee approved the nomination of Buttigieg, a 39-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, on a 21-3 vote. His nomination now heads to the full Senate, where a vote could happen as early as this week. He would be the first openly gay person, and one of the youngest, confirmed by the Senate to a Cabinet post. Biden has been urging the Senate, where Democrats hold a bare majority, to move quickly on his Cabinet picks given the current crisis of COVID-19, which prompted him in part to sign an executive order mandating masks on airplanes and in public transportation to help stem the spread of the deadly virus. The president has also pledged an ambitious agenda of jobs growth, fighting climate change and promoting racial equity. Sen. Maria Cantwell, the panel's incoming Democratic chair, praised Buttigieg's credentials before the vote Wednesday and urged quick confirmation so he can get to work on COVID-19 safety in transportation. "He understands what all of us have to deal with on transportation and infrastructure," Cantwell said.

Biden unveils climate strategy

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the most ambitious U.S. effort to stave off the worst of climate change, President Joe Biden signed executive orders to transform the nation's heavily fossil-fuel powered economy into a clean-burning one, pausing oil and gas leasing on federal land and targeting

subsidies for those industries. The directives aim to conserve 30 percent of the country's lands and waters in the next 10 years, double the nation's offshore wind energy, and move to an all-electric federal vehicle fleet, among other changes. Biden's sweeping plan is aimed at staving off the worst of global warming caused by burning fossil fuels. But his effort it also carries political risk for the president and Democrats as oil- and coal-producing states face job losses from moves to sharply increase U.S. reliance on clean energy such as wind and solar power. "We can't wait any longer" to address the climate crisis, Biden said Wednesday at the White House. "We see with our own eyes. We know it in our bones. It is time to act." Biden has set a goal of eliminating pollution from fossil fuel in the power sector by 2035 and from the U.S. economy overall by 2050, speeding what is already a market-driven growth of solar and wind energy and lessening the country's dependence on oil and gas.



Camp, Curry seek Allen Dem chairs

FORT WAYNE — Former Indiana Young Democrats President Derek Camp and Allen County Councilwoman Sheila Curry Campbell today announced their candidacy for the Allen County Democratic Party Chair and Vice Chair, respectively during the party's quadrennial reorganization in March 2021. The pair are running on a platform that will expand the party's organizing efforts, create a robust get out the vote program, increase its fundraising capabilities, develop a candidate mentorship program, and establish a focused message from the local party. These efforts form the foundation of the "Allen County Roadmap." "Democratic leadership has generated tremendous success in the City of Fort Wayne over the past 20 years, making it a great place for families to live, work, and play. Democrats run and win in Allen County. Now it's time to supercharge that success and win

paces up and down the ballot," said Camp.

No action on councilman's post

MUNCIE — The Delaware County Council took no action against one of its own members Tuesday afternoon over commentary he made on social media that prompted public outrage (Ohlenkamp, [Muncie Star Press](#)). Infuriated members of the public had called for newly-elected Republican Delaware County Councilman Ryan Webb to step down following a post he made on his personal Facebook page in early January regarding the pro-Trump rioters who breached the U.S. Capitol. The councilman, in a post that had garnered more than 230 comments before being hidden, stated in part: "In 1776 those revolting against the government were also called traitors, terrorists, and trouble makers. In 2021 we now call those same men our forefathers." His multi-paragraph post further questioned whether the mob that stormed the Capitol would be considered patriots or domestic terrorists. Webb did not condemn the violence in his initial post.

DHS bulletin warns of violence

WASHINGTON — Warning that the deadly rampage of the Capitol this month may not be an isolated episode, the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday said publicly for the first time that the United States faced a growing threat from "violent domestic extremists" emboldened by the attack ([New York Times](#)). The department's terrorism alert did not name specific groups that might be behind any future attacks, but it made clear that their motivation would include anger over "the presidential transition, as well as other perceived grievances fueled by false narratives," a clear reference to the accusations made by President Donald J. Trump and echoed by right-wing groups.