

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“I’m the chairman. I knew it was there. I shouldn’t have signed it...”

- Sen. Bob Meeks on signing off on the biennial budget that repealed the personal property tax exemption, to the Fort Wayne Journal Gazette

Legislative end game winners and losers

Clark, Lubbers emerge in Senate

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in Indianapolis

It is unclear whether we’ve reached the end game of the 2001 Legislative session as Gov. Frank O’Bannon still has his veto pen poised over the biennial budget.

But there is enough information to begin to assess who ended up in good shape and who was dinged in this strange session, which was marked by almost bipolar harmony early on, followed by sine die walks by House Republicans and Senate Democrats, and then abject confusion as the clock struck midnight on a black Sabbath.

O’Bannon-Kernan: The governor and his sidekick get an incomplete at this point because we don’t know what he’ll do with the budget. One option is to let it become law without his signature. O’Bannon took some heat for not using the session to restructure the tax code and was then forced to propose the cigarette tax, with Kernan by his side. Now with a budget he calls “irresponsible,” the governor has the chance to portray himself as the fiscal conservative while cleaning up the mess left by the legislature. The guess is he won’t call the rabble back into session because it would prolong everyone’s pain. But to put that in perspective, while he threatened veto, reporters from the Associated Press and *Evansville Courier & Press* in Wednesday’s editions basically called that implied action a facade.

Power trio: If nothing else, Sens. Bob Garton and Larry Borst and Rep. B. Patrick Bauer remained at the top of their Machiavellian games. Garton and Borst consistently undermined each other on the budget and dockside, setting the stage for “the mouse that roared” when the Senate Democrats walked. Bauer was placed in a room with Senate

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TICKER T A P E

CHARTER SCHOOL BILL SIGNED: Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson joined Gov. Frank O'Bannon today at the Indiana Statehouse as the governor signed historic charter schools legislation into law. The law makes Peterson the first mayor in the nation to have the authority to charter a school. Also attending were State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Suellen Reed and the law's chief legislative architects, State Rep. Greg Porter and State Sen. Teresa Lubbers, both of Indianapolis. "Charter schools offer yet another way to bring innovation and creativity into our public schools," Mayor Peterson said. "I applaud the efforts of the O'Bannon-Kernan administration, Dr. Reed, Rep. Porter, Sen. Lubbers and so many other educators, parents, business and community leaders, and citizens who joined together to make charter schools a reality for the families of Indianapolis."

MAHERN COMPLETES REDISTRICTING COMMISSION THAT WILL MEET IN CHAPEL: Gov. O'Bannon made the final appointment to the Indiana Redistricting Commission that will meet May 10 in the chapel at Franklin College. It comprises Senate President Pro Tempore Robert D. Garton, R-Columbus; Senate



Legislature, from page 1

Budget Committee Chair Bob Meeks, and that move was akin to putting a lamb in the lion's den. Said one Statehouse insider, "No one briefed Meeks on how to deal with Pat Bauer. He opened his jugular and said let's chat and Bauer pounced. It was brutal." Borst is now positioned to make or break the governor's efforts to overhaul the tax code and possibly define the political future of Kernan. He's likely to resist a deal that would bring the troops back in this fall or even on Organization Day, as the governor is suggesting. He could put it off until Jan. 7, 2002 and get the whole process started during an election year, when a slew of Democratic House members will join a couple of Republicans in newly competitive seats.

Speaker John Gregg: He straddled the fence on a number of issues ranging from redistricting (where his own personal fate drew the attention of organs such as the *Wall Street Journal*) to the budget and between Bauer and O'Bannon. He was able to keep a near caucus rebellion on the maps from getting out of control over the weekend. He acted decisively on dockside. Somehow he got the troops out of

town, probably without a special session, and with his team viewing the Pacers on TV as opposed to watching legislators chasing hula girls in grass skirts with toy lawnmowers (which actually happened during the sine die of 1962).

