

# Harris, Buttigieg emerge in debate 2

Mayor had to explain police shooting; separates himself on Medicare for all and free tuition

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – California Sen. Kamala Harris and South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg found traction in their first presidential debate Thursday night, potentially encroaching on frontrunners Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders.

Buttigieg's big moment came midway through the debate when the topic turned

to the immigration disaster on the Mexican border, culminating with the tragic photo of a Guatemalan man and child lying drowned in the Rio Grande. "For a party that associates itself with

Christianity to say it is OK to suggest that God would smile on the division of families at the hands of federal agents,



Mayor Buttigieg tried to create a generational divide with former vice president Joe Biden and U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders in Miami during the second Democratic debate.

that God would condone putting children in cages, has lost all claim to ever use religious language," Buttigieg said in one of the key exchanges in the debate in Miami.

Another exchange involving U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell underscored the thrust of Buttigieg's campaign that

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## Knowing Sgt. O'Neill

By **JACK COLWELL**

SOUTH BEND – South Bend police Sgt. Ryan O'Neill was proud that in 19 years as a cop he never shot anyone – never once fired a shot in the line of duty – even though mostly working in the late night when violence peaks.

Until . . .

O'Neill is the cop in national news, caught up in coverage of Mayor Pete Buttigieg's presidential campaign. He shot and fatally wounded Eric Logan, a man said by O'Neill to have forced him finally to shoot someone in a him-or-me, life-or-death



**“Don't meddle in the election, president. Don't meddle in the election.”**

*- President Trump, pointing a finger at Russian President Putin with a smirk when the two met at the G-20 summit in Osaka, Japan.*



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situation in which Logan approached threateningly with a raised knife.

White cop shoots and kills black man.

That's how it played.  
And that's what happened.

But it wasn't like one of those cases elsewhere where some white cop fires a barrage of shots into the back of a black man who is running away.

**O'Neill fired two** shots. One hit Logan – in the stomach, not in the back. Police reports say Logan, after being shot, threw a knife that struck O'Neill with a glancing blow.

Still, was it justified?  
And how has Mayor Buttigieg handled the situation?

The mayor handled it well in the Democratic debate, as well as he could, admitting problems in failing to recruit black police officers, expressing sympathy over the death but not declaring a verdict on the shooting. He didn't fold as a result of his city, about which he boasts, being portrayed now as a mess of racial strife.

Buttigieg moves on, still a strong contender, although still struggling to win support among African-American voters, especially in South Carolina, with its key early primary.

Whether the shooting was justified will be looked at by a special prosecutor from another county. There also will be a civil suit.

**It's possible to** piece together some of the story from statements by police and the prosecutor.

Some of the information raises more questions. Especially: Did the city have an unclear policy on when an officer was to turn on a body camera? And was limited use encouraged to save money? O'Neill didn't turn on his body camera as he got out of his patrol car. Did he have reason to believe his investigation of car break-ins would lead to the first time in 19 years that he would shoot someone?

A regulation change now orders officers to turn the camera on in "all enforcement and investigative

contacts." Belated.

If that had been the clear rule for investigating whether the man in the parking lot owned the car or was breaking into it, would video have shown an attacker with knife raised? Or not?

I know O'Neill well.

**He is one of** the South Bend police officers who have taken students in my Notre Dame journalism class along on patrol, with department approval. Their written assignments gave a positive portrayal of O'Neill. I have talked with him many times about policing, including his stated belief that all his gym work and running enabled him to subdue many a



violator without need to use his gun.

I didn't see the shooting. Only two people knew the facts at the precise moment. One is dead. But, as the nation speculates, I tend to believe the cop that I know shot to save his own life and be there still for his wife and children.

But I also understand there is skepticism among many blacks. Why wouldn't there be? After all of those stories about racist cops in shootings elsewhere, why wouldn't they be suspicious?

**While I know** O'Neill, they don't. And some of them have had bad experiences with police.

For want of video, no matter what the reason, whether flawed policy or not, the chance for proof that could convince so many people, either way, was lost. ❖

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



## Buttigieg debate, from page 1

echoed John F. Kennedy's 1961 call for a new generation of leadership. "I was 6 years old when a presidential candidate came to the California Democratic convention and said it's time to pass the torch to a new generation of Americans," said Swalwell, adding, "That candidate was then-Sen. Joe Biden. He was right when he said that 32 years ago. He is still right today. If we are going to solve the issue, pass the torch. If we are going to solve climate chaos, pass the cover. If we want to end gun violence and solve student debt, pass the torch."

**Biden shot back**, "I'm holding onto that torch. I want to make that clear."

Buttigieg tried to interject saying at one point, "As the youngest guy on the stage, I feel like I probably ought to contribute to the generational..." but he was interrupted by Sen. Bernie Sanders, who said, "As part of Joe's generation, let me respond."

It underscored the generational divide between the septuagenarians Sanders and Biden, both of whom would finish a theoretical first term in their 80s.

In his closing statement, Buttigieg said, "Nothing about politics is theoretical to me. I had the experience writing a letter to my family, putting it in an envelop marked 'just in case' and leaving it where they would know where to find it in case I didn't come back from Afghanistan. I've experienced being in a marriage that exists by the grace of a single vote on the U.S. Supreme Court. I've experienced guiding a community where the per capita income was below \$20,000 into a brighter future. I'm running because the decisions we make in the next three or four years will decide how the next 30 or 40 years will go. When I get the current age of the current president in the year 2055, I want to look back on these years and say my generation delivered on climate solutions, racial equality and an end to endless war. Help me deliver that new generation to Washington before it's too late."

**Buttigieg was also asked** by NBC host Rachel Maddow about the police action shooting on June 16 resulting in the death of 54-year-old Eric Logan who was wielding a knife. It risked the future of Buttigieg's ascendant campaign as he returned to his city for much of the past week. He acknowledged that "that I couldn't get it done" to change race relations in South Bend, where the black population is 26% but the police force is just 5% African-American.

"My community is in anguish right now because of an officer-involved shooting," Buttigieg explained. "A black

man, Eric Logan, killed by a white officer. I'm not allowed to take sides until the investigation comes back. The officer said he was attacked with a knife, but he didn't have his body camera on. It's a mess, and we're hurting. And I can walk you through all the steps that we took from bias training to de-escalation, but it didn't save the life of Eric Logan. And when I look into his mother's eyes, I have to face the fact that nothing that I say will bring him back."

Buttigieg tried to translate the crisis into a national context. "This is an issue that is facing our community and so many communities around the country," he continued. "And until we move policing out from the shadow of systemic racism, whatever this particular incident teaches us, we will be left with the bigger problem of the fact that there is a wall of mistrust put up one racist act at a time. It threatens the well-being of every community, and

I am determined to bring about a day when a white person driving a vehicle and a black person driving a vehicle, when they see a police officer approaching feels the exact same thing. The feeling not of fear, but of safety, I am determined to bring that day about."

Sen. Harris also seemed to gain ground at a point where the 10 candidates began speaking at once. "Hey, guys, you know what? America does not want to witness a food fight," Harris said. "They want to know how we're going to put food on their table." The remark

was met with raucous cheers and applause.

**In the other defining moment**, Biden's comments on segregationist senators James Eastland and Herman Talmadge came up, Harris pounced, saying, "Vice President Biden, I do not believe you are a racist, and I agree with you, when you commit yourself to the importance of finding common ground. But I also believe — and it's personal — it was actually hurtful to hear you talk about the reputations of two United States senators who built their reputations and career on the segregation of race in this country."

