

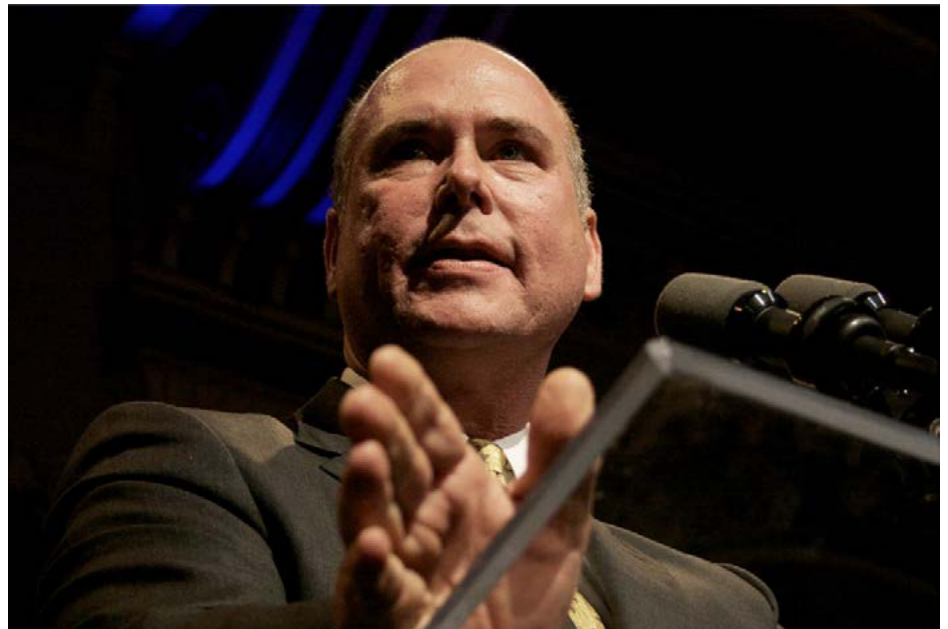
How Bosma created his power base

In his farewell, he urged colleagues to think a decade in advance, which is what he did in 2010

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Speaking in the well of the Indiana House just after he had passed the gavel to Speaker Todd Huston, Brian Bosma reflected on one of the key elements of his record tenure. “We have to have a long-term vision here,” Bosma said at the end of a historic 12 years as speaker, including the last 10. “We each need to think a decade away.”

He was speaking from experience. While Republicans have held the Indiana Senate for all but two years (1974-76) in the past half century, the Indiana House had swung back and forth between Republicans and Democrats regularly (along with two 50/50 splits), until 2010. Bosma was instrumental in the creation of the super majority House, and he held it as



House Minority Leader Brian Bosma on Election Night 2010, when the GOP recaptured the Indiana House, igniting the reforms of Gov. Mitch Daniels.

speaker for an unprecedented decade.

His first stint as speaker lasted a mere two years,

Continued on page 3

Trumpian whiplash

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — This has become the whiplash era of American politics.

The punditry class was chastened in 2016. Howey Politics Indiana put out a “blue tsunami warning” that June, only to see it swing wildly the other way resulting in Donald Trump’s stunning upset of Hillary Clinton. But



Political Science 101 teaches us that no two election cycles are the same, particularly in consecutive fashion.

Now think about where the 2020 presidential race was a month ago: President Trump was acquitted in the Senate impeachment trial and his approval approached the 50% mark that had eluded him for most of his first



“I think there’s a good chance this will prove manageable, that it won’t be a cataclysmic global event. We can’t be sure of that yet. It may not quite be of the Y2K variety, but it may not be 1918, either.”

- Purdue President Mitch Daniels, to HPI on the coronavirus



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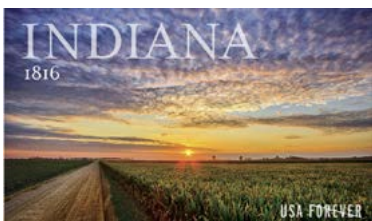
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Jack E. Howey
 editor emeritus
 1926-2019



President Trump at the Centers for Disease Control last Friday, where he wondered how anyone could have anticipated a pandemic.

term. His reelection chances were greatly enhanced. Pete Buttigieg won the Iowa delegate battle, and came within a whisker of upsetting Bernie Sanders in New Hampshire. But Bernie's win there ignited the notion that Trump's risk of impeachment to slime Joe Biden had handsomely paid off, setting up his dream November showdown with an avowed Socialist. With Joe Biden's apparent demise, Trump v. Sanders appeared to be a fait accompli.

Since then, we've watched the coronavirus swarm across the globe and into the American psyche. President Trump's response has been abysmal, crystalized in his visit late last week to the Center for Disease Control where he asked, "Who would have thought? Who would have thought we would even be having the subject?"

Ask Indiana Health Commissioner Kristina Box or Gov. Eric Holcomb if they had ever pondered a microbe-induced pandemic here.

The day before his CDC trip to Atlanta, President Trump said of the pandemic, "It's going to disappear. One day it's like a miracle, it will disappear. We'll see what happens. Nobody really knows."

By Monday, Tom Bossert, who handled the pandemic portfolio for the National Security Council before President Trump fired and didn't replace

him, described a "tip of the iceberg" scenario in a Washington Post op-ed: "The most useful comparison now is to a fire that threatens to burn out of control. It is one we can still contain, even extinguish – if we act. School closures, isolation of the sick, home quarantines of those who have come into contact with the sick, social distancing, telework and large-gathering cancellations must be implemented before the spread of the disease in any community reaches 1%. After that, science tells us, these interventions become far less effective. If we fail to take action, we will watch our health-care system be overwhelmed."

Faced with a Trump v. Sanders shouting match, voters responded. After Rep. James Clyburn's clarion endorsement and the presidential field moderates of Buttigieg, Klobuchar and Bloomberg coalescing around Joe Biden, an unprecedented turn of events occurred. Though Biden's "No Malarkey" campaign was running on financial fumes, with virtually no field offices and a tiny advertising budget, he ran the table up to Colorado and California, where a third of the vote pre-dated the pandemic and veep revival. He swept swing states Virginia and North Carolina, the Deep South, Texas, Minnesota, Massachusetts and now Missouri and Michigan. At this writing it was Biden who possessed the

insurmountable delegate lead.

And telltales are emerging that Biden v. Trump won't be the nail-biter that conventional wisdom envisioned. If Biden can avoid a health emergency, keep his malapropisms to a cute minimum, and choose a running mate that enhances his electability, Trump continues his unempathetic approach to the pandemic, the November showdown may not even be close.

In Tuesday's Missouri primary, white men with college degrees swung 55% away from Sanders. According to CNN exit polls, Sanders defeated Hillary Clinton 64%-36% in 2016. On Tuesday, Biden won that demographic 60% to 33%. As the Political Wire's Taegan Goddard observed, "That's pretty solid evidence that a significant amount of Bernie Sanders' support four years ago was more anti-Hillary than pro-Bernie."

As I've been stating since 2016, Sanders and Trump are fueled by the same set of grievances. And as I've stated at the beginning of the 2020 cycle, Trump won't have Hillary Clinton to kick around anymore.

Tim Alberta reported for Politico: "Two things happened on Tuesday in Michigan. First, Democratic turnout exploded. Second, Biden performed far better with key demographic groups than Clinton did four years ago. If either one of those things happens in November, Trump will have a difficult time winning the state again. If both things happen, the president can kiss Michigan's 16 electoral votes goodbye – and with them, more than likely, the electoral votes of Wisconsin and Pennsylvania."

"The big takeaway from the day's big prize, Michigan, isn't that Biden is a spectacular candidate," Alberta explained. "The big takeaway is that he doesn't need to



Joe Biden campaigning in Michigan this past week. He carried all 88 counties in a state Bernie Sanders carried against Hillary Clinton

be."

Another case in point: Sanders upset Hillary in Michigan in 2016; Tuesday, he didn't carry a single county against Biden. Turnout in the Texas Democratic primary was described as "staggeringly high" with long lines at polls.

Anecdotally, I and people I know have been approached by 2016 Trump voters. The conversation often goes like this: "I voted for Donald Trump because I just couldn't vote for Hillary Clinton. Annnnd I thought that voting for Trump would be good for draining the Washington swamp. Now I'm having buyer's remorse. What do you think?"