Rep. Brian Bosma: The new House minority leader got stung on a couple of fronts. Democrats called him on his claim that he didn't participate in the 1995 walkout when Democratic aide John Shorg unearthed a press release from that era showing that he did. He told HPR that he didn't seek to put in play Paul Mannweiler's 99-seat redistricting plan because it was a battle Republicans couldn't have won. The impact of that won't be felt until we see how many narrow victories the GOP wins or loses in the next two or three election cycles. While he walked out in order to get better maps for Reps. Jim Atterholt and Jack Lutz, those were only marginal victories as both will have to run in tough districts. However, Bosma has his first session as caucus leader under his belt and can rightfully claim that he tried to hold the line on taxes and spending. Bosma will now lead the charge to try and paint O'Bannon-Kernan as tax hikers.

Sens. Murray Clark, Teresa

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Lubbers and Luke Kenley: Both Clark and Lubbers are poised to move up to the gubernatorial tier. Lubbers gets great credit for moving the charter school bill into law. Clark is already running for governor. Both voted against the budget (with Luke Kenley turning to Clark after seeing his red light flash on, saying "You've got to be kidding me") and against the e-mail restriction bill. Kenley might find it tough to explain his vote on the budget to Republican primary partisans.

Rep. Peggy Welch and Sen. Tom Wyss: The other big meltdown besides Meeks in this session was Wyss and the BAC bill. Finally poised for passage, Wyss pulled it, to the dismay of nearly everyone. Sophomore Peggy Welch then picked it up and rammed it into law. Wyss has been an ardent champion of getting impaired drivers off the road, but his emotions overran him at what could have been his greatest moment.

Redistricting Bubble: House

Republicans who will appear in the HPR Horse Race as occupying competitive districts will include the aforementioned Jim Atterholt and Jack Lutz. Democrats on the potential bubble will include Gary Cook, Bob Kuzman, Ron Herrell, Vern Tincher, Dick Bodiker, Welch, Bob Bischoff, Dale Sturtz, and the seat likely to be vacated by Mike Dvorak.

Retirements: State Rep. Bruce Munson will step down and back Jack Lutz for this open seat. Claire Leuck's retirement set off the chain reaction on the House maps. Four to five members in each caucus are weighing potential retirement.

Legislative Bottom Line: It wasn't pretty as the legislature passed themselves a big pay raise, exempted themselves from public access laws in one of the most significant erosions of the Open Door Law, then passed an unbalanced budget in an uncertain economic climate.



Centrist Dems take tax compromise credit

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON - Centrist congressional Democrats are taking credit for persuading President Bush to scale back the size of his proposed tax-cut, but they're waiting for the details before they decide to back the compromise.

"It is moving in the right direction thanks in large part to moderate Democrats in the House and Senate who have been pushing for a balanced approach to fair tax relief and paying down the debt," said Democratic Rep. Tim Roemer (D-3rd CD), co-chair of the House New Democrat Coalition. "The president has not exercised bipartisan spirit but has been forced toward principled changes by moderate Democrats."

On Tuesday, Bush agreed to a \$1.25 trillion tax cut over 11 years with a \$100 billion economic stimulus package. His original proposal, which he had not wanted to negotiate, was for a \$1.6 trillion, 10-

year tax cut. The House passed that size cut in March, but the Senate, thanks in part to 15 centrist Democrats, including Sen. Evan Bayh, passed a \$1.2 trillion tax cut. But Roemer and Bayh are waiting for the details. "I want to see what's in the final 1.25 trillion dollars," said Roemer. The agreement struck between the White House and Congress is for the tax-cut

CONGRESS WATCH

total in the budget blueprint. Over the summer, Congress will determine the composition of the tax cuts, which could include marriage penalty relief, estate tax reduction, and rate reductions.

Last week, Bayh said that Bush should settle on the \$1.2 billion figure. But he's not ready to take a stance on the

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Elections Committee Chairwoman Sue Landske, R-Cedar Lake; Speaker of the House John Gregg, D-Sandborn; House Elections Committee Chairman Tom Kromkowski, D-South Bend; and Rep. Ed Mahern, D-Indianapolis, who was appointed to the commission by O'Bannon. As HPR exclusively reported on Tuesday, the commission will convene to finalize the new Congressional districts that the legislature failed to act on by last Sunday's sine die. Garton acknowledged Democrats will likely take over soon after he convenes the session. "I can count," Garton said. "It's 3 to 2, and I'm sure I'll be replaced as chairman pretty quickly" (Louisville Courier-Journal).