Harris invoked images of growing up in a more segregated America, saying Biden had worked to prevent the Department of Education from integrating school busing during the 1970s. "That little girl was me," Harris said emotionally. "So I will tell you that on this subject, it cannot be an intellectual debate among Democrats. We have to take it seriously. We have to act swiftly."

Biden's performance was largely panned, with Politico observing: "At his worst, the frontrunner seemed to shrink on the crowded stage, coming off as tired in his manner, soggy in words and argument in ways that sometimes unintentionally reinforced the criticism."

MSNBC's Joe Scarborough panned the entire group, citing all of their support for health care for all il-



Mayor Buttigieg glares during an exchange with U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell as Joe Biden looks on.

legal immigrants, saying they reinforced President Trump's characterization of Democrats favoring "open borders." As for Buttigieg, Scarborough observed, "He kept his cool and even handled the South Bend question very well."

**The Trump campaign** observed: "The cast of characters may have changed, but the second night's script was eerily like the first: A two hour-long infomercial for President Trump's re-election campaign. All of the Democrats tripped over each other in a race to see who could stand out as the most leftist candidate, threatening government control of every aspect of people's lives."

On two key issues, Buttigieg seemed to separate himself from the pack that had been veering left over the past two nights. On Sanders' proposal to forgive all student debt, Buttigieg said, "College affordability is personal for us. Chasten and I have six-figure student debt. I believe in reducing student debt. It's logical to me that, if you can refinance your house, you ought to be able to refinance your student debt. I also believe in free college for low- and middle-income students for whom cost could be a barrier. I just don't believe it makes sense to ask working-class families to subsidize even the children of billionaires. I think the children of the wealthiest Americans can pay at least a little bit of tuition. And while I want tuition costs to go down, I don't think we can buy down every last penny for them."

**In a repeat of a question** from Wednesday night, the candidates were asked if they supported Medicare for all. Buttigieg was one of the few who refrained. "Everybody who says 'Medicare for all,' every person in politics who allows that phrase to escape their lips, has a

responsibility to explain how you're actually supposed to get from here to there," Buttigieg began. "I would call it 'Medicare for all who want it,'" insisting that "it will be a very natural glide path to a single-payer environment."

Buttigieg's performance was more than credible. Republican pollster Frank Luntz talked of Buttigieg's castigating GOP religious stances, saying, "Mayor Pete just delivered his best lines of the #DemDebate by contrasting the GOP's purported religious values with their support of forcibly separating children from their parents at the border. It is worthy of a 30-second ad."

Political analyst Reid Wilson added, "Sitting at a bar in Grinnell, Iowa with a bunch of local Dems. Buttigieg's religious answer (was) first one of the night that got everyone applauding."

**And conservative commentator** Hugh Hewitt reacted to Buttigieg's stance on Medicare for all, "Our country is healthier when everybody is healthier. Hardest question in two nights and @PeteButtigieg nails it. Not sure where country polls on health care for the undocumented, but the mayor had no trouble with the curve. Then @joebiden agrees with him."

Liberal New York Times columnist Nick Kristof observed, "@PeteButtigieg and @KamalaHarris were the stars of the #DemDebate tonight and its biggest beneficiaries. I thought @JoeBiden was a net loser."

Buttigieg communications director Lis Smith told CNN, "He won the debate and he had a great direct conversation with the American people about how he's not just thinking about the next four years, but the next 50 years." ❖

## Buttigieg's crisis came with a nation watching

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — In presidential politics, it's often described as that "3 a.m. phone call" that signals a crisis.

For South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, he received that call in the midst of what has been seen as a credible presidential campaign and has spent the last week in the utterly conspicuous glare of local and national media attention. The shooting death of 54-year-old black man Eric Logan apparently as he wielded a knife by SBPD Sgt. Ryan O'Neill has thrust Buttigieg into a racially tinged crisis coming in an era bookended by Ferguson and Charlottesville.

And it surfaced just as Buttigieg was poised to make his most con-

spicuous play for the Democratic presidential nomination with the second debate in Miami last night. The backdrop has become an era of racial-generated politics, with the contrasting forces, be they white or black, Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, moving beyond Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s clarion credo that what really matters is living in "a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

For mayor and candidate Buttigieg, it was the proverbial Catch 22. No matter what he would do or say after he was informed of the police action shooting on Sunday June 16, the mayor would find critics in every corner.

From a crisis communications standpoint, Buttigieg did what he had to do:

- 1. In a crisis, the first step is recognition, and on June 16, Buttigieg immediately realized the volatility of the situation, cancelled a series of campaign events and headed back to South Bend.
- 2. He addressed this crisis in



a timely fashion. He met with the victim's family, attended a police swearing-in ceremony at the South Bend Board of Works, and acknowledged that the forthcoming anger and criticism was "justified."

■ 3. He fostered a wide-ranging community conversation that was utterly transparent, with two public forums and a Friday night protest rally where he was directly confronted by angry constituents in the glare of klieg lamps and "breaking news."

■ 4. He accepted President Harry Truman's famed dictate that the "buck stops here." He took responsibility for a single police officer's action, even with Sgt. O'Reilly's body cam deactivated, unable to record what really happened.

"He did everything right in terms of rapid response," said Cameron Carter, whose public affairs agency Content By Carter handles crisis communications. "It was a very public and transparent response. He engaged all stakeholders and called for an objective third party to examine the incident. In terms of crisis communications, I can't find fault with what he did."

After his Sunday town hall that was nationally televised, Buttigieg became visibly emotional when reporters questioned the wisdom of holding the forum that dissolved into shouting match by some of his constituents. "I just think it's my job," Buttigieg said. "I don't know if it's smart or not. I don't know if it's strategic or not. But it's my city."



## Catch 22

Carter, a former aide to Sen. Richard Lugar and staffer on Dan Quayle's 2000 presidential campaign, noted that no matter how the mayor responded, there would be critics. He was described at the town halls as a dispassionate "technocrat" by pundits. When he acknowledged the fears of African-Americans and their police force, he was criticized by the South Bend Fraternal Order of Police, which said Monday, "Mayor Buttigieg's comments have already and will continue to have a detrimental effect on local law enforcement officers and law enforcement officers nationwide," adding that "his comments are driving a wedge between law enforcement and the community they took an oath to serve."

David Axelrod, a key adviser to President Obama and a friend of Buttigieg, told the New York Times, "In politics, as in life, everyone's strength is also their weakness. Pete's appeal is that he is cool, calm and thoughtful, a stark contrast to the churn of an endlessly divisive president. But the flip side is that, earnest as he is, he's not overly emotive, which didn't serve him well here."

Buttigieg told The Atlantic's Edward-Isaac Dove, "This is something that's had an impact on our campaign, on me personally, and, most importantly of all, on my community. This is a reminder that things come at you

that you can't always fully prepare for and can't anticipate. And you need to be ready for that, especially as you're competing for the toughest job in the world. It's exceptionally serious compared to most things that we've dealt with. And, of course, it is different when you have national attention." He added of his constituents: "They're basically saying, 'We have to get this right, not only for us, but because everyone's watching.'"

