



Mayors react to mergers differently

Weinzapfel, Goodnight take different tacts on municipal reforms

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

FRANKLIN, Ind. - This is the story of two mayors - Jonathan Weinzapfel of Evansville and Greg Goodnight of Kokomo. Both are Democrats and both ran unsuccessful races for Congress. Both are viewed as rising stars in the party and Weinzapfel acknowledges he is gearing up for the 2012 gubernatorial race (unless Evan Bayh comes back).

Earlier this week, with the property tax caps poised to be chiseled into the Indiana Constitution in eight months, both talked about government consolidation, which is the primary thrust of the caps. Gov. Daniels designed the caps to force municipalities to rethink and reformat the way they operate.

Evansville Mayor Weinzapfel gave his State of the City address Tuesday night and when it came to the gigantic moose on the table - whether Evansville and Vanderburgh County should merge when voters take up the referendum in November along with the caps - the future gubernatorial candidate took a pass. It was classic equivo-



Evansville Mayor Weinzapfel at an Obama rally in Evansville on April 22, 2008.

cation.

The 2010 version of "Vandy-Gov" - a similar proposal failed in the mid-1970s - will be on the ballot, having passed both the city and county councils, along with the county commissioners.

"The system of government we have today hasn't changed much since our constitution was ratified in the 1850s," Weinzapfel said. "Services are provided by an overlapping series of political units: townships, cities and

Continued on Page 3

Blue dogs walk the plank

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON - In his latest urgent push to overhaul the health care system, President Barack Obama is asking members of Congress to do something in the next couple of weeks that he has never had to do - cast a vote that threatens a career.

Obama has taken political risks, namely running for president. But while he was doing that, he was safely ensconced in the third and fourth years of a Senate seat. If he lost in his quest for the White House, he would have a soft landing.

If Americans reject what will likely be a nearly \$1 trillion final health care



"We all know schools need flexibility. We all know we need to be able to keep teachers in the classroom. Why hold our children hostage over UI?"

- STATE REP. GREG PORTER



HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA

is a nonpartisan, by subscription Internet publication based in Indianapolis and published by NewsLink, Inc. It was founded in 1994 in Fort Wayne.

Columnists articles are independent opinions and do not represent the views of the publisher.

Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington
Jack E. Howey, Editor
Beverly Phillips, Associate Editor/Business Operations

Subscriptions:
\$350 annually HPI Weekly
\$550 annually HPI Weekly & HPI Daily Wire

Contact Us:
Howey Politics Indiana
6255 North Evanston Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317.627.6746

www.howeypolitics.com

bhowey2@gmail.com
Howey's Mobile: 317.506.0883
Washington: 202.256.5822
Business Office: 317.627.6746

©2010, Howey Politics Indiana. HPI is a subscription-based publication. All rights reserved. Photocopying, Internet forwarding, faxing or reproducing in any form, in whole or part, is a violation of federal law without permission from the publisher.



bill, Obama will suffer. He has ample time, however, before 2012 to shore up his political foundation.

The context is more urgent for those facing voters in November. When he was a legislator in the Illinois state house, Obama voted "present" many times. The members of the House who he is prodding to support a Senate bill that makes them queasy don't have the same luxury.

Three under intense pressure are in the Indiana congressional delegation - Democratic Reps. Brad Ellsworth, 8th CD, Joe Donnelly, 2nd CD, and Baron Hill, 9th CD.

Ellsworth has the most to lose. His position on health care reform may define his nascent campaign for the Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Evan Bayh. Ellsworth voted in favor of the House version of the bill that the chamber passed 220-215 in early November.

Ellsworth held out his support until the end, when he was satisfied that the measure contained strong restrictions against federal funding of abortions. Ellsworth was a central figure in writing the abortion amendment that was approved prior to a final vote on the health care bill. This

time around, Ellsworth is undecided on how he will vote. The House may be forced to pass the Senate bill, which many pro-life House members argue contains weaker abortion language.

"As I have said from the very beginning, I will not support a bill if I believe it would result in federal funding for abortions," Ellsworth said in a statement released on Wednesday after HPI had made repeated calls to determine his position. "I am looking carefully at the current language in the bill to ensure it meets my pro-life principles, and I will continue to work to ensure pro-life concerns are addressed."

With the health care margin of victory so slim in the House - where 216 votes are needed - it wouldn't take much opposition to scuttle the Senate measure. Donnelly has already indicated that he is skeptical about the version coming over from the other side of Capitol.

"[I]f I'm asked to vote on the Senate health care reform bill as is, I will vote no," Donnelly said in a statement. "The Senate version of health care reform does not meet my standards for assuring that no federal funds are used for abortion-related



services."

Abortion is one of several objections many House members have to the Senate version. They may have to depend on the Senate to correct those problems through a controversial parliamentary maneuver called reconciliation, which allows a bill to pass with a simple majority rather than the supermajority required to overcome a filibuster.

Senate Republicans are taunting House Democrats, warning them that if they pass the bill the Senate approved on Christmas Eve, it may not be modified through reconciliation. Republicans have several means at their disposal to block the revisions.

Hill acknowledges that the political machinations have been unsettling for some of his colleagues.

"I understand the unease and confusion surrounding the process," Hill said in a statement. "I'm also awaiting word of how Congress will proceed. My vote on a final bill is dependent upon several factors, many of which are in limbo and could be contained in the measure rectifying the House and Senate bills."

Hill also said that he has been "consistently straightforward in my support of an overhaul of our current health care system." That foreshadows what is likely to be a "yes" vote.

That's the same place where Ellsworth and Donnelly probably will wind up, too. Ellsworth's "principles for



health care reform" - lower costs, more insurance choices, coverage of pre-existing conditions and deficit neutrality - echoed almost word-for-word Obama's description of the plan he has put forward, which closely resembles the Senate bill.

Still, it will be a tough vote for Ellsworth (pictured at left), Donnelly and Hill, with most polls showing that Americans are skeptical about massive health care reform legislation. Obama urges

members of Congress to join him on the policy plateau, far above the messiness of politics.

"They're obsessed with the sport of politics," Obama said in a recent speech describing people in Washington other than himself. "And so that's the environment in which elected officials are operating. My question to them is: When is the right time? If not now, when? If not us, who?"

Obama went on to exhort people like Ellsworth, Hill and Donnelly to stand up and be counted on health care.

"We weren't sent (to Washington) just so everybody can say how wonderful we are," Obama said. "We were sent there to do what was hard. We were sent there to solve the big challenges."

Obama sees himself as a paragon of public service. I wonder if he would be as confident if we were eight months away from the 2012 election. ❖

2 mayors, from page 1

counties. As I have mentioned, we continue to find ways for the city and county to cooperate and save money. But, it begs the question of what else can be done."

And then he began sounding like Tevye from "Fiddler on the Roof."

"On the one hand, consolidation makes a lot of sense," Weinzapfel reasoned. "The city and county provide similar services in a compact geographical area. It's fair to ask if we need both a city council and a county council, or both a sheriff's department and a police department."

And?