Sadly, we now face an engulfing pandemic. The Trump administration's decision not to accept the World Health Organization's coronavirus test has mystified and infuriated American governors. Tests remain elusive here in Indiana. Universities, schools, basketball tournaments, the NBA schedule suspension, and political rallies are being cancelled. The bears have moved into Wall Street, stoking recession anxiety after an 11-year bull run and were not reassured by President Trump's primetime speech last night that focused on keeping the foreign contagion out, as opposed to widespread testing within.

Fear, once Trump's tool of choice, is now induced within the population in a way polio once did more than a half century ago.

What has become painfully evident is that President Trump is woefully unprepared for his first non-self-inflicted crisis. This is not to say that incredible events and fate won't whip-lash the body politic once again before this cycle runs its course. But we find ourselves in a vastly different place than we were a month ago. ❖

Bosma, from page 1

from 2004 through the 2006 election, that served as a referendum on not only the Iraq War nationally, but on the passage of Daylight Saving Time and Gov. Mitch Daniels' toll road lease via his Major Moves program. In 2004, Bosma helped create the 52-48 GOP majority that allowed Bosma to replace Democratic Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, with the defeat of Democrats Markt Lytle, Alan Chowning, John Frenz and Ron Herrell while using the Karl Rove-inspired anti-gay-marriage issue.

If there was a political failing in Gov. Daniels' tenure, it was his inability to pull a Republican House majority with his 58% landslide reelection victory over Democrat Jill Long Thompson in 2008. That was the year Barack Obama became the first Democrat to carry Indiana's 11 Electoral College votes since 1964 and Democrats were able to pick off Reps. Andy Thomas and Jon Elrod in a downtown

Indianapolis district

That set the stage for what became the transformative 2010 election, when a nucleus of Susan Ellspermann, Mike Karickhoff, Kevin Mahan, Cindy Kirchhofer, Matt Ubelhor, Jim Baird and Rebecca Kubacki helped forge a 60-40 majority.

While Senate Presidents Pro Tem Robert Garton and then David Long had ruling tenures measured in decades (Garton from 1980 to 2006; Long from 2006 to 2018), Daniels, deputy chief of staff Eric Holcomb and Bosma created what would eventually become the super majority House in 2010. It was solidified by the 2012 (including the arrival of Todd Huston) and 2014 elections that crossed the super majority threshold.

Actually, Bosma began laying the political groundwork for a systemic approach after he became House minority leader back in 2001. "Starting in 2002, there wasn't a cycle where he didn't have an agenda," explained

Mike Gentry, who heads the House Republican Campaign Committee and the Mark It Red consulting group. "He always had an agenda that he would take into the cycle and then that would become the caucus policy agenda."

Bosma traveled to Florida, Pennsylvania and Iowa where he picked the brains of Republican speakers. He then traveled extensively across the state, recruiting candidates, often in their living rooms and kitchens. He would enlist the help of other local elected officials, and after Gov. Daniels took office, had help from above. On a recent trip to Lake County, Bosma noted that he had been there over 90 times.

"We used all that benchmarking information to create a system," said Gentry. "We focused – with limited resources with the Democrat-drawn maps – on where we could win. We would say, 'These are seats we thought we could win,' and then mustered resources. It was because of Brian setting out early on to put together a system, then having an agenda that pushed Indiana forward."

"He was focused," Gentry said. Bosma worked even harder to develop this enduring House GOP majority. Gov. Mitch Daniels formed the Aiming Higher PAC that pumped more than \$1 million into House races during the 2010 cycle. Daniels, Bosma, Holcomb and the Hoosiers for Economic Growth PAC began recruiting the class of 2010 (which also included the unsuccessful campaigns of current Republican Chairman Kyle Hupfer, and former DLGF Commissioner Cheryl Musgrave) in 2009.

While 2010 was the transformative year, it was 2006 that may have been Bosma's most influential year. Hoosier Republican U.S. Reps. Chris Chocola, John Hostetler and Mike Sodrel all lost in that Democratic wave that developed nationally due to the Iraq War. "We could have lost a corresponding 30 House seats," Gentry said. Instead, House Republicans lost one seat held by Rep. Troy Woodruff. Not falling into a deep hole then set the stage for 2010 when Republicans retook the House and the driver's seat when it came to drawing up the 2011 maps. The Republicans haven't been in the minority since, with these maps the first in modern times when the Indiana House hasn't shifted control to the Democrats.

Purdue President Mitch Daniels told HPI on

Politics Indiana
Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics
Thursday, July 22, 2010

Battle for House takes shape

Parties test outlier races, economy as Daniels engages

By BRIAN A. HOWEY
RISING SUN - The ad for Altica Clerk-Treasurer Sharon Neplee clipped up on Terre Haute and Lafayette TV last week. It is the first tangible electronic signal in the coming House Wars - the battle for the lower chamber which will play a huge role in crafting the reappointed Congressional and legislative maps for the coming decade.



Altica Clerk-Treasurer Sharon Neplee (left) is challenging House Majority Caucus Chairman Dale Gribb (top) in a race HPI viewed as a keener tier challenge. The HRCC is running TV to drive her name up, hoping the race becomes competitive if the economy is languishing in the fall and a new developer. (HPI/Photo by A. Walker Show)

Continued on page 3

How does Brad win?

By DAVE KITCHELL
LOGANSPORT - What is it exactly that a recent poll on the Indiana Senate race is expected to tell us? The Razamussen poll, which trends Republican, tells us former Sen. Dan Coats, a Republican who has not served in Congress in more than a decade, has a 51-30 lead over Brad Evers, a Democrat who has been there for the past four.



There are probably many takes on that poll right now, but for the sake of honesty, let's be blunt: This could be the worst Senate race Indiana has



"This election is going to be a referendum on the borrowing, spending, bailouts and take-overs of this liberal Democratic Congress and administration." - U.S. Rep. Mike Pence

Politics Indiana
Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics
Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2010

GOP House will ignite reforms

At least a 59-seat majority is a precursor to Daniels' plan to reshape Indiana

By BRIAN A. HOWEY and KATIE COFFIN
INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana House Democrats suffered a stunning rebuke Tuesday as Republicans retook control of the lower chamber - and the 2011 redistricting process that will shape the next decade of Congressional and legislative maps - with at least 59 seats as Republican Sen. Bacon picked up 600 votes today to defeat Democrat Mike Goebel. HPI had forecast a 54 to 62 seat majority on Monday. The GOP picked up 10 Democratic seats while one - HD76 where Sen. Bob Degg had a 30-seat lead over Republican Wendy McNamara - hangs in the balance with only two Gibson County precincts uncourted.



Brian Bosma speaks to Republican faithful Tuesday night as he watched his party take at least 59 seats, which will return him to the speakership this week. Bosma is expected to help shepherd Gov. Daniels' education, government and business reforms. (HPI Photo by Isaac Daniels)

Continued on page 4

Young climbs the hill

By BRITTANY BROWNING
BLOOMINGTON - "Bacon is off the hill," Todd Young supporters were heard saying at his campaign pathing here last night.



"History will record that Indiana led the way." - U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, who announced today he will not seek a U.S. House leadership post, igniting speculation he will run for Indiana governor

Wednesday that the Aiming Higher PAC was actually formed to fund the 2004 transition team. "In 2006 it was revived as a PAC and it raised some money," Daniels explained. "That year the money was given to Bosma's committee, the House Republican Campaign Committee. We supported them, but they identified the candidates. And then it sat because in 2007 and 2008 we were campaigning for ourselves."

"It was brought back for the 2010 cycle," Daniels continued. "The difference there was we recruited the candidates ourselves and we chose which ones to support. We coordinated, we talked to Brian's group all the time, but we didn't just give them the money. We operated as an independent identity. We were looking for reform-minded people who not only would win elections, but would help us make reforms we had not yet made. In that cycle, we supported some people they thought couldn't win. We ended up winning 60 seats. Even they didn't imagine that. We supported some were too long of shots to back. We bet on some real long shots like Wendy McNamara down in the southwest corner, and Sue Ellspermann. Our criteria were a little different. We were looking for allies who would stand up for changes and reforms we wanted to advocate, not just get elected."

Daniels added, "We were certainly glad to see that majority. We wanted to finish strong. There

were things we wanted to do. You heard me say lame ducks can still fly. We wanted to be as active as we could be right to the end. We were able to deliver some of our biggest changes in year seven and year eight when you're supposed to be out of gas."

Eric Holcomb, then Daniels's deputy chief of staff, told HPI after the results had come in, "The 2010 elections put on stage, front and center stage, just how different the two major political parties are today. The Democrats chose a two-front strategy: One, demonize job creators by attacking local employers, and two, smear their opponents. Even when the going got tough, Republicans stayed disciplined and stayed on message talking instead about jobs, spending, and taxes."