From a political perspective, Buttigieg was just finding traction with black voters, many leery of a gay presidential contender. He went from zero to 6% in two South Carolina polls over the past two months. But the South Bend crisis also underscores Buttigieg's Indiana vulnerability. While his book "Shortest Way Home" recounts his Hoosier upbringing and political rise to local power, he has no endorsements from South Bend, including African-Americans on the city council, or the Indiana General Assembly Black Caucus. He has no Indiana endorsements, period.

On Monday, he sent an email to his campaign supporters, saying, "It's been a week since a member of our South Bend family was shot and killed by a police officer. I've held meetings with community members, the police department, and faith leaders. And yesterday, I held a community-wide town hall to discuss race and policing in our city, to make sure all residents could be heard. It was a tough conversation. Hearts are broken. My heart is broken. It was a painful but needed conversation."

He added, "I feel overwhelmed and heartened by the number of people – supporters and critics – who have reached out and made it clear over the past week that they want to join hands and face these problems together. Safety and justice are inseparable. Making them a lived reality for all is one of the great challenges of our time. And the solutions will have to come from cities like South Bend, where people are ready to come together to struggle and repair. I'm running for president as a mayor of an American city because the toughest issues we face locally are also important national issues."

## Buttigieg contours emerge

By Wednesday, Buttigieg was in Miami preparing for Thursday's second Democratic presidential debate. It was where the mayor began outlining the contours of how his crisis would play out nationally in the context of a presidential race. Asked by MSNBC's Stephanie Ruhle if it was wise for him to be back in campaign mode, Buttigieg responded, "We have to be able to do many things at once. This is a moment my community is in anguish. We've been on the ground working with community leaders, working with community members trying to make sure the facts emerge, but also recognizing that the anguish that is happening is not only about a family who has lost a loved one, the family of Eric Logan, but also



goes to another set of issues, both locally and nationally we have been dealing with, the feeling from black Americans that they are literally being policed to death. And making sure we have a way forward on that.

"This is not just a policy question, this is a moral question," Buttigieg continued. "Everything that all of us do is in the shadow of systemic racism that has poisoned the relationship between communities of color and police departments everywhere in the country."

He added that the process would be good for police, explaining, "What I would say to them is increased accountability is good for them, at least for good police officers. Even the work by the best police officer imaginable is clouded, hampered and undermined by the shadow of racists. If we don't tackle that with greater accountability, with hearing voices from an entire part of the country ... if that fear persists, no police officer, even the ideal police officer, will be able to do their job."

When Ruhle said he seemed to lack empathy, Buttigieg responded that sometimes "you are seeing the pain in people who feel not just anger, but anger rooted in fear." He noted the difference between white and black drivers who are pulled over by police, with black drivers often fearing for their loved ones' lives. "These things

express themselves in so many ways," he said. "What I felt on the stage at that town hall it was my job to absorb all of that pain, all of that anger. I can talk about all the things we have done, but clearly we haven't done enough. I take responsibility for that because I'm in charge. Sometimes you feel such powerful emotion, the only thing you can do is try and sit still, sit tight and try to absorb it."

"I don't know if that's good politics," Buttigieg said.

Rahm Emanuel, the former Chicago mayor, White House chief of staff and congressman, famously said, "You never let a serious crisis go to waste. And what I mean by that is it's an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before."

Some have consigned Buttigieg's presidential aspirations to the historical dustbin, at least for 2020. But up to this point, Buttigieg did just about everything right in this damned if you do, damned if you don't crisis, creating an aura that he genuinely belongs on that debate stage between frontrunners Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders.

At this writing, it's impossible to tell where candidate Buttigieg might end up. He had a crisis, he dealt with it as his city and nation watched in real time. Where it leads him (and us) is to be determined. ❖



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# 3rd CD Dems holding Cornfield Conference

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — More than 80 years after Homer Capehart reenergized Hoosier Republicans who had been rendered moot by President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, Northern Indiana Democrats are gathering today for the "2019 Tri-State Cornfield Conference" at the Noble County Fairgrounds in Kendallville.

"Given the situation we're in now in the Midwest — Trump carried Indiana by a larger amount than expected along with Ohio and Michigan — now is the time for a Democratic revival on the Midwest," said Noble County Democratic Chairwoman Carmen Darland.

"This Cornfield Conference is intended to fire people up. We can't wish Donald Trump away. We're going to have to work this election. We need activists to go past voting. We need voting-plus, and that means collecting ballot petition signatures now. It is time for a revival of the Democratic Party, so that we can restore checks and balances in government at the statehouses and in Washington, D.C."

The conference comes with Indiana Democrats at a historic low ebb. The party has been shut out of the Statehouse constitutional offices, lost a U.S. Senate seat in 2018, and has super-minority status in the General Assembly. It has virtually no presence in rural Indiana, with 80% of county offices and 89% of county commissioners in GOP hands. It is struggling to field a gubernatorial challenger to Gov. Eric Holcomb.

The conference sponsored by DeKalb, Kosciusko, LaGrange and Whitley County Democrats, will feature potential Democratic gubernatorial candidates Rep. Karlee Macer of Indianapolis and Sen. Eddie Melton of Gary speaking at 6:20 p.m. Saturday. A third Democrat gubernatorial candidate, Dr. Woody Myers, is not on the bill.

Myers told HPI earlier this month he will likely declare his candidacy in early July. Elise Schrock told HPI on Thursday that Macer remains in exploratory mode. "She's still contemplating," Schrock said. "Obviously the time line

is quickening, but she has not made a decision." Melton's campaign strategist Orrin Evans told HPI on Thursday, "Sen. Melton continues to travel Indiana, listening to the comments of Hoosiers and talking about the need for education, higher teacher pay and raising the minimum wage."

Melton has made exploratory stops in Northwest Indiana and the Fort Wayne area prior to the Cornfield Conference.

The conference begins at 4 p.m. today with a seminar by Becker Digital Strategies on building digital infrastructure. It is sponsored by 3rd CD Democrats and the Greater Allen County UAW Cap Council.

There will be a five-county picnic beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday. It will feature seminars on "Climate Challenges for the Midwest" by Dr. Jim Angel of Illinois State University.

At 1 p.m., David Green of UAW Local 1112 will tell "The Story of Lordstown, Ohio." Later, Emily Weikert Bryant of Feeding Indiana's Hungry will talk about "Hunger in Rural Midwest." Julia Vaughn of Indiana Common Cause will discuss "Gerrymandering and Redistricting" and Dr. Jonathan Walker will discuss "Getting Real About Medicaid For All." Another speaker will be Peru Mayor Gabe Greer.

Curiously, Indiana Democrats don't appear to be part of the event. The state party has not publicized this weekend's lineup, it's not listed on the party's website, and there has been little press coverage beyond a story in the Kendallville News-Sun and KPC News.

Capehart revived Indiana Republicans with the original "Cornfield Conference" in 1938 at his farm in Daviess County with the help of Indiana GOP Chairman Arch Bobbitt, drawing 20,000 dispirited Republicans for a huge barbecue. Capehart oversaw the epic event and checked every detail, according to historical accounts. Dressed in "floppy canvas sun hat, white long-sleeved shirt, long checked tie, tan cotton trousers, and cigar in the corner of his

mouth," Capehart greeted everyone with a warm handshake. Two years later, Hoosier native Wendell Willkie won the Republican presidential nomination. The conference paved the way for Capehart to win a U.S. Senate seat and Ralph Gates to retake the governor's office in 1944.

