



2020 Democrat gubernatorial wide open

Who's going to run? was met with shrugs and few names at Dem Convention

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – For the party out of gubernatorial power in the modern era of Hoosier politics, there has almost always been

a prime challenger in waiting, even two years out. This is the time

that prospects beginning lining up support and a team, and as often the case, attempt to create an air of inevitability to keep other contenders out.

In 1976, it was Secretary of State Larry Conrad who was poised for the challenge against Gov. Doc Bowen. In 1980, there was Batesville industrialist John Hillenbrand



2016 lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale at a campaign rally in South Bend along with John Gregg, Sen. Joe Donnelly, Evan Bayh and Mayor Peter Buttigieg. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

in waiting, and four years hence it was State Sen. Wayne Townsend. In 1988, it was a youthful Secretary of State Evan Bayh, who cut a deal with Sen. Frank O'Bannon (though he actually remained on the primary ballot) to join

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The party of Simpson

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – This was once the party of Vi Simpson, the former state senator and 2012 lieutenant governor nominee. She was smart, savvy, witty, inclusive and accessible. To run into Sen. Simpson came with a virtual guarantee of a hug. Sen. Simpson knew how to communicate and could deliver a rebuke or plaudits with appropriate pitch.

The reeling, embattled Indiana Democratic Party of 2018? It's the party of Homer Simpson. "Operator! Give me the number of 911!" or "Stupidity got us into this mess, and stupidity will get us out."

Exhibit A? Friday night's



"As a father of four children, I believe the separation of illegal immigrant families at the border is heartbreaking, and I am against it."

- U.S. Rep. Larry Bucshon on child separations at the border hours before being with President Trump.



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"Hoosier Hospitality" Dinner. The news media wasn't invited, even though a potential 2020 presidential candidate, U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan, was giving the keynote. HPI convinced party communications director Phil Johnson that the biennial dinner had always been a great way for reporters to reconnect with party activists and current candidates from around the state. So, we got in, the only press there.

Rep. Ryan gave a stirring keynote and conducted an interview with HPI. And that was that. Or as Homer Simpson would say, "The problem in the world today is communication ... too much communication."

This mid-term election has been called the "Pink Wave" or the "Year of the Woman." Congressional candidates Courtney Tritch, Tobi Beck, Dee Thornton and Liz Watson inexplicably were not given speaking roles at Friday's dinner or at the convention. But they did lead the dinner in the Pledge of Allegiance. The four candidates are all distinct underdogs. The Washington Post last week consigned them all to districts probably unwinnable, in large part due to the gerrymandered maps Republicans drew in 2011.

The Saturday keynoter was former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, who made gerrymandering one of his key topics. Do you think a press avail with Holder, Tritch, Beck, Thornton and Watson as Hoosier poster childs and bringing up the reality of the current maps might have made sense? Nope. Didn't happen. Apparently, no one thought of it.

In the "Year of the Woman," all seven featured convention speakers were men, though Cordelia Lewis Burks handed out awards and a female speaker presented the platform. Sen. Joe Donnelly and Rep. Andre Carson addressed delegates – twice. Or as Homer Simpson would put it, "If I could say a few words ... I would be a better public speaker." Or, "Bart, a woman is like beer. They look good, they smell good, and you'd step over your own mother just to get one."

There were no TV stations covering either the Friday dinner (none were invited) or the convention, which news directors deemed unworthy of coverage assets. There were five TV crews at the Republican convention in Evansville, including the local affiliates and others from South Bend and Indianapolis. Or as Homer Simpson would say, "What's the point of going out? We're just going to wind up back here anyway."

As I've analyzed repeatedly over the years, Indiana Democrats are



almost totally consigned to Marion, Lake, St. Joseph counties and the smattering of college towns. When the lone rural Democrat, Terry Goodin, was elected House minority leader, HPI's request for an interview was ignored, even though my weekly column runs in newspapers in places like Decatur, Bluffton, Logansport, Madison, Crothersville, Angola, Auburn and Churubusco. When Matt Lehman was elected House majority leader, I got an interview with him the next day. Ditto for incoming Senate president pro tem Rodric Bray (resulting in a statewide column on him). Republicans know how to communicate.

Or as our friend Homer would say, "Marge, don't worry. It's like when we stopped paying the phone bill. They stopped calling us. In fact, everyone did."

It didn't used to be this way. When Evan Bayh ran for governor in 1988, I was working at the Elkhart Truth. My phone would ring and it would be Bayh's campaign manager, Joe Hogsett. "How's it going? Brian,

do you need anything from us?" Or when Bayh was governor, press secretary Fred Nation would make frequent rounds through the Statehouse press shacks. "What are you working on? What are you hearing? Do you need anything from us?"

And there were the days when Lt. Gov. Frank O'Bannon and Judy would host a cook-out for the media at his restored Old Northside Indianapolis home. Frank and Judy built relationships with reporters, so that at a crucial moment in his 1996 gubernatorial race against Stephen Goldsmith, he flagged an epic lie and told the press, "Go out and find the truth!" And we did. And he pulled off the greatest upset.

True, in the age of social media, things have changed. There are fewer dedicated political reporters. But effective communication takes out-reach and relationships.

No, in the view of Hoosier Democrats, the press is a nuisance. At Saturday's convention, they put the press in the farthest corner of the vast Sagamore Ballroom. We were so far out we were almost in Greenfield. We were prohibited from crossing a curtained barrier where we could actually talk to delegates and candidates. I was at both Friday and Saturday events, and didn't meet the four aforementioned female congressional nominees or Mel Hall in the 2nd CD. If I had, I would have interviewed them for the HPI website, the weekly edition and the newspaper column.

Or as Homer Simpson would observe, "Son, if you really want something in this life, you have to work for it. Now quiet! They're about to announce the lottery numbers."

Democrats talked about the hot button issues of the day: Child separations at the border, Republicans targeting pre-existing conditions, gerrymandered maps that give, as Holder put it, a built-in 16-seat GOP advantage in the U.S. House. But in the minds of Indiana Democrats,

those are issues to be discussed between Democrats. Forget the independents and Republicans unnerved by the Trump administration.

Homer Simpson's logic on this would be, "America's health system is second only to Japan ... Canada, Sweden, Great Britain ... well, all of Europe. But you can thank your lucky stars we don't live in Paraguay!"

And President Trump? Rep. Carson and Holder mentioned him on Saturday, but it was hardly a sustained theme, even as the border child separation issue was mushrooming into the fore.

Prospects for Indiana Democrats? Their statewide candidates have virtually no chance of winning, even though they smartly positioned their nominations for a watchdog role at the GOP-dominated Statehouse, where they hold no constitutional offices and only 39 of 150 General Assembly seats. Ditto for the four female congressional candidates unless a huge "blue wave" emerges. And if Sen. Donnelly loses his toss-up race, this party will be back in the kind of oblivion where Evan Bayh found it in 1984 when he toured the state with gubernatorial nominee Wayne Townsend.

After Republican National Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel spoke to the Hoosier GOP in Evansville, she conducted a media avail and told reporters that the "blue wave" is really "a blue ripple."

I derive no joy in concluding that Indiana Democrats are broken, tone deaf, optic averse and hoard information meant apparently for only Democratic ears. It's a misfiring party at its nadir. It's a party that doesn't communicate with the press and a majority of voters.

Or as our Democrat friend Homer Simpson would put it, "How is education supposed to make me feel smarter? Besides, every time I learn something new, it pushes some old stuff out of my brain." ❖

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the ticket. In 1992, it was Republican Attorney General Linley Pearson. In 1996, it was Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, who easily fended off Rex Early and George Witwer Jr. in the GOP primary before O'Bannon pulled off a stirring upset. In 2000, it was U.S. Rep. David McIntosh. In 2002-03, White House Budget Director Mitch Daniels returned to the state and cleared both McIntosh and Sen. Murray Clark from the field (but not conservative gadfly Eric Miller) prior to his historic defeat of a sitting governor, Democrat Joe Kernan in 2004. And in 2012 and 2016, it was former Demo-



Former Evansville mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel passed on an 8th CD run this year.

cratic House speaker John Gregg.

With an open seat in the majority party, then U.S. Rep. Mike Pence edged out Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman at the end of 2010, leaving his path wide open for the chance to succeed two-term Gov. Daniels.