"On the other hand, consolidation brings with it a whole new set of challenges," Weinzapfel continued. "If you consolidate public safety services, whose pay scale do we use: the Sheriff's Department or the Police Department? What will the impact be on taxpayers in the county versus taxpayers in the city? These are not insignificant questions. I believe it is vitally important that the reorganization committee develop a detailed proposal that people can clearly understand."

And?

"The goal, of course, is to streamline City and County government in a way that allows us to make the most effective use of your tax dollars so we can build infrastructure, provide services, enhance quality of life, and grow our economy."

Well, that was it. No vision as to what a consolidated Evansville/Vanderburgh would look like from the mayor. By the end of the speech, citizens and voters had no idea where Weinzapfel stood. It was hardly a clarion call for a potential gubernatorial nominee. People look to good leaders for leadership.

On Wednesday, the Evansville Courier & Press reported that Weinzapfel spoke to the Rotary Club, saying he prefers not to follow the 2005 City-County Unification Study Committee's vision of creating a framework for government with details of public safety to be decided by an elected body.

"I believe it is vitally important that the reorganization committee develop a detailed proposal that people can clearly understand."

Weinzapfel also told the press, "As mayor, County



Commissioners, County Council members, City Council members, they understand how local government works better — works or doesn't work — better than anybody else in this community.

They grasp and study the issues, come to conclusions, take definitive positions and explain to the people the logic behind them. Or they explain a process for getting there. Gov. Mitch Daniels did this in July 2006 when he formed the Kernan-Shepard Commission, asking them to report back with a course of action. Five of the 27 recommendations have been adopted; many of the others stand to be cued up in 2011 if Republicans retake the Indiana House.

Goodnight on consolidation

There's another Democrat worth watching - Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight, who very likely will emerge on short lists in June 2012 when the next lieutenant governor nominee is chosen. Goodnight has steered his city through an epic crisis that began when the Getrag plant in nearby Tipton was shut down, followed by the General Motors and Chrysler bankruptcies; Delphi was already in the midst of one.

A year ago, Goodnight was faced with the very real prospect that between 10,000 and 20,000 jobs could evaporate overnight in a city already described as the hardest hit by the auto collapse. Even after GM and Chrysler emerged from a prepackaged bankruptcy early last summer, and as Chrysler/Fiat continues to teeter, Kokomo still has a 14.4 percent jobless rate.

Goodnight, who was a union official when Haynes International Inc. went into bankruptcy and emerged a couple of years later, has sought to prepare his city by paring away at the budget. He privatized ambulance service and whittled away at the fire department. He was innovative on everything from garbage routes to the development of K-Fuel derived from restaurant grease, and has been an aggressive advocate of embracing the green industry sector.

In the wake of Kernan-Shepard, HPI pressed Goodnight last year on the potential of consolidating government. Howard County, relatively compact in size, with one major city, a couple of very small towns (Greentown and Russiaville), appeared to be the perfect candidate for what Evansville and Vanderburgh County are now attempting.

Goodnight was open to the idea, but he was extremely sensitive to the political dynamic. It would be

a hard sell to entrenched parts of his own party, of the Howard County component, let alone the loyal Republican opposition.

On the day before Weinzapfel was wringing his hands, Goodnight was issuing call for a city-county joint commission on consolidation during a Monday State of the City speech. The Kokomo Tribune reported that Goodnight listed seven specific areas, ranging from township government and school consolidation to the fact the city and county have separate SWAT teams, and suggested a commission study might find efficiencies.

And Goodnight went even further. "We must question why a county our size maintains five separate school systems, with five separate maintenance garages and five separate custodial staffs," Goodnight said. "High school basketball sectionals just ended, and if it were up to some in our community, the New London Quakers would have faced the Clay Township Brickies in the first game of this year's first round."

Did the political dynamic change?

"It's one of those things. Last year we spent so much time trying to fight for the auto industry and stabilize things," Goodnight said Wednesday morning. "I think we've done that. We're to the point we can be more proactive. Instead of looking at things a few months out, we want to look long term and dedicate more time and energy to it. This probably should have been addressed some time in the past, but now is the perfect time."

Goodnight said that the property tax caps - all but certain to pass on a November referendum - had little to do with his call for a study. "We made all the tough calls last year with the Early Learning Center and the ambulance service," Goodnight said. "We made

the clear cut. We had a \$55 million budget and spent \$49 million. I feel like we're living within our means. I equate it to the guy who has a heart attack before he changes his diet."

The mayor, instead, was working on a hunch. A successful, dynamic mayor knows how to read the community and to lead the way.

"I don't know much has changed with the elected officials," Goodnight said. "I really believe the general public in Kokomo and Howard County is open to looking at things. So is the business community. I really believe they genuinely support some form if not all of consolidation. I



Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight is initiating the merger issue in Howard County.



don't have polling. It's a gut feeling from comments I hear."

Contrasting leadership

To Weinzapfel's credit, he's already forged joint purchasing with Evansville/Vanderburg School Corp. (there's only one school district in the state's seventh largest county). But he's letting the movement play out underneath him, perhaps not to alienate people on both sides of the issue.

The Evansville/Vanderburgh consolidation movement is a grassroots movement initiated by the League of Women Voters. Goodnight is taking a top-down approach by initiating the idea and hoping to get a buy-in from county officials, merchants and, ultimately, voters.

And then there is the legislature

In the April 16, 2009, edition of Howey Politics Indiana, the headline read, "Change Dems Don't Believe In." It referred to Barack Obama's comments at the May 2008 Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner: "You don't have to sit here and watch our leaders do nothing. I learned we don't have to consign our children to a future of diminished returns, a future of few opportunities. We don't have to stand by, we don't have to wait, we don't have to put off, because this is the United States of America."

A year later, with President Obama's health reforms on the brink, Hoosier Democrats appear to be half-heartedly committed to change.

The classic example is taking place at the Indiana Statehouse, where Democrats are pushing Ways & Means Chairman Bill Crawford's township reform bill. HB1181 would require township by township referendums.

Marion County's Wayne Township Trustee David K. Baird explained, "I strongly support State Rep. Bill Crawford's House Bill 1181, which calls for township-by-township referendums that would let the voters decide whether or not they want their township government to remain operating as is. Allowing the people we serve to voice their opinions about township government is the right way to go. The Wayne

Township Trustee staff and fire department serve their constituents well, and we're confident that a referendum here would show that."

Republicans see the bill as a trojan horse designed to end once and for all the township debate. Critics fear that such referendums at the township level, instead of the entire county, would create a patchwork quilt of government. You can use the "if you were to start from scratch" argument here and say that people creating a new state government probably wouldn't opt for 12 township assessors (as Indiana has now), and several hundred township trustees and advisory boards scattered about with no consistency. Classes of counties, similar to the four classes of cities in Indiana code, would be a better way to handle the various urban and rural dynamics for fire protection, poor relief and cemetery maintenance.

State Sen. Connie Lawson told the Indianapolis Star that the Crawford bill is a ruse and it wouldn't result in more efficient government, which she said is the whole goal of reforming townships. "I'd like to get something out on townships this year," she said, "but I'm not going to agree to something that isn't meaningful."