Holcomb added, "The Indiana Republican Party has become the 'Party of Purpose' while the Democrats, both national and state parties, have drifted away from their founding principles. This will be the single biggest reason Reagan Democrats defect in droves."

"This was not about winning an election," Bosma said on Election Night in November 2010. "That's the easy part. Now, we are prepared to make the tough decisions to bring Indiana into the 21st Century all the way, to balance the budget without a tax increase, to prioritize the items that we're going to have to deal with in education and job creation.

"So many different areas need our attention as Republicans to be innovative, reform-minded and conservative, and that's what this team pledges to do and we're going to do it with you," Bosma continued.

After the middle four years of Gov. Daniels' tenure with Speaker Bauer in the way, Bosma's elevation ignited the 2011 education reforms. With Huston as Supt. Tony Bennett's chief of staff and Bosma sponsoring legislation that expanded charter schools, allowed students to enroll in any district, and created the nation's first voucher program, the pent-up Republican agenda barreled forth.



It also created SEA1, the teacher evaluation bill that Daniels and legislative leaders described as "landmark" and even "revolutionary."

"The governor made the comment that this is no ordinary moment, this is no ordinary General Assembly," Bennett said as Daniels, Bosma and Senate President David Long looked on. "This General Assembly and this governor have opened the door to honor Indiana's truly inspired and inspiring teachers in no way like we've ever done before. This particular measure has the most direct impact on student performance in our schools, has the most direct impact on economic development for our state's future and it has the most direct impact on making sure that we have a human capital system that carries forward a legacy of great instruction for this state."

Bosma's final speech

Bosma dispensed other advice during his final speech on Monday after handing the gavel to Huston. "This is an unbelievably wonderful institution," Bosma said. "It is literally the crucible of democracy in this state and you must work hard to protect it."

He noted a weekend Wall Street Journal story: "Headline, Illinois races toward default. I went through the details of what Illinois has attempted to do and we have adopted the exact opposite path: Fully funding pensions,

not raising expenditures as revenues plummet, not making promises to future pensioners that cannot be kept without future tax increases, and the likelihood of an Illinois bankruptcy. I don't wish that on them. I wish we had 50 healthy states, but we don't. This is a healthy state because of the institution of the legislature. Under Republican leadership and Democrats, it's been the key."

Bosma was extremely protective of nurturing his House majority. When Gov. Mike Pence sought an income tax cut in 2013 as checking off a box on a future presidential bid, Bosma and Long applied the brakes, giving Pence just a fraction of what he had originally sought. Bosma didn't want to defend a future tax hike during the next recession.

"I want to tell you about what I want you to remember about this institution," Bosma continued. "First of all, you younger legislators, you need to prepare yourself to lead. It doesn't just happen. You need to study, you need to read bills and listen to the more senior members as they debate them, and you need to learn your area and find your area of expertise. As my team knows, you have to have a long-term vision here.

"My next admonition is, be courageous," Bosma said. "Step out and be bold. I am confident in Speaker Huston's ability to take the reins and hit the ground running, and I have no doubt his strong leadership and excitement for Indiana's momentum will serve this chamber and our state well."

A classic example of Bosma's leadership as speaker came during the 2016 session when the state was racked by thousands of clandestine methamphetamine labs that were injuring first responders, were home to hundreds of children, and were contaminating hundreds of houses and motel rooms. For several years Indiana led the nation on meth labs. Health committee chairs Mike Young in the Senate and Cindy Kirchhofer in the House attempted to block the bills in February 2016, saying there wasn't enough time on the schedule. This is when Bosma stepped in, signaling behind the scenes that the legislation needed to be heard on the House floor.

As HPI reported in 2016: "His clout was essential." Within a year, the number of reported meth labs had fallen more than 70% in 2017 and the removal of children from such environs dropped 80%.

After he was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Mark Massa, Huston said, "My family has always stressed the importance of public service and conservative leadership, and I am honored and blessed to be placed in this position to help make sure Indiana stays on the right track. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the House and Senate and Gov. Eric Holcomb to fuel Indiana's economic engine, and make our state a destination for all." ❖

Visclosky backs Mrvan but McDermott claims endorsement edge

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — Last Saturday, retiring U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky endorsed North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan. "I know that Frank Mrvan will fight with each breath and every fiber of his being to further collaborate and implement his vision for the next transformational initiatives that will bring the people of Northwest Indiana together in order to grow our regional economy, create more good-paying jobs, and improve our quality of place," Visclosky said in a prepared statement.



That prompted Mrvan to tell the Northwest Indiana Times: "He's not passing away; he's just levitating himself to be able to advise and be able to help."

The Visclosky nod came in tandem with the United Steelworkers District 7 endorsement, with President Mike Millsap adding, "We have profound strength in electing the next member of Congress. Frank, I hope you and the Steelworkers will be friends for a very long time."

The frontrunner in this open 1st CD primary is Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., who told Howey Politics Indiana on Wednesday, "We knew Pete was coming out for Frank. You'd think that endorsement was the biggest thing, but I'm clearly leading the endorsement game."



U.S. Rep. Visclosky and United Steelworkers President Mike Millsap endorsed North Township Trustee Frank Mrvan on Saturday. At right at some of Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr.'s list of endorsers, including Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter, Sheriff Oscar Martinez and Treasurer Peggy Katona.

McDermott, the five-term mayor and former Lake County Democratic chairman, has an impressive list of endorsements, including Lake County Sheriff Oscar Martinez Jr.; Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter; Lake County Treasurer Peggy Katona; Lake County Surveyor Bill Emerson Jr.; Lake County Auditor John Petalas; Lake County Commissioner Mike Repay; Lake County Councilman David Hamm; Crown Point Mayor David Uran; Hobart Mayor Brian Snedecor; Hammond Council members Bill Emerson Sr., Scott Rakos, Barry Tyler Jr., Janet Venecz and Dave Woerpel; Hobart Councilman David Vinzant; Gary Councilman Michael Brown; Lake Station Councilman Rick Long; and East Chicago Clerk Adrian Santos.

McDermott has also been endorsed by the Northwest Indiana Building and Construction Trades; Hammond Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 51; Hammond Firefighters Local 556; Portage Firefighters Local 3151; Hobart Firefighters Local 1641; Painters and Allied Trades District 91; and Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers Local 26.

The mayor told HPI he's about "60%" to his \$500,000 fundraising goal and hopes to do advertising in the Chicago TV market.

He was just reelected to a fifth term in Hammond, which makes up about 10% of the district. "If I come out of Hammond with two-thirds of the vote, with 10,000 votes, it's going to be real tough to beat me," he said. "I have a path to victory, it's good and it's reasonable."

McDermott added that Trustee Mrvan isn't well known in Porter County. "I will get good crossover support there," McDermott said. "I'm getting a tremendous amount of Republican votes. It's very encouraging I'm getting out of Porter County."

The other key force in the race is State Rep. Mara Candalaria Reardon. With the General Assembly's sine die,



Reardon was expected to skip the party last night in Indianapolis and move into full campaign mode. She has been endorsed by the Latino Victory Fund, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' BOLD PAC and the SMART-TD railworkers union. **HPI Primary Horse Race Status:** Likely McDermott.

Governor

Holcomb, Myers on the coronavirus

Gov. Eric Holcomb dealt with the spreading coronavirus by declaring on Monday, "We're remarkably prepared and you're seeing that play out right now in our coordination. Again, this is all about staying informed to the facts on the ground as they change and they will continue to change. We plan to, through the state department of health, continue to put out up-to-date information on a daily basis."

At this writing, ISDH said that 10 Hoosiers have contracted the virus in Marion, Johnson, Boone, Noble, Howard, Hendricks and Adams counties. On Monday, Avon schools closed based on one elementary student testing positive, "They made the right decision for them and that should underscore the main point that we all need to take



Gov. Holcomb and ISDH Commissioner Kristina Box.

from this: We need to adapt to the facts on the ground and there is no 'one size fits all,'" Holcomb said.

Democratic gubernatorial candidate Dr. Woody Myers called for Indiana to take additional measures to protect Hoosiers from the coronavirus, specifically COVID-19. "State officials must take immediate steps to facilitate laboratory testing within the state," Myers, a former Indiana health commissioner, said. "We have a public health emergency, so

the testing should be free to those who need it because of symptoms or exposure. That will eliminate the delays in receiving confirmation of positive cases."