If there is an anomaly in this pecking order, it was 2008 when Democrat Jill Long Thompson edged out Jim Schellinger by a little over 1% in a very tight primary race, mirroring the Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton showdown in that year's presidential primary.

But the real break from gubernatorial history is now.

If there was one clear thing that emerged from the Indiana Democratic

Convention last weekend, it is there is no heir apparent preparing to take on popular Gov. Eric Holcomb. No one was acting like the challenger lying in wait, not Gregg or South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who both attended weddings and not the convention (in the mayor's case, his own). Not Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., who was there, but ignored a query from HPI. Not 2016 lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale, who hasn't ruled out a run but appears to be focused more on a potential open seat candidacy in 2024. Hale told HPI on Tuesday after a busy travel schedule she would catch her breath and weigh options in mid-July. Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett was the only one of the potential 2020 class with a convention speaking role, but he said nothing to make his case for a run. (Like other mayors, Hogsett will likely seek reelection in 2019.)

Other potential contenders with enough cred to make the conversation would include: Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight, who faces family issues that would preclude a run; former Evansville mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel, who passed on an 8th CD bid this year; former congressman Baron Hill, who was shoved out of the U.S. Senate nomination in 2016 by Bayh; and House Minority Leader Terry Goodin, who faces a potential stiff challenge for reelection this November. Of this group, Goodnight and Weinzapfel both have been successful mayors, more so with the Kokomo Democrat who has taken his city from the brink of an auto industry disaster to creating a destination city with the third-highest economic growth rate in the nation.

Out of all these names, Goodnight's pedigree is the most prolific on just about every front, from his fundraising abilities, to his policy manifestations and the impressive results that span brick-and-mortar (a new baseball stadium and thriving downtown), to lack of debt, reduction in city employees, and enhanced services to the public, like a free transportation system.

In the Democratic context, the annual Indiana Democratic Editorial Association convention at French Lick in August two years out is to find hospitality suites and contenders openly vying for position or consolidation.

Democratic Chairman John Zody reiterated Tuesday what he said last year, that a future gubernatorial nominee needs to be working this cycle for candidates. "Anybody who wants to be running in 2020 needs to be out busting their tail for people in 2018," Zody said. "People need to know them better this year and they need to be helping candidates."

The question we had for friends, activists and delegates was, "Who's preparing for 2020?" The question brought arched eyebrows, shoulder shrugs and head shakes.

Of all those mentioned above, it is the 2016 ticket of Gregg and Hale who are actually taking a leadership



Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight with Gov. Eric Holcomb. Goodnight has been one of the most successful mayors over the last decade.

role in campaigning and advocating for mid-term candidates. Gregg has been conspicuous on Twitter, showing up across the state endorsing and lauding Democratic legislative candidates. But those close to Gregg tell HPI he's not interested. Been there, done that. Twice.

If Gregg were to seek a third consecutive nomination, it would be matched only once in Hoosier history. Only former governor, senator and vice president Thomas A. Hendricks carried the Democratic torch three times, losing in 1860 and 1868 before winning in 1872. Others who ran twice in the pre-1972 world where governors could seek two consecutive terms, include James Ray, Noah Noble, Samuel Bigger, James Whitcomb, Joseph Wright, along with two-term Gov. Henry Schricker (but not consecutive) and Gov. Matt Welsh, who won in 1960 but lost to Doc Bowen in 1972.

Mayors Hogsett, Goodnight and McDermott face the obstacle of running for reelection, only to then turn around and seek another office a year later.

Mayor Buttigieg is the obvious rising star, but having lost a statewide treasurer's race in 2010 to Richard Mourdock, he's now on the course for an unprecedented presidential run. Few mayors (i.e. John Lindsey, Sam Yorty) have had the gumption to go directly into presidential politics and none has been successful. The real goal there for Buttigieg, sans a truly historic lightning strike, is a place on the national ticket. Having said that, only former vice president Joe Biden is the kind of political force who might attain frontrunner status, but he'd be 77 years old, and Buttigieg is making the case for the torch being passed to a new generation.

Holcomb, whose approvals and favorables have hovered around the 60th percentile, will certainly have a Democratic challenger in 2020. We just have no idea who it will be. ❖

Zody cites high energy, unity after Dem Con

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana Democratic Chairman John Zody spoke to Howey Politics Indiana from Washington Tuesday afternoon and said his party is united and focused on issues and a watchdog role heading into the general election.

He believes that Sen. Joe Donnelly will be reelected and that Democrats can break the Indiana House super majority. He said that party will have a stronger presence on social media and that the Democrat outreach to voters is strong.

Here is our HPI Interview

with Chairman Zody:

HPI: Where do you think Indiana Democrats are after the convention season?

Zody: We're in good shape. We're unified. We're going to keep talking to people around the state. I felt real good about the energy Friday night and the convention on Saturday. I feel good. We had 1,100 people at the dinner Friday night, we had 1,600 convention delegates on Saturday. We passed our platform unanimously. We nominated three great statewide candidates. People felt they were heard, they had energy moving into the rest of the summer.

HPI: What does your statewide ticket bring to the equation?

Zody: First and foremost, they bring both experience and diversity.

Jim Harper running for secretary of state is a younger candidate but brings experience as an attorney. He knows the law. He knows about the issue of voting rights which is critical right now. Joselyn Whitticker is a former member of the (Marion) city council, former school administrator, former member of the board of public works, knows government finance and knows how to campaign and work. John Aguilera, a former legislator and county council member, brings experience. They bring that energy and that drive to get out there and talk to people. People want to know that their party and, more importantly, there are candidates out there who reflect their values.

HPI: They talked about taking on the watchdog role in a Statehouse that is dominated by the Republicans. Is the watchdog role going to be the key point of acti-

tion?

Zody: Jim's role as secretary of state will be to watch over elections and business securities, but it's to make sure the right to vote is advocated. John and Joselyn have different roles, that they are checks and balances on the administration. They would both be members of the State Board of Finance. I've worked in state government and I know the importance of the auditor's office when it comes to the forecasts or closing out the fiscal year along with the governor's office. Having those checks and balances and having those watchdogs is really important.

HPI: Where do you think Sen. Donnelly's campaign stands at this point? I moved that race to tossup last week, figuring it was going to end up there. We've seen some recent polling suggesting that Mike Braun might be stronger than Todd Rokita or Luke Messer might have been.

Zody: I feel good. Joe is hanging in there real well. He hasn't missed a beat. We've seen Mike Braun drop off since the primary. He might be on TV but he's nowhere else to be found as far as I can see. I saw Joe Donnelly today and he was joking at the meeting we were in that he went and did a parade on Sunday. He said, "You were probably at home and I did a parade." He's the hardest working person I've ever met. He made it clear where we stand on our values both Friday and Saturday. He's hanging in there well. I think he's going to win and everything is running on track.

HPI: We heard Eric Holder talk about redistricting reform and we've had two U.S. Supreme Court cases where the justices passed. Do you think gerrymandering is going to resonate with voters?

Zody: It's a big issue for grassroots activism and energy. When you talk about it in a way that politics needs to be better, people respond very passionately to that. The Supreme Court has decided to punt on these two cases out of Maryland and Washington. I know people here in

Indiana are still going to fight and try to get rid of gerrymandering until the court decides something. That is an issue we found during the General Assembly where I took 3,000 petitions over the Rep. Milo Smith's office and people who were interested in something getting done. It can be an issue that can get real complicated but when you boil it down, when you say your right to vote is important, when you say it allows for districts to be drawn in a partisan way to silence people's voices, that gets a lot of response from people. People want politics to be better and if we want better politics, expanded voting rights, fairer elections and making sure we deal with all of these things, it is something we're going to keep fighting on.

HPI: How much of this election is going to be a referendum on President Trump?



Zody: We'll see. Donald Trump is going to do what Donald Trump is going to do. We're going to stay focused on Indiana stuff. Certainly the national mood is going to have an impact on Indiana. We have been and will continue to stay focused on what we need to do as Democrats, and I talked about this on Saturday, what we are for. We're going to continue to point out where things need to be better in Washington, what Congress is doing along with what President Trump is or isn't doing. At the end of the day, we want to work and elect candidates who are for something. We're going to keep talking about that.

HPI: On the border child separation issue, I asked Kyle Hupfer about that and he called it a national issue and he would stay in his lane. How big an issue could that be for Indiana Democrats?