## Holcomb going Hoosier

Mitch Daniels kicked off his first gubernatorial campaign at Hinkle Fieldhouse, stepping into the scene of the actual "Milan Miracle." Gov. Eric Holcomb will launch



Noble County Democrat Chair Carmen Darland is hosting the "2019 Cornfield Conference" in Kendallville today and Saturday. It's a spin off Homer Capehart's epic 1938 event in Daviess County.





his reelection bid at the iconic "Hoosier Gym" in Knightstown, which hosted scenes from the iconic movie "Hoosiers". His "big announcement" will come at 1 p.m. Saturday, July 13. "What better place to make that announcement than in the famous Hoosier Gym in Knightstown - the place where Indiana movie magic was made as the site of the home court of the Hickory Huskers in "Hoosiers"! (And, of course, Gov. Holcomb loves any chance to shoot a few baskets!)," the Holcomb Crew said in a Monday email to supporters. It comes on the 65th anniversary of Milan's 1954 state title. Holcomb often wears a "Hoosiers" Hickory HS sweater and has a goal of shooting buckets in gyms in all 92 counties. "In every corner of the state, Hoosiers know that they have a friend and ally in Gov. Eric Holcomb," said Kyle Hupfer, treasurer of the Eric Holcomb for Indiana campaign. "That's because he's focused on tackling our biggest challenges, lifting up Hoosiers' lives and delivering results. His people-first leadership has earned Indiana incredible momentum, which will be on full focus at this event. We invite all Hoosiers to come and be a part of it."



**Crouch transfers \$1 million**

Gov. Holcomb is officially a \$5 million man, thanks to his sidekick. A little more than two weeks before he launches his reelection bid in Knightstown, Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch transferred \$1 million from her account to the governor's reelection campaign. That's on top of the \$400,000 she has already moved to Holcomb over the past two years. And it underscores that the LG is a money juggernaut in her own right. No other LG has come close to the amount of money Crouch has raised. "As Indiana's lieutenant governor, I'm proud of the results Gov. Holcomb and I are delivering for Hoosiers of all walks of life," said Crouch. "I'm proud to have this historic outpouring of support from Hoosiers across the state for our efforts."

**Statewides**

**Westercamp declares for attorney general**

Embattled Attorney General Curtis Hill will have a convention opponent should he decide to seek reelection in 2020. Zionsville attorney John Westercamp today formally announced his candidacy on Thursday. He described himself as a "pro-life candidate," adding, "No life is



safe as long as any life is threatened. As attorney general, I would defend Indiana's right to protect all life."

The campaign said that Westercamp's vision for the attorney general's office is to lead the state by collaborating with state legislators and the administration to advance conservative policies and uphold the rule of law. He also vowed to address the "overwhelming robo calls," saying, "Too little has been done to address this issue." Westercamp would collaborate with telephone providers to reduce the number of robocalls.

Westercamp practices law at Bose McKinney & Evans LLP. He grew up in Greenwood and earned degrees

at Purdue University, and obtained his law degree from Indiana University in Bloomington.

Indiana Democratic Chairman John Zody said of Westercamp, "John Westercamp helped pen RFRA – a hateful policy that embarrassed our state on a global level and cost millions in lost economic opportunity. Curtis Hill's conduct as Attorney General has been disgraceful and well below the dignity of the office. Hoosier Democrats are looking forward to defeating either candidate in the fall."

Hill has not declared he will seek reelection. He has ignored calls to resign from Gov. Holcomb, Lt. Gov. Crouch, the four legislative caucus leaders and U.S. Sen. Mike Braun after four women accused him of sexual harassment at a 2017 sine die party. One of the women is State Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon. The four women filed for civil damages last week, and Hill faces a Supreme Court disciplinary hearing this fall. "I think the distractions around the attorney general's office is not good for the state of Indiana and we need new leadership," Westercamp said.

Hill has been active on the pro-life front, filing a number of actions to limit abortion. He remains popular with social conservatives, some urging him to challenge Gov. Holcomb in 2020.

Sources close to Gov. Holcomb have told HPI that he will not actively seek to defeat Hill at the convention should he choose to run. That was a lesson learned when Gov. Daniels backed Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas for attorney general in 2008, with delegates nominating Greg Zoeller instead.

Former congressman Todd Rokita is also weighing a potential run.

**Congress**

**Thornton to enter 5th CD race**

Dee Thornton, the 2018 Democratic nominee, will enter the race on July 15 at 5:30 p.m. at the Willows in Westfield. Thornton lost to out-going U.S. Rep. Susan



Brooks 56.8% to 42.3% in 2018, raising just \$170,000. "We made significant progress in 2018," Thornton said on Facebook. " We got the attention of the nation and with your help I am prepared to finish the job." She becomes to indicate clear intent to enter. Democrat Christina Hale is weighing a bid, as are up to a dozen Republicans that include State Sen. John Ruckelshaus, former senator Mike Delph, former Indianapolis mayor Greg Ballard, Fishers Deputy Mayor Leah McGrath, former legislator Steve Braun and State Sen. Victoria Spartz. Indiana Republican Chairman Kyle Hupfer has told HPI he is unlikely to run.

### Rep. Pence amends FEC report

Some campaign finance reports for U.S. Rep. Greg Pence, R-Ind., were amended after his office was questioned about expenses for lodging at hotels named for President Donald Trump (Columbus Republic). Of 22 filing entries regarding expenditures at Trump hotels in either Washington, D.C., or New York dating to November 2017, six were amended by Greg Pence's campaign — all dated Nov. 14, 2018, or later. Five originally were listed as "lodging expense" and one as a "reception expense." All six — totaling \$13,631.02 in expenditures at the Trump International Hotel in Washington — were changed to "fundraising

event costs." The items that were changed were not personal living expenses, Pence's chief of staff Kyle Robertson said. "All the expenses incurred by the campaign were fundraising event expenses," Robertson said. "There was a clarification made on one reference point to which we did not have to amend but chose to ... to reflect the true nature of the expense." Pence has told The Republic previously that he has an apartment in Washington where he stays during the week before returning to Columbus for the weekend. Robertson said it was about December when Pence secured the apartment. In all, Pence's campaign has spent \$44,990.01 at the Trump hotels through the end of March, according to filings with the Federal Election Commission.

### Sen. Young launches funding platform

Republicans launched a new cell donation platform on Monday that they hope will rival ActBlue, the Democrats' web-based fundraising behemoth (AP). Called WinRed, it's a play by the GOP to reproduce Democrats' success raising big portions of money online from grassroots supporters who in overall give correct about a bucks at a time. "WinRed is an crucial first step in leveling the taking half in field in the small-dollar donor scuttle," said

*"I have had several opportunities to use the services of Content By Carter and its founder, Cameron Carter, over the years. The fact that I have continued to use Cam and his team to help on new projects speaks more than any words of recommendation can say."*

**Greg Zoeller**

Chairman, World Trade Center Indianapolis  
and former Indiana Attorney General



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Sen. Todd Young, chairman of the occasion's Senate campaign committee. "A unified GOP fundraising platform will enable us to harness the enthusiasm for President Trump's agenda, invent a lengthy-timeframe small-dollar community and address in 2020."

## Presidential 2020

### Trump says Pence will be on ticket

President Trump made it clear that he will seek reelection in 2020 with Vice President Mike Pence on the ticket. NBC Meet The Press host Chuck Todd asked Trump if he would run with Pence. "Well, look, look - 100 percent, yes. He's been, he's been a terrific vice president. He's my friend." Todd asked Trump why he didn't commit to supporting Pence for president in 2024. "Because it was a surprise question," the president said. "I mean, you know, I'm not even thinking of it. It's so far out. I mean, It's so far out. That would be the only reason. Now what happens in 2024? I don't know that Mike is going to run. I don't know who's running or anything else."



