



Rep. Souder & the Kelty fiasco

Endorsement pulled for a campaign that is taking the cake

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

FORT WAYNE - With eight words - "My endorsement of Matt Kelty does not stand" - U.S. Rep. Mark Souder may have shifted the political dynamic in Indiana's second largest city in a way that could have repercussions that go well beyond the Nov. 6 election. Souder told HPR on Wednesday that his deliberations were "agonizing."

It ended a week-long, angst-ridden exercise that had his desire to be a good Republican outweigh taking a morality stance with regard to good governance. When Souder pulled his endorsement of the indicted GOP mayoral nominee, any chance that Kelty might have had to win probably has vanished. It came at a time when Souder's own probable 2008 opponent - Democrat Michael Montagano - reported impressive fundraising numbers.



It recalled the turmoil in which Souder found himself in December 1998 when he was one of the lone conservatives to question the impeachment of President Clinton. In the end, he voted against three of the four articles of impeachment, putting himself at odds with members of his family, staff, and two GOP chairs. Souder began

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Government from scratch

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

FRANKLIN - I sat at a table with a Franklin city councilman, the city clerk, a librarian, an activist from Union County with a population of 7,000, and Mark Lawrence of the Indiana Chamber, who lives in Indianapolis with a population of more than 700,000.



Brian Howey's Column

They were participating in the final Blue Ribbon Commission on Local Government Reform last Wednesday night at Franklin College. They pondered what a government for a 21st Century Indiana and beyond might look like. Or as former secretary of state and Blue Ribbon Commissioner Sue Anne Gilroy



"It's conduct unbecoming of an officer whether on or off duty. Certain standards you are supposed to be living by, I failed to do so."

- **Chris Minor, 2nd CD Republican candidate, on a fight that led to his leaving the Kokomo PD (Kokomo Tribune)**



HOWEY *Political Report*

told me, "We have an opportunity to create a government from scratch." That's opposed to the notion that if we have a problem – and we do, which is reflected in your property tax bill – we just slap another patch on the jalopy.

I'd prefer a hybrid government that is sleek, fast, and efficient while it covers the bases of security, education, and transportation while providing a strong social safety net. It must be affordable.

The forums were an excellent exercise in civic duty. Instead of two hours of people streaming to a microphone and repeating the same things, this forum had people seated at 12 tables where they selected a "reporter" and a "recorder." They spent the two hours discussing their current government; what services are critical to the success of their community and family; what can be done to streamline local governments and their services; the biggest impact local government has – both positive and negative – in delivering services; and what their three recommendations were for government reform?

Of the 100 or so people at Franklin College, a good number were local and state elected officials, like six-year Franklin City Councilman Ken Austin. "We have so many layers of government," Austin said at the round table. "We get so bogged down. We are so slow to react." Franklin is in Johnson County, which Clerk Janet Alexander described as once believing that they were at the back door of Indianapolis. "We're at the front door of Indianapolis now," she said. Alexander gets calls for "every clerk" in Johnson County. "People don't understand it. The layers of government make it very difficult."

Beverly Martin, director of the Johnson County Public Library, said, "We see the state as too patriarchal" and failing to provide many of the basics. She said that at one time, Indiana had interurban mass transit to many communities "and now they don't exist." Martin believes that

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government reform should come from the ground up, which is a concept Gov. Mitch Daniels has recommended to city and county officials over the past several years as he told them to begin "reforming yourselves" before the state does. Essentially, with the Blue Ribbon Commission headed by former Gov. Joe Kernan and Supreme

was this: don't replace the current template with another one. Some rural counties, for instance, may be best served with a township trustee. Or as one man put it, in some counties the surveyor is deemed one of the most important offices. Mae Hubbard of Union County said she felt that townships are a layer of government she has little interaction with.

Hubbard's concern was her local school corporation, where she says the board members might spend two hours on a budget the superintendent presents to them and have had five years of deficits. Councilman Austin, like the dozens of councilmen and women I covered as a reporter in Elkhart and Fort Wayne, spends exhaustive hours going through every facet of their city budgets. That's why I don't buy into Gov. Daniels' perception that local governments are spend-thrifts.

Here's another broad plea from Franklin: "Stop the unfunded mandates." Another was, elect library boards so they can be accountable to the public. Another suggestion was to have school districts conform with government districts as opposed to the overlapping we have. A number of people thought that the county recorders, auditors and treasurers should be combined into a "controller." There were calls to do away with electing county coroners and have a regional medical examiner. Some even talked of reducing the number of counties. ❖



Franklin Councilman Ken Austin, with Blue Ribbon Commissioner Louie Mahern in the background. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

Court Chief Justice Randall Shepard, the state going to do it.

I liked what Martin said. "I would leave the definition of a community open. It can be any size and any shape."