Myers proposed steps that Indiana should take immediately. Myers urged the state to:

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all negative pressure hospital rooms in Indiana and make it available 24/7 to all Indiana physicians;

2. Create contingency plans now for those individuals in confined settings not easily moved – cruise ships, nursing homes, jails and prisons;

3. Give Hoosier teachers and school administrators more tools now, with weekly webinars conducted for all Indiana teachers and administrators where factual information is presented and where questions can be asked and answered by medical professionals. We should make non-invasive thermometers (that do not touch the patient) available in every school;

4. Use all of Indiana’s consumer protection assets to both report and prevent price gouging;

5. With federal help, determine when and how major public events, where thousands of people will gather, should be modified or postponed or cancelled;

6. Advocate for a paid-sick-leave law.

“Indiana must pull out all of the stops when it comes to preparedness and not wait for direction from Washington, where contradictions between federal officials continue to frustrate and confuse, putting lives at risk,” said Myers. “It’s time in this session of the legislature for decisive action. It’s time for informed leadership.”

Libertarians nominate Rainwater

The Libertarian Party of Indiana has nominated Donald Rainwater of Westfield for governor and William Henry of Plainfield for lieutenant governor. Rainwater is a 1981 graduate of Warren Central High School, served eight years in the Navy and has worked in software engineering and information technology for the past 20 years. He ran unsuccessfully for Westfield mayor in 2019. His campaign platform pledges to reduce or abolish taxes for Indiana residents.



Congress

5th CD: Mitchell to host virtual events

In response to the postponement of multiple previously scheduled opportunities for 5th CD residents, the Kelly Mitchell for Congress campaign announced a virtual townhall series to connect with voters amid the coronavirus pandemic. “The health and safety of Hoosiers is important to me,” Mitchell said. “We are launching this townhall series to give 5th District voters a voice. Our goal is to engage voters and give them the opportunity to ask questions, hear my platform, and learn why I am the best candidate to represent them in Congress.” The first virtual townhall date is Wednesday, March 18th from 7:00-8:00 pm. To join, dial 317-342-8568. You can submit questions in advance via email to Questions@HoosiersForKelly.com.

Statewides

Lake County Dems endorse Weinzapfel

Democratic Indiana attorney general candidate Jonathan Weinzapfel announced he has been endorsed by the Lake County Democratic Central Committee city and town chairs. “Being from Evansville, I understand the frustrations of many Lake County residents who feel neglected and ignored by Indianapolis,” Weinzapfel said. “As attorney general, I’ll be a voice for them and for common sense reforms that improve the lives of all Hoosiers.” “From Lake County to Vanderburgh County we are putting together the statewide coalition needed to secure the Democratic Party’s nomination this summer and to defeat Curtis Hill this fall,” added Weinzapfel, who faces State Sen. Karen Tallian of Ogden Dunes.

Presidential 2020

Sanders to continue campaigns


Bernie Sanders on Wednesday announced he will continue his campaign for president (Politico). “Last night, obviously, was not a good night for our campaign from a delegate point of view,” Sanders acknowledged in an address delivered from his campaign headquarters in Burlington, Vermont. But “while we are currently losing the delegate count” in the race for the Democratic nomination, “we are strongly winning in two enormously important areas which will determine the future of our country.”

Biden has huge lead in Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Joe Biden is in line to deliver a knockout punch to Bernie Sanders in Florida in Tuesday’s Democratic primary, according to a new poll that gives the former vice president a staggering 44% lead. Biden is lapping Sanders in voter support, with support from 66% of likely Democratic primary voters to 22% Sanders, according to a University of North Florida. ❖

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Mayor Pete's impact came Super Monday

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Super Monday, not Super Tuesday, was when Pete Buttigieg had real impact on the presidential race.



Mayor Pete's eloquent endorsement of Joe Biden on the eve of crucial voting in 14 states was an important factor in helping to build momentum and to clear a winning path for what was indeed a super Tuesday for Biden. The former vice president won in 10 of those states, in some by landslides.

And Biden's highest of praise for Buttigieg on Monday, likening him to Biden's late son Beau in terms of character, courage and intellect, enabled Buttigieg to end his candidacy in a super rather than disheartening way. That high praise also signaled bright future possibilities; Mayor Pete could become Secretary Pete, holding a key Cabinet post, if Biden wins the presidency.

Monday was indeed a super day for Buttigieg as he closed out his improbable but impressive campaign at the right time. He left amid praise and with purpose, a strategically timed boost for Biden on election eve. He thus wasn't subjected to the embarrassment suffered by Michael Bloomberg, he of the half-billion-dollar campaign, and Elizabeth Warren, she of the plummet from early frontrunner to irrelevancy. Those two suffered humiliating defeats.

But Tuesday wasn't super for the Buttigieg campaign. It was over. Buttigieg would have won some additional delegates if he had stayed in the race. Not a lot. Not enough. He wasn't positioned in staffing or funding to compete in all of those states Tuesday. He would not have won any state. There was no path to the nomination.

That path, though never wide, seemed possible after early success in Iowa and New Hampshire.

But each success was diminished by a development beyond control of the Buttigieg campaign.

In the Iowa caucuses, the first test with voters, Buttigieg won the most delegates. That should have brought election night focus by the national news media on the startling victory by a young, former mayor of South Bend. It should have brought the bounce in the polls that usually comes from Iowa victory. Instead, with the messed-up tabulation, focus was on inability for days to add up the totals. It took nearly a month for the Iowa Democratic Party to confirm Buttigieg as the delegate winner. Not enough bounce. Mostly jokes about Democrats not knowing how to count.

In New Hampshire, Buttigieg came within 1.3% of a monumental upset of Bernie Sanders in a state Sanders was supposed to win big. But Amy Klobuchar, down to single digits in polls almost everywhere during the campaign, surged one time, in New Hampshire, after she was her most impressive in a debate. The New Hampshire percentages: Sanders, 25.7; Buttigieg, 24.4; Klobuchar, 19.8.

Since Buttigieg and Klobuchar were competing in the same "moderate" lane, if she had not suddenly caught fire to get nearly 20% of the vote, headlines could have been that Sanders suffered a stinging defeat and Buttigieg was for real as a top contender, the frontrunner. That's not to say that Buttigieg would have gone on to solve his problems with African-American voters and win the nomination. But a Buttigieg win in New Hampshire could have showed weakness in the Sanders effort to expand his base before that became apparent on Super Tuesday, and could have enabled Buttigieg to compete in most of those 14 states.

What now for Mayor Pete, no longer mayor, no longer a presidential candidate? Biden will want him as a surrogate speaker throughout the nomination process and beyond if Biden is the nominee. Buttigieg already is sending out emails to his own extensive donor lists to urge contributing now to the money-strapped Biden campaign.

After the November election? You have to guess the outcome in order to guess the prospects. ❖



Pete Buttigieg endorsed Joe Biden in Dallas earlier this month.

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

Hill bill dies in Senate

Howey Politics Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — Despite a push from Indiana House lawmakers to clarify in state code whether Attorney General Curtis Hill could remain in office if his law license is suspended, state legislators failed to pass a bill before adjourning this year's session Wednesday night (Erdody, [IBJ](#)). The Republican-controlled Indiana House earlier this



month added language to a bill that would have required the attorney general to forfeit the office if he or she were disbarred from or suspended from practicing law for 30 or more days. Such a forfeiture would create a vacancy in the

office, which would be filled by the governor. The amendment, added to Senate Bill 178, would have also prevented anyone who had been disbarred or had his or her law license suspended for 30 days or more within the past five years from running for the office. Gov. Eric Holcomb said he supported the measure. But the Republican-controlled Indiana Senate did not agree with it. On Wednesday, Republican senators offered a compromise that would have only addressed whether someone could run for office if his or her law license was suspended without automatic reinstatement. But the overall Senate GOP caucus did not support that language, and House Republicans also rejected it. Senate President Pro Tem Rodric Bray said his caucus talked at length about it, but "at the end of the day there was concerns about the timing of it." Bray said it will be up to voters to decide whether Hill should serve another term.

Session ends with 14-hour kick

In a 14-hour finishing kick, legislators voted to limit surprise medical billing, nullify local landlord-tenant ordinances, and raise the minimum age for smoking and for getting married (Berman, WIBC). They also voted to make it easier for schools to seek relief from state regulations, and to repeal an eight-month-old externship requirement fiercely opposed by Indiana's teachers' unions. Legislators didn't pass any bills related to the coronavirus pandemic. Huston and Bray both said Gov. Holcomb assured them the state health department has all the authority and cash it needs to fight the outbreak. But they both say they'll be watching the outbreak's effect on the economy. They say Indiana's strong reserves have the state well positioned to ride out a recession, a sentiment echoed by Gov. Eric Holcomb in a written post-adjournment statement.