Epilogue

Indiana Democrats are torn. They were evenly split in the Obama/Clinton primary two years ago. They seemed to be voting more for "Vice President Bayh" than president. Now with Sen. Bayh leaving the scene, 32 people on the Central Committee picking his successor, and President

Obama's popularity waning in large part due to the profound problems he inherited, the party is torn. If it embraces reform, there are the constant caveats. Since the departure of Bart Peterson, it's difficult to find a Democrat ready to stand up, lay out a bold vision and spend the capital to achieve it. Perhaps Peterson's defeat in 2007 is the reason why. Or it could be the potential congressional losses that have Democratic leaders cowed, even though everyone knows the party in the White House always loses seats in the first mid-term. There aren't many Democratic leaders on hand who profess a strong vision and are asking the people to "follow me." ❖



Ways & Means Chairman Bill Crawford is rallying Democrats to support his township reform bill. (HPI Photo by Steve Dickerson)

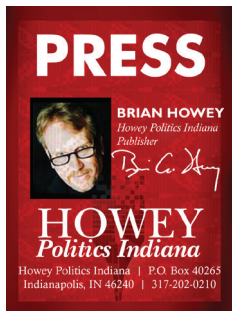


Apogee to Armageddon on the butterfly wing

"Don't let it bring you down, it's only castles burning."
- Neil Young

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - America has a staggering budget deficit of \$1.6 trillion. It is fighting two wars on the other side of the planet. It has apocalyptic public debt of \$12.556 trillion, which, according to the U.S. National Debt Clock, increases \$3.87 billion a day. Wall Street has been in the hands of snake oil salesmen with Yale and Harvard degrees that the rest of us don't trust. The U.S. auto industry came close to collapse and Toyota seems to be trying. There were 75.8 million Americans born during the Baby Boom between 1946 and 1964.



Or as the Baby Boomer Headquarters website explains, "The huge growth in the economy since the '90s was due in no small part to (70 million) of us working up to our peak earning and spending years. In about a decade, 70 million boomers will

begin counting on those 'kids' to pay our Social Security." Actually, it's already happening.

On top of these amazing demographics, we have a political situation in Washington that is in shambles. President Obama is pushing through health reforms that supporters like U.S. Rep. Baron Hill say will reduce the federal deficit by \$132 billion over the first 10 years and up to \$1.3 trillion in the decade beyond. Republican opponents of the health reforms say they are budget busters (how can anything be more busted than it is now?) and want Congress to "start over."

I look at those 70 million Boomers and think of how many prescription drugs they will be gobbling, how many doctors, surgeons and nurses they will need as they grow old, and I shudder.

Now, for the real warning. I'm reading Niall Ferguson's analysis in Foreign Affairs magazine entitled "Complexity and Collapse." When we talk about waning empires, most of us think they occur over decades or centuries. But it took the Roman empire a mere five decades to collapse, with the nation of Rome reduced by 75 percent in that timeframe. The Ming Dynasty in China dissolved much quicker. "The transition from Confucian equipoise to anarchy took little more than a decade." The Bourbon monarchy in France "passed from triumph to terror with astonishing

rapidity" with its role in the American Revolution to 1789, when a financial crisis summoned the Estates-General which "unleashed a political chain reaction that led to a swift collapse."

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the Hapsburg, Ottoman and Romanov empires quickly died following The Great War, a conflict no one expected before August 1914. The British empire dwindled from Yalta in 1945 to 1956 when 13 colonies spun into independence.

And within most of our lives, there are the Soviets. No one in March 1985 was predicting the Soviet Union would unravel and collapse in a mere six years, including my colleagues and professors at the Indiana University Russian and East European Institute. But that's what happened.

Ferguson writes, "If empires are complex systems that sooner or later succumb to sudden and catastrophic malfunctions, rather than cycling sedately from Arcadia to Apogee to Armageddon, what are the implications for the United States today?"

And this "today" comes a mere year and a half after Wall Street and the world wide financial structure came within hours of collapse?

Ferguson explains that it is the "precipitous and unexpected fall that should most concern policymakers and citizens. Most imperial falls are associated with fiscal crisis. All the above cases were marked by the sharp imbalances between revenues and expenditures, as well as difficulties with financing public debt."

All a Hoosier has to do is go one state west to find Illinois with an \$11 billion deficit, with Gov. Quinn proposing the borrowing of \$4 billion for a short-term patch. U.S. public debt is expected to go from \$5.8 trillion in 2008 to \$14.3 trillion in 2019. Interest payments that you, dear taxpayer, must pay, will go from 8 percent of federal revenues to 17 percent during the same span.

Ferguson writes that while the numbers are "bad," in the "realm of political entities, the role of perception is just as critical."

Here's the scary prediction by Ferguson: "One day, a seemingly random piece of bad news - perhaps a negative report by a rating agency - will make headlines during an otherwise quiet news cycle. Suddenly, it will be not just a few policy wonks who worry about the sustainability of U.S. fiscal policy, but also the public at large."

When I look at the petty gamesmanship in Washington and the race for advantage heading into the November elections, I am coming to the conclusion that this past generation of political leadership has exposed America to dangers in ways few of us truly understand. But these anxiety pangs are throbbing across the state at Tea Party events and those of us with progressive views.

I hope I'm not the butterfly in the Amazon❖



POS poll shows Rokita 4th CD frontrunner

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - A second POS poll on an Indiana Congressional primary shows the frontrunner - this time Secretary of State Todd Rokita in the 4th CD - with 40 percent of the vote. A January POS poll showed U.S. Rep. Dan Burton with 42 percent.

The difference is that Burton is an incumbent.



Rokita released a Feb. 22-23 Public Opinion Strategies Poll showing him with a wide lead over the 4th CD Republican primary field. The poll showed Rokita with 40 percent, compared to 10 percent for State Sen. Mike Young, 8 percent for State Sen.

Brandt Hershman, and 3

percent for Greenwood Mayor Charlie Henderson. The other 10 candidates split up the rest. The poll showed that Rokita had 70 percent name recognition (compared to 28 percent for Young and 21 percent for Hershman), with his fav/unfavs at 44/7 percent.

It noted that his fav/unfav with pro-life voters stood at 47/5 percent. Pollster Patrick Lanne said in a March 1 memo, "Todd Rokita is well-known and well-liked with Republican primary voters across the 4th Congressional District. Strong name identification provides Todd Rokita with a significant early advantage over his opponents in the primary election." The poll was conducted with 300 likely primary voters and has an error rate of +/- 5.66 percent. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Leans Rokita

U.S. Senate: Ganging up on Coats

Former Republican Sen. Dan Coats was the target at the second debate in Warsaw last weekend, sponsored by the local Tea Party cell. Don Bates Jr., Richard Behney and State Sen. Marlin Stutzman, billed themselves as Washington outsiders, according to coverage of the event by the South Bend Tribune and Fort Wayne Journal Gazette.

Coats, who said some advisers had urged him not to attend a debate sponsored by "radical" Tea Party activists. "Well, first of all, we need to be radical," Coats said. "But secondly, I said, 'These people are Hoosiers. I know Hoosiers. They know me.'"

