THE HOWEY POLITICAL REPORT

The Weekly Briefing On Indiana Politics

The Howey Political Report is published 40 times a year by NewsLink, Inc. Founded in 1994, The Howey Political Report is an independent, non-partisan newsletter analyzing the political process in Indiana. It neither endorses candidates nor advocates positions of public policy.

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Subscription information: $250 annually for 40 editions via fax or first class mail. Call 317-926-1433.

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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"He was the only one of everybody on this planet that could have done it...."

- Sen. Larry Borst, to reporters, on Gov. Frank O'Bannon driving through the five-bill package f r sports arenas and w rker's comp.

A memorable week in Hoosier history

Gov. O'Bannon, Mayor Goldsmith come through

INDIANAPOLIS - Hoosier historirans may look back on May 27, 1997, as a decisive day in the state's history. If you include that entire final week, that short flicker of time will continually be recalled in countless future stories.

May 27 was the day the Indiana General Assembly reconvened in special session. It was a day that might even have drawn the awe of the late-Bill Schreiber. The great Democratic strategist would have seen Gov. Frank O'Bannon and Mayor Stephen Goldsmith (see the HPR Interview, pages 4-5 and 8) working in tandem for deals that could keep the Indiana Pacers and the Indianapolis Colts from moving elsewhere.

There was Colts owner Jim Irsay's full-page ad in the *Indianapolis Star/News* that day that teemed with promising talk about work-ing out a deal. Irsay gave his word he was not bargaining with other NFL city wannabees.

The remarkable week brought about a raise by 18 percent in a huge Democratic gamble over worker's compensation benefits. Senate President Pro Tem Robert Garton broke for the deal, leaving an Sen. Joseph Harrison to complain about this manufacturing state's still bottom of the barrel ranking in help for injured workers.

That next Saturday, the NCAA announced that it is settling in the White River State Park just off Downtown Indianapolis.

A few days later, Lilly Endowment broke the news that it is pitching in $30 million for RCA Dome/Convention Center improvements vital to keeping the Colts here.

What's it all mean?

Most critically, Indiana's stature in the eyes of the nation and its people not only dodged a potentially huge hit, but actually grew. From a psychological standpoint as we head into the next century, Indiana stands poised as a thriving manfacturing center with better protected workers and maintaining itself as a sports center.

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TICKER TAPE

PLAY OF THE WEEK: Gov. Frank O'Bannon and Mayor Stephen Goldsmith for putting aside their differences and putting the heat on the legislature to get the five-bill arena/comp bill passed. It was an audacious, commanding move by O'Bannon when the legislative process deteriorated. But it might not have happened had Mayor Goldsmith not joined the full-court press. It was one of the most compelling political dramas HPR has ever seen and one that Statehouse junkies will be talking about for years.

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U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer and three colleagues introduced the Agriculture Transportation Relief Act. Buyer describes it as

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Burton staffer suggests that national security breech may be uncovered by House Oversight

WASHINGTON - Twenty-seven U.S. House Oversight Committee staffers are currently pouring over 300,000 White House documents and planning to depose 100 people.

What will this committee chaired by U.S. Rep. Dan Burton find? "I think there was a distinct possibility that national security may have been compromised," said John Williams, press spokesman for the Indiana congressman. "There are real questions right now about whether national security favors were sold for campaign contributions."

For a White House with controversies such as Paula Jones and Whitewater swirling around, perhaps the most sensational and damaging problem for President Clinton could come in the John Huang/Charlie Trie political fund-raising efforts and the parade of contributors who were entertained and slept at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Burton has hinted in past interviews that national security may have been compromised.

Williams said the final White House documents will be turned over by June 13, with the exception of "privileged" documents that will be released on a weekly basis thereafter.

Among the documents uncovered thus far by Oversight staffers are Huang's resume, Trie's Little Rock, Ark., Chinese restaurant menu and a White House beer blast invitation to Congressional staffers.

Meanwhile, Burton appears to have traded places with Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson, who is currently embroiled in a dispute with Democratic Sen. John Glenn over Senate committee activities. In the past two months, Burton critics have pointed at Thompson's committee as more prudent in its approach to the campaign fund-raising scandal.

Roll Call suggested in its May 26 edition that "the pressure is getting to ... Burton." As Roll Call reported, "After the House failed to pass a motion to adjourn at around 7:30 p.m. Thursday, a frustrated Burton stormed off the floor and into the Speaker's lobby, threw his hands up in the air, and declared, 'We're never going to get out of here. We're going to die in this place.'"