STATEWIDE VOTER REGISTRATION POSSIBLE: A statewide voter registration system would be established under legislation now before Gov. Frank O'Bannon. "We have the law and we have the money," said Sen. Becky Skillman, R-Bedford, a former county clerk who authored the reform proposal (Times of Northwest Indiana). Skillman said both the House and Senate passed the measure on Saturday before adjourning.

LTV DEAL STILL POSSIBLE: Dennis Henry, presi-

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dent of United Steelworkers of America, Local 1011, told LTV Corp.'s rank and file he was optimistic that a deal could be struck, despite warnings last week of strikes and plant closures. Henry said the company hasn't offered a new proposal, but "it's obvious they're moving closer to the middle. We have a possibility of coming back from this. Last week I didn't think that." Henry is also a member of the union's negotiating team (Clint Mitchell, Times of Northwest Indiana). "My gut reaction is that we can get something done in a week to two weeks." In other news related to the steel crisis, Mishawaka-based National Steel Corp.'s first quarter net losses were \$108.7 million, or \$2.63 per share, for the first quarter of 2001, compared to a profit of \$10.6 million, or 26 cents per share, for the first quarter of 2000.

GILROY PITCHES HOOSIER ELECTION REFORM: The day after the Indiana legislature approved two election reform bills, Secretary of State Sue Anne Gilroy was in Washington holding Indiana up as a paragon of progress on the issue. Gilroy, in town for a meeting of the National Association of Securities Administrators, talked with Rep. Steve Buyer (R-5th CD) and Sens. Richard Lugar and Evan Bayh on Tuesday.

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Centrists, *from page 3*

compromise. "There's not enough detail attached to the proposal yet," said Mark Kornblau, a Bayh spokesman.

It's not clear what kind of support the compromise will generate, but Bush was declaring victory on Wednesday. "This will be the largest tax cut in a generation," White House budget director Mitch Daniels told CNN. "It's a fine, fair and balanced deal. That's what good compromises deliver."

At the beginning of the tax debate, it looked as if right-wing Republicans in the House would be a thorn in the Bush's side by fomenting for a tax-cut higher than \$1.6 trillion. But Rep. Mike Pence (R-2nd CD) also is ready to call the compromise a win. "It's a moral imperative that we cut taxes," he said. "You bet I'll vote for it with gusto. There is no tax cut of any scope that I would oppose."

Bush's campaign-like barnstorming for his tax cut notwithstanding, Bayh said he didn't doubt that the president would have to come to the negotiating table. "It was both inevitable and a healthy sign," he said. "If he alienates everyone by taking an all-or-nothing approach on the budget, it will make it much harder to get 60 votes for the other (legislation) on his agenda." Sixty votes are required to break a filibuster in the Senate.

But in siding with 15 other moderate Democrats on the tax-cut vote for the budget blueprint, Bayh may risk alienating liberal constituencies, which could cause a problem in 2004 if he runs for president. "Voting for that bill could come back to haunt him in a presidential primary," said Marshall Wittmann, a fellow at the Hudson Institute. "It will be unearthed in the snows of Iowa and New Hampshire in three years. (Vice President Al) Gore was bringing up votes by (former Sen. Bill) Bradley from 1981 in the last election cycle. (Bayh) will be to the right of his potential Democratic primary foes."

Bayh was joined in his vote for the

\$1.2 trillion tax cut by Sens. John Breaux (D-La.) and John Edwards (D-NC), both of whom are potential presidential contenders. Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle and Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) both voted against the bill.

Bayh and Roemer have been leading their party on education reform, where they have found the waters less choppy than on the tax-cut issue. "The difference has been like night and day," Bayh said. "I don't think it's as inherently an ideological issue as the budget and taxes can be."