When the various tables "reported" what they "recorded," one recommendation from another table



this odyssey early this year when he joined most of the Allen County Republican establishment in endorsing county Commissioner Nelson Peters for mayor. It came at a time when Fort Wayne Republicans were extremely optimistic of capturing the mayor's office after eight years of Democratic rule under Graham Richard. Due to Mayor Paul Helmke's aggressive annexation program of the 1990s, there would be 25,000 new and mostly Republican voters in conservative Aboite Township voting in their first city election in 2007. "This whole thing has been agonizing, including my endorsement of Nelson," Souder told HPR. "It's almost impossible to get 27 elected officials to agree on anything."

Kelty lined up against Peters as a pro-life alternative, boasting endorsements from the local Right to Life and statewide family groups. Kelty mustered an impressive grassroots effort, boxed a wavering Peters in on the Harrison Square/stadium issue, and in late March, benefitted from a Zogby poll that showed the race a dead heat. It was with that poll that Kelty began to sink into the morass of legal jeopardy that resulted in a grand jury investigation, a nine-count indictment that included two perjury counts, all while essentially shattering the Fort Wayne and Allen County GOP.

Before the indictments were announced, Souder rallied to Kelty's side on July 23 and made a public endorsement. Souder, who called both Kelty and Democrat nominee Tom Henry "good friends," said it came down to a basic question: "Who can best lead Fort Wayne into the future?" Souder said his endorsement was for "fiscal reasons" due to the "outrage" of property taxes and the growing "backlash" from voters. "Matt offers a new vision, an optimism, a willingness to confront tough choices, in an environment of opposing new taxes," Souder said. "They don't want their taxes raised. Some will likely be forced to sell their homes at depressed prices."

Souder sounded emphatic and emotional as he said he was "shocked" that Congressional Democrats were planning to raise taxes. "Matt Kelty has raised the tax and spending issues from the beginning of his campaign. He has spent his entire adulthood raising these questions."

Souder said that Kelty offered "fresh leadership and a new voice. Matt Kelty is the Republican candidate for a new era."

Souder also said that all the information had been made public on the alleged campaign violations. "It should have been expedited by Aug. 1," Souder said. "It is an attempt to influence the election through the court process. The facts are all publicly known. There is no additional information required by law."

But on Aug. 13, the bombshell dropped when Kelty was indicted on two counts of perjury, five felony counts of fraudulent election filing and two misdemeanor counts of commingling campaign and personal funds.

The birthday cake & judgment

What has happened since has been perhaps the strangest campaign sequence in the history of mayoral politics. Kelty has gone from waging one of the best campaigns when he came within less than 100 votes of upsetting State Rep. Winfield Moses Jr. in 2002, to what can now be described as the biggest fiasco this side of Iraq.

The final straw might have come last week during Kelty's 43rd birthday party when a cake was decorated in a Wizard of Oz theme with an out-house that was labeled "GOP" headquarters and a witch that was purported to be Republican Allen County Prosecutor Karen Richards. There was a disparaging image of Souder. A cake might have been the work of some of Kelty's zealous base, but the yeasty photo ended up on Kelty's campaign website and was subsequently pulled during the



Perhaps the most famous Hoosier birthday cake since Steve Hilbert met Tommi Sue.

resulting furor.

By late last week, the **Fort Wayne Journal Gazette** quoted Souder as saying he was "very troubled" by the Kelty campaign and said, "Continuing concerns about the judgment of the candidate and his staff lead me to question his ability to lead the city."

Souder dropped one big hint: he said his concerns about Kelty, with whom he served on the staff of U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, were compounded by the campaign finance violations, the perjury charges, and other things that have happened since, "Many," Souder said, "that aren't public."

On Tuesday, Souder dropped his own bomb. "Because I was the senior elected Republican in the city, because I was a long-time friend of Matt Kelty, and because I shared his conservative views, after he was cleared by the election board and before he was indicted, I felt it was important to endorse him, even though few other elected Republicans have done so," Souder said of his July presser with Kelty.

"In Washington," Souder said, "the filing of campaign charges has been used as a political weapon to discredit opponents. Unfortunately, more often than not the charges have proven to be true. But that's not the case for them all; some have been unjustly smeared. In my opinion, prosecutor Karen Richards had no choice but to make a referral to a special prosecutor when the case came before her. Since she had endorsed Peters, no one would



have seen any decision she made as fair. Dan Sigler, though a former Democrat prosecutor, was elected in a very conservative county (Adams) with widespread Republican support. He had a reputation for fairness. It would have been hard to find any current or past prosecutor who would not have been criticized by someone. Dan Sigler is about as close to non-partisan as exists in our region." He said his decision was "not a hasty one. We have real concerns about how we're going to govern in Fort Wayne. It was one of the hardest things we've ever had to do."