Roll Call noted that the House finally adjourned at 12:07 p.m. Friday.

Price enters Senate race; Hasler out in 8th CD

HORSE RACE

TRENDLINE: Two 1998 races that we thought a month ago would have been decisively defined - the Democratic 8th CD race and the Republican U.S. Senate - now stand muddled. State Rep. Brian Hasler withdrew from the 8th CD race, and Hamilton County attorney John R. Price jumped into the Senate race.

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■ **1998 Republican Senate:** Price faces huge odds in getting competitive in the Senate derby. His biggest claim to fame was taking on WFBQ's Bob & Tom Show over what he called indecent broadcasting content. Price promises that his formal announcement "will be a high-tech, precedent-setting event which will be made available to all Hoosiers."

Washington political analyst Stuart Rothenberg is calling Indianapolis attorney Peter Rusthoven the front-runner. If it becomes a Rusthoven-Price race, Horse Race would have to agree. In fact, Price's entry into the race would be good for Rusthoven because it would keep Indiana's lackadaisical news media engaged in the race through the primary and probably wouldn't put much of a damper on his PAC money.

Still in the wings is Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke, who has spent time in Washington and is still contemplating a run. But that more time passes, the harder that will get. Allen County GOP Chairman Steve Shine is frosty toward a Helmke run. Rusthoven is pulling out key 4th CD endorsements, including Helmke Republican nemesises Rep. Bob Alderman and Sen. David Long, as well as 1996 LG nominee George Witwer.

A three-way race would make things more complicated for the Rusthoven game plan. In fact, Price's presence could give Helmke an opening to get competitive, if he can raise money. As stated before, Horse Race would love to see a poll. But IU's Brian Vargus is not so inclined.

8th CD Democrats: Hasler's withdrawal was both a surprise and a jolt. The southwestern wing of the party had coalesced around him. Labor was gearing up to pour in resources. U.S. Rep. John Hostettler still seems vulnerable with a 3,500 vote win in 1996. But Hasler insisted he likes his work in the Indiana General Assembly.

More troubling for Democrats is that the scandal storm clouds gathering around the Clinton White House are sending a foreboding signal that '98 might not be the best year to run, particularly in Indiana.

If not Hasler, then who?

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee sought out State Rep. Dave Crooks, a native of Sullivan County, a former resident of Lawrence County (where he owns a radio station) and a current resident of Davies County. That's the middle section of the district where Hostettler has done well and the DCCC believed that Crooks could cut into Republican margins there.

But Crooks will not run. He told HPR, "It's too much to be putting on my wife and children at this time. Legislature has been enough stress on my family at this point. But I won't rule out a future bid."

Another name is freshman State Rep. Russ Stilwell, who could garner big labor support, has grown children and comes from the Democratic stronghold of Warrick County. But he was trying to talk Crooks into running.

The most likely nominee will be Jonathon Weinzapfel, who ran the close race in 1996. And Weinzapfel will have plenty of time to decide whether to make the second plunge.

TICKER TAPE

a major legislative initiative. The issue arose in 1996 when the U.S. Department of Transportation proposed a rule that would supersede each and every state exemption granted to the agriculture industry of transporting farm products. Indiana has granted exemptions to retailers and farmers for transporting crops.

U.S. Sen. Dan Coats is sponsoring legislation that would prompt television networks and stations to rate programs for profanity.

Former Gov. Otis "Doc" Bowen had a cancerous kidney removed. He was released from the hospital on June 5.

U.S. Rep. Mark Souder has joined U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar in an effort to expand estate tax exemptions for farmers and small businesses. "It's time we declared 'No taxation without respiration,'" Souder declared. "The death tax is often the last straw for Americans trying to maintain a family farm or other small business."

Rep. Souder has urged President Clinton to reconsider Massachusetts Gov. William Weld as his choice for ambassador to Mexico. Both Souder and Weld are Republicans. "Given Mexico's difficulty in controlling narcotics traffick-

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Gov. O'Bannon states everybody wins as events come together in May

HPR INTERVIEW

" As soon as it happened, I told my staff who was in here with me at the time, 'You know, Paul's going to have to walk.' He had to take his caucus out because that was a real stunner...."

- Gov. O'Bannon

INDIANAPOLIS - It was an incredible ending to the 110th session of the Indiana General Assembly. And, as Gov. Frank O'Bannon explained to HPR in his office, the ultimate compromise on the arenas, inheritance taxes and worker's comp all came about by accident.