Bayh and Roemer both spent most of Wednesday working on education bills, which have been in development since early winter. "I have never participated in a more intense, lengthy, testy, but so far successful negotiation," said Roemer, who gives the Bush administration a better grade for its approach to education. "They have practiced genuine bipartisanship over four months of negotiation with us. (President Bush) has showed some real passion on this issue."

But conservative Republicans will have to be mollified to move the education bill forward. "I have real concerns about the way this bill expands the role of federal government in local schools," said Pence. He said that 50 to 60 members of the House Republican Study Committee have "openly discussed the possibility of taking a walk on the bill. We could have us a real role of government debate."

Roemer said that significant progress was achieved on Wednesday on education legislation. "We had a real victory today," he said. "We removed vouchers from the base bill." The fate of education reform and tax cuts is not mutually exclusive, Bayh said. "They are inextricably linked because the size of the surplus is finite."

Pence said the composition of support for the education and tax bills differs. "(Education) is a bill that many liberals and moderates are comfortable with. That's a bigger pile than the conservatives and moderates who (back) the tax bill." ❖

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune* - (State Sen.) Bob Meeks represents the Senate Republican view that Gov. Frank O'Bannon can keep the state operating just fine and education needs can be met without new revenue sources, even as the economic downturn makes some prior rosy revenue forecasts unrealistic. (State Rep. B. Patrick) Bauer represents the House Democratic view that the Republicans could be squeezing the Democratic governor and Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan, who will be the Democratic nominee for governor in 2004, to help future GOP election chances, even if this also squeezes education. Meeks arrives for a meeting of budget conferees with the Republican response to Bauer's dockside proposal. Bauer is still meeting with O'Bannon. Reporters and lobbyists ask Meeks what he will propose. He won't say. "I want to tell the chairman (Bauer) first," Meeks explains. And he does, meeting with Bauer privately to explain his stand rather than seeking some advantage in surprise or in advance "spinning" with the news media. ❖

David Broder, *Washington Post* - The first part of the two-week congressional recess was consumed by worries over the 24 American service members forced down onto Hainan Island by that reckless Chinese fighter pilot. There were floods in the Midwest; riots in Cincinnati, reminding us of the unhealed racial wounds in the country; and rapidly rising gasoline prices, signaling that the energy problem was spreading. But in the midst of all this melodrama -- surely not a crisis but a disturbed atmosphere -- what was most unsettling was the odd silence at the center of the city. This capital takes its cues from one person, the president, and he was stoic to the point of reticence during

all of this. Bill Clinton's histrionics had grown wearisome well before he left the White House. But Bush in these opening months of his presidency has gone to the other extreme. It is doubtful that most voters in the country can recall hearing him speak out on more than two occasions -- Inauguration Day and his address on the budget to the joint session of Congress. ❖

Sylvia Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - In the Senate, money is the big issue. Democrats, including the moderates, want a bigger education budget than Bush is willing to agree to. (In fact, the negotiations appear to be between the Senate Dems and the White House, with the Senate GOP on the sidelines.) The normally unmodulated Sen. Evan Bayh even raised his voice in a speech when he described his take on the money standoff: "The president's proposal, as it now stands, calls for investing \$2.6 billion in improving the quality of education, 25 times more for reducing taxes than investing in the quality of education," he said. "I support tax relief, but it's not 25 times more important than our children's education." The fact that the list of conservative objections to the education bill is finite is remarkable. A scant five years ago they were trying to eliminate the Education Department. Or, as (U.S. Rep. Mark) Souder put it: "For 40 years Republicans have criticized the expansion of these (education) programs. If we now put them in our bill, we are now certifying that we're accepting them. ... It is a big concession from the conservatives to basically take any of this." Now they're just trying to shade a GOP-written bill a little more to their liking. ❖

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Observers say that partisanship and procrastination have stymied election reform in Congress. "We've been the antithesis of that," Gilroy told HPR. "Indiana has set the course, and we can show ourselves as a model. It was marvelous to watch the legislature work through it as a group." Monday night, the legislature approved a \$5 million bill to computerize statewide voter registration lists. It also passed a \$4 million measure to replace punch-card voting machines. But Gilroy estimates that the overhaul bill will total \$30 million. "We're going to continue to meet with the Indiana delegation to encourage them that we're moving forward and we need federal financial support," she said. Gilroy is chairwoman of the 16-member bipartisan Task Force on Election Integrity. It will present a report to Gov. Frank O'Bannon in November.