IndyGo funding bill dies in House

After the Indiana Senate passed a compromise on the IndyGo funding feud Wednesday night, the Indiana House killed the measure by not voting on it before adjourning for the year (Erdody, [IBJ](#)). The Senate passed

House Bill 1279, which would have required the transit agency to raise \$220,000 in private donations by the end of the year. That was a significant drop from the \$6 million IndyGo initially needed to fundraise in order to comply with a 2014 law. Since the House did not vote on the measure, the bill died Wednesday night, which means IndyGo is still expected to raise \$6 million annually.

Governor signs micro-chipping bill

It's official — Indiana companies cannot require their workers to be forcibly microchipped as a condition of employment. Republican Gov. Eric Holcomb signed into law House Enrolled Act 1143 Wednesday. The new statute takes effect July 1. Indiana senators OK ban on companies forcibly microchipping their employees. The new law was approved 97-0 in the House and 47-0 by the Senate.

Speaker Huston deems successful session

House Speaker Todd Huston said at sine die, "We successfully brought the legislative session to a close after taking our priorities across the finish line, including supporting our educators and schools, and taking important steps to address rising health care costs (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). "Building off our state's historic education investment last year, we were able to decouple student test scores from teacher evaluations, and ensure schools and educators will not be negatively impacted by ILEARN scores during the two-year transition period. Our action on health care will allow patients to request good-faith estimates on their medical bills upfront, so they can make more informed decisions and shop around for better prices. We also protect consumers from receiving unexpected, out-of-network medical bills that can unfairly crush family budgets."

Holcomb lauds session

Governor Eric J. Holcomb offered the following statement regarding the conclusion of the 2020 legislative session. "This legislative session, Senator Bray, Speaker emeritus Bosma, Speaker Huston and the rest of the General Assembly navigated a series of important issues that matter to Hoosiers. I'm grateful for all the legislative support my Next Level Agenda achieved. While short sessions go fast, we got significant work done while continuing our track record of fiscal stability, which positions our state to face any unexpected challenges – including the current coronavirus outbreak."

Election financial report bill signed

Legislation authored by State Representative Chuck Moseley (D-Portage), which will increase transparency by allowing candidates to file campaign reports online, was signed into law by the governor today. Public Law 24 gives all candidates the option to file their campaign finance reports online through a secure vendor. ❖

Young, Yovanovitch, Burns talk about values

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

BLOOMINGTON — U.S. Sen. Todd Young gave the first Richard G. Lugar Lecture at Indiana University last Friday, calling for “three bold actions” with an America “leading with its values,” including a bolstering of the nation’s diplomatic capabilities.

But the day before, former ambassador William J. Burns told the conference that of 28 State Department assistant secretary positions in the Trump administration, only one is filled, and there has been a 40% drop in Foreign Service applications. And later the day of Young’s speech, former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch, received the Lugar Award and made an appeal for “maintaining our principles” and “moral traditions.”

The late Sen. Lugar, in a video before her speech at I.U. Auditorium, added, “I would say the best advice I could retrieve is to be honest, maintain your integrity.”

Young was one of 53 Republican senators who blocked Yovanovitch’s testimony at the Senate trial that ended in President Trump’s impeachment acquittal in February that stemmed, in part, from her dismissal last summer as Trump tried to shake down Ukraine President Zelensky for political dirt on Joe Biden.

Hamilton Lugar School Dean Lee Feinstein asked Yovanovitch what it was like to be in the spotlight during Trump’s impeachment hearings last fall. Yovanovitch responded, “It is important to tell the truth and then hand it over to political leaders who take their own actions. We are in this together, and we need to find the solution together. We can never forget that our foreign policy needs to be American foreign policy.”

Sen. Young said at the Hamilton Lugar America’s Role in the World Conference, “America has no choice but to lead with our values. Without the steady hand of American support and reassurance, new leaders will emerge. And those new leaders will seek to remake the world in line with their interests, not to defend democracy or market capitalism, nor to advance the universal human rights on which this nation was founded.”

Young added, “Fortunately, America is leading. I commend President Trump and my colleagues in Congress for enacting new tax and regulatory policies. Increasing investment in the skills required to fuel our 21st century workforce. And implementing new bipartisan free trade agreements. Collectively, these policies are the table stakes required to continue growing our economy, and thereby, as Paul Kennedy reminds us, to strengthen

America’s global economic position, expand and enhance our sphere of influence, and preserve our system of government and capitalism as the source of both our shared prosperity and our national security.”

Young said that “our work is far from over” and said that American leadership will require bold action on three additional fronts. “First, in strategic technological investment,” Young said. “Second, in smart, flexible nuclear modernization. And third, in ensuring China remains the top priority of our military and our diplomats.”

On Thursday, Burns told the conference that in addition to 27 under secretary posts going unfilled, there are now a “record number of political ambassadors.” Burns called President Trump’s diplomacy “as an exercise in narcissism” saying it “hollows out” the Foreign Service.

Asked about Trump’s view that the Foreign Service is akin to the “deep state,” Burns responded, “That’s a crock.”

Burns pointed to President Trump’s 2018 press conference in Helsinki with Russian President Putin where Trump “essentially threw the 17 U.S. intelligence agencies under the bus.” He said that Putin was trained as a KGB agent and added, “If there had been a quote balloon” it would have Putin saying of Trump, “What an easy mark.”

In accepting the Richard G. Lugar Award, Yovanovitch said, “We also need to set an example. Sen Lugar believes in America’s moral traditions, rule of law, human rights, the Bill of Rights including freedom of the press, are all a source of our international power. He believed that exerting authority in the present age requires outreach and the ability to build coalitions. The U.S. maintains respect that derives from moral traditions. Maintaining our principles is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do.”

She added in the age of pandemic, “We need a strong and resilient Department of State that is fully funded, fully staffed and fully empowered to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.”

“So what do we need to do to reinvigorate the State Department?” she asked. “I believe

we need to recommit to our principles, our rule of law, generosity of spirit and understanding that we are stronger together, both internally and externally ... to make the world more democratic and more prosperous. We need to be principled, consistent and trustworthy.”

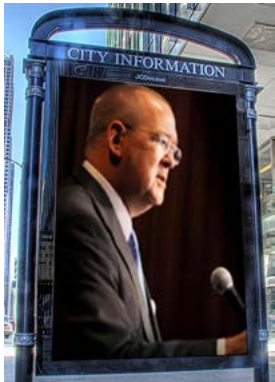
“We need to re-empower diplomats to do their jobs. Government officials should not be afraid to challenge assumptions or share their expertise and experience. Working on the basis of fact and rigorous analysis is not the work of the deep state, it is the work of the deeply dedicated state,” she added, acknowledging a quote from former U.S. ambassador Michael McFaul. ❖



Federal stimulus and local leadership are key

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE — The unfolding response to the Covid-19 disease is helpful in clarifying both the limits to government and the wisdom of our federal system. What most of us are now learning is that our most useful govern-



ments are local. The farther away government gets from us, the less useful it becomes in matters that directly affect our lives. This is not only a good lesson, but a fine fact of governance.

Many of us look to the federal government for guidance in all matters of policy. In reality, the federal government is responsible for very little of the public sector's influence on our lives.

The events of the day should make it clear that this is a fortunate truth. While it is true there is a Center for Disease Control, most of the world's experts on communicable diseases work in universities around the country. There are economists in the federal government who can help design policy responses, but most of the new ideas come from universities and think tanks dispersed around the nation. Our expertise on these critical issues is broad and diffuse.

Likewise, we cannot rely on the military for broad assistance in a pandemic. Our military forces are too few to take on this challenge. And, as the recent North Korean missile launch demonstrated, our enemies are likely to take advantage of any crisis. This will be especially true if disease threatens their regime's stability. Our military has a national focus unconnected to local spread of disease.

The federal government really only has two important roles; offering reassurance and spending money. On the former, there are mixed results. On the latter, they are moving too slowly. In the coming weeks, the U.S. economy may need significant stabilization. This is an unprecedented example where fiscal policy can support public health. There is compelling reason to move quickly to make our prevention efforts and economic stabilization work together.