But there were cautionary soundings from Republicans about the Tea Party movement. It has attracted a

great deal of attention, but when it came to actual elections in New York, Illinois and Texas, members of the movement struggled to get more than 20 percent of the vote.

"There's a danger from them, particularly if they're used by political operators . . . to try and hijack" elections, said Karl Rove, former political adviser to President George W. Bush (USA Today). Rove said Tea Party activists, who want to limit taxes and government's reach, could expand their clout if they emulate the 1960s civil rights movement, the gun rights movement and abortion opponents. Those groups grew "from the bottom up" and found "a raggedly unified voice," he said in an interview with USA TODAY about his new memoir, "Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight."

Behney, who helped organize the Tea Party cell that protested outside the Indiana Statehouse on April 15, 2009, said at the debate, "I'm not a career politician." He took jabs at both Coats and Hostettler. He welcomed Coats back to Indiana. As for former Congressman John Hostettler, Behney assailed him for not reading bills. "This is certainly not a time for a politician who will work not in the best interest of Hoosiers but will work for his best interests, and the best interest of his lobbying buddies and then take the first flight to North Carolina."

Bates repeatedly referred to Coats as the "ambassador," something the press characterized as negative. Bates told HPI, "For the record, I have the utmost respect for Ambassador Coats, and, while I may not agree with his entrance into this race, I have endeavored to show him the respect he deserves as a former U.S. senator, and a former ambassador. My reference to him as 'Ambassador' was misinterpreted by the media as an insult. I was simply following protocol, and addressing him by his most recent official title. Nothing derisive was intended. I also was not intending to point him out when referring to career politicians. I was actually referring to him, Hostettler, and Stutzman when I mentioned the 50 years of political experience."

A straw poll at the end of the Warsaw debate favored State Sen. Marlin Stutzman, who received 80 votes, compared to 76 for Behney, 47 for Don Bates Jr., 18 for Hostettler and 16 for Coats.

The Tea Party isn't the only one taking aim at Coats and Hostettler. Charlie Cook of the Cook Political Report in Washington is unimpressed with both. "If former GOP Sen. Dan Coats had never retired and was simply running for re-election, he would be in strong shape," Cooks observed. "But even having retired, he would have been better off had he gone back to Indiana after his stint as ambassador to Germany, instead of moving to Northern Virginia to become a Washington lobbyist. And if he weren't on videotape effectively telling a North Carolina



audience he intended to retire there but please don't tell the folks back in Indiana, he would have been stronger still. Suffice to say Coats is a bit damaged, and House Republican Conference Chairman Mike Pence might have been a better candidate."

As for Hostettler, Cook explained, "Hostettler made no friends at the National Republican Congressional Committee. Indeed, when he finally did lose, the feeling seemed to be, 'Good riddance.' In a cycle or two we'll get a Republican in that seat who will be worth defending and

won't need to be bailed out every election year. As a Senate candidate, Hostettler is likely to be a disaster, unless he has gotten a complete political makeover. He or a Tea Party type could lose what otherwise would be a fairly safe race."

Primary Horse Race Status: Leans Coats

2nd CD: Jordan says he's shut out

State Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-Elkhart, seeking the GOP nomination to challenge U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly, was endorsed by the 2nd Congressional District Republican Party and several county party chairmen at a recent meeting (Weinhold, Elkhart Truth). But the man who may be Walorski's most prominent challenger, Jack Jordan, R-Bremen, told The Elkhart Truth Wednesday that his own party didn't give him a chance to be heard. District and county party leaders won't return his calls or e-mails, he said, and he hasn't been invited to several "meet the candidates" events. For a lifelong Republican, Jordan said his first foray into party politics has been frustrating. "To be treated like this is just disappointing," the Bremen school board president and businessman said in a phone interview. "This is not what the Republican Party stands for. It stands for competition. It stands for the free market. It doesn't stand for a group of political elites making decisions for voters." Of the 12 counties entirely or partially in the 2nd District, seven GOP county chairmen have endorsed Walorski. St. Joseph County Chairman Chris Riley and Elkhart County Chairman Dale Stickel are among them.

3rd CD: Sizing up Souder's GOP opponents

The Elkhart Truth sized up the field challenging U.S. Rep. Mark Souder and came to the conclusion that Indianapolis and Fort Wayne car dealer Bob Thomas, R-Indianapolis, "stands to pose the biggest threat financially" to Souder. Thomas, 59, hasn't lived in the district since 1985, though state laws don't require congressional candidates



Republican Senate hopeful Richard Behney speaks at Saturday's Tea Party Senate debate at Warsaw Community HS. (Troy Photo)

to reside in the district they run in. He makes his home in Indianapolis, though he told the Journal-Gazette he plans to rent or buy a residence in the district soon.

Phil Troyer, the Truth reported, has been campaigning five or six days a week and speaking to local Tea Party chapters as well as the 9/12 Project. Troyer has been campaigning on his "Compact with America," a document he drafted with a Missouri congressional candidate that outlines conservative goals he'll strive for if elected. Troyer announced his candidacy in November, but said he wasn't shocked to see the number of Republicans eventually deciding to challenge Souder this year. "It was clear to me that there was a very strong sentiment out there that Mark had served his time and it was time for somebody new," he said. "So in that case, I wasn't surprised."

Greg Dickman, R-Auburn, is a 48-year-old manager and part-owner of a mobile home park. Dickman didn't like who was running (at the time, just Souder and Troyer), so he decided to try to beat them. "I don't want to be a politician," he said. "I want to be a statesman and try to fix the problems with government." **Primary Horse Race Status:** Safe Souder

4th CD: Hershman taking flak

Of all the congressional challengers, State Sen. Brandt Hershman generated the most controversy this week, though considering the source, it might not hurt him with GOP voters. House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer abruptly adjourned the House until Wednesday, complaining to the Evansville Courier & Press that Hershman had left negotiations on the Unemployment Insurance bill so he could attend a Boone County Lincoln Day Dinner. "Hershman is the author of the bill, the chairman of the conference committee. He's a vital part of this," Bauer said. "When you're



negotiating, you do it face to face."