NORTHEASTERN SENATORS UPSET WITH IPFW PLAY: An Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne senior will direct and produce "Corpus Christi," a tale of a Christ-like figure who is surrounded by 12 homosexual men. The betrayal of Joshua, the lead character, comes through a kiss from another man. In a letter to the editor that will run this week, State Sens. Tom Wyss, David

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Long, Charles Meeks, Robert Meeks, Harold Wheeler and David Ford, publicly condemn the production as well as IPFW Chancellor Michael Wartell for allowing the play to continue (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). The senators remind the public in the letter that they are responsible for a significant portion of the university funding and say that some people have urged them to eliminate the school's equity funding - \$700,000 the school has adamantly fought for. "Our No. 1 priority was IPFW this session," said Sen. Charles "Bud" Meeks. "Those of us who have fought for them feel like we've been hurt by the university's decision. The passions for Chancellor Wartell have cooled significantly." Larry Life, head of IPFW's theater department and an adviser to the student director, said he wishes the senators would have discussed the production with him or read the play. "It's an allegory to a Christ-like figure. So is Billy Budd," he said. "I think it's very Christ-affirming." State Rep. Win Moses, D-Fort Wayne, said, "It is absolutely critical that this situation does not reflect on trying to get equity funding this year. It disturbs me that the Senate Republicans mentioned it in their letter. Tying the two together is unfair."

6,000 'GHOSTS' ON LAKE

Indiana 2002, 2004 Racing Form

Governor 2004: Republican: David McIntosh, Sen. Murray Clark, Sen. Luke

Kenley, Sen. Teresa Lubbers, Paul Helmke, Eric Miller, Pat Kiely, George Witwer. **Democrat:** Lt. Gov. Joe Kernan. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D), Goldsmith (R), Dillon (L). **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** Kenley's gubernatorial hopes were severely compromised this week after he voted for the biennial budget. "It doesn't quite add up. But it leaves us without a tax increase," said Kenley (*Indianapolis Star*). Of the three members of the Indiana Senate viewed as potential 2004 Republican gubernatorial nominees, two of them - Clark and Lubbers - voted against the budget, joining Senate Finance Chairman Larry Borst. **Kenley's** vote on a budget that included a \$320 million "tax increase" due to the repeal of the personal property tax exemption will not play well in GOP primary circles. "We stated we wouldn't raise taxes," observed House Minority Leader Brian Bosma. "You saw where Borst voted no. That speaks volumes." Of the trio of Senate Republicans, only **Clark** has been actively working the GOP's Lincoln Day circuit. Kenley has said he will make a decision on running by July 1. **Lubbers** emerged from this session having pushed through the historic charter school bill. She has yet to signal any kind of earnest interest in running for governor, although the time is fast approaching that one of the graduates of the Lugar Series steps up to fulfill the promise of that program. In additional fallout from the legislature, HPR's conversations with leaders there reveal serious questions on their part as to **David McIntosh's** viability in 2004. Words expressed on McIntosh's 2000 effort were along the lines of "abysmal" and that sentiment pervades the ranks of legislators who two years ago openly wooed McIntosh to run. As for **Helmke**, see the Secretary of State entry below. How **Kernan** stands after this session still remains to be seen. If Gov. O'Bannon doesn't veto the budget, Republicans will try and tag him as a tax hiker, which could be a stretch when taken into historical context (Democrats have not raised taxes for the past 13 years). If O'Bannon vetoes the budget and seeks "revenue enhancements" heading into a conspicuous special session where everyone would be tired and angry, Kernan will have to endure a potentially prolonged process with the dreaded words "tax hike" popping up often with the cynical media types. We still believe Kernan's most significant dilemma is the tax reassessment issue. At this early, early, early stage of the game, the man with the most potential appeal to the voting bloc the Republicans keep missing (female, independents), who is working the Lincoln Day circuit the hardest, and who emerged from this legislative session in good shape is Murray Clark, although it is far too early to consider tagging anyone on the GOP as "front runner." **Status:** *Leans D.*