President Trump and Vice President Pence in the Oval Office with NBC's Chuck Todd.

### Pence launches Latinos for Trump

Vice President Pence launched the "Latinos For Trump" coalition for the Trump campaign in Miami this week (CBS4 Miami). "I'm here for one reason and one reason only. Florida and our country need four more years of President Trump," Pence told the cheering crowd. "I promise you from the first day of this administration, President Trump has been fighting for the values that are really synonymous with Hispanic and Latino immigrants. Hard work, faith, family, freedom, educational choice, and the American way," he added. "Under the leadership of President Donald Trump in two and a half short years we have the lowest unemployment rate ever recorded for Hispanic Americans," he said. Pence also addressed immigration and the wall on the southern border. "We fought to support the courageous and compassionate work of the CBP (Customs & Border Protection) and after the president declared a national emergency in January of this year we've already started to build that wall on the southern border of the United States," he said to cheers.

## Mayors

### Indianapolis: Merritt unveils safety plan

Indianapolis Republican mayoral nominee Jim Merritt unveiled his public safety platform, declaring, "Indianapolis is in peril. Citizens are scared, opportunity is fading, and our streets are crumbling. It is in the face of this battle that I seek to be your mayor and fight for our city,

because we deserve better. Over the past three years, we have seen new records for murders each year." His public safety strategy, named the "SOS" plan, concentrates on three critical components: Safety, opportunity and streets. "First and foremost, in my administration, someone in addition to me will be focused on public safety every minute of the day. To address the critical need for this leadership and management, I will appoint a qualified deputy mayor who will focus exclusively on public safety," said Merritt.

"This position will have direct authority over the police and fire departments, as well as all emergency services. This position will provide strategic direction to the departments and will serve as a key focal point in my administration." Merritt addressed the staffing shortage in law enforcement due to the dramatic rise in police retirements. "Mayor Hogsett said he would increase the force by 150 officers. That simply hasn't happened. In fact, new hires have barely kept pace with retirements," Merritt said. "We must address this issue with more creative recruiting, better training and better equipment." Merritt referred to police officers driving cars that are more than 10 years old, while new patrol cars sit unused at the Regional Operations Center. According to Merritt, "this is simply unacceptable." Third, Merritt stressed the need to get back to community policing throughout Indianapolis. "Officers must have time to develop and maintain positive relationships with the citizens they serve," Merritt said. "The Deputy Mayor for Public Safety will build relationships with neighborhood organizations and leaders, connecting those people to police officers assigned to their neighborhoods."

### Indianapolis: Dems criticize Merritt

Indianapolis Democrats say State Sen. Jim Merritt helped propagate "slumlords." Citing an IndyStar story about ex-Fox and Friends host Clayton Morris and his business partner Bert Whalen, two "slumlords" who are responsible for hundreds of problem properties across Marion County, "In doing so, they identified a number of reasons why state law does not empower cities like Indianapolis to combat the scourge of bad landlords as well as the lengths that state lawmakers — including Sen. Jim Merritt — have gone to ensure the law stays that way. The Star reported: "Indiana law requires landlords to provide "habitable" homes, but does not require cities to inspect them before they are occupied. Pre-rental inspections are required in many other states and cities to ensure properties include functioning systems. But Indiana legislators took a different approach. In 2014 they greatly restricted such inspections by capping the fee cities can charge at \$5. As a result, most simply don't do it. But in Indiana, tenants must keep paying rent even if they have a hole in the roof or a broken furnace. Their only recourse is to take their landlord to court." ❖

# Indiana becoming a prohibition holdout

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — By 2020, Indiana may become the so-called “middle finger” of Midwestern marijuana prohibition. Illinois became the 11th state to legalize recreational weed on Tuesday, joining Michigan. It’s on the ballot again in Ohio this November.



More than 30 states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana in either medicinal or recreational forms. But this is Indiana, where the political class can sometimes be a decade or more behind the sentiment of voters. The October 2016 WTHR-Howey Politics Indiana Poll revealed 73% favored legalizing medicinal marijuana, including 58% of conservatives. Democrats were most likely to support with 82%, followed by independents at 77% support and Republicans with 59%. Hoosiers older than 65 had the lowest level of support but still favored legalization 57% to 41%.

While Gov. Eric Holcomb says he would need Federal Drug Administration recognition of marijuana legality before moving Indiana in that direction, his status quo to side with the prohibitionists does so on social and economic. He told the NWI Times’ Dan Carden, “I’m not convinced that legalization will lead anyone to the promised land. I’ve asked the federal government to enforce the law as it is, and I’ve let them know that we’re a law-and-order state.”

Holcomb is also unimpressed with the state incentive to tax legal marijuana sales. “We’d be happy to be a partner in that effort so that we are looking at facts, not just trying to run to some honey hole for cash,” Holcomb told the Times.

**With marijuana soon** to be legally available in Michigan, Illinois and Ohio, Hoosier cops appear to be ready for more arrests. “I have spoken to our Indiana State Police and Superintendent Doug Carter about this very issue,” Holcomb said. “He’s confident that we have the resources that we need on all of our borders.”

And Indiana is enforcing current law with apparent gusto. According to the FBI uniform crime reporting program, 8,691 Hoosiers were arrested in 2014 (7,432 for possession), 9,047 were arrested in 2015 (7,802 for possession), and 10,143 in 2016 (8,953 for possession).

So as the nation and our neighbors trend toward legalization, Indiana is stocking its crowded county jails with more potheads trending toward 100,000 such ar-

rests each decade. The state seems intent on seeing more criminal records in its population while marijuana commerce remains in the black market and off the books.

I couldn’t find how much Indiana spends to interdict, prosecute, incarcerate and enforce probation sentences on marijuana laws, but any discussion on legalization or continued enforcement should include such costs.

Nationally, the Drug Policy Alliance reports that the U.S. spends \$47 billion on drug law enforcement. In 2017, there were 1.63 million arrests, including 1.39 million for possession (85%). Of those, 659,700 were for marijuana and 599,282 were for possession in 2017. Of drug law offenses, blacks and Latinos accounted for 46.9% of arrests, though they are 31.5% of the population.

**According to Vox**, a 2010 paper from the libertarian Cato Institute found legalizing marijuana would net all levels of government \$17.4 billion annually — half of that would come from reduced spending (particularly for drug enforcement), and the rest would come from taxing marijuana like alcohol and tobacco.

Opponents of legalization fear that use by juveniles will increase, as will impaired driving. USA Today reported on research from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the Highway Loss Data Institute showing the frequency of collision claims filed to insurers were higher in four states where marijuana is legal: Colo-

## Indiana Marijuana Arrests

Indiana	2014	2015	2016
Possession	7,432	7,802	8,953
Sales	1,259	1,245	1,190
Total	8,691	9,047	10,1431

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reporting [Program](#)

rado, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

While General Assembly Democrats have been the driving force behind unsuccessful legalization bills, Republican State Rep. Jim Lucas has teamed up with veterans groups seeking medicinal marijuana. Nationally, former House Speaker John Boehner is now pushing an end to prohibition.