Zody: Humanitarian issues are not outside of our lane. I will say to that we were very strong with our platform to say that what is happening needs to stop immediately. Congress has to do its job. The Republican majority is not doing its job. We need to stay together. We were strong on our platform on Saturday and I stand behind it.

HPI: Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel told me in Evansville the RNC has made 210,000 contacts in Indiana and Hupfer said they've got three field staffers in each nine congressional districts. Talk about your outreach and any metrics you'd like to share.

Zody: We started last year measuring things and putting together a running list of how many registered voters there are since November 2016. How many more volunteers we have. We feel good because every month those numbers are going up. Our training programs, our social media, our training programs, all of those have steadily increased over the last 18 months. Our field program has been running since the Spring. We've got more than two dozen folks on the ground at least in each of the congressional districts. We have a solid coordinated campaign. The legislative campaigns are full partners in that. We are coordinating where we can, we are talking with voters and we're measuring every bit of that. We're talking to folks around the state on whether they are 100% going to vote for our candidates and if they are undecided we are going to attempt to persuade them.

HPI: When I was preparing my House and Senate forecasts I noticed most of your candidates have websites and Facebook pages, far more than in

past cycles. Is that part of your new strategy?

Zody: People understand the importance of digital. We just hired another digital staffer at state party. It's important. There are lots of folks out there who are newly engaged. We've got to do everything we can to stay engaged, educate them on the political process, as well as our candidates. We are focused very heavily on doing that. We have spent money every month on our budget to dedicated social media targeting in different parts of the state so people know they know what's happening in Indianapolis and they are hearing the news from us. Targeting those efforts, making sure people



know more about the process and our candidates is critical. We've got to do it. You talk about Facebook and websites. That is the result of the state party staying on line. We've gotten a lot of first time Millennial and female candidates running than we've ever had. I think for those newly engaged, one of the first things they think about is social media and what do they need to do to have a presence. For people who are newly engaged, you don't have to have decades of experience in politics to know how to do that on social media. There are lot of people who are new volunteers who just want to help a candidate. They know how to do social media and digital stuff.

HPI: Hupfer believes Republicans will maintain their General Assembly super majorities. What is your assessment?

Zody: A realistic goal is to at least break the super majority in the House. In the Senate that's a tougher climb because there are fewer seats. We can break the super majority in the House and pick up some seats in the Senate. ❖



CONTENT BY CARTER
strategic content creation and deployment

Hupfer predicts GOP super majorities will survive mid-term

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – With the Indiana political convention season concluded, we sat down with Republican Chairman Kyle Hupfer, a week after his successful confab in Evansville. He remains confident that the GOP will hold on to its U.S. House seats, upset Sen. Joe Donnelly and maintain its General Assembly supermajorities.



He chided Democratic efforts at redistricting reform with Republican Communications Director Pete Seat injecting at one

point, “What they’re asking for is actually gerrymandering.” Hupfer added that to achieve more competitive districts would mean weakening stalwart Democratic districts.

He views the Indiana GOP as united after the divisive U.S. Senate primary. He was unconcerned that U.S. Rep. Luke Messer skipped the convention, noting that Messer was invited and that a number of his campaign staffers had migrated to Mike Braun’s campaign.

Hupfer believes that Braun is now emerging as a favorite over Donnelly and expects both campaigns to stay up on the air until the November election. He said the Senate race is actually steering vastly more resources into that campaign with spill-over into other races, citing the three GOP field staffers in each of the nine congressional districts.

And Hupfer believes that the migration of Hoosier Republicans into the Trump administration, numbering about 30, has opened doors for the next generation of GOP leaders. “I expect 20 years from now, there will be 10 or 20 leaders across the state that come out of this group hitting doors today,” Hupfer said.

Is he concerned that with the upset of Sen. Donnelly and the maintenance of supermajorities, that Indiana will essentially be a one-party state? “No,” he said, “The results speak for themselves.”

Asked if it will take one of the Bayh twins – the recently graduated sons of former governor and senator Evan Bayh – to revive Democrats, he cited the 2016 Bayh campaign ad where the two donned Pacer and Indiana State University t-shirts as a potential future problem. “We’ll see if one of them actually moves here,” he said.

Here is our interview with GOP State Chairman Hupfer:

HPI: How do you feel about your party coming

out of the Evansville convention?

Hupfer: It was great. I echo what you say about the convention atmosphere itself. The Ford Center certainly afforded a venue unlike anything we’ve ever done as a party. The visuals you saw, the screens gave it almost a national convention type feel to it. The party came out united and strong. Mike Braun did a great job of distinguishing himself from Democrat Donnelly. It was pretty apparent in watching the general session and talking to people that there’s really no hangover from the primary. People have immediately rallied around Mike Braun. We nominated a great ticket and for the second time in our history have nominated three females, Connie Lawson, Tera Klutz and Kelly Mitchell. I think those four folks at the top of the ticket are going to be extremely strong heading into November.

HPI: Are Indiana Republicans in a mode where the mid-term conventions are going to be held in places other than Indianapolis?

Hupfer: I don’t know. I think it’s going to be a decision made four years from now. It has to be a joint decision. There has to be someone who wants it and supports the work that’s necessary. I think there’s a balance.



I think a lot of people would like us to take a break and do two or three in a row in Indianapolis. I think Fort Wayne did a great job and so did Evansville. We’ll just have to see.

HPI: Did Mayor Winnecke make a pitch for this particular convention?

Hupfer: We had an RFP process and had several communities make a pitch to us. We selected Evansville based on their submission. If we ever did it again, we’d do it that way.

HPI: Which were the other communities?

Hupfer: I know we talked to French Lick, Indianapolis and Evansville.

HPI: I moved the Senate race to "Tossup." I had said all along Mike Braun would create the most difficult matchup for Joe Donnelly. He's coming out of the gates strong.

Hupfer: I think putting it in as a tossup is being generous to Joe Donnelly at this point. I think coming out of the primary the way we did and having some independent polling that has Mike Braun in the lead.

HPI: Is that polling you did or the campaign?

Hupfer: We saw some Real Clear Politics (polling) a couple weeks ago (that) had Braun up. I think when you just look at some of the other information out there, the generic reelect which you highlighted where it was in the low 30s for him to be reelected and the mid-40s for someone else; that's not a good place for an incumbent like Democrat Joe Donnelly to be. I think that people are starting to see this guy really isn't someone who he says he is when he comes back to Indiana. Nothing highlights that better than for the last three or four years he told Hoosiers he wants to reform, replace and fix Obamacare and then stood on the stage of the State Democratic Convention this week and touted and bragged on being the deciding vote on Obamacare. I think he's struggling on who he is. Hoosiers are seeing that and see him as a liberal Democrat who supports Chuck Schumer, Nancy Pelosi and the Obama administration. He's not a moderate. He's not someone who relates to most Hoosiers and that continues to come out as the campaign comes on.

HPI: So, Ronna McDaniel had everyone get out their cell phone and text the RNC. I've seen a lot of polls that shows Democratic intensity is higher than for Republicans. Did that help?

Hupfer: About 250 people responded to that.

HPI: So, I don't put a lot of stock into the congressional generics until late August, but we've seen poll after poll showing great Democratic intensity. How do you work to adjust that in your favor?

Hupfer: I don't know what you're using to measure that intensity. I can tell that in Indiana, as you travel around Indiana, I've done my 15 or 16 Lincoln Days and the governor has done his share. Statewides have all been out. It is record crowd after record crowd after record crowd regardless of who headlines the event. There's a record amount of intensity in the Republican Party and you couple that with the efforts of Ronna McDaniel and the RNC and we're up to 60 paid field staff for the summer.



Over 30 will roll into post-college starting back up and paid interns going back. This weekend was a national action and we hit over 15,000 doors this weekend. So, I think there's a tremendous amount of intensity here in Indiana. They've seen the success that has happened under Republican leadership. There is this young group of Republicans we're tapping into that are committed to getting the vote out. These national days of action, the amount of training we're doing, the Republican Leadership Initiative in conjunction with the RNC, you're going to

see a ground game like you've never seen before from the Republican Party. You're going to see that amplified two or three times this November.

HPI: When we talked last winter, you kept emphasizing that outreach. Any other metrics you can share? I know Ronna McDaniel talked about 210,000 contacts and that will be quite a bit higher by November.