Hershman called Bauer's remarks "political silliness." He said he left Bauer his cell phone number, his e-mail address and a proposal to consider and agree to or counter. Senate President Pro Tempore David Long, R-Fort Wayne, blasted Bauer afterward, saying Hershman had been "spending long hours here in the Statehouse" in recent days trying to work under Bauer's deadline. "I can only say that Sen. Hershman has been unfairly castigated. He is owed an apology in my opinion," he said. **Primary**

Horse Race Status: Leans Rokita

5th CD: Messer asks Burton to sign pledge

U.S. Rep. Dan Burton said last week he will not participate in any debates. So challengers began trying other tactics. Republican Luke Messer urged Burton to sign a pledge to freeze spending until there is a balanced budget. "Simply put, we are in a time of fiscal crisis, and the reckless spending needs to stop!" said Messer. "Leaders in both parties have led us to our current crisis, and Dan Burton has been part of the problem." The federal government is four times as big as it was when Dan Burton was first elected to Congress in 1982. That year, the federal budget was \$746 billion. Today, the federal budget is \$4 trillion. Congressman Burton has been a part of the Washington establishment for 28 years and has ignored this issue for decades. I hope he will join us in the fight to decrease spending and establish a balanced budget." **Primary**

Horse Race Status: Leans Burton

9th CD: Hill awaits health reform

U.S. Rep. Baron Hill, D-Ind., favors an overhaul of the nation's health care system, but is waiting to see how differences in House and Senate bills are fixed before deciding whether to support the final version (Johannesen, Columbus Republic). "My vote on a final bill is dependent upon several factors, many of which are in limbo and could be contained in the measure rectifying the House and Senate bills," Hill said in a press release. The fiscal impact of the Senate's version encourages the 9th District representative. Hill said Congressional Budget Office's review of the fiscal language indicates it would reduce the federal deficit by \$132 billion over the first 10 years and up to \$1.3 trillion in the decade beyond. "We've seen this same song and dance from Baron Hill numerous times in the last year," said Indiana Republican Party Chairman Murray Clark. "He had concerns with Cap-and-Trade, he had concerns with the health care bill in his committee, and he had concerns with the House health care bill. Despite that and the clear opposition of his constituents, he ultimately voted 'Yes' every time. It's hard to take Baron Hill's concerns seriously when he's shown in the past he doesn't take them seriously himself." **General Horse Race Status:** Tossup

HD74: Ellspermann stays on ballot

Republican Sue Ellspermann asked the Indiana Election Commission for leniency, and she got it. The commission denied a motion to disqualify her for a possible general election run against Rep. Russ Stilwell, D-Boonville, on Friday (Ault, Howey Politics Indiana). Ellspermann is one of about 25 Republicans recruited by the House Republican Campaign Committee and Gov. Mitch Daniels to retake control of the lower chamber in November's elections. The Democrats now control the House 52-48. "I want to thank the commission," Ellspermann told HPI. "They allowed me to remain a candidate. They realized it was an honest error and that the evidence was very strong that I have Republican Party support and that I am a Republican. It was an honest mistake, and I apologize for that."

Ellspermann voted in the Democratic primary in May 2008, one of thousands of Republicans attracted for one reason or another to the Hillary Clinton vs. Barack Obama presidential primary. Some Republicans wanted to vote for who they considered to be the weaker of the two candidates as a way of supporting Republican nominee John McCain. Others were goaded into crossing over by conservative radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh. HPI and Obama campaign manager David Plouffe attributed Clinton's razor thin victory over Obama to Republican crossover vote. But in the 2010 election cycle, a number of Republicans like former Elkhart County Commissioner John Bentley were disqualified by county election boards in Elkhart, Tippecanoe and Porter counties - among others - by their Democratic primary vote two years ago. When filing for election, Ellspermann claimed to have voted in the Republican primary. Her paperwork said she voted Republican, but her vote did not. "I made a mistake on the form," Ellspermann told the commission. "I am asking you to consider that it was genuine oversight, that I have a strong record with the Republican party, and that I've run in an honest way." Ellspermann, in fact, is a Lugar Series of Public Excellence graduate, a program sponsored by U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar to encourage women to enter the political process. The challenge against her was brought by Charles Wyatt who has donated and voted for Democrats historically. The news about her mistake came just last week. "Last Thursday, I heard a rumor that I had not filed the way I should have," Ellspermann said. "On Friday morning, I wanted to convince myself that I voted Democrat. I have historically voted as a Republican. I'm not this great ticket person. 2008 was a unique primary in Indiana. Like many Republicans did in 2008, I chose to vote Democrat. That did not stick in my mind as I





was filling out this form. I was not convinced until I saw it."

Immediately after recognizing her mistake, Ellspermann said she proceeded to call county chairs and received their letters of certification and support. "I had no problem getting letters from the chairs," she said.

But 8th CD Democratic Chairman Anthony Long of Boonville said the law should have been upheld. "She didn't attach her paperwork, and now, she can't change it," Long said. "They have to be attached to the declaration of candidacy, and they were not. It's a felony to file a false affidavit. The document was filed incorrectly to start with. I vote to sustain the law. It's here for a reason. The law is the law. I don't think that's permitted under the law." (Long is a long-time ally of Rep. Stilwell.) He continued, "Ma'am, I don't think you've committed a felony. I think you made a mistake, but that doesn't mean that because it's not a felony, you haven't broken the law. Our mandate is to enforce the election laws in the state of Indiana - period." But Long didn't have the backing of the rest of the commission, which voted to keep Ellspermann on the ballot. Ellspermann is running against Angela Sowers in the primary. The blog Hoosier Advocate alleges that the Sowers' family are legal clients of Long. She filed on the final day, drawing allegations that her candidacy was politically motivated as Democrats planned to challenge Ellspermann. A victory for either Ellspermann or Sowers will mean a race against incumbent House Majority Leader Stilwell. After filing on Sept. 1, 2009, she has raised money and campaigned in House District 74. "I promise I will never make that mistake again," Ellspermann said.

Ellspermann's only primary opponent is Angela Sowers, a 46-year-old tax preparer from Boonville (Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press). Sowers said two issues she'd like to tackle are the lack of appropriate housing for the elderly and welfare waste and abuse. Sowers said she hasn't voted in years, though she comes from a Republican family. She said she was motivated to consider entering politics when Barack Obama was elected president. "I thought, 'You know, maybe I could be one of these types of people who can get a point across,'" she said. Sowers has not raised money and has not yet campaigned. "Honestly I just signed up for all this. I'm going to do some meet-and-greets with some of the elderly here in Warrick County," she said. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Safe Ellspermann

HD38: Van Natter out-raises Rep. Clements

In what is expected to be a hotly contested Republican Party primary for the Indiana HD38 seat, challenger Heath VanNatter is raising more money than incumbent Jacque Clements (de la Bastide, Kokomo Tribune). According to campaign finance reports filed with the Indiana secretary of state's office for 2009, VanNatter raised \$22,957. Clements, of Frankfort, raised \$11,823. Cle-

ments started 2009 with cash on hand of \$138 and spent \$2,042 during the year. She entered 2010 with a balance of \$9,923. Her campaign received contributions of \$3,075 from individuals, \$1,700 from corporations and \$6,150 from political action committees. Listed as a contributor is Nikish Corp. of New York, which provided \$250 to the campaign. Clements and Nikish are named in a civil lawsuit filed by Clinton County over a county contract to provide accounting software. Clements was the county auditor when the contract was awarded. The case is still pending. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Tossup

HD30: Karickhoff leads Herrell in money

Incumbent Democrat Ron Herrell, seeking reelection in House District 30, reported a cash balance of \$2,205 at the start of 2009, raising \$7,150 and spending \$3,920 during the year. He started 2010 with \$5,434 for the campaign (Kokomo Tribune). Kokomo Councilman Mike Karickhoff has raised over \$16,500, according to Howard County Republican chairman Craig Dunn (Howey Politics Indiana). He said money was transferred from his city council organization. **General Horse Race Status:** Tossup

2011 Campaign: Evans joins Indy mayoral

Indianapolis Councilman Jose Evans kicked off his Democratic mayoral campaign this week. He joins a field that includes Melina Kennedy, former Councilman Ron Gibson and Brian Williams. In an e-mail to supporters, Evans said, "Too many politicians care more about downtown businesses than they do about creating jobs and our neighborhoods - I plan on changing that attitude. As mayor, I will promote 21st Century ideas focused on creating jobs and fostering neighborhood development. I'll fight to ensure we have a world-class public education system and to make Indianapolis one of the safest cities in America. Over the next several months we'll have many opportunities to discuss these and other important issues."