**WIBC’s Hammer and Nigel** spoke with Rep. Lucas about the issue Monday afternoon. “This is something that we have to be intellectually honest about, guys, and quit relying on decades of stigma, fear-mongering, and just outright lies on this issue,” Lucas told WIBC’s Hammer and Nigel. “[Legalization of marijuana] is not the magic wand for everything and yes, it can be abused. So with those ground rules established, let’s move forward and start having an adult conversation on this issue.” ❖



# State marijuana laws and federal rules

By **LINDA CHEZEM**

MARTINSVILLE – Clowns to the left of me, jokers to the right,

Ah, yes, we are here in Indiana watching as Michigan and Illinois sell their residents down the dream river of free marijuana tax money. Setting aside the discussion of



how one can use “free” to describe money derived from taxation for another time, let’s address the morality of the marijuana legalizing bill by the 11 or 12 states that have legalized marijuana as a recreational drug.

Here we go. And, please set aside for another time the discussion of how drugs may or may not be truly recreational.

A critical and basic element of the definition of a moral government is that it be honest and trustworthy in its communications to the people. You know, like tell the truth.

The simple passage of a bill garnering tax revenue from the sale of marijuana and no criminal penalties does not make marijuana “legal” in any state while the current federal government statutes and regulations remain. A governor who wants to claim a moral high road in supporting the state level legalization that pretends to legalize marijuana should also provide a truth in legislation statement.

Such a statement should say something like “Dear Resident, we want the tax money bad enough that we will pretend to make marijuana legal in this state. But, our state action does not effectively change the federal law.”

Here are some of the risks Illinois and Michigan created for their folks by pretending to “legalize” marijuana.

■ 1. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires reporting when “infants affected by substance abuse.” There are custody and visitation concerns for any pediatric marijuana exposure. Colorado cases increased significantly and at a higher rate than the rest of the United States. Almost half of the patients seen in the children’s hospital in the two years after legalization had exposures from recreational marijuana, suggesting that legalization did affect the incidence of exposures.

■ 2. Food and Nutrition Services has reaffirmed its long standing policy that a household may not utilize the SNAP medical deduction for the cost of any substance considered illegal under Federal law.

■ 3. The FDA has determined that it is not legal to sell products that contain THC or CBD as dietary supplements. It is also not legal to sell foods containing added THC or CBD in interstate commerce.

■ 4. SNAP benefits cannot be used to buy marijuana anywhere in the U.S., as the use of SNAP benefits is specifically restricted to the purchase of qualifying food products: SNAP benefits cannot be applied to the purchase of beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco, nor non-food items such as pet foods, household products and supplies, vitamins, and medicines.

■ 5. The United States Department of Transportation’s Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation – 49 CFR Part 40, at 40.151(e) – does not authorize “medical marijuana” under a state law to be a valid medical explanation for a transportation employee’s positive drug test result.

■ 6. The United States government employees, regardless of the state of residence are advised: “That legislative changes by some states and the District of Columbia do not alter Federal law, existing suitability criteria, or Executive Branch policies regarding marijuana. An individual’s disregard of Federal law pertaining to marijuana remains adjudicatively relevant to suitability determinations and relevant for disciplinary actions.”

■ 7. Employers who have federal funding, grants or contracts, are required to certify that they maintain a drug-free workplace. Michigan has ruled that claimants for unemployment benefits will be disqualified from receiving unemployment benefits if the claimants: (1) positive drug test for marijuana was caused by the ingestion of marijuana at the workplace; (2) discharge is based on the fact that the claimant was under the influence of marijuana at the workplace; or (3) inability to demonstrate that he or she is a qualifying patient who has been issued and possesses a registry identification card under the [Michigan Medical Marijuana Act](#).

■ 8. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued this memo, “Use of Marijuana in Multifamily Properties,” on the use of medical marijuana in HUD senior housing and other multifamily communities. The policy specifies that HUD owners must deny admission to any applicant (or member of the household) that is illegally using a controlled substance, including marijuana. In addition, owners must develop policies which “allow the termination of tenancy of any household with a member who is illegally using marijuana or whose use interferes with the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.”

Further, owners may not establish lease provisions or policies that affirmatively permit occupancy by any member of the household who uses marijuana. Yet, The HUD notice clarifies that while the use of marijuana is illegal under federal law, HUD multifamily owner/operators have discretion on developing policies and procedures when not to evict a resident for marijuana use under certain [usually medical] conditions.

If you think the state marijuana laws are simple, [check out the Michigan statutes](#). ❖

**Chezem is a former Indiana appellate judge and practices law in Martinsville.**

# The danger of mounting debt

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – A few months ago, the federal debt we have accumulated over the past decades crossed the \$22 trillion mark. That’s a record. And it’s surely not going to be the last.



According to Congressional Budget Office estimates, annual federal deficits over the next decade — the deficit is the annual figure for how much more Congress and the president opt to spend than the government takes in as revenue — are expected to average \$1.2 trillion. Overall, the debt held by the public amounts to about 78% of our gross domestic product.

That’s double what it was before the 2008 recession, and the CBO estimates that without significant changes, it’ll rise to

118% over the next 20 years, higher even than right after World War II.

Does this matter? Back when I was in Congress, I came away confused practically every time I listened to an economist offer an opinion. Some thought it mattered immensely. Others, not at all.

**Indeed, I remember** when the prospect of running a deficit of a few billion dollars caused fiscal experts to say we were facing fiscal catastrophe. They turned out to be wrong. The system has been able to carry heavier debt than we once thought. The problem is, all we know is that we’re okay so far; we have no idea when we suddenly won’t be.

Here’s a useful way to look at it. Interest on the debt is expected to hit \$390 billion this year. We’re paying more in interest on the debt than we spend on our children, and we’re headed toward doing the same with defense. I doubt that fits the priorities of most Americans. And I don’t think it’s sustainable indefinitely. It may even be dangerous.

At a certain level, carrying such huge debt — and spending so much each year to pay off the interest — makes it harder for the government to respond to future challenges and raises the risk of an economic crisis with no gas in the tank left to accelerate out of it.

**It may crowd out** both public and private investment, because there’s less money for the government to invest in human capital or infrastructure, and private capital flows into government bonds

rather than other avenues that might stoke economic growth. Or investors may decide that the U.S. government isn’t creditworthy after all, and either push up interest rates or find a different currency to back, forcing the dollar’s value to plummet.

The bottom line is that ultimately government spending has to be paid for. Deficits don’t replace that need, they merely defer it.

**The problem is that** attacking yearly deficits is politically very difficult. They have to be addressed on both the spending and the revenue side — that is, with both spending cuts and tax increases — but there’s not much appetite in Washington for either. Even though politicians know full well that it’s not a question of whether we need to raise taxes or cut spending, just of when.

In the end, I believe strongly that the first rule for any policymaker ought to be: Do no harm. This requires a shift in our thinking about spending policies; if something is really important to do, it’s worth paying for and not pushing the cost into the future and on to the backs of our children. If no one’s willing to do what it takes to pay for it, maybe it’s not as high a priority as its backers think.


Similarly, we need to get real about taxes. It’s hugely seductive to politicians to believe that tax cuts pay for themselves by boosting economic activity and hence tax revenues. There’s no evidence that this is how things work in the real world, however. Instead, deficits just keep increasing.