Many American workers will be just fine while we take efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Factory workers will be provided protective clothing and many of us can work from home for lengthy periods. But, it is mostly the better paid who will be economically unaffected by Covid-19. Folks working in restaurants, retail or part time positions are at greatest risk of economic disruption from the coming recession. These workers are also least likely to have sick leave or vacation. It is precisely these people who will face the strongest financial pressure to

work when ill, and ironically, will also be the most needed to stay home if they are sick. Fiscal policy must take into account these workers.

Tax cuts, firm bail-outs, monetary policy and even payroll tax cuts will do nothing for people without sick leave, or those who lose their jobs in restaurants or stores. These workers most directly need a stimulus plan. I admire the idea of a direct payment of \$1,000 a month per person (\$500 per child), as proposed by Jason Furman. This payment will help keep sick people home, without financially devastating them for decisions that benefit the public good.

There are easier programs to implement, such as a payroll tax cut. Those would be better than nothing, but direct aid to low-income workers and those most at risk of job losses should be the overwhelming priority in Congress and the Administration. Ironically, with long-term bond yields in negative territory, it is hard to imagine a fiscal stimulus that would not have benefits that exceed its costs.

We also need to help sustain small businesses through this. An immediate line of credit for small firms who were incorporated prior to the law would prevent numerous bankruptcies. This is a complementary policy because it would also keep more workers employed at a critical time. We should also offer a rebate for sick leave, which would allow small businesses to recoup the cost of such a policy.

The federal government can do these stimulus plans because they can print money and borrow at a negative interest rate. Beyond that, there is little we can expect from Washington, D.C. Any other help will come from state, and especially local, leaders. The experience thus far should be encouraging. Here in Indiana, the governor's announcement of our first case last week was a model of communications.

The local public schools are providing superb communication to parents and students. My local school, Yorktown, has reviewed preventive measures with students and are talking about it in science classes. Through a variety of communications, families are informed enough to be ready for whatever happens tomorrow, much less weeks from now.

I'm especially proud of Ball State, which has provided clear information and reviewed travel and contingency plans for classes and dormitories. They've even installed hand sanitizers in every hallway, and prevention posters across campus. They've done this without panic or alarm, respecting a broad set of concerns by faculty, staff, students and our families.

Anyone who has participated in crisis management knows how good communication instills confidence. Colleges, schools and employers will make tough calls in the coming weeks and months. Because of their respectful and clear communication, I have no reason to second guess the decisions by Indiana state government, Ball State or Yorktown schools. I hope many readers feel the

same about their local governments and employers.

The next few weeks will reveal a great deal about the effectiveness of Congress and the Trump Administration in handling Covid-19. It is too early to make a definitive judgement about either, but it is clear that state and especially local governments are doing just fine. ❖

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



This pandemic exposes need for family leave

By **ERIN MACEY**

INDIANAPOLIS — It's inevitable.

Flu season comes around, and so do the standard recommendations: Wash your hands, and stay home if you develop symptoms. This year, health officials are doubling down on this advice as coronavirus cases emerge in the United States, including here in Indiana.



That advice is much easier to follow if you have paid sick days. The United States is an outlier when it comes to paid leave. Nationally, policymakers have set no baseline standards for what employers should offer. And while some employers recognize that it is not to their benefit for sick employees to come to work for a variety of reasons – including

that they are less productive and could infect fellow employees and clients – far too many still do not. According to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data (2019), about one in four workers nationally, and as many as one in three workers in Indiana, do not earn paid sick days.

Digging deeper, the statistics on who does and does not earn paid sick days becomes even more problematic. Fewer than half of workers in the lowest wage quartile – often, the people who care for children and the elderly, prepare food, or handle transactions at a cash register – lack the ability to earn paid sick days.

When workers lack paid sick days, they are far more likely to go to work sick. In one Center for Disease Control study, nearly 60% of workers who prepare food reported going to work sick. Parents with sick kids and no paid sick leave are much more likely to send those kids to school when they are contagious, or to take them to emergency rooms

rather than doctors' offices for treatment. They do so for good reason; beyond an inability to pay the bills without a paycheck, nearly one in four workers without paid sick days have reported either losing a job or being threatened with job loss as a result of needing time off.

Fortunately, some states and localities are stepping up to the plate. Currently, 33 jurisdictions – including 11 states – require employers to allow workers to accrue paid sick leave. Often, these laws require a minimum of one hour paid sick leave per 30 hours worked, although variations exist. The only law Indiana has passed concerning paid sick days is preemption, barring localities from requiring employers to provide this vital workplace and public health benefit.

In my first session at the legislature, a lawmaker asked me why an employer should pay people for the time when they are not at work. There are a number of good reasons to provide paid leave. Vacations make workers more productive and more committed to their jobs. Paid maternity and paternity leave increase morale, satisfaction, and retention. Staying home when sick can reduce infection and the risk of workplace injuries. The list goes on and on.

Now we can add “reducing the impact of a global pandemic” to the list. ❖

Erin Macey, PhD, is a senior policy analyst for the Indiana Institute for Working Families and the Indiana Community Action Association.



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How Hoosier metros stack up

By MORTON MARCUS

INDIANAPOLIS — The first warmish day brought forth green shoots of nascent flowers. And, lo, Faye of the Forest was on my deck railing, feisty as ever. "You waste a lot of time," she announced.



Not waiting for my defensive counter-thrust, she continued, "Every week you turn data sets into kindling for your writing fire. You spend hours on spreadsheet manipulations. What you want is already out there, done by others and available for free."

"And you know this how?" I asked. "I have my ways," she said coyly, tossed her hair as women do, and flitted off into the forest.

She was right! Last week, the Brookings Institute posted economic comparisons of the nation's 192 largest metropolitan areas. Indianapolis was in the group of 53 metros with over one million persons and ranked 27th in growth of jobs, Gross Metro Product (GMP) and change in jobs at young firms, from 2008-18.

That's smack in the middle of those very large metros, a comfortable Hoosier rocking chair. Yet, that's better than Fort Wayne which was 45th among 83 mid-sized areas (250,000 to 500,000). Nonetheless, Fort Wayne still out-performed Evansville (58th) and South Bend (70th) in the same group.

Suddenly, Faye returned. "But," she said, "what if you're not seeking growth as much as progress on closing the gap between where the rich and the poor live?"

"Brookings," I replied, "does look at the change in the gap between the top and the bottom of neighborhood median household incomes."

"And?" she prompted.

"And," I answered, "the Indianapolis metro area saw its gap widen by \$4,402 (12th worst in its group of 53 metros). Fort Wayne's gap widened by \$1,002 (39th worst in its group of 83 metros). South Bend's gap widened by \$2,227 (22nd worst in that group)."

"You're not saying?" Faye demanded.

"Evansville," I stuttered, "with a gap widened by \$4,778. It was the 10th worst in that mid-size group of 83 metros."

"There are two things wrong here," Faye said in tutorial mode. "First," she continued, "you're bottom-surfing. Each of those metro areas was in the top 10 in at least one of the 15 measures considered. Indianapolis was seventh in closing the gap of the relative poverty rate between whites and persons of color, Evansville fourth in

change in median income, Fort Wayne eighth in change of standard of living. South Bend was first in closing the employment rate gap between whites and persons of color.

"Second," she continued, "Brookings is focused on change with nothing said about status. Little change in something where the status is very good, is not bad. If you're making \$200,000 and you go up only 1% that's a \$2,000 bump, double a 10% increase on \$10,000."

She was right, again! But gone before I could admit it. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist. Reach him at mortonj-marcus@yahoo.com. Follow his views and those of John Guy on "Who gets what?" wherever podcasts are available or at mortonjohn.libsyn.com.

Did gender play a role in Warren's defeats?

By KELLY HAWES
CNHI News Bureau

ANDERSON — It would have been fun to watch Elizabeth Warren go toe to toe with Donald Trump on a debate stage.

She had made clear in her encounters with fellow Democrats that she could hold her own in a policy discussion.



Warren was one of three women I thought had a chance to win the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination.

At one point, it looked like the choice might be Kamala Harris. She had kicked off her campaign in front of 20,000 supporters, but she wound up dropping out two months ahead of the Iowa caucuses.

Then there was Amy Klobuchar, who parlayed a strong debate performance ahead of the New Hampshire primary into a surprise third-place finish. Her moment in the sun ended quickly, though, and she suspended her campaign just ahead of Super Tuesday.

Warren, though, seemed to show the greatest promise. She won support with her sharp intellect and a seemingly endless stream of policy blueprints. She was the frontrunner in numerous polls, and she was drawing large crowds at campaign appearances.

Things began to unravel, though, on the issue of health care. Rivals pointed out she seemed to have a plan for everything except "Medicare for All," and the proposal

she finally put forward left both moderates and progressives disappointed.