The real news in this Democratic race to see who challenges Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard unfolded prior to the Feb. 19 filing deadline. It was revealed afterward that some 400 precinct candidates recruited by Brian Williams filed for office. Add in the vice precinct committeemen and women they selected, and Williams enters the 2011 slating convention with enough votes to win.

It was an extraordinary strategy. While presumed frontrunner Kennedy was gathering party endorsements, Williams was recruiting precinct candidates. **Primary Horse Race Status:** Leans Williams ❖



Taking no chances on gerrymandering

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - Most of the many analyses of why Congress doesn't work, why it stalemates in nasty, partisan warfare, mention redistricting as part of the problem. It is.

But state legislators participating in a recent panel discussion in South Bend all brushed off redistricting as

something voters don't care about and concluded that it thus was a matter with no legislative priority.

They were correct that voters don't know or care much about redistricting. The general public would as soon watch paint dry as look at some new district maps with squiggly lines and weird shapes. Means nothing to them.

It's something for politicians. Inside politics. And the inside politicians want it kept that way,

kept in their hands, with little public input or attention. They don't want any less partisan approach to redistricting.

The process is oft described as gerrymandering in honor of Elbridge Gerry, one of the Founding Fathers, who back in 1812 designed a politically crafted district that looked like a salamander. So this isn't something new, even though computerized data now make it a science.

New legislative districts are drawn after each Census so that the districts reflect population changes.

What counts more than population size in determining control of Congress is how those districts are gerrymandered for selection of the 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In most states, new district lines for the U.S. House are drawn by state legislatures. States legislatures controlled by Republicans draw districts designed to elect as many Republican members of Congress as possible.

State legislatures controlled by Democrats draw districts designed to elect as many Democrats as possible.

How? Easy. Easier than ever with computerized data on voters.

Suppose, for example, that one area of a state has voted 50-50, an even split between Republican and Democratic candidates in recent elections. And the area is entitled by new Census figures to elect three members of Congress.

Will there be real competition for those three seats, with candidates having to reach out to a wide spectrum of

voters on many important issues in order to go to Washington? No, not with gerrymandering.

Suppose, as often is the case, there are urban areas that vote strongly Democratic and suburban and small town areas that vote strongly Republican.

If Republicans do the gerrymandering, they will draw one district containing as many Democratic precincts as possible, making it safe for a Democratic member of Congress. The reason is to have two other districts safe for Republican members of Congress.

If Democrats do the gerrymandering, they will draw the meandering boundaries to put as much of the GOP strength as possible in one district, writing it off and enabling Democrats to win in the other two.

This drawing of safe districts, which only infrequently turn out not to be safe, helps to make things so nasty in Congress.

With so few districts actually competitive, actually requiring widespread political appeal, and so many drawn strongly Democratic or strongly Republican, the real contest often is in the primary election. The winner of the primary of the majority party in that district is virtually certain of election in the fall.

Primary elections bring out the more partisan voters, including those at the extreme ends of the political spectrum, those to the right in the Republican primary, those to the left in the Democratic primary.

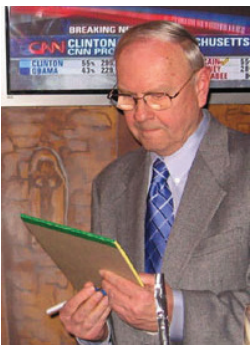
A congressman knowing that the real political threat is in the primary, where the most partisan members of his party have the loudest say, doesn't dare to reach across the aisle in Congress - unless it's with a knife to stab someone in the evil opposition. Fraternizing with the opposition is viewed as unprincipled by the highly partisan.

A Republican in one of these districts knows that voting for something President Obama proposes could trigger charges that he's a RHINO, a Republican in name only, and bring a possible primary challenge.

A Democrat in one of these districts knows that working for something seen as bipartisan compromise with hated Republicans could trigger charges of "sell-out" on liberal blogs and bring a possible primary challenge.

Primary challenges cost money. Take effort. And could mean defeat. Why take the chance? Many of them won't. ❖

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





It's not too late for high speed stimulus

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - "Too little, too late," is the standard objection to the economic stimulus program now in effect. That criticism is based on opinion, not fact. It will take several years to know whether the stimulus (or stimuli, because there was more than a single stimulus) worked.



Morton Marcus
Column

We do know that funds from the federal government were used by state and local governments everywhere to supplement or replace their own depleted revenues.

This meant people held jobs that would otherwise have been cut. It meant that contracts were let to private firms that would have had thinner order books. Was it enough? What's enough? We could not expect that a federal stimulus

program from a constipated congress could be enough. We could not expect that the entire economic slide of the past two years would be offset by federal spending when nearly half the congress believes (incorrectly) that government spending is inherently sterile.

Yet it is appropriate to ask "What kind of economic program should we be following now?" Health care is popular, but no one is suggesting giving the health care industry a spending boost. Most people not in the insurance or health care industries want to see lower expenditures for health care. We want our neighbors to take better care of themselves, act on problems before they reach a crisis stage, and accept less than cutting edge treatment.

What then could be the right kind of economic stimulus? One answer is High Speed Rail (HSR), not the puny program put forward recently by the federal government. A few disjointed lines operating at speeds that fail to match those of other advanced nations will not do. If we are going to increase productivity (which should always be a priority

of government spending), then we need a decade-long, integrated national program to design, build and operate an HSR system competitive with any in the world tomorrow.

This would be the national interstate highway program on steroids. It would generate millions of new jobs and benefit every corner of the country. (I admit I don't have an idea of how HSR would work for Hawaii.) The upheaval in our cities would be marvelous. It would allow us to tear down decrepit structures along existing rail lines. All grade crossings on the HSR lines would be removed and not a single HSR train would ever be constrained by local speed regulations.

HSR would encourage the improvement of intra-city transportation. When visitors get to Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, South Bend they will need a means to reach their local destinations. More visitors without cars mean more local options for transportation.

HSR would help re-establish regional centers. If the new service skips Sullivan, Vincennes, and Princeton on its way from Terre Haute to Evansville, then efficient carriers connecting smaller places to larger places will be encouraged. Today a traveler from Sullivan to Chicago drives through Terre Haute and dreams of a by-pass. With HSR, the Sullivan traveler has reason to be in Terre Haute.

Trains build density about well-designed terminals and transfer points. Downtown areas will flourish and the decay of odious suburban sprawl will be accelerated. As a realignment of land values takes place, the sad errors of the past century could be eased into oblivion.