**So do we need to panic?** No. But we must not take the view that the question is irrelevant. Far better to begin now to address the problem gradually than to be forced into sudden and drastic measures by a crisis we all knew was coming, but didn’t have the will to forestall. ❖

**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.**

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# The absurd notion of forgiving college debt

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

MUNCIE — Every presidential campaign contains a share of pandering drivel. One idea that currently fits that bill is the idea of cancelling the roughly \$1.6 trillion of outstanding college debt. I will explain why this is a bad



idea, and outline some of the real problems underlying college costs. However, I must begin by noting that this is a ridiculously absurd and frankly immoral notion. In a marginally better world, its proponents would be laughed out of public life. Alas, this horrendously bad piece of public policy is at least moderately good politics. That is where I must begin.

Student loan debt comprises only 2.2% of all private debt in the United States. This is still a large number, some \$1.6 trillion. Families who earn \$100,000 or more owe more than one-third of all this debt. This fact alone frames both the absurdity and immorality of the issue. I am sure kids do not like to hear this, but every American college student is firmly in the global 1%, at least in terms of consumption.

Moreover, a college degree confers an average of more than a million-dollar-lifetime wage premium to its recipient. As an individual financial investment, there is nothing even remotely as good as a college degree. People with college debt are almost exclusively rich or well on their way towards being rich.

It is easy to find an anecdote of an unemployed and heavily indebted graduate with a master's degree in puppetry. Poor judgment among college-aged students is neither a novelty, nor is it cause for a massive transfer of wealth from poor to relatively affluent citizens. In any other context, this proposal would be viewed as an immorally regressive tax, which it is. But, affluent college students vote, so burdening someone else's children with their college loans is good politics, as surely as it is offensively immoral public policy.

**The discussion about** cancelling student debt is also unproductive in that it masks some of the real problems that surround education policy in the United States. There are three big ones worth covering.

The first is that too few young people go to college. This is especially true for students from poorer households who go to college at a much lower rate than equally talented kids from richer families. Poor kids are unlikely to benefit from the forgiveness of college debts. To expand college access, we need to make it less expen-

sive up front, which requires more public investment at the front end of the college experience.

The second problem is that most of the increase in college costs is not tuition, but fees, room and board. Competition for a smaller number of students has left colleges and universities scrambling to provide luxurious amenities. Some readers might be surprised to learn that both Purdue and IU have dorms with granite countertops, and sushi is available at most of Indiana's state university dining facilities.

**The simple fact is that** most student loans subsidize lifestyle, not learning. Without subsidized loans, college dorms and dining facilities would be a lot more austere, which just might increase time to graduation.

Third, most of the tuition increases at American universities are due to decreased state spending on universities. In inflation-adjusted dollars, Indiana spends less on higher education now than in 2010. This has helped reduce the share of Hoosier kids heading to college, which will punish our economy for decades to come.

Lower state spending also incentivizes universities to change their admissions focus away from in-state students to out-of-state students. Indiana schools are especially good at this. In the decade ending in 2016, some 73% of Indiana's college students were in-state. This dropped by five full percentage points in a decade. By 2030, less than two thirds of all college students in Indiana will be Hoosier kids. Today, for every 100 students Indiana sends to out-of-state schools, we import 260 students. This is the result of deliberate disinvestment in education.

**Finally, it is worth noting** there is plenty wrong with higher education. Faithful readers will recall I condemned tenure while an untenured professor.

Eliminating college debt will not fix any of the problems of higher education; it will enrich those least in need of public support. In fact, it is a ludicrously bad idea that should embarrass anyone who once thought it a good idea. That we are even talking about it is a deep condemnation of the current slate of candidates for the presidency.

In a world full of tangible challenges, the last thing we need is a presidential election between pandering demagogues, and an electorate that absorbs their nonsense. ❖

**Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University.**



# Census and metro data comparisons

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS — The 2020 Census is coming! Yes, that's going to be more fun than the 2020 elections. We'll learn something from the decennial Census. Dyspepsia is all we can expect from the quadrennial elections.

The Census will give us a better understanding of our communities compared with others in the nation.



Nonetheless, we are not suffering from a lack of data. Unfortunately, too few Hoosiers know what is to be known about our communities.

For example, the nation has 383 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). Indiana has eight of those metros entirely within our borders. In addition, we can count Evansville as a ninth, although it does have a Kentucky county included. Furthermore, Indiana has four counties in the Chicago MSA, three in the Cincinnati MSA, and five in Louisville's MSA.

How do we compare with metro areas in other places? Consider population. In 2017, only the Indianapolis MSA (I am leaving off the names of other places in the MSA titles) was in the 100 most populous metro areas, ranking 34th. With just more than two million persons, Indy squeezed in between Cleveland (OH) and San Jose (CA).

**Indy's population was far** smaller than the Chicago area (9.5 million), not far behind Cincinnati (2.2 million) and ahead of Louisville (1.3 million).

But what the residents of the Indy metro area

probably don't know is the total population of the central and surrounding counties grew by more than 134,000 between 2010 and 2017. This was a figure greater than any other MSA containing an Indiana county. Even the giant Chicago region failed to match this volume of growth.

Which is more important, the volume of growth or the rate of growth? When your two kids move back in with you and your spouse/partner/ significant other, the volume is small, just the two of them, but that's a 100% increase. It's no problem if you have the infrastructure (bathrooms) to accommodate them. Otherwise, you have a new example of congestion.

**The Lafayette MSA** had the second highest amount of growth (18,100), the state's highest percent change in population (9.1%) and was among the 100 fastest growing MSAs in the nation.

Nationwide, 87 (23%) of the 383 metro areas had lower populations in 2017 than in 2010. Traditionally, these would have been "declining" or "disintegrating" places. But in today's environment, growth is not necessarily seen as a "blessing." The mantra, "If you're not growing, you're dying," is heard less frequently than in decades past.

Four Indiana MSAs lost population between 2010 and 2017. The decline was less than 2% in Michigan City-LaPorte, Muncie, and Terre Haute. The loss of 444 persons in Kokomo hardly registered, a decline of merely 0.5%. No doubt some challengers for mayor in those places will see catastrophe; the incumbents will pledge to stop the bleeding of "our youthful treasure."

I'd wait for the 2020 Census results before attending the civic funeral. ❖

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**Liz Mair, Politico Magazine:** The guy who comes out of these two nights — and it is a guy — with the most gut-level appeal, both for Democrats and I suspect a lot of independents and Republicans tuning in too, is Pete Buttigieg. He's likable, clearly very smart, has a vision, can articulate it, and a lot of people from all different philosophical backgrounds will appreciate that he's a veteran. It's a very positive distinguisher in this field. That said, I think Joe Biden did what he needed to do in this round. Yes, he could have handled the attack by Kamala Harris better, but I suspect he knows that voters aren't where progressive Twitter is and didn't want to look like he was punching a girl in order to address a challenge that might not even truly exist. His constant references to positive aspects of his record that showed real leadership, how he led on so much during the Obama-Biden administration especially, and his simple invocation of President Obama will, I think, prove very effective. Plus, he is just hard not to like on some level. Who comes out of this round a loser? Bernie Sanders, big time. It's clear at this point that if you want what he is selling, policy-wise, you can get it from Elizabeth Warren without the befuddled, yelling, USSR-honeymooning act. If you like the policy and the yelling, Bill de Blasio is also an alternative. Kirsten Gillibrand also performed badly on Thursday. The constant interruptions, the scripted, pandery and badly delivered answers, and the retuned, politically charged 1990s Spice Girls "girl power" theme really don't say "commander in chief." And it's not a gender thing, as Harris proved by standing right next to Gillibrand and looking about 30 times as tough, effective, principled and capable, live on camera. ❖



bers — and Buttigieg impressed more than O'Rourke did on Wednesday (more on the former Texas Senate candidate below). However, it felt like the action in this debate was elsewhere, and his already very long odds of winning meaningful black support have not been helped by a recent officer-involved shooting in South Bend that he tried to show contrition for during the debate. For all of Buttigieg's progress, he either needs to attract many more liberals to his side (and he may be blocked in doing so by Warren and Sanders) or many more black voters (where he is blocked by Biden and probably Harris and Booker, among others). So we're struggling to find a path for him even as he ranks among the better-polling candidates. ❖