HPR: When we look back on the end of May 1997, it will be viewed as one of the most decisive periods in modern Indiana government history. How did the five-bill package come about?

O'Bannon: It all started probably on April 28 when Democrats finally put a budget together that the conferees had worked on. Watching it go into that final night on April 29 when it was a good budget and in good shape, it got hung up 50/50 in the House.

HPR: And your reaction was?

O'Bannon: My reaction at that time was surprise. I thought we had put together a good deal in almost all respects, and then to find out that politics was really put over the people because it was so much anger at that time. They didn't know if they came here to cut taxes or came here to cut spending, or they came here and were ignored or they came here to set the Democrats up so they could beat them in '98, which the Democrats had done two years before. It becomes more of a game - I'm getting you on the vote so I can get you on the election next year. Some of the people who voted against the budget on the Republican side were threatened with primary opposition; politically breaking their legs.

HPR: Did you get angry?

O'Bannon: I think I was angry after that happened. It took awhile to sort out the personalities as to why that happened. Then the next step I took was to veto the Marion County legislation. It had nothing to do with Mayor Goldsmith at all. In fact, I called him and told him I was doing it, but that I would fight for it because it was good for Marion County if I could get a budget.

HPR: What was the reaction to that in the GOP caucus.

O'Bannon: Most people agreed that until we got a budget, all other things were secondary. There wasn't much objection. I was looking at the people involved, people who had certain interests in the budget, and to see how I could bring that together. I waited for the legislative leaders to come together for an agreement. That was not happening at all. I set June 2 so they would have at least 30 days. After seeing that and talking with the leaders, my experience as a legislator and knowing when people will and won't talk, I decided to call them back to get them together so they could at least start negotiating so we could get a budget passed. Worker's comp and the inheritance tax were discussed a lot and we were asked, could they be added to the budget, along with the Pacer bill and the convention center would be a part of it too . At the time I talked to Paul Mannweiler at 5:30 that evening the budget did pass, I had told him I had been informed by House Democrats that worker's comp and the inheritance tax was off the table. I had told all the people interested, 'Don't put them on the budget.' I told Paul that. So then they went through the process and then the Democrats came up with the amendments after the budget passed. Listening in this room, we were very surprised by that. Bob Kovatch was up there and couldn't get a copy of any amendment.

HPR: Kovatch didn't know?

O'Bannon: (Chuckling) That's right. And you know Robert, he's going to find out what's going on. As soon as it happened, I told my staff who was in here with me at the time, "You know, Paul's going to have to walk." He had to take his caucus out because that was a real stunner. From that point forward, there was no speaking among leadership. No one would initiate it. They didn't trust the other one. That's when I decided I'll bring 'em back and say, "Here's a package." I decided what the package was on Race Day, that Sunday.

HPR: So, unbeknown to you, House Democrats basically came up with the counterweight to the arena bills?

O'Bannon: That's right. I had the whole focus on the budget. We got the budget. They

had been talking about worke'rs comp and the inheritance tax. But they just weren't going to pass the Senate. We just knew that wouldn't happen. It surprised me they brought it up later that evening. That caused so much anger and mistrust.

HPR: I thought calling them into session without a deal was a big gambit. Did you see it that way going in?

O'Bannon: What it was like was when I held the machine open for two days when there was only two weeks to go before we shut down government in 1993. The reason you do it is you've got to shock the people back into negotiating; shock the people into getting the work done. They had stopped talking and it looked like they were going to stall the thing out and shut down the government.

HPR: People didn't expect that out of you, up until this point.

O'Bannon: Well, you know my style of leadership and my legislative experience is to know the people and know the policies involved and to try to put those together to make some sense. Then as I worked at it over the weekend, I decided what the five bills would be and they were the Pacers bill, innkeepers bill, worker's comp bill and inheritance tax bill and unemployment insurance bill. It gave a $50 million break to businesses. I added that to the package in case they wanted to throw something off.

HPR: I'm utterly intrigued by how you and Mayor Goldsmith worked the ol' fullcourt press. How did that come about, particularly after his PEP Boys salvo he fired at you?

O'Bannon: My relationship with him has always been businesslike. I haven't felt any animosity. It didn't influence me that he had been my opponent in the election. You get past that very quickly and need to, or you can't govern. Even the veto of the innkeepers tax was not aimed at the mayor or Larry Borst and I called them.

HPR: What kind of dialogue did the two of you have going into May 27? Did you get on the phone and say, "We're gonna need help."