Hupfer: I know we've trained over 1,000 volunteers through the Republican leadership initiative. So, when you start talking about three paid staff in each congressional district plus our college interns, this summer will be spent on days of action when we're out knocking on doors and making calls, while training that next layer of leaders in get-out-the-vote efforts. That will continue to grow. We're so far ahead of where we've ever been as a party this early in the cycle. We had kind of expectations we'd grow to, but the amount of paid staff and when you couple that with the cooperative nature of what we've got now with the state party, the state legislative candidates, the congressional candidates, Sen. Young, Gov. Holcomb, and everybody's pulling in the same direction. Throw on top of that the RNC because of the Senate race and it's just a wealth of resources. Those folks are on the ground every single day until November. We're going to take the message to voters. With the data we have, we think that gives us an advantage. The number of points we have on voters allows us to craft a specific message and let them know about what the Republican Party is doing for them on the issues that matter to them as Hoosiers will resonate.

HPI: Are you going to hold the congressional seats and those in the General Assembly? Will Democrats make any gains? Do you think you can pick off the Stemler House seat and maybe Terry Goodin?

Hupfer: I think both of those races down south are in play. We've got two candidates working really hard

down in those races. There were a few primaries that the governor and state party got involved in, and in all 11 the incumbent won. That was critical to maintain our success going forward. I think we will come out of this with both supermajorities in the House and Senate.

HPI: The elephant on the table is the child separation thing at the border. That's an issue that seems to be mushrooming. Sen. Young just put out a statement calling for the expeditious reuniting of families. What's your take on that?

Hupfer: I've said this before, we try to focus on Indiana. That's why we're successful. We are focused on the pillars the governor has established. That being said, I think that everyone wants to find a solution on immigration issues. That's up to the president and the Congress to come up with that. I urge them to continue to work to come up with a solution. Most Republicans in Indiana want that. But at the end of the day, that's a federal issue and we've got to follow the lead on that nationally.

HPI: Is President Trump as popular here in Indiana as he was in November 2016, or has there been some erosion of support?

Hupfer: I think it's at least where it was. It's hard to gauge. I don't necessarily buy all the polling we've seen. We saw the number of new voters President Trump turned out in 2016. I think there's still an electricity around him that is undeniable. You see him come to Elkhart two days after the election and you fill a gym of 8,500 people at capacity and there's probably 4,000 or 5,000 who were in line. They had to close the doors. His entire parade route from the airport was lined with people holding signs. It's a level of enthusiasm we've never seen in politics here in Indiana. He could go do that in 250 cities across the country any night of the week. That enthusiasm is still there. There is a great intensity still around with the president and vice president.

HPI: One of the things I had in last week's column was the 30 Hoosiers now in the Trump administration. There's some major talent that migrated to Washington and yet it seems like you're finding the next person up. Is there a new wave of talent of 20- and 30-year-olds coming up?

Hupfer: Absolutely. One benefit of working with Gov. Daniels was he wanted to bring in a new crew of people, look to young folks and look at young people around the state. Vice President Pence did that as governor and Gov. Holcomb is doing that, as well. This RNC effort here in Indiana is allowing us to put a whole new generation of folks into the system. There are 60 kids, 60 young adults somewhere between college age and their mid-20s, who are out there getting educated on how to run elections, how to win elections and how to message, day in and day out. The cream will rise to the top of that crop of the next generation. I expect 20 years from now, there will be 10 or 20 leaders across the state that come out of this group hitting doors today. ❖

Rep. Ryan urges Dems to focus on economy

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana Democrats heard from Ohio U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan at the Friday night Hoosier Hospitality Dinner and he focused on economic and social issues. In 2016, Ryan unsuccessfully challenged House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi even though he has not held a leadership position.

"We got the message we wanted to get out," Ryan said after his defeat to Pelosi. "We have to focus on economic issues. It's the issue that unites us as Democrats. If we're going to win, we have to have an economic strategy that resonates in every region of the country."

Since then, he has entered the conversation of the 2020 presidential race. Ryan represents the Youngstown/Akron area of Ohio, first elected in 2002, saying that he is interested in the policy side of government. The 45-year-old was raised by a single mother in a Catholic family.

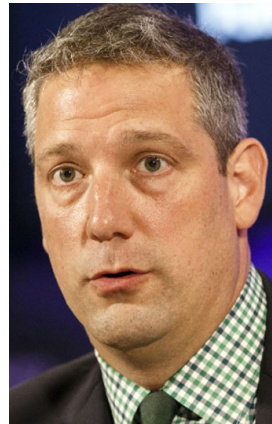
"I'm half-Irish and half-Italian, so I want to fight," Ryan told The Huffington Post. In 2012, he published a book, "A Mindful Nation," that promotes meditation as a way to reduce stress and improve performance. He is an ardent proponent of meditation, advocating for "the movement of mindfulness" as a vehicle for escaping the daily grind and alleviating external pressures.

HPI: What is the message you are trying to convey to Indiana Democrats and beyond?

Ryan: The economic challenges that face Indiana and Youngstown and Akron, Ohio, where I grew up; it's been going on for a long time now, the insecurity on health care, wages and pensions. It's been going on for 30 to 40 years strong. There are pockets of jobs, but overall, people are hurting. It's time for Democrats to stay focused on those economic challenges that most people are focused on.

HPI: Sen. Donnelly has been talking about the "sabotage" of the Affordable Care Act by Republicans and the Trump administration. Is that a winning message?

Ryan: I don't think there's any question. Nobody said the ACA was perfect, but it was a step in the right direction. And now all the benefits through the expansion and ways to pay for it have been undermined by the Republicans. Most people realize that destabilizing it, whether



it's health care or anything else, is going to drive costs up and that's what is happening right now.

HPI: The family separations at the border are sparking a lot of outrage from many Americans, from some of the president's evangelical supporters and some Republicans. Is that going to be a problem for Republicans this fall?

Ryan: I think this kind of issue transcends the left/right of politics, Republican or Democrat. This is a human issue that people of faith need to continue to speak out on. This is against everything I was taught in 13 years of Catholic schooling. I think most people who go to church on Sunday know this is not how God wants us to treat children – or anybody, let alone children.

HPI: On almost a daily basis we're seeing these cascading controversies with the Trump administration, whether it's the children at the border or the president saying North Korea is no longer a nuclear threat after his summit with Kim Jong Un, or wanting Americans to stand up for their president like the North Koreans must do with their dictator. Do you see a threshold that could be surpassed and punctured that would bleed his political support?

Ryan: The thing with Trump is I feel like he's not wearing well. The daily attacks, the daily power grabs, the fights he starts with people happen daily now. He's trying to exploit my fears, exploit my insecurities and anxieties, and I think it's starting to catch up with him. As Democrats, we need to build the alternative vision for the country. That's what is really important.

HPI: That would be ...

Ryan: Trump is out there saying how great the economy is, how great the stock market is. Most people aren't on the stock market, wages are stagnant and continue to be. People are losing their pensions. They are working longer and getting less. So, we need to talk about an economy that works for the working class. If you work hard and play by the rules, you can make it. You can put your 40 hours in and go fishing on the weekend, pay for your kid to go to college and your kids will have a better life than you. That's what the Democrats are for. While we have to be critical of Trump and express our disagreements and, with the children, be very vocal and forceful on how we explain that, we have to let people know we're not just being anti-Trump. We have to have a vision for where we want to go.

HPI: Do you think the tariffs are going to grow into a seismic issue?

Ryan: It's so destabilizing. A lot of these tariffs, when you come from a place like from where I come from, China has been cheating, but when you put tariffs on Canada, you stop and think, "I can't believe the president of the United States has picked a fight with, and unnecessarily so, our greatest ally." Canada and Europe have the same labor standards we have, the same environ-

mental standards. The protections are better, the pension systems are better, so we can trade with them fine. It's when you're trading with countries that don't have these standards that they gain a huge advantage, so we need to do things that offset that. But the president is doing it one day, but not the next day. He's doing this one day and then he's not. There's no strategy. What really concerns me is the Chinese have a five-year plan, a 10-year plan, a 20-year plan and a 100-year plan.

HPI: The Road and Belt plan.

Ryan: Yes, the One Road, One Belt, the Make It in China 2025 Plan, they are building bases in Africa, they are locking down raw material contracts in these poor African countries to feed their industrial machines. They are building islands in the South China Sea. They're doing

what they said they were going to do in the '90s. They are executing their plan. So, they have a 100-year plan and President Trump lives in a 24-hour news cycle. All he cares about is "How do I dominate the 24-hour news cycle today?" If it means embracing a dictator, I'll do that. If it means fight with a friend, I'll do that. Then I'll clean it up tomorrow and make news out of that. And so, while we're doing the 24-hour news-cycle thing, China is eating our lunch. The American people

need to know that, and Democrats need to be seen as the party that can fix that.