**Byron York, Washington Examiner:** On the second night of the Democratic presidential debate in Miami, NBC moderators asked candidates whether they would support decriminalizing the act of illegally crossing the border into the United States — that is, reducing the seriousness and consequences of illegal entry to the level of a parking ticket. "Raise your hand if you think it should be a civil offense, rather than a crime, to cross the border without documentation," said NBC's José Díaz-Balart. All 10 candidates raised their hands in approval. That moment was perhaps the Democratic Party's most significant step yet toward embracing a policy of open borders. ❖

**William Galston, Wall Street Journal:** Today's political landscape presents an incongruous scene: Despite a strong economy — usually a good predictor of presidential popularity — President Trump's approval rating remains stuck in the low to mid-40s. Many conservatives blame the media, which seems improbable because the state of the country is a matter that most people can and do judge for themselves, at least as it concerns themselves and their families and local communities. Progressives claim that the economy is actually not doing as well as the standard indicators suggest, but even if true this is beside the point. The majority of Americans think it's pretty strong and give the president high marks for his handling of this issue. Some pollsters speculate that as the axis of American politics has shifted away from economics toward cultural issues, the impact of the economy on presidential approval has weakened. If so, political scientists will have to retool their models. But it's much too soon to tell whether this represents a permanent change. I have a simpler hypothesis: Because Mr. Trump is such an unusual president, his personal conduct and character are having a much greater influence on the public's judgment of him than has been the case for any other president in my lifetime, and perhaps ever. Consider the findings of a Monmouth University poll released June 20. When asked whether his unconventionality is good or bad for the country, only 27% say good versus 47% bad. ❖

**Chris Cillizza, CNN:** If you knew nothing about Buttigieg going into Thursday night, you would have assumed from his performance that a.) he was a senator or a governor who had been at this for a long time and b.) a co-frontrunner with Harris in the race. That person would be stunned to learn that Buttigieg is currently the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and running at the back of the lead pack. He was serious, smart, thoughtful and probing. His outspokenness on why Democrats need not cede religion to Republicans was powerful. His answer on the officer-involved shooting in his hometown was clearly well rehearsed, yes, but it was about as good an answer as he could give on such a difficult issue. Buttigieg has lots and lots of natural political ability — and it shone through on Thursday night. ❖

**Larry Sabato and Kyle Kondik, Sabato's Crystal Ball:** Mayor Pete displayed many of the attributes — such as introspection and intellect — that won him attention and praise over the past several months and allowed him to surpass many Democratic pols with better resumes. He is often compared to Beto O'Rourke — his rise probably came at some expense to O'Rourke's num-

## Trump jokes with Putin on meddling

OSAKA, Japan — President Trump called on Russian President Vladimir Putin to stay out of the 2020 presidential election, but the tone of his comment Friday was open to interpretation (Wall Street Journal). "Don't meddle in the election, president," Mr. Trump said with a bit of a smile as he sat next to Mr. Putin. "Don't meddle in the election." The meeting between the two took place in Osaka, Japan, where leaders gathered for the Group of 20 summit of leading world economies. Messrs. Trump and Putin had just given brief opening remarks when Mr. Trump was asked by a reporter if he would raise the election issue. "Yes, of course I will," Mr. Trump replied. He then pointed a finger while Mr. Putin chuckled, and the room filled with crosstalk from reporters and camera shutter sounds. "It's a great honor to be with President Putin," Mr. Trump said, calling their relationship "very, very good."



## SCOTUS rules vs. Census question

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Thursday put on hold the Trump administration's plan to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census form sent to every household, saying it had provided a "contrived" reason for wanting the information (Washington Post). Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. wrote the splintered opinion. In a section agreed with by the court's liberals, he said the Commerce Department must provide a clearer explanation. Agencies must offer "genuine justifications for important decisions, reasons that can be scrutinized by courts and the interested public," Roberts wrote. "Accepting contrived reasons would defeat the purpose of the enterprise. If judicial review is to be more than an empty

ritual, it must demand something better than the explanation offered for the action taken in this case." Roberts said a district judge was right to send the issue back to the Commerce Department for a better explanation.

## SCOTUS passes on gerrymandering

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court's conservatives decided Thursday that federal courts do not have a role to play in deciding whether partisan gerrymandering goes too far, giving a dominant political party in a state leeway to draw electoral maps that preserve or even expand its power (Washington Post). The 5-to-4 decision was written by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and joined by the court's other conservatives. "We conclude that partisan gerrymandering claims present political questions beyond the reach of the federal courts," Roberts wrote. "Federal judges have no license to reallocate political power between the two major political parties, with no plausible grant of authority in the Constitution, and no legal standards to limit and direct their decisions." The action puts a stop to recent decisions by federal courts across the country that have found extreme partisan gerrymandering went so far as to violate the constitutional rights of voters.

## House passes border funding

WASHINGTON — The House passed a \$4.6 billion bill funding humanitarian aid for migrants at the southern border, approving the Senate version of the legislation over the objections of nearly 100 Democrats and sending it to President Trump for his signature (Wall Street Journal). House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had earlier pledged to make changes to the Senate package before allowing it on the House floor for a vote, including tightening restrictions on how the administration could use the funds. But

she abandoned those plans Thursday amid pressure from moderates to pass the Senate version and a deadline to approve the funding ahead of the July 4 break.

## Brown County SP reopens

NASHVILLE, Ind. — Water service has been restored at southern Indiana's popular Brown County State Park and its overnight facilities are reopening 10 days after heavy rainfall spoiled its drinking water source. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources said Thursday that the park's water production has returned to normal and the water has passed safety tests.

## Bray names Senate fiscal analyst

INDIANAPOLIS — Senate President Pro Tem Rodric Bray (R-Martinsville) today announced that Krista Rivera has been named Senior Fiscal Analyst for the Senate Majority Caucus. Rivera currently serves as the Assistant Director of State Relations and Policy Analysis for Indiana University. "I am excited to welcome Krista Rivera back to the Senate as our Senior Fiscal Analyst," Bray said. "Krista is an extremely bright and talented woman who has worked for and with our caucus for a number of years. I have no doubt her talents will make her a strong addition to our team."

## Sunday talk lineup

WASHINGTON — CBS "Face The Nation": Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). Panel: Shannon Pettypiece, Ramesh Ponnuru, Antjuan Seawright and Edward Wong. ABC "This Week": Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.). Panel: Chris Christie, Donna Brazile, Yvette Simpson and Rich Lowry. "Fox News Sunday": Panel: Jason Chaffetz, Donna Edwards, Gillian Turner and Juan Williams. Power player of the week: Wilton Gregory, the archbishop of Washington. CNN "State Of The Union": Panel: Jess McIntosh, David Urban, Bakari Sellers.