Secretary of State 2002: Republican: Mike Delph, Deputy Secretary of State Todd

Rokita, Richard Mourdock, Luke Messer, Paul Helmke, Carmel Clerk-Treasurer Diana Cordray. **Democrat:** Bloomington Mayor John Fernandez. **1994 Results:** Gilroy (R) 902,100, Jeffers (D) 542,539, Dillon (L) 32,483, Knight (A) 13,948. **1998 Results:** Gilroy 828,557, Little (D) 652,565, Dillon (L) 51,775. **2002 Forecast:** Former Fort Wayne Mayor Paul Helmke ponders entry into this race. If he does, he would become an immediate front-runner, unless State Sen. Becky Skillman decides to get in. What Indiana Republicans need to ponder is whether they view this race as grooming new talent for the next generation (Delph, Rokita, Messer, Cordray) or prepare an older warhorse like Helmke or Mourdock for governor. Helmke would almost certainly view secretary of state in the Evan Bayh model, who ran in 1986 while making no bones about the fact that he was going to run for governor in 1988. When Joe Hogsett won the office in 1990, he promised he would serve a four-year term, but opted into the 1992 Senate race where that issue became a millstone around his neck. Helmke would have to articulate his true intentions and make the case to Republican voters that in order to win back the governor's office, statewide exposure in the 2002 SofS race would be critical. One of David McIntosh's early hurdles was gearing up name recognition. Some party leaders believe that Helmke might have a dogfight on his hands coming through a crowded GOP primary, but would probably be in

HORSE RACE

pretty good shape heading into the general election. Helmke won an intense three-way race in 1998 over John R. Price and Peter Rusthoven, but never coalesced his campaign to a coherent degree to make a serious challenge against Bayh. Helmke would need to demonstrate lessons learned from the Bayh race and that he is capable of running a savvy statewide race. **Status:** *Tossup.*

Congressional District 2: Republican: Chris Chocola, State Sen. Thomas Weatherwax, State Rep. Bill Friend. **Democrat:** Roger O. Parent, Jill Long Thompson, State Sen. Bill Alexa, State Rep. Mike Dvorak, Katie Humphries, Cleo Washington. **Geography:** LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Miami, Carroll and parts of Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **2000 Result:** Roemer (D) 107,076, Chocola (R) 98,367. **2002 Forecast:** Chocola tells the Indianapolis Star he intends to run in the 2nd, even though he doesn't live in the district. "I can see it from my driveway," Chocola said. Jill Long Thompson appears to have the momentum on the Democratic side as key leaders speak glowingly of her candidacy. Dvorak appears to be headed for a run as St. Joseph County prosecutor. **Status:** *Tossup.*

Congressional District 3: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. **Democrat:** Open. **Geography:** Fort Wayne, Goshen, Kosciusko, Whitley, LaGrange, Steuben, DeKalb and parts of Elkhart and Allen counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Fort Wayne. **2000 results:** Souder (R) 131,051, Foster (D) 74,492. **2002 Forecast:** Helmke made this bombshell comment to HPR: "I've had people encourage me to get into all the races you've mentioned as well as others, like challenging Souder in the new 3rd CD. I haven't made any decisions yet on what I might want to do politically or when I might want to get back into the mix." Of all of Paul Helmke's options, challenging Souder is the worst. Souder is the consummate tenacious political tactician. While Souder was bruised in the Clinton impeachment fallout, he seems to be back in stride and most folks have moved on. People throughout Northeast Indiana would tend to view Helmke as the Big City guy, more "liberal" for their tastes and neglecting their needs. Souder would paste him. **Status:** *Safe R.*