Advances in transportation are central to gains in productivity. Web-conferences are poor substitutes for face-to-face interaction. Yet, at today's prices and speeds, the movement of people has been sacrificed and only messages are given premium service. The HSR network is ideally suited to financing through bonds paid from future revenues. Future citizens benefit from the system and pay for it as they use it. In the present, however, we can create the jobs we desperately desire. ❖

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





Sylvia Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette:

Republicans are calling it a "rubber stamp" or an effort to "jam through" legislation. They've labeled it "controversial and partisan" and "an assault on the democratic process." What they are referring to is the oddly named "reconciliation," which Congress sometimes uses for major bills to expedite what can be a cumbersome process. Congressional Democrats have said they probably will turn to reconciliation to reach final votes on legislation to revamp the health insurance system. Under reconciliation, Senate filibusters are prohibited. That means a simple majority – 51 votes – is needed to pass something. When filibusters are permitted, it takes a supermajority of 60 votes to unblock a bill, meaning 41 senators can freeze Senate action. To suggest that legislation passed by a majority vote is undemocratic and illegitimate is absurd. Reconciliation is a tool the legislative body gave itself, so there is nothing unethical or underhanded about it. But just because something is legal does not make it ideal. Sen. Evan Bayh has suggested several times lately that reconciliation for health insurance restructuring probably will create a backlash that will inhibit across-the-aisle compromises on many other issues. "Reconciliation should be kept as a last, last resort," he said on a Charlie Rose interview program. "I suspect because it may poison the well for dealing with other issues over the remainder of this year." The Senate was set up to be deliberative. That means slow. One senator can hold up a bill, often indefinitely. But the Senate also has this procedure called reconciliation that allows some efficiency. It was created by law more than 30 years ago, so it is hardly "controversial and partisan." In fact, both parties love it – but they love it best when they have a majority. I'm not sure when – if ever – the minority party has tried to convince the voting public that the other guys were doing something wrong by using reconciliation. Generally, the issues of a bill are argued on their merits. It's curious that the GOP is spending so much energy on its twisted civics lesson when there are plenty of substantive concerns about the health insurance legislation it could capitalize on. ❖

Mark Kiesling, Times of Northwest Indiana:

Ideally, prison is meant to rehabilitate an offender for release into society. Failing that, its purpose is to punish an offender for a crime of which he or she has been convicted. If that's true, prison is not working so well in the case of Bob Cantrell. Oh, it's working all right for him. It's just not working that all right for us, the residents of the region who were betrayed by his political shenanigans, in which he steered clients to an addiction rehab program. The program, in turn, paid him a finder's fee, although finding the clients was about as hard as finding a rhinoceros

in a phone booth. If you missed Times sports columnist Al Hamnik's fine exclusive interview with Cantrell, try to find a Friday paper either online, at the library or in your recycling bin. It's well worth the read and leaves one with the distinct impression Cantrell is being neither rehabilitated nor punished. Cantrell was convicted of defrauding taxpayers in North Township, where he worked, by steering drug and alcohol offenders to Addiction and Family Counseling, run by Nancy Fromm, who testified she paid Cantrell a fee for each client he could turn up. "I don't feel I was guilty.

They put me in here because a woman said she gave me some money," Cantrell told Hamnik.

"Other than that, I'm not embarrassed. I know deep down in my heart it's not true." Well, OK, a federal jury and judge felt otherwise. But that's what an appeals court is for. Asked how tough life is in the low-security Federal Correctional Center in Ashland, Ky., he said it is "more like what I would call a retirement home" than a prison. But he said he is not planning

on retiring from Lake County politics. "I'm not going to run away from (politics)," he said. "That's what may have got me here, but I've got a lot of friends out there." One of his closest political students has been County Coroner Tom Philpot, who once gave credit to Cantrell for getting Philpot elected county clerk. Cantrell said he feels he will be "missed" in the race for sheriff, in which Philpot is a contender. OK, just to be sure I've got it straight, convicted federal felon Bob Cantrell says his input will be missed in the election of the county's top law enforcement officer. Do you want a convicted felon helping elect your top cop? Apparently Cantrell thinks you do. ❖

Gary Gerard, Warsaw Times-Union: The Congressional Budget Office - the official, non-partisan bean counters for the U.S. federal government - came out with a report (last) Thursday. The report showed the budget deficit reached \$655 billion through the first five months of fiscal 2010. At that rate, the annual deficit will be \$1.572 trillion. At the end of the the first five months of 2009, the deficit was a mere \$590 billion. The deficit in February 2010 alone was \$223 billion, up \$30 billion over February 2009. There was some bright news: Receipts increased by \$16 billion during February compared to 2009. But the government managed to wipe all that out and then some, spending some \$46 billion more in February 2010 than it did in February 2009. The CBO said the increase in outlays was largely due to President Barack Obama's signature tax credit - Making Work Pay - which goes to low- and middle-income earners. OK, this is just insane. I thought it was unimaginable when President George W. Bush ran up a \$455 billion deficit during his last year in office. But the current administration is making W look absolutely frugal. ❖





Daniels plays peacemaker with Long, Bauer

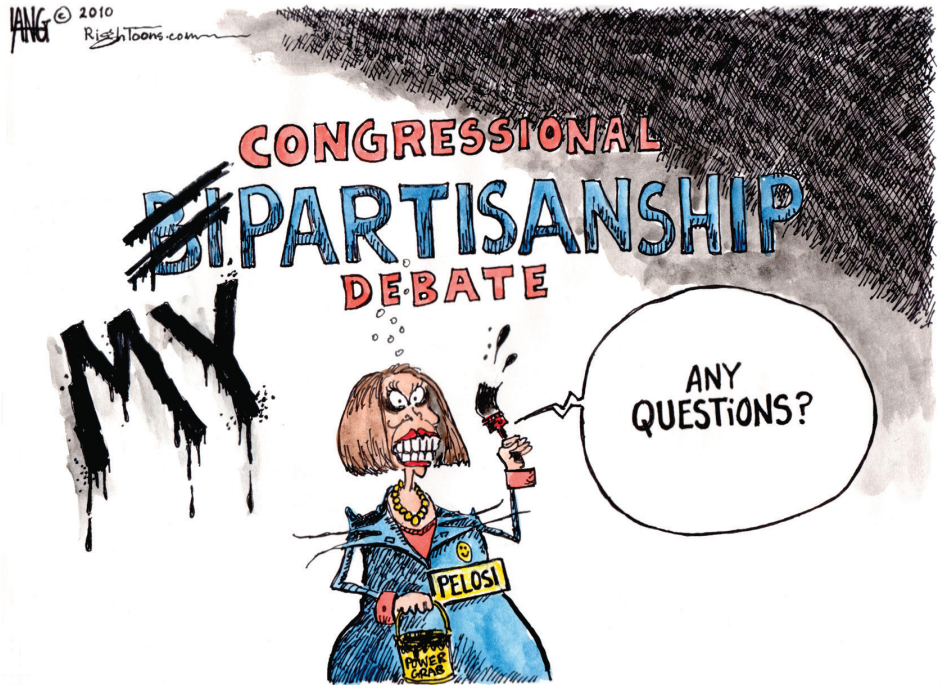
INDIANAPOLIS - Conflict over a bill that would cancel a scheduled increase at the end of this month in unemployment taxes that Indiana businesses pay still has the Indiana General Assembly in a logjam (Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press). It's the last issue legislators must sort out before Sunday's deadline to adjourn for the year. They