O'Bannon: That's right. I said we're going to need help to suspend the rules from the House Republicans who had voted in a bloc for political purposes and I was certainly going to need that help. He also talked to me and said as governor, I would need to move these bills and he would help in any way he could with Marion County legislators. There's an animosity outside of Marion County that Indianapolis gets too many things.

HPR: Did Goldsmith indicate that this would be a tough nut to crack?

O'Bannon: (laughs) That's right. I didn't know what his relationship was through the political process with his legislators, or with other legislators around the state. But he pledged to move forward and help as much as he could. He spent time being visible. And I can't give enough credit to Joe Loftus, who used to work with Goldsmith, and Pat Kiely, who knew all the issues. I also typed up a statement on my computer at home to give to each legislator coming back, so I set up the bills, set up the process and then I decided, something has got to hold this together. That's when I said they all had to go or none of them would, or I would veto. The glue that held everything together was the publicly announced plan, the promise I made about the trust factor.

HPR: Did you and the mayor get together and coordinate strategy?

O'Bannon: No. It wasn't that. It was just a concern for the bills and I had said we need to have as many people talking to legislators as we can. When it finally got out, everything was in pretty good shape except worker's comp. I set my levels as best I could and tried to get support and then the pressure came, really, from the business sector, with Mayor Goldsmith talking with the Republican Senate and Joe Harrison in particular, and the IMA and the Chamber to support this. The mayor was working on it; John Mutz was working on it; Randall Tobias was working on it. They worked to say that a 9-percent increase in premiums on worker's compensation, but they would still be paying 9 percent less they were three years ago and that had to be a fair deal. That finally carried the day with strong leadership from Bob Garton in the last three or four hours.

HPR: What prompted you to go before the House Republican caucus? And what was the reaction? I've got to hear about this!

O'Bannon: It was a great experience. The night before I typed a note and printed it out at the house to each of the caucus leaders suggest-

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TICKER TAPE

ing across its borders, we strongly believe that sending an ambassador who apparently disgrees with the United States government on this important issue and endorses the use of an illegal drug ... undermines American efforts."

Gov. Frank O'Bannon had kind words for his top sidekick, Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan, for his working during the legislative special session. "He was a big part in moving this all along that last day," O'Bannon said in his Thursday HPR Interview. "He played a big part. I told him, 'Either this will work and it will be good for Indiana or it will fail and we'll have several more days to look at the special session. We did what we thought was right."

Hoosier labor leaders gathered in O'Bannon's office on Thursday to watch him sign the worker's compensation law. O'Bannon told the story of Dan Cicatko of Huntington who, with two arm prostheses, came to lobby the legislature and asked to see the governor last winter. "I came to see Gov. O'Bannon and ask him how I was to pay for them," he said of his worn out prostheses that cost thousands of dollars. "He said he had no answer. A couple of months later, he got back to me with an answer." The worker's comp bill guaran-

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tees lifetime replacements for prostheses.

Chuck Deppart of the Indiana AFL-CIO tells HPR he and other labor leaders pressed House Democrats for the worker's comp bill."We were coming out of this session with nothing," Deppart said."We were losing our momentum from the building trades rally of 1995."He and labor leaders such as Ben Ramsey, Cordelia Lewis, Jerry Payne and Bill Livvix were on hand for the bill signing and gave O'Bannon an emotional applause afterward.

Jim McKinney of the Shelbyville News notes that U.S. Rep. David McIntosh's upcoming jobs fair is the first "any political writer in the district can recall to be organized and hosted by a congressman." It will take place at the National Guard Armory in Muncie on July 14. As McKinney wrote, "The district is unusual in that the northern end - Muncie, Portland, New Castle specifically - is losing jobs but the southern end - Shelbyville, Greensburg and Columbus - has an abundance of jobs and needs workers. Mike Dellinger of the Shelby County Chamber of Commerce said his organization will set up at the Muncie fair in an effort to attact workers."It shows that

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COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Brian Howey, *HPR* - When the dust settled, O'Bannon got an 18 percent worker's compensation increase spread over three years as well as hiking one-time awards for permanent injury, and an increase in the maximum weekly unemployment insurance benefits from $217 to $252. Both these issues will play well with traditional Democratic constituencies, many who felt they were abandoned or had to "carry the water" for the cautious Gov. Evan Bayh during the previous eight years. Republicans got an elimination of the state inheritance tax on estates valued at less than $100,000 passed along to family members, as well as help for the Pacers and Colts. Most significantly, O'Bannon has built the foundation for the rest of his governorship as a risk-taker who chooses his battles wisely and, when it counts, fights them well. It's a picture reminiscent of another kindly governor - Doc Bowen - who had the ability to cut deals with savage wit and an audacious clarity of will. Old-timers will tell you that those who got in Doc's way could be cut so concisely that they wouldn't even feel the wound until long after the battlefield smoke had disappeared over the horizon. The perils for O'Bannon center around the fact that the Republicans will soon feel their pain.