Congressional District 4: Republican: U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, U.S. Rep. Brian Kerns. **Democrat:** Open. **Geography:** Tippecanoe, Clinton, Boone, Montgomery, Hendricks, Morgan, Lawrence and parts of Marion, Johnson, Monroe, Fountain and White counties. **Media Market:** Lafayette, Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Evansville, Louisville. **2000 Results:** **Old 5th CD:** Buyer (R) 132,035, Goodnight (D) 81,423; **Old 7th CD:** Kerns 131,562, Graf (D) 65,174. **2002 Forecast:** Roll Call reported that House Speaker Dennis Hastert and NRCC Chairman Tom Davis had asked Buyer to run in the new 2nd CD. "The article is false. It's not even credible," Buyer responded (Indianapolis Star). *Roll Call* reported that following three weeks in which neither Kerns nor Buyer seemed ready to back down from plans to run in the 4th, sources said, Speaker Hastert and Davis asked Buyer to run in the nearby 2nd, a more competitive district being vacated by Rep. Tim Roemer (D). "I'm not demanding anything at this point," said Davis. "These are big boys and they've got to make their own decision. But this lets you know if they're thinking about the team or they're thinking about themselves." Said another senior House Republican aide, it was Hastert's desire to have Buyer run in the 2nd. "It doesn't make sense for two incumbents to run against each other," the aide said. The aide said House leaders, convinced that Kerns is a better fit for the new 4th, would "help [Buyer] in that marginal district if he takes a shot." Republicans offered Buyer fundraising assistance and campaign appearances by Hastert and President Bush if he agreed to the move. Kerns has also drawn the backing of Bob Bales, the GOP chairman in Hendricks County. "You make me laugh. That would have to have come from Kerns," Buyer said Friday. "No one has said, 'Steve, move and run in the 2nd.' The only one who's trying to get that spin out is Brian Kerns." Buyer spokesman Mike Copher told *HPR* on Monday that neither Hastert nor Davis demanded that Buyer move into the 2nd, where he already represents seven counties. Asked why Buyer won't consider moving into the 2nd, just a couple of miles away, Copher said that Buyer has two children in high school at Monticello and, "He doesn't believe in moving to run for office." Kerns plans to move his family from Vigo County to Hendricks County. **Status:** *Safe R.*

TICKER

T A P E

COUNTY VOTER ROLLS: About one in five of Lake County's 519 political precincts have more registered voters than people old enough to vote (William Lazarus, Times of Northwest Indiana). Though that's true of the entire cities of Gary and Whiting, the same phenomenon exists in 115 precincts across the county, according to an analysis of data from the 2000 census and the county election board. Those precincts had more than 59,000 registered voters but less than 53,000 residents age 18 and older, leaving more than 6,000 ghosts. Eight precincts - in Schererville, Griffith, East Chicago, Crown Point, Gary and Winfield Township - have more registered voters than residents of all ages.

RESIDENTS WALK OUT ON FORT WAYNE MAYOR: About 100 East Central residents left a surprised Mayor Graham Richard staring at their backs Thursday as they left a meeting he had scheduled to discuss plans for their neighborhood (Rhea Edmonds, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). "This situation is uncomfortable and inappropriate under the circumstances," said Bonnie Andrews, East Central Neighborhood Association president, after delivering a 3 1/2-page statement, which included criticism of the mayor for calling a public,

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rather than a private, meeting. "Now that you have heard our views, we will excuse ourselves from this meeting." At that point, about 100 people left, leaving only a few, who watched in amazement. Richard remained stoic as he listened to Andrews' criticism and witnessed the mass exodus. "I'm disappointed that we didn't have a dialogue," Richard said.