HPI: We have the same opioid crisis that is afflicting Ohio. What's your message on that?

Ryan: These systems are all broken. With the health care system, we spend two-and-a-half times more than most countries. Our education system, we rank 34th and 19th in math and science. We're having these algae blooms in the Great Lakes and our agriculture system in some ways is broken. With the economic system, when you have the lowest unemployment ever and the stock market is where it is, and the country is still anxious, that's a problem.

HPI: And we're looking at \$1.5 trillion budget deficits while the economy is strong. What happens with that if we have a recession, or a Great Recession like we did in 2008 and 2009. Are we looking at \$2 trillion or \$3 trillion deficits, to be paid by our kids and grandkids?

Ryan: Yes, with rising interest rates. We'll have no money in the bank.

HPI: There's been talk of a presidential run in your political future. What are you thinking on that front?

Ryan: We're going to make a decision about that after the election.

HPI: Is a presidential run an option?

Ryan: You know, I never say "no" to anything. It's important we win some House races here. It's important we win the House back. No. 1 is win the House, try and get some Senate seats, protect guys like Joe (Donnelly) and see where we are after that. ❖



A children's crusade

By CAMERON CARTER
HPI Contributing Editor

INDIANAPOLIS – Perhaps not since the Children's Crusade of 1212 have adults in power so cruelly exploited children for political ends. Today's situation on the U.S.



border is akin to that disastrous medieval enterprise led by Franco-German zealots in that we once again (centuries later) have on offer a religious rationale for decisive action unmoored from reality and from the very human kindness that Christianity espouses but we too rarely see.

WWJD?

Certainly not this. Not the systemic separation of babes from their mothers nor the destruction

of families as a matter of state policy. We are admonished ad nauseum that the family is the cornerstone of society – and so it is. Does this not apply to these migrants? Are their human rights not as inalienable as our own?

Jesus counselled all to turn the other cheek, but I doubt he did so in order for us to avert our eyes from a humanitarian crisis of our own government's making.

The Trump Administration has decided to enforce our country's immigration laws with zero-tolerance. But its enforcement and, indeed, its rhetoric is not unprecedented. These immigration laws are not new; they are established through acts of Congress. Anti-illegal immigration rhetoric was deployed by both the Clinton and Obama administrations merely in more discreet, mellifluous form. (This is not a



claim; it is supported by the facts. Anyone wishing to dispute them is welcome to search CSPAN's archives for the relevant State of the Union passages. Seek and ye shall find.)

No, the issue and U.S. policy are not new. What's different this time around is the willingness of an administration to throw judgment and humanity out the window while stepping up enforcement and claiming a "biblical" reason for doing so.

Also, a news media that was willingly conscripted into "Le Resistance" to anything Trump well before images of detained migrants began populating newsfeeds (their cheeks turned, indeed, during the Obama years).

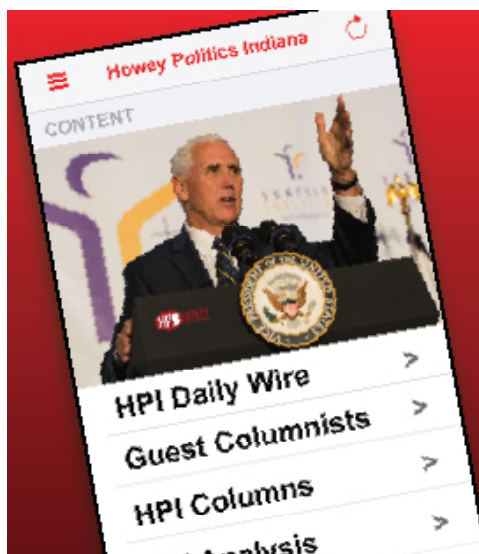
As parents and children are separated at our border and placed in detention centers – glorified cages and boxes, really – the Trump Administration has found itself in a box of its own. However, the ultimate responsibility for this fiasco lies with congressional Republicans and Democrats who, for their own political ends rather than the public interest, have not negotiated in good faith on solutions to our broken immigration system.

It is said, often accurately, that Congress only acts when there is a crisis. Well, a pox on both their houses if they fail to act now.

Legislation on workable immigration reform is both possible and long overdue. The clear-headed among us will see opportunity in this misery to establish border security ("build the wall"), grant refuge and opportunity to those seeking both (asylum and skilled visas), as well as amnesty for the blameless (DACA). Only then can we deter another influx of non-citizens coming to our borders in such numbers and destitute fashion.

If this Congress fails to act, then we must take it upon ourselves to do so. In November. ❖

Carter is CEO of Content by Carter.



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U.S. trade imbalances are complex with no easy fixes

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO – United States trade imbalances and difficulties with our nation’s trading partners are complex and not subject to easy fixes. If it were as simple an issue as merely comparing tariffs, as President Trump has recently attempted with his explanation of Canadian dairy tariffs, then we could solve the problem by either charging identical tariffs or none at all. However, tariffs are just the tip of the trade iceberg.



Barriers to free and fair trade raise their ugly heads in a variety of ways. Regulatory, taxation, customs, subsidization, dumping, preferential trading and currency barriers are just as potent and chilling in their effect on free trade as are tariffs. Sniffing out the barriers and the subtle nuances that either enhance exports

or restrict imports of is more of an art than a science. As long as nation states exist, there will be no such animal as unrestricted free and fair trade. The idea is as romantic as it is illusive.

For those of you who are so easily moved to criticize President Trump for his tough trade positions with China, Canada, Mexico, Europe and, soon to be, India, you need to recognize this rather inconvenient fact about trade. You may call Trump a jingoistic “America Firster,” but every last one of our trading partners in this great big world are their “Country Firsters.” Let’s take a look at some of the non-tariff ways that countries wag the trade dog by using the tail:

Governmental regulations are a particularly onerous way of restricting competing trade. You can make the rules in such a way as to heavily tip the scale in favor of your country’s trade. For example, Europe regulates the amount of non-GMO beef that may be imported. In addition, you may exclude certain ingredients from products. Regulations such as these tip the scales in favor of the home team. As one Hungarian agriculture official told me, “You can’t get a good steak in Europe because of European Union trade regulations. All we get is tough Spanish beef.”

If the United States insisted that China meet the same wage laws, child labor standards and environmental regulations as we have in the United States, then we could kiss the trade imbalance goodbye. I’m not advocating this, but it makes you think when you see the recurring

trade imbalance with a country that drains industrial waste straight into their rivers.

Taxation policy can also impact trade. There are numerous examples of taxes or lack thereof moving the trade needle. Our recent tax law change allowing the depreciation of capital investments over a twelve-month period instead of longer term depreciation just gave us a big advantage over other countries. Another favorite is an oil depletion allowance that gives our oil companies a whopper of a competitive break. Until our recent corporate tax rate cut, our businesses were at a distinct disadvantage to those domiciled overseas.

Subsidization of an industry by the government gives a big pricing advantage to the home team. Many French industries are subsidized by their government. This allows lower product pricing underwritten by Jean Q. Publique. Most airlines around the world are owned or heavily supported by their country’s government.

Lest we get too haughty, the United States has been the Emerald City of subsidies over the last 50 years. Farmers have been paid to not plant. Loans have been guaranteed by government, prices have been fixed and production has been capped. Remember years ago when the government handed out all that free cheese to poor people? Where did you think the government got the cheese and why did they buy it? This is largely why Washington, D.C., has become a swamp filled with creatures trying to get candy from the government.

In the United States, most industry will cut back production when sales slow. That usually results in layoffs, industry consolidation, plant closures, etc. In some countries, most notably socialistic ones, you just don’t lay off workers when business gets slow. You keep on producing and cut your prices on the surplus that you export.

This strategy results in exporting goods at a price that is less than what it costs you to make. This is dumping in its purest form. In the 1980s, Japan did this with semiconductors and now Europe is doing it with steel and aluminum.