After coming up short in the first four states and on Super Tuesday, Warren finally called it quits.

"I will not be running for president in 2020, but I guarantee I will stay in the fight," she told the crowd gathered outside her home in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The announcement effectively narrowed the choices to Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders, two white men in their 70s. For those who had celebrated the Democratic primary field as the most diverse in American history, it was disappointing.

Warren's departure would seem to be good news for Sanders, who told reporters there was "no question" Warren's platform was more ideologically aligned with his policies than those of Biden.

"And so, today, I would simply say to her supporters out there, of whom there are millions, we are opening the door to you, and we'd love you to come on board," Biden said. "Together we can win this primary process. Together we can defeat the most dangerous president in the history of American politics."

Warren made clear, though, that she was in no hurry to endorse anyone.

"Why would I owe anybody an endorsement?" she told Jess Bidgood, national political reporter for the Boston Globe. "Is that a question they asked everybody else who dropped out of this race?"

Democratic voters closing door on Sanders

By **KYLE KONDIK**
and **J. MILES COLEMAN**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – Tuesday night's Democratic presidential primary results were the equivalent of a diner motioning across the restaurant to a waiter and mouthing two words: "Check, please."

While a significant chunk of the party supports Bernie Sanders in his head-to-head matchup with Joe Biden, a considerably larger portion backs Biden. The size of that larger group is indicative of a party that is ready to move on to the general election against Donald Trump.

Biden's smashing victories in Michigan, Mississippi, and Missouri were so total that Sanders did not win a single county in any of the three states.

Washington state is basically tied, with Sanders up a couple tenths of a percentage point, as mail-in ballots trickle in. There are about a million votes in, which we suspect is substantially more than half of the total votes

What did she think of the remaining candidates?

"I think I would have made a better president than either one of them," she told Bidgood. "That's why I was running!"

The loss was harder, she said, precisely because she had such detailed plans.

"The pieces are far more real," she said. "It makes losing this chance to lead our government to make those changes far more painful."

In speaking to reporters about the end of her campaign, Warren mentioned "all those little girls who are going to have to wait four more years."

She called the issue of gender "a trap question."

"If you say, 'yeah, there was sexism in this race,' everyone says 'whiner,'" she said. "And if you say 'there was no sexism,' about a bazillion women think, 'what planet do you live on?'"

The pundits will argue about whether female candidates are treated differently because of their gender, but when it comes to presidential politics, the facts speak for themselves.

This year marks 100 years since women earned the right to vote. How long will it be before we give a woman a chance to lead this country? ❖

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even if turnout is very high. The eventual delegate edge that the winning candidate gets when it's all said and done will end up being relatively negligible. The Biden campaign is surely comfortable with that outcome given that Sanders won other western states California, Colorado, and Utah last week. Biden won Washington's eastern neighbor, Idaho, while Sanders won North Dakota.

In this newly consolidated two-person race, Biden appears stronger than Hillary Clinton four years ago, and Sanders weaker than his previous incarnation. In Michigan amidst significantly higher turnout – close to 1.6 million ballots cast this time as opposed to just about 1.2 million last time – Biden got more votes than Clinton in every

single county, while Sanders ran behind his vote total in 70 of 83 counties, per Michigan reporter Jonathan Oosting (these figures may change as the vote is finalized; Michigan is using a hugely-

expanded absentee balloting system for this election).

MI-3, a Republican-leaning congressional district represented by Republican-turned-independent Rep. Justin Amash, covers most of Grand Rapids' Kent County and other parts of western Michigan. The trend there helps to demonstrate what happened statewide. This was Sanders' best district in the state against Clinton in 2016; Biden ended up carrying it this time amidst significantly higher



turnout (close to 110,000 total votes, up from about 75,000 four years ago).

There were some bright spots for Sanders: It appears that he did better than four years ago, for instance, in both the city of Detroit and East Lansing (home of Michigan State University), but the negative trends far outweighed the positive ones: no surprise when a narrow victory four years ago turns into a 15-plus point defeat.

The focus on Michigan took attention away from Missouri, which Clinton only won by .25 points over Sanders in 2016. Biden pushed the decimal point two places to the right, winning by 25 points. Biden's domination of the state was thorough. He even carried Boone County (Columbia), home of the University of Missouri, albeit just by six points (Sanders, then and now a favorite of younger and collegiate voters, won the county by 22 points four years ago).

Missouri's turnout was only up a little bit from 2016, more than 660,000 votes this time compared to about 630,000 four years ago, a modest change compared to some other states. This is perhaps unsurprising in a state that has transitioned from competitive to safe Republican over the past couple of decades. Of 114 counties, 72 saw turnout drops, with vast swaths of the northern and southeastern parts of the state seeing a drop. This is indicative of the weakening Democratic brand in rural parts of the state, something that has become obvious in recent statewide general elections, too. Meanwhile, some counties close to the state's major urban centers, Kansas City in the west and St. Louis in the east, saw turnout increases. This is suggestive of the broader trend of increased Democratic engagement in suburban areas across the country.

There were some bright spots for Sanders. It appears that he did better than four years ago, for instance, in both the city of Detroit and East Lansing (home of Michigan State University), but the negative trends far outweighed the positive ones, no surprise when a narrow victory four years ago turns into a 15-plus point defeat.

Mississippi was very similar to four years ago overall. The state with the nation's most heavily African-American primary electorate voted 82%-17% for Clinton and 81%-15% for Biden. Technically, the most recent reporting has Sanders at 14.8% in Mississippi; that is important for delegate-counting, because if he remains under 15%, he won't get any statewide delegates. Regardless, Mississippi suggests Biden will enjoy landslides in the two remaining Deep South states that have not yet voted, Georgia on March 24 and Louisiana on April 4.

There are no signs things will get better for Sanders next week, when four more large states vote: Arizona, Florida, Illinois, and Ohio. Sanders has never shown any strength in Florida, and Biden should rout him there. Sanders lost Illinois narrowly and Ohio not so narrowly in 2016. Biden's sweep of both Michigan and Missouri's counties suggests we should expect something similar in their regional neighbors. Sanders carried much of downstate Illinois and also some of the Chicago collar counties in 2016.

The results so far this year suggest he won't replicate that. Sanders has done better out West, and he has also done well with Hispanic voters, which gives him a glimmer of hope in Arizona. But Arizona also has a lot of older voters and well-off suburbanites, high-turnout groups that have been flocking to Biden.

Biden's delegate lead is increasing. As of Monday night, he was up 608 to 532 in our Crystal Ball/Decision Desk HQ count; that is now 777 to 636. So Biden's lead has nearly doubled, going from 76 to 141. Based on proportional allocation rules, the only way for Sanders to really gain ground is to win lopsided victories in big states. But the opposite seems likely to occur next week.

Perhaps Sanders can hold out to try to score a victory in Wisconsin on April 7, a state with a liberal Democratic electorate where he won decisively in 2016. But at this rate, Biden is probably favored there too, given that he won Michigan and Minnesota, two states similar to Wisconsin, after Sanders carried them in 2016. And even if Sanders were to win Wisconsin, what would that really get him? Sanders also is disadvantaged by the nation's public health crisis, which limits his ability to campaign and hold the big rallies that have defined his campaign both this cycle and last.

Yes, there is a debate scheduled for Sunday night. Biden, a shaky performer, could fall on his face and give Democrats buyer's remorse. But the cushion Biden has built, and will add to, is getting so large that Sanders can't reasonably hope to catch up. Over the past two Tuesdays, states that possess more than 40% of the total pledged delegates have spoken. Next Tuesday, four more states with 15% of the delegates will amplify, in all likelihood, the message from those states: The Democrats have seen enough, and they prefer Biden to Sanders.