Mary Beth Schneider, *Indianapolis Star* - Leadership is a quality so rare anymore that when you see it, it can take your breath away. We saw it last week in Gov. Frank O'Bannon. He created a package of five bills - help for the arena, the convention center and injured workers, along with unemployment compensation and inheritance tax relief. He did what the legislature wouldn't by writing compromise language on worker's compensation. And he gave them an ultimatum: Pass it all or lose it all. "The governor literally took a bucket of lemons and turned it into lemonade for everybody," (House Speaker John) Gregg said. The Statehouse and the state are hungering for leadership, and O'Bannon filled the void. Now that we have seen it, we want more.

Bill Benner, *Indianapolis Star/News* - There comes a time when you have to take a man at his word. This past week, Jim Irsay went to extraordinary lengths to give us his. So it's either part of one of the most elaborate ruses in sports history. Or he really, really, really means it. The Colts president and owner took out a full-page advertisement in The Indianapolis Star/News, then appeared on local radio to emphasize his determination to maintain his National Football League franchise here. He spoke directly to fans. And, in the instance of Sports Daily on WNDE-AM, he spoke directly to me. Irsay insisted he has not talked with any other city about moving the Colts, nor have any of his representatives. He said anyone under his jurisdiction caught doing so will be fired on the spot. Our fellow Hoosier has given us his word. And we should take it, even if we can't ultimately hold him to it.

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - Senate Fiance Chairman Larry Borst paid a high compliment to the Democratic governor for pushing through the package. "He (O'Bannon) was the only one of everybody on this planet that could have done it," Borst said. Maybe so. With the legislators all so mad at each other, they seemed incapable of putting together a package. State Rep. Pat Bauer, who often has engaged in tough negotiations with Borst over a state budget, was as pleased as Borst with the outcome of the session. "This budget is one of the best ever passed," said Bauer.

Stuart Rothenberg, *CNN All Politics* - (Evan) Bayh begins with strong statewide identification, a good image and good poll numbers. The Republicans face a competitive primary and can't guarantee that their nominee will have the money or message needed to beat the former governor. And that's why Democrats believe that they have a good chance of picking up this Indiana Senate seat next year.

PERHAPS... WE WANDER

By Brian Howey

A bomb in Oklahoma City; a trial in Denver; and a worry here in Indianapolis

INDIANAPOLIS - A friend of mine who hadn't been at the Indiana Statehouse since he was in junior high school spent a recent day wandering around one of the most extraordinary buildings we have.

He commented on the beautiful stonework, the huge columns and pillars, the ornate light fixtures and deep, dark woodwork. Later that night, we stood on the south lawn, staring up at the gilded eagle, wings spread at the top of the building with the dome glowing as backlight, just above the statutes of pioneers, Native Americans, settlers and farmers.

The other thing mentioned was the ease of access to the building. Virtually any Hoosier can walk right into the building and go about anywhere. My friend found himself standing in an empty Supreme Court room while a dark thought crossed his mind. Anyone could have placed a small package right underneath the Chief Justice's desk that commands the court.

People walk into the Statehouse with all sorts of packages, briefcases, phone pouches and shopping bags.

So perhaps there were similar thoughts of those who walked into the Statehouse on June 3, and saw the dark headline on the front page of the *Indianapolis Star*: GUILTY!

It was, of course, coverage of the Timothy McVeigh trial in Denver, where he was found guilty on 11 counts in connection with the April 19, 1995, Oklahoma City federal building bombing.

That day is etched in most Americans' minds. For many in Indiana's political establishment, that tragedy was even more striking. It came just as Sen. Richard Lugar was about to kick off his presidential campaign at City Market. Many of us present that day literally ran from that rally to catch a glimpse on TV of what had happened in the southwest. Later, Lugar himself predicted that Americans would one day witness the "destruction of an American city" at the hands of terrorists.

In that context, the Indiana Statehouse seems to stand proud behind the striking statute of Gov. Oliver P. Morton, and very vulnerable.