Customs is another chokepoint for free trade should a country wish to slow down imports to a crawl. The French have been notorious for singling out imports that have direct French competitors and then strangling the competition with an interminable customs process. Just picture a cargo container full of the latest Kanye West CDs. Since Kanye poses an existential threat to the hallowed memory of Serge Gainsbourg, each and every CD container must be inspected by French customs. By the time the last CD is opened and inspected, Kanye has already released a new album. The French have long had a history of using this tactic to slow down entry of imported tires and electronics.

Occasionally you will see a country attempt to protect an industry by creating artificial free trade zones or some other geographic government inducements meant to prop up a non-competitive industry. Many times, this is done to lower a domestic company’s costs by reducing

American tariffs in a certain area. These are popular with politicians, organized labor and the Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, currency value differentials will substantially affect trade balances. Sometimes these currency fluctuations are market-driven and sometimes they are due to overt government manipulation.

Back in the 1980s, we used to read books about the marvels of Japanese manufacturing and how their miracle culture was going to eat our lunch. The red ink of our trade deficit piled up as millions of Hondas and Toyotas were unloaded at our ports for American consumption. American auto workers lost jobs and plants closed. Then just when you started to wonder who really won World War II, something amazing changed. No, our machinery didn't get better, our workers did not increase productivity and our auto styles didn't get any zoomier. What caused this change? The value of the U.S. dollar versus the Japanese yen declined significantly and, all of a sudden, our labor and manufacturing costs became significantly cheaper when measured against the yen. Next thing you know, we're opening Japanese auto plants in Lafayette, Indiana and everywhere else in the United States.

This cheapening of the dollar drove up the cost of a Japanese auto when measured in yen and it made our vehicles far more competitive. American consumers raced back into American auto dealers and slapped that,

"Be American, Buy American" bumper sticker on their new Chevette.

The decline of the U.S. dollar in the 1980s was a market-driven phenomenon as a direct result of large, American budget deficits and huge trade imbalances. That's how it is supposed to work. But, what happens when a country acts in a way to intentionally drive down its currency's value or to keep it artificially low? Hey China! I'm talking about you! Ever wonder how the prices at Walmart stay so low each and every year even though the United States piles up huge budget deficits and mounting trade imbalances with China?

China is like a heroin dealer; their first and foremost duty is to keep you hooked. China keeps us hooked on cheap goods by artificially keeping their currency in a perpetual state of relative weakness so that prices in U.S. stores don't rise. They can do this by purchasing dollars in the currency market, buying U. S. Treasury securities and U. S. stocks. Thus, the dollars return home like the swallows to Capistrano. This gives me the ability to purchase the same squirt gun at Walmart year after year for 99 cents. And, there is absolutely no way and no risk to Chinese industry that an American company will be able to manufacture a squirt gun for nine dollars, let alone 99 cents.

When it comes to trade negotiations with the Europeans, Canada, Mexico, India, China and others,

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you will hear a lot about average tariffs charged by each country. You won't hear much about the 270% dairy tariff in Canada or the 350% tobacco tariff in the United States. You'll hear that the European tariffs only average 6.5% overall versus the United States average of 1.5%. That doesn't sound like that big of a disparity does it? These averages only tell one small part of the overall trade story.

Make no mistake about it, every country in the world does and should act in its own self-interest. What has sent the media of the world into a state of extreme anxiety is that for the first time in many, many years, the United States has declared that it is going to act in its own self-interest. The last time this happened was in the spring

of 1987 under Ronald Reagan, when he imposed large tariffs on Japanese semiconductors being dumped in the United States.

This is the essence of President Donald Trump and what has infuriated his detractors. Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton because he promised to put America first again. When he actually puts America first, there should be no surprise! ❖

Dunn is the former Howard County and 4th CD Republican chairman.

Consumers need to have a watchdog

By ERIN MACEY

INDIANAPOLIS – We all want financial services that propel us toward our goals – a home, an education, a small business, a dignified retirement. But in today's increasingly complex financial marketplaces, some companies exploit consumers, often denying their victims the opportunity to reach those goals, or even sending them backwards.



Abuse and deception in financial marketplaces affects whole communities, not just individuals, and it should not take an advanced degree in finance to

avoid the pitfalls, so it makes sense for consumers to have a watchdog. And they did, until recently.

From 2011-2017, Hoosiers could depend on the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). Established in the wake of our still-recent financial collapse, the CFPB went after the banks, student loan servicers, debt collectors and others who took advantage of consumers. It recovered about \$12 billion for consumers in principal reductions, cancelled debts or monetary compensation against unfair or deceptive lenders.

Among these was Wells Fargo, which secretly opened deposit and credit card accounts, racking up fees and other charges. Through rules, guidance and enforcement, the CFPB aimed to end discriminatory practices in auto lending and make prepaid card fees more transparent. It developed a rule to limit arbitration clauses in financial contracts so that consumers could band together in class-action lawsuits (later repealed by Congress). It crafted a landmark rule to curb the debt treadmill of pay-

day loans. It produced educational materials so consumers would know their rights when debt collectors call (and call and call) and had tools to help them balance their budgets.

Then in November of 2017, a leadership change transformed everything. Now, with temporary acting director Mick Mulvaney at the helm, it feels like the watchdog has been greeting thieves at the door with an enthusiastic tail-wagging. Under Mulvaney's part-time supervision (he also heads the Office of Management and Budget), the CFPB quickly dropped pending lawsuits against predatory lenders attempting to use tribal affiliation to charge upwards of 900% APR on small loans.

It is threatening to hide the complaint database, which more than 16,000 Hoosiers have used to seek redress and which the Institute for Working Families and others have used for research. It actually joined two payday lender trade associations, representatives of the industry it is supposed to be overseeing, in calling a halt to the payday rule — which was honed through five years of research and public input, and would have ended a significant portion of the harms caused by these extremely high-cost loans. And now President Trump has appointed Kathy Kraninger, an associate director under Mulvaney at OMB, to be the permanent director.

All Hoosiers, regardless of their income or background, deserve access to a financial marketplace that is fair, safe and transparent. To get there, we need a CFPB that will guard consumers effectively, not one that rolls over and plays dead at the sight of financial abuses. We have had such an agency in our corner once before and we can have it again. Senators Donnelly and Young should thoroughly vet Kraninger and only put the stamp of approval on her if they are confident she will fight for working families. Anything less is unacceptable. ❖

Macey, Ph.D, is a policy analyst for the Indiana Institute for Working Families and the Indiana Community Action Association.

Indiana is 7th in export dependency

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – “Don’t you dare!” Myrtle (my muse) cautioned. “Back in mid-March you wrote about exports from Indiana and other states. Never have so many read so little before skipping so fast to the comics.”

“But it’s different now,” I insisted in defense of my choice for this week’s column. “The trade war, if there is one, is heating up. Folks want to know what impact it will have.”

Myrtle paid no attention. She had made up her mind and strawberry shortcakes warranted her consideration at this moment.

“Well, I’m doing it,” I declared as if I were WWI doughboy going over the embankment out into No Man’s Land despite the



machine guns’ persistent ratatat-ratatat.

“Exports from Indiana accounted for 10.5% of our 2017 Gross Domestic Product,” I said aloud while writing. “That means we ranked as the seventh most dependent state in the nation on exports to fuel our economy. Only Michigan among the Great Lake states ranked higher in sixth place and 11.8%.”

“Hmm,” Myrtle acknowledged, reaching for a second shortcake and eyeing the bourbon balls.

“Now, we’re not able to say much at the metropolitan-area level because, while we have export numbers for 2017, we don’t have GDP as yet for that year,” I said.

“**Must be** tough on all the number nerds,” Myrtle said.

“Well, all is not lost,” I confided. “We do have 2016 data. And there we find that the Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson metro area had a dependency on exports of just 7.1% of GDP.”

“That’s surprising,” Myrtle surprised me by paying attention to what I was saying.

“Yes,” I responded.

“We’d imagine Indianapolis and vicinity as the most internationally connected metro area in the state, but it falls short of the rest of the state because so much manufacturing and farming is present elsewhere in Indiana.”

“And there’s another factor,” Myrtle said. “You can’t forget the export of services from Indiana. We have Purdue, Indiana, Notre Dame and several other colleges with many foreign students. That could be a significant element in the export picture for Indiana.”

I’ll admit, I was stunned. Although she had whipped crème on her lips from some puffy pastry, Myrtle was actually inspiring me just as a muse is expected to do.