STEEL CRISIS A MATTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY, SAYS AYRES: Northwest Indiana steelworkers, along with a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers from Lake and Porter counties, were gathered in the Statehouse to support the passage in Congress of the Steel Revitalization Act, a politically controversial bill co-authored by U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind. The Indiana General Assembly currently is considering a legislative resolution crafted by several Northwest Indiana lawmakers urging Congress to approve the measure. At the Statehouse rally, state Rep. Ralph Ayres, R-Chesterton, said the nation owes a debt to the steel industry, which "through more than one war worked to save the world" (Terry Burns, Times of Northwest Indiana). The crisis now confronting the nation's steelmakers, he said, "is a national security issue and people across the country better wake up and realize this." ❖

Congressional District 6: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Pence. **Democrat:** Melina

Ann Fox. **Geography:** Anderson, Muncie, Richmond; Wells, Adams, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union, Decatur, Franklin, and parts of Bartholomew, Shelby, Johnson and Allen counties. **Media Market:** Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Dayton, Cincinnati. **2000 results:** Pence (R) 106,023, Rock (D) 80,885, Frazier (I) 19,07. **2002 Forecast:** At a White House luncheon hosted Monday by President Bush to mark his first 100 days in office, Pence used his face time with the chief executive to ask Bush to visit Indiana. Bush was noncommittal. "We really would like to see him in Indiana," Pence said in an *HPR* interview. "He can come and make his case for tax relief. One of our senators has not been a strong supporter of the president's tax cuts," he said in reference to Democratic Sen. Evan Bayh. Bayh voted for a \$1.2 trillion tax-relief package passed by the Senate in early April. Bush has advocated a \$1.6 trillion tax cut. But Pence complimented Bayh for making an appearance at the Bush lunch. "That was very impressive," Pence said. In Pence's estimation, 25 percent of the luncheon attendees were Democrats, which demonstrated Bush's bipartisanship. "What the president did today was very helpful in moving forward his legislative agenda in a constructive way." **Status:** *Leans R.*

HORSE R A C E

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. **Democrat:**

House Speaker John Gregg, Paul Perry, State Reps. Russ Stilwell and Jonathon Weinzapfel. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **1994 results:** Hostettler (R) 93,529, McCloskey (D) 84,857. **1996 Results:** Hostettler (R) 109,582, Weinzapfel (D) 106,134, Hager (L) 3,799. **1998 Results:** Hostettler (R) 92,227, Riecken (D) 81,381, Hager (L) 3,395. **2000 Results:** Hostettler 116,860, Perry (D) 100,461. **2002 Forecast:** All eyes are on John Gregg, who tells the ol' Horse he might have something to say in the next week to 10 days. **Status:** *Tossup.*

Congressional District 9: Republican: Kevin Kellems, Mike Sodrel. **Democrat:**

U.S. Rep. Baron Hill. **Geography:** Bloomington, Columbus, Lawrenceburg, Rising Sun, New Albany Jeffersonville, Madison, Nashville; Spencer, DuBois, Orange, Crawford, Perry, Harrison, Washington, Jackson, Brown, Jennings, Scott, Floyd, Clark, Jefferson, Switzerland, Ripley, Ohio, and parts of Dearborn and Monroe counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Indianapolis, Louisville, Dayton, Cincinnati. **1994 results:** Hamilton 91,459 (D), Leising (R) 84,315. **1996 Results:** Hamilton (D) 128,885, Leising (R) 97,747, Feeney (L) 2,315. **1998 Results:** Hill (D) 92,477, Leising (R) 87,278, Feeney (L) 2,397. **2000 Results:** Hill 125,978, Bailey (R) 101,790, Chambers (L) 4,634. **2002 Forecast:** Sources tell *HPR* that Kellems asked supporters last winter to shelve their plan to mount a district-wide draft movement on his behalf. Kellems, who is serving as a press aide to Ohio Gov. Robert Taft, also has said that he would meet with key supporters of his 2000 campaign before making any decision known publicly. "He certainly hasn't told me about any plans to leave and run for Congress," said Mary Anne Sharkey, Taft's communications director and Kellems' boss (*Columbus Dispatch*). Another source in Gov. Taft's office indicated that it's unlikely Kellems will run for Congress. **Status:** *Leans D.*

- Brian A. Howey ❖

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