Consider other government buildings. The federal building in downtown Indianapolis is void of parking at its curbs. Security is conspicuous and tight. Some Indiana city halls and court buildings have metal detectors at their entrances. Others have police officers and security personnel posted near entryways. At the Statehouse, Capitol Police have a desk at the north entrance and conduct regular walking patrols. Often visitors and employees see Capitol Police cars parked between the two government center buildings and the Statehouse.

But that's about it. Anyone with a grudge or a radical point of view could accomplish the most horrific of deeds. It is in the back of minds of most who regularly work the Statehouse.

Thus, there's a dilemma. Should security be beefed up to help prevent a nightmare that might not ever occur? Or do we treat the Statehouse as Indiana's citadel of freedom; a building of total access?

It's a mental dilemma for anyone who works or visits the building and appreciates the notion that any man, woman and child can breeze into the building and find themselves a few yards from the governor just by walking past his office.

Kim Greco, secretary for U.S. Magistrate Theresa Springmann at the Hammond federal courthouse, told the *Munster Times* that all employees at that building were aware of the McVeigh verdict the other day. She praised U.S. marshals and court security officers "for keeping everyone safety-conscious."

That may be the key at the Statehouse. Perhaps the emphasis should be that all who love the building keep an eye open for the strange and unexplained, and more direct phone lines to Capitol Police.

TICKER TAPE

he has a great concern about the work force within his district," Dellinger said of McIntosh.

Gary Hofmeister's 10th CD Republican campaign released parts of a TeleResearch Poll that showed the Indianapolis jeweler with a "familiarity rating of 68 percent." Hofmeister is a familiar voice and face for his TV, radio and billboard advertising. "It is very clear that he has the initial numbers to be very competitive in the Republican primary," said Jeff Lewis of TeleResearch.

Rock 'n roll star John Fogerty, who recorded one of the best political songs, "Fortunate One," with Credence Clearwater Revival is planning to move his family to the South Bend/Elkhart area. He and his wife, Julie Kramer, a South Bend native, were married in Elkhart in 1991.

St. Joseph County Prosecutor Mike Barnes announced plans to charge people arrested for DUI while transporting their children could face child neglect charges. "If we're going to be pro-active with regard to children, then it should include any situation in which children are endangered," Barnes said.

While 1996 vice presidential nominee Jack Kemp addressed

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TICKER TAPE

1,200 Hoosier Republicans last weekend, former Vice President Dan Quayle was doing the same in Dallas, Texas, home turf for another potential presidential contender, Gov. George W. Bush, Jr. Sources tell HPR the nearly 500 Republicans gathered there gave the former Indiana senator three standing ovations, including when he entered the dinner and as he was leaving.

Columbia City jeweler Mary Blandford has announced she will run against State Rep. Dan Stephan in the '98 GOP primary.

HPR Interview, from page 5

ing that I would be available to talk to their caucus to explain the bill, talk about the process and to give my word that nothing would become law in this session unless all five passed. I sent it to all of them early Tuesday morning. Paul Mannweiler called me and asked if I would come to their caucus. I didn't want to go into their caucus room so I invited them up to my office. He said, "It's a lot easier if you came up here because everyone is seated." So I went up to the old Senate Finance Room where I used to sit in that chairman's chair where I hadn't been back since and I just went through the process. I told them, "We need to put behind us everything that's happened before." I said I knew everyone was angry, upset and mistrustful, but here was what I proposed to get everyone out in one day. I said "Everyone's a winner who comes out of this." We could have higher worker's comp benefits and still pay less than we were three years ago.

HPR: When you left that room, did you know you had a deal?

O'Bannon: No. I heard somebody say, "Well, how can we trust people on the other side?" I said, "I'll tell ya, you can trust me because I'll veto it. That's the thing that can hold this together." And I said it publicly. Later on, the Indianapolis Star said, "We don't know if he's bluffing" and that really upset me, because then I would have been lying. I meant every word I said otherwise I wouldn't have said it in the first place. It wasn't dictatorial because I told the leaders that they could change the package anyway they wanted. I'm not a legislator so I can't legislate and I'm not a dictator.

HPR: How do you believe history will view this period?

O'Bannon: As I've said all along, you've got to put families first. We certainly saw that with people needing to replace their prosthetic devices. We can see that with the family farmer, who will be passing the homestead to his sons. Unemployed will receive higher benefits. Businesses will save $54 million. And there will be new arena and hotel construction. By the time you put all of that together, I can't see any losers in it. There might be some hurt feelings. Overall, I think families won.

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