“You think about it,” Myrtle continued, “We really don’t know much about our exports or our imports. For example, how much money is spent on the Indianapolis 500 by people from other countries? We’re familiar with our domestic beer-bellies, but how many perfectly decent fans come from outside the U.S. with credit-laden cards to watch 33 vehicles go around that oval in Speedway?”

“And let’s not forget,” I added, “the feds won’t break out our Northwest Indiana figures from the rest of all those exports subsumed under the Chicago metro area.” But it was for naught. Myrtle had spotted the eclairs. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist. His views can be followed on a [weekly podcast](#) or reached at Whogetswhat4@gmail.com

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 Mark Curry On Indiana Politics
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SCOTUS leaves door open to outlaw gerrymandering

Howey Politics Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS – On Monday the Supreme Court of the United States released opinions in two partisan gerrymandering cases, remanding *Gill v. Whitford* and allowing *Benisek v. Lamone* to go to trial. Although these

decisions fell short of what redistricting reform advocates had hoped for, the decisions leave the door open for the court to outlaw partisan gerrymandering in the future.



The Indiana Coalition for Independent Redistricting (ICIR), a diverse coalition of organizations working to reform redistricting by passing legislation to implement a citizens redistricting commission, will spend the summer continuing to build grassroots support for reform. During the 2018 Indiana General Assembly, legislation to create a set of public interest redistricting standards passed the Indiana Senate but was killed in the Indiana House of Representatives. Both the speaker of the House and the chairman of the House Elections Committee said that redistricting reform had to wait until the SCOTUS decided these cases.

“While we hoped the Supreme Court would make a final decision on partisan gerrymandering with the Wisconsin and Maryland cases, that didn’t happen,” said Julia Vaughn, policy director for Common Cause Indiana, a co-founder of the ICIR. “But, with these decisions it’s clear the court is still looking for the right case to establish a standard for what constitutes an unconstitutional partisan gerrymander. With the Wisconsin and Maryland cases being revived and the North Carolina case awaiting review by the Supreme Court, this issue remains in legal limbo.”

Vaughn continued, “But, that doesn’t mean the Indiana General Assembly cannot act on redistricting reform. It should be noted that those states that have established citizens redistricting commission or other alternatives to legislative driven redistricting are not being sued for partisan maps. While what constitutes an unconstitutional partisan gerrymander is still under judicial review, the court of public opinion is clear. Hoosiers want an end to the process that allows our legislators to pick their voters. We want redistricting reform in 2019.”

Debbie Asberry, redistricting reform

advocate for the League of Women Voters of Indiana stated, “Support for a citizens-led redistricting process continues to grow. Just last week the Highland Town Board became the 25th local government in Indiana to pass a resolution calling for the legislature to pass redistricting reform. We’ll be surveying every candidate for the state legislature to find out where they stand on this important issue. We’ll hold activist trainings and rallies and continue to pressure our lawmakers to be proactive on this issue. While the Supreme Court put off its final decision for another day, we firmly believe that day is coming. We call on the Indiana General Assembly to stop its delay tactics. There is no need to wait on the Supreme Court. Do the right thing and pass redistricting reform legislation to create a citizens redistricting commission.”

SCOTUS to hear Indiana forfeiture case

A lawsuit challenging Indiana’s civil forfeiture procedures will be heard by the United States Supreme Court after the justices granted a writ of certiorari to a case that a national legal organization says will have significant implications on Eighth Amendment protections nationwide (Covington, [Indiana Lawyer](#)). The justices on Monday agreed to hear Tyson Timbs and a 2012 Land Rover LR2, 17-1091. The Virginia-based Institute for Justice filed the cert petition in January on behalf of Tyson Timbs, a Grant County man who used proceeds from his father’s life insurance policy to purchase a \$42,000 Land Rover in 2013. A spokesman for Attorney General Curtis Hill’s office said the office is looking forward to “addressing the important questions raised by this case in our nation’s highest court.” He also said Solicitor General Thomas M. Fisher has argued three times before the Supreme Court, including *Crawford v. Marion County Election Board*, the voter identification case.

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YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?

Holcomb going to DC investment summit

Governor Eric Holcomb is taking part in the 2018 SelectUSA Investment Summit in Washington D.C. (Ober, [IBJ](#)). Holcomb will take part in meetings with business leaders and give a presentation on Indiana's Next Level Jobs workforce initiative during the two-day event. The summit is part of a U.S. Department of Commerce program focused on bringing more business investment to the United States. The fifth annual event will include business leaders in sectors including advanced manufacturing, infrastructure and energy. Topics will include tax and regulatory reform, trade, infrastructure and workforce development. Indiana's delegation will also include Secretary of Commerce Jim Schellinger, Indiana Economic Development Corp. President Elaine Bedel and other economic development leaders from throughout the state.

Donnelly, Young welcome Trump's move to repatriate remains from Korea

In a letter, U.S. Senators Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and Todd Young (R-IN) welcomed President Trump's recent commitment in Singapore to recover and repatriate the remains of American prisoners of war (POW) and service-members who are missing in action (MIA) from the Korean War, including 176 Hoosiers, a news release announced (Howey Politics Indiana). The senators said, in part, in their letter, "As a nation, we must help these families bring their loved ones home, and we must honor our commitment to never leave our fallen behind. We applaud your commitment to restart the POW/MIA recovery effort and to finally provide closure for the families that have waited for so long. We are eager to do all we can to help."

Koch group presses Donnelly

A powerful conservative group is pressing U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and other senators this week to back President Donald Trump's effort to eliminate an unspent \$15 billion in federal spending that Congress has already approved ([McClatchy](#)). The Koch Brothers-aligned Americans for Prosperity is running digital ads urging reluctant Republicans and some vulnerable Democrats to back the "rescission package," which cleared the House two weeks ago but faces an uncertain future in the Senate. Democrats have ridiculed the idea, noting that it comes on the heels of Republicans approving a \$1.5 trillion tax break that is expected to increase the already-big federal deficit.

Bucshon backs health insurance rule

Rep. Larry Bucshon, M.D. (R-IN) released the following statement after the Department of Labor issued a final rule to help make more affordable health insurance options available to Americans through expanded access to Association Health Plans: "Small businesses and self-employed Hoosiers are struggling to afford skyrocketing health insurance premiums and deductibles under the Affordable Care Act. I commend the Trump Administration

for addressing this problem by allowing self-employed individuals and small businesses to purchase association health care plans based on industry and geographical location. This change will allow more people to have affordable access to health insurance, while maintaining important consumer protections. Through this rule change, the Trump Administration is helping to ensure that consumers can have access to a health care plan that best fits their needs and their budget."

Donnelly skirting campaign finance laws

Democratic senators are pushing the limits by essentially posting instruction manuals on how they prefer allied groups to attack their opponents, which super PACs have then turned into ads in within a matter of days or weeks ([Politico](#)). The messages are short, featuring just a couple paragraphs or set of bullet points detailing either a line of praise for the senator or criticism aimed at their opponent. Occasionally, they link to larger research documents detailing and backing up the specific claims. Democratic Sen. Joe Donnelly's campaign posted under the tagline "Hoosiers should know" on May 31 that Republican opponent Mike Braun "enriched himself at the expense of working Hoosiers," citing information from an Associated Press story on Braun's business history published during the Republican primary. Six days later, Senate Majority PAC released a new ad in Indiana also highlighting details from the AP story on Braun's business record. Donnelly's campaign updated the section of its website with a new post on June 14. The new message said Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Braun were "lying about Joe Donnelly in order to distract voters from Mike Braun's terrible outsourcing record." On Tuesday, five days later, Senate Majority PAC released two new statewide ads in Indiana — one attacking Braun by labeling him "Mr. Outsourcing," and a second featuring Indiana voters praising Donnelly's record on the issue.