Virus on the elections

In 1845, Congress established the "Tuesday next after the first Monday in November, in every fourth year succeeding every election of a President and Vice President" as the day to hold a presidential election. In 2020, that's Tuesday, Nov. 3. But just as Congress set this date, Congress can change it. The United States Constitution gives the Congress the authority to regulate presidential elections and provides that the Congress may determine the "time" of choosing presidential electors. With any luck, virus fears will be well behind us by the time Americans cast their votes in the fall. But just as the public benefits from a renewed focus on efforts to reduce the spread of germs, the Congress and U.S. election administrators will also benefit from this opportunity to focus on addressing these issues in the voting process many months ahead of the actual election. The closer this discussion comes to Election Day, the more partisan it will become. So now is the time to discuss from a public health perspective whether and how to conduct a presidential election in the time of COVID-19. ❖

Mark Bennett, Terre Haute Tribune-Star: Vigo County has built a reputation for being a mirror of American presidential politics. It's taken 132 years to develop that niche. It may take just four years to end it. Ironically, Vigo could lose its status as the nation's bellwether county for the same reason it earned that distinction — the county mirrors the rest of the country. Americans grew more polarized through the 21st century. Somehow, Vigo County voters avoided such heightened political rigidity. Until 2016. Political flexibility had allowed a majority of Vigo voters to favor the winning presidential candidate in every election dating back to 1888, except two. No other U.S. county comes close. "Vigo actually is pretty impressive," said Dave Leip, an MIT-trained engineer who operates the "Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections" website from Massachusetts. Indeed, Vigo Countians backed Republican George W. Bush twice, then Democrat Barack Obama twice, and then Republican Donald Trump in 2016. That pendulum swung just as widely throughout the late-19th and 20th centuries, too. Trump's 2016 victory brought a new twist. Of the 40,699 people casting ballots in Vigo County, 16,844 voted straight-party — all Republican, all Democratic or all Libertarian, according to Vigo County Clerk's Office figures. Straight-party ballots accounted for 41.5% of all ballots cast. Two years later, in 2018's non-presidential midterm election, an almost identical 41.4% of Vigo residents voted straight-party. That's a significant surge. Is increased partisanship the cause? It's hard to know for sure. But straight-party voting never topped 34% in any midterm or presidential election from 1998 through 2014. Staunch Republicans in Vigo County seem to have grown in number, too. Straight-party Republican voters slightly outnumbered straight-party Democrats in 2016 and 2018 for the first time since at least 1998 and perhaps ever. "In Terre Haute, that [growth in straight-party voting] has benefited Republicans and will continue to benefit Republicans," said Jim Bopp, a Terre Haute attorney for Trump's national campaign. In fact, Bopp added, "I think it's perfectly conceivable that in a relatively short amount of time, Terre Haute will be more Republican than the nation." ❖

Robert Schlesinger, NBC News: The middle of the coronavirus crisis is one of the rare circumstances during which the presidential bully pulpit could really make a difference, thanks to a combination of a need for public education and reasoned calm. Trump fails in both aspects of that calculus. He has often been a font of dangerous nonsense, as he was Friday during his rambling and often misleading comments at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the appearance where he seemed to believe that the novel coronavirus is just an exotic species of flu (it's not). And he has consistently downplayed

the situation's seriousness, mixing both nothing-to-see-here assurances aimed at pacifying the stock market and self-congratulation aimed at voters. For instance, "We've had tremendous success, tremendous success beyond what many people would've thought," he said in a Feb. 26 press conference, asserting that the risk to Americans from the coronavirus was "very low." Since then, the number of confirmed U.S. coronavirus cases has grown from 60 to more than 500 and the number of U.S. deaths has gone from zero to 22. But Trump's tune has not changed: "We have a perfectly coordinated and fine tuned plan at the White House for our attack on CoronaVirus," he tweeted Sunday. (His Nero meme on Sunday and deaths-happen-but-life-goes-on tweet Monday did not improve matters.) Meanwhile, the president has openly talked about keeping U.S. passengers on a cruise ship in coastal waters because "I like the numbers [of infections] where they are" and he didn't want them to rise. Optics, in other words, are more important to him than reality. But the coronavirus is not a marketing challenge on "The Apprentice"; it's a fast-moving public health emergency. And while Trump long ago shredded whatever personal credibility he had with many Americans, his obsession with short-term perceptions particularly hampers the government's ability to deal with the crisis." ❖



Mitch Daniels, Washington Post: The cheery woman grabbed me on my way to the stage. She couldn't wait to tell me that, after a long career in the Washington area, she was moving to the Midwest. About the great house she found at half the price and a fraction of the property tax. The quick, easy trips to work, stores and everywhere else. It's an increasingly familiar story. The event I was attending was a CNBC-sponsored program titled "Growth in the Heartland," a contradiction in terms for most of the past half-century, but now a real phenomenon and a possible long-term trend. Studies now detail the resurgence of a host of Midwestern cities such as Kansas City, Mo., and Minneapolis, including some in what has been called the Rust Belt, such as Columbus, Ohio, and Madison, Wis. Net domestic migration from the Northeast now runs more than 350,000 per year; California is losing population, and likely a congressional district, for the first time in its history. These changes are more than just a pendulum swinging. Some of the turnaround is the product of conscious, thoughtful public policy. Places such as Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and my home state of Indiana have built some of the country's most business-friendly climates. Many have reformed and strengthened public education and seen positive results. ❖

5 new virus cases pushes state to 11

INDIANAPOLIS — Five more people in Indiana have been sickened by the coronavirus, including three in the same suburban Indianapolis county, boosting the state's tally of cases to 11, health officials said Wednesday ([Indiana Public Media](#)). Johnson County has three presumptive positive cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, and north-central Indiana's Howard County has one, the state Department of Health said. A fifth new case of COVID-19 was announced Wednesday afternoon by health officials in northern Indiana's St. Joseph County - an adult male who is quarantined at his home tested positive for the coronavirus, said Dr. Mark Fox, the county's health officer. He was tested outside a private outpatient clinic in "a drive-through situation," Fox said. "He came to the parking lot of an outpatient facility and the health care provider, in appropriate personal protective gear, went out to the individual's car and obtained the necessary specimens for testing," Fox said. The state Department of Health's online dashboard for COVID-19 cases still showed 10 cases statewide as of Wednesday evening based on tests performed by the agency's laboratory, but spokeswoman Jeni O'Malley said it hopes "to expand it in the future to capture tests" that private labs report to the state.



Big 10 bans crowds for tournament

INDIANAPOLIS — The Big Ten Conference announced Wednesday evening that beginning Thursday, March 12, 2020, attendance at all Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament games will be limited to student-athletes, coaches, event staff, essential team and Conference staff, TV network partners, credentialed media,

and immediate family members of the participating teams (WLFI-TV). Additionally, all further Big Ten Conference winter and spring sport competitions, including championship/tournament events, will also be limited to student-athletes, coaches, event staff, essential team and Conference staff, TV network partners, credentialed media, and immediate family members of the participating teams.

NBA suspends season due to virus

NEW YORK — The NBA suspended its season after a Utah Jazz player tested positive Wednesday for the coronavirus ([ESPN](#)). "The NBA is suspending game play following the conclusion of [Wednesday's] schedule of games until further notice," the league said in a statement issued shortly after 9:30 p.m. ET. "The NBA will use this hiatus to determine next steps for moving forward in regard to the coronavirus pandemic."

Trump announces Europe travel ban

WASHINGTON — President Trump announced a 30-day ban on some travel from Europe into the U.S. and said he would act to offer financial assistance to those affected by the coronavirus pandemic rapidly spreading across the country and around the world ([Wall Street Journal](#)). Mr. Trump, in a national address from the Oval Office on Wednesday, said the travel suspension would begin Friday at 11:59 p.m. and would exclude the U.K. He suggested the restrictions would also apply to cargo, but the White House later said they applied only to people and declined to answer other questions. "The restriction stops people not goods," Mr. Trump later tweeted. Hours after the address, the State Department advised U.S. citizens against all travel abroad, even to countries not yet experiencing an outbreak. The department warned of mandatory quarantines, travel restric-

tions and other measures that could complicate international travel. "This is not a financial crisis," Mr. Trump said. "This is just a temporary moment in time that we will overcome as a nation, and as a world." U.S. stock futures and global stock markets dropped after the president announced the new travel restrictions.

BSU cancels in-person classes

MUNCIE — Ball State University on Wednesday canceled in-person classes for the rest of spring semester in response to growing concern with the coronavirus that is now a global pandemic ([Muncie Star Press](#)). President Geoffrey S. Mearns announced on Wednesday night the university is halting face-to-face instruction as well as suspending from March 16 until April 30 all university- sponsored/funded events of 100 people or more. No decision has been made yet on commencement this spring.

Biden cancels Chicago rally

CHICAGO — Joe Biden's presidential campaign has canceled events planned for here on Friday, including two high-profile fundraisers and a public rally, in the wake of growing fears about the coronavirus outbreak and just days before Illinois' March 17 primary (Politico). "The health and safety of the public is our number one priority," Biden's campaign said in a statement. "We have been and will continue to consult with relevant officials, including our recently announced Public Health Advisory Committee, regarding steps the campaign should take to minimize health risks for staff and supporters."