have an agreement in place already to let schools spend in the classroom some money ordinarily set aside for capital projects. That's the item the Democratic-controlled House says it must get done before Speaker Patrick Bauer, D-South Bend, can gavel this year's session to a close. But the Republican-led Senate won't allow that bill to pass until it also gets what it wants: a one- or two-year delay on the planned premium changes that would increase the amount most businesses pay into the state's unemployment insurance fund. Senate Appropriations Chairman Luke Kenle said his caucus is concerned that if the education bill were to pass before an unemployment compromise is brokered, the speaker simply would end the session. "All of these issues are so difficult that they do depend on each other. That is not an abnormal part of this process," he said. Gov. Mitch Daniels was playing peacemaker Wednesday afternoon. He met with Bauer, then with Republican legislative leaders. "It was positive, constructive and sometimes friendly," Bauer said of his talks with the Republican governor.

Dobis calls for special session for UI

INDIANAPOLIS - A Merrillville



lawmaker is calling on the governor to order a special session of the General Assembly if job-creating legislation is not approved (Carden, Times of Northwest Indiana). State Rep. Chet Dobis, D-Merrillville, asked Gov. Mitch Daniels in a letter Wednesday to call a special session if the Legislature adjourns "without passage of a meaningful jobs bill." "I fear that a compromise may not be worked at before the target day of March 14," Dobis said. "If we as legislators fail to complete our job when we adjourn sine die, please use your power as governor to keep us here in special session until the job is completed to your satisfaction." Sine die is Latin for "without day," which means, "without assigning a day for a further meeting or hearing" to adjourn an assembly. "We can't afford to wait until April 30, 2011, to put this problem to rest," Dobis said.

State says it will intervene with South Bend schools

SOUTH BEND - State education officials say they will intervene at three South Bend high schools if local leaders don't agree on a strategy to

improve academic performance (Allen, South Bend Tribune). Bendix School, Riley High School and Washington High School are among 23 schools the Indiana Department of Education has placed on academic probation each of the past four years because of failures to show improvements on the state's standardized ISTEP test. Schools that remain on probation for six straight years are subject to state intervention, including the possible assignment of a management team to operate all or part of a school, according to the state's Public Law 221. That means the South Bend Community School Corp., and the other nine school corporations in this situation, have until May 2011 to forge a plan to turn things around, said Jeff Zaring, chief of results and reform for the department. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett is in the process of meeting with leaders of the 10 school corporations that operate those 23 schools. Meetings will continue through March 19, the DOE reported. Bennett and other state officials met with South Bend schools staff and three school board members Monday at the school corporation's downtown



office. "We really want them to do something," said Zaring, who is one of the state officials who attended the meeting Monday. "We want them to feel the urgency and the need to do that. We can help them." About 57 percent of Riley's 10th-grade students and 43 percent of Washington's 10th-graders passed the math and English sections of the ISTEP during the 2008-09 school year, according to the DOE.

Other schools on list

SOUTH BEND - Other schools on notice from the Indiana Department of Education: East Allen County Schools: Paul Harding High School, Prince Chapman Academy, Village Elementary School; School City of East Chicago: East Chicago Central High School; Fort Wayne Community Schools: North Side High School, South Side High School; Gary Community School Corp.: Theodore Roosevelt High School; School City of Hammond: Hammond High School, Morton Senior High School; Indianapolis Public Schools: Arlington Community High School, Broad Ripple High School, Emmerich Manual High School, Northwest High School, Emma Donnan Middle School, Willard J. Gambold Middle School, Thomas Carr Howe Community High School, George Washington Community High School; Lake Ridge Schools: Calumet High School; Lake Station Community Schools: Central Elementary School; Marion Community Schools: Marion High School

State jobless rate stays at 9.7%

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's unemployment rate remained unchanged in January, state officials announced today. December's rate of 9.7 percent remained the same for January, based on a slowing of job losses, Teresa Voors, commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development, said in a statement (Associated Press). The national rate for January

also was at 9.7 percent. Three sectors led Indiana losses in January. Private education and health services cut 5,700 jobs, leisure and hospitality fell by 2,600 positions, and construction lost 2,220 jobs. Growth sectors included manufacturing, adding 3,900 jobs. Also, financial activities and professional and business services each added 6,000 in January. The December figures showed that more than 300,000 Hoosiers were looking for work.

Ben Quayle talks of his House race

PHOENIX - Ben Quayle was born two days after his father, Dan, was first elected to Congress, and remembers well tossing a football with him on Capitol Hill between votes. He could have lived without the constant mocking of his family — particularly the whole potato thing — but his memories of Washington are largely gauzy and pleasant (New York Times). Vernon Parker is also one of the eight Republicans seeking the nomination for the open seat. Since his father, who served as vice president under President George Bush, exited the scene in 1993, the younger Mr. Quayle's life has been clearly apolitical — he hasn't even voted in local elections since he registered here in 1997. But now he is getting into his father's old game. "It was time for me to stop yelling at the TV," said Mr. Quayle, 33, in an interview at a cafe here, "and throw my hat in the ring."

Zoeller blasts GOP over robocalls

INDIANAPOLIS - Attorney General Greg Zoeller criticized his own political party Wednesday for annoying Hoosiers with robocalls (Carden, Times of Northwest Indiana). Zoeller said the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee's use of unsolicited prerecorded political telephone calls violates a "treaty" among the leaders of the

Republican, Democratic and Libertarian parties in Indiana. The three parties agreed on Jan. 5 not to use robocalls during the 2010 campaign. "I'm sorry to report that the National Republican Congressional Committee is the first to intentionally violate the treaty and show a lack of respect for the privacy of Hoosiers by blitzing them with unwanted political calls," said Zoeller, a Republican. The NRCC is reportedly robocalling voters in three downstate congressional districts. "Hoosiers have said time and again that they enjoy their telephone privacy and don't want to be interrupted by the annoying ring of unwanted telephone calls, and that the use of prerecorded messages adds insult to injury," Zoeller said. "My office has explained to the NRCC that their nuisance calls into Indiana violate the intent and spirit of the state's telephone privacy laws."

McShurley doesn't like council finance chair

MUNCIE - The city council's new finance committee hasn't met yet but it is already coming under fire from Mayor Sharon McShurley (Werner, Muncie Star Press). Among Republican McShurley's chief concerns is that Democratic city council President Mike King appointed Democrat Sam Marshall as the finance committee chairman for 2010. Marshall was a supervisor in the street department for 25 years before McShurley laid him off due to budget cuts at the end of 2008. Their already-strained relationship worsened late last year when Marshall initiated cuts to the 2010 budget that McShurley felt were detrimental to the city. One of those cuts included firing McShurley's deputy mayor, Dick Shirey. Marshall -- who served as finance committee chairman for at least three years during Republican Mayor Dan Canan's administration -- said he would not have a problem working with McShurley. "That's her problem."