Hollingsworth says blue wave is crashing

With talk of the impending "blue wave" of voters going to the polls in November, Democratic candidates raised over a million dollars as they battled it out to appear on the ballot against a Republican incumbent in a solidly red Indiana district ([Washington Free Beacon](#)). Rep. Trey Hollingsworth, the incumbent Republican, says it was the blue wave talk that enabled Democrats to raise so much money, but he's seen no sign that it will actually be coming to Indiana. "They talked nonstop about how Democrat turnout was going to be high and how Democrats were going to rebuke Trump, and then nobody showed up for the Democrats," Hollingsworth said of his district's May primary, during which there were nearly twice as many Republican ballots cast than Democrats. ❖

Matt Tully, IndyStar: “What can I do?” a relative asked me over the weekend. She was talking about the immigrant children who have been separated from their parents and housed at detention facilities, and about a zero-tolerance policy from the Trump administration that has come to represent fundamental cruelty and negligence. What can I do? The question struck me because it was based on a desperate desire to help, one so many Americans feel right now, and because I had no good answer. I offered the most obvious one: Contact your congressional representatives in Washington so that they understand that this particular example of government gridlock and policy failure is different than so many others. As former First Lady Laura Bush put it: “Our government should not be in the business of warehousing children in converted box stores.” She compared this display of inhumanity to the Japanese American internment camps during World War II, “one of the most shameful episodes in U.S. history.” Or to quote current First Lady Melania Trump, “We need to be a country that follows all laws, but also a country that governs with heart.” I know my column can’t come close to matching the impact of words from first ladies and so many others. But this issue requires all of us to speak up and speak out. We all need to embrace the argument, shared by so many of late, that America is better than this, that this is not what our country represents, and that this cannot be tolerated. ❖



this is a rare case where Trump alone really can fix it. With a single word, he could reverse the policy, which his administration implemented last month. ❖

Michael Gerson, Washington Post: Logic not being the strong point of the Trump administration, it claims that it is not to blame for the separation of families at the border and that a just God is pleased it is happening. The first claim is a lie. Without the administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy, there would be no surge in detained children at overwhelmed facilities. And President Trump has incurred further responsibility by employing confused, frightened children as leverage in negotiations over a border wall. All of this is taking place as a direct result of Trump’s command to get tough at the border. And what shows toughness better than mistreating little boys and girls? The second claim, made most prominently by Attorney General Jeff Sessions, is that Romans 13 — a biblical passage written by the Apostle Paul urging everyone to be “subject to the governing authorities” — is an endorsement of the administration’s hard-line enforcement of immigration laws. Sessions is effectively claiming divine sanction for the idea that people who break laws may be punished and deterred by subjecting their children to mental anguish. This is cruelty defended by heresy. The Bible, like a gun, is a dangerous thing in the hands of a bigot. ❖

David Graham, The Atlantic: Nearly two years ago, on July 21, 2016, Donald Trump stood at a lectern in Cleveland and made a solemn vow. “Nobody knows the system better than me, which is why I alone can fix it,” he said. To his critics, this line was chilling, even authoritarian, defying the democratic nature of the American system. But to many of Trump’s supporters, it was a heartening moment—a sign that he would not allow himself to be tied up in red tape and mealy-mouthed excuses. There would be none of the vacillating and hand-wringing of the Obama administration. President Trump would not hesitate. Candidate Trump was clear that he was talking, in large part, about immigration, which had been the central issue of his campaign: “Tonight, I want every American whose demands for immigration security have been denied—and every politician who has denied them—to listen very closely to the words I am about to say. On January 21st of 2017, the day after I take the oath of office, Americans will finally wake up in a country where the laws of the United States are enforced. We are going to be considerate and compassionate to everyone.” Where that politician has gone is anybody’s guess, but he’s not the one who’s in the White House now. Trump now faces a mushrooming political crisis over his administration’s policy of separating children of unauthorized immigrants from their parents at the border. While Trump has often been confounded by the checks and balances of the courts and the Congress,

Andrew Egger, Weekly Standard: For weeks now, we’ve been hearing about the travails of the White House communications team: That they’re hemorrhaging employees, that the administration isn’t too concerned with hiring replacements, that morale is plummeting to all-time lows. Which might help explain the PR disaster the administration has blundered into with its new “zero tolerance” immigration policy, which has led to the separation of nearly 2,500 children from their parents to date at the U.S.-Mexico border. Even by the standards of a Trump scandal, this one is a five-alarm fire: Families of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers alike have been torn apart after being vacuumed up by law enforcement, with children sent to detention centers and parents tossed in jail pending a court date. The reports from the ground curdle the blood: Parents told their children are being taken away for a bath, then informed they won’t see them again. Shell-shocked children clustered in chain-link pens at overcrowded “shelters.” Parents deported without knowing where their kids are or how they might be reunited. Developmental psychologists warning that the separations amounted to emotional torture for the children involved. President Trump thrives on chaos, and his administration has always been a sloppy outfit. This has caused a number of unforced errors for the White House over the last year. But not until now has it resulted in the state-sanctioned torture of thousands of innocent kids. ❖

Trump sidesteps end to child separations

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump urged House Republicans to pass broad immigration legislation in a Tuesday evening meeting, but he stopped short of telling them he would immediately reverse a widely condemned policy that has separated thousands of migrant children from their parents ([Wall Street Journal](#)). In the private meeting, Mr. Trump discussed taxes, tariffs and the Russia probe before endorsing two different Republican immigration bills, according to lawmakers in the room. On the controversy over immigrant families, Mr. Trump said: “We have to take care of separation,” according to a lawmaker in the room. “It’s too nasty, it’s too nasty.” Mr. Trump took no questions and engaged in no discussion on a day when family separations engulfed nearly every other issue.

Many Republicans had come to the meeting prepared to press Mr. Trump to halt his administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy of detaining adult immigrants at the southern border, which has split more than 2,000 children from their parents in less than two months. A decades-old court settlement bars the jailing of migrant children. Past administrations had opted to let families be released while their cases were pursued. “We certainly want to support our president, but most of us have to support our district first,” said Rep. Mark Meadows (R., N.C.), who is close to the president, as he headed into the meeting. “It has not only got my attention but requires action,” Mr. Meadows said about the issue, which he said has sparked more constituent mail than any in recent memory.

The meeting set the stage for House Republican leaders to begin lining up votes for a compromise bill that is seen as having the best chance of passing later this week. But the president’s performance did little to give momentum to bills that are tentatively set for votes on Thursday, because he didn’t line up behind one and sell it. As a whole, Republicans remain divided over how to

treat young immigrants brought to the U.S. illegally as children. “His message to us was we’ve got to pass something,” said Rep. Warren Davidson (R., Ohio). “If he spends the week very publicly embracing the compromise bill...I think that will generate a lot more support than this meeting just generated.”

U.S. out of Human Rights Council

WASHINGTON – The U.S. said Tuesday it was withdrawing from the United Nations Human Rights Council, delivering on a long-running Trump administration threat to leave the panel unless it adopted major changes ([Wall Street Journal](#)). Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S.

Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley announced the U.S. withdrawal in an appearance at the State Department. Mr. Pompeo said the Council had a poor record of defending human rights and criticized it for allowing some of the world’s worst offenders, including Iran and Venezuela, to remain as members. “The Council has failed in its stated objective,” Mr. Pompeo said, calling it an “exercise in shameless hypocrisy.”

Banks says Chinese should be probed

WASHINGTON – The White House and Congress are at odds over whether to save Chinese telecom giant ZTE, which has been accused of threatening U.S. national security ([Washington Post](#)). But that’s not the only Chinese company in lawmakers’ sights. Huawei, another Chinese “national champion” technology firm, is attracting scrutiny for its partnerships with American colleges and universities in areas of technology that the Chinese government is trying to dominate. A bipartisan group of 26 lawmakers wrote Education Secretary Betsy DeVos on Tuesday to highlight the national security implications of

Huawei’s research partnerships and other relationships with several dozen American colleges and universities. They want DeVos to investigate the Huawei Innovation Research Program and other programs through which Huawei partners with institutes of higher education across the country. “We believe these partnerships may pose a significant threat to national security and this threat demands your attention and oversight,” states the letter, which was organized by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.). “Huawei is not a normal private sector company the way we have grown accustomed to thinking of the commercial economy in the West.”

Canada Senate legalizes pot

TORONTO — Canada’s Senate voted on Tuesday to pass the federal government’s historic bill legalizing the recreational use of marijuana, clearing the way for the country to become the first advanced industrialized nation to legalize the drug nationwide and fulfilling a major campaign promise of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau ([Washington Post](#)).

Corbett concedes sheriff race

SOUTH BEND – Tim Corbett conceded the race for St. Joseph County sheriff Tuesday but also criticized the man who beat him, saying Bill Redman wants “to give a lot of speeches” and that he’ll allow “crime to get worse.” More than a month after the primary election, Redman is officially the Democratic nominee who will be on the ballot in the November election ([South Bend Tribune](#)). Corbett filed for a recount after preliminary results in the May 8 election put him 16 votes behind Redman.