Souder said that before endorsing Kelty, he had questioned him about the Zogby poll and said the "opinion of my long-time friend Jim Bopp also helped persuade me." However, Souder said, "When I learned the specifics of the seven felony counts and two misdemeanors, it became clear that the case was a lot more complicated than it had at first appeared. The indictments were substantial, not superficial. Two were for felony perjury." Souder told HPR that the Zogby Poll paid for by Red Rost and Don Willis included two companies that needed "security clearance. This is pretty serious stuff." Rost is managing director of Command Systems at General Dynamics C4 Systems. Willis is CEO of SentryPoints, a software company working with Homeland Security.

Then came some of the most incredible quotes from Souder: "An increasing number of defectors from the Kelty campaign claimed that people within the campaign, and the candidate himself, continued to make disparaging remarks about me and attacked my friends. Those active in the Kelty campaign had portrayed Cathy Hawks as a terrorist, Dr. John Crawford as a Nazi, smeared the character of Ken Neumeister, and portrayed Prosecutor Richards as a witch, just to name a few."

Souder explained further, "After declining to tape a radio commercial, and after refusing all requests to support the Kelty campaign since the indictments, the Kelty campaign nevertheless mailed out my earlier endorsement without even the courtesy of asking me or the common decency even to inform me. Each Fort Wayne voter, including myself, has to make up his or her mind about the substance of the indictments, the character of the candidates, and the importance of the issue differences. My vote will be private. But because I had previously been one of the only elected Republican officials to endorse Matt Kelty publicly, the questions kept coming about whether that endorsement still stood. For the stated reasons, my endorsement of Matt Kelty does not stand."

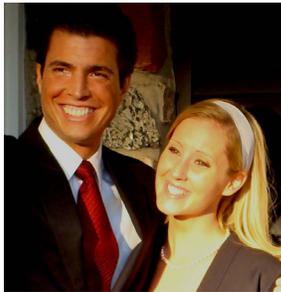
Political risk

Souder's stance comes with some risk. He has already expressed concern about the impact of the Iraq

War and, uncharacteristically, has begun his fundraising for 2008. Democrat Michael Montagano had a \$147,000 to \$145,000 lead over Souder in the Sept. 30 FEC report.

Souder normally rolls up more than 60 percent of the vote, but in 2006, he got only 54 percent against Democrat Fort Wayne Councilman Tom Hayhurst, even though the Cook Partisan Rating has the 3rd CD as +17 percent Republican (compared to +18 for Rep. Steve Buyer's 4th CD and +20 for Rep. Dan Burton's 5th CD. Any suppression of his Christian right base, which has stuck with Kelty this campaign, could pose problems in 2008 if the Iraq War becomes the Republican millstone, though if Rep. Souder were to lose or even find himself in a barnburner, then Republicans would essentially be in the midst of a 1964/1974 caliber catastrophe.

Last February as the surge got underway, Souder explained, "We cannot sustain this intense an effort indefinitely. Complete victory over terrorism is unlikely ever to occur. Sometimes you have to reposition and prepare for the broader battle, not exhaust yourself on just one front and then risk defeat in the overall conflict."



Democrat Michael Montagano is raising cash to take on Souder

Conscientious Souder & impeachment

Souder has gone through controversial periods before. His vote against three of the four Clinton impeachment articles enraged some of his 4th CD supporters, putting him at odds with Allen County Chairman Steve Shine (who is still backing Kelty).

During the impeachment sequence, Souder had extensive discussions with Rep. Buyer, an impeachment floor manager, and U.S. Rep. Ed Pease. "He was being studious," said Buyer, who referred Souder to documents at the Ford Building. Souder poured through thousands of pages of the Monica Lewinsky investigation and decided to vote against three of the articles, bringing the wrath of the **Weekly Standard** and other conservative journals. There were further conversations with Sen. Coats, Charles Colson and Gary Bauer. "He wanted to see more evidence," Buyer told HPR at the time. Pease explained, "He is what I've always known him to be - conscientious."

HPR would describe it this way: "Souder continued down the torturous impeachment road all the way up to the Saturday morning votes." When it was final, Souder said, "The danger of my vote is I didn't make anyone happy. But this isn't about making people happy. I did the best I could."

In Fort Wayne these days, less than three weeks before an election the Republicans thought would bring them victory, no one in the GOP is happy. Certainly not the earnest conservative U.S. Rep. Souder. ❖



2008 Indiana Governor

Governor 2008: Republican: Gov. Mitch Daniels, La Ron Keith. Democrat: Jim Schellinger, Jill Long Thompson. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Results:** Daniels (R) 1,302,912, Kernan (D) 1,113,900, Gividen (L) 31,644. **2008 Forecast:** Schellinger today criticized



Governor Mitch Daniels' failure to improve women's health care after three years in office, as an independent report gave Indiana a failing grade for its policies on women's health. "In 2004, Mitch Daniels promised to 'focus on results' and get Indiana to 'aim higher,'" Schellinger said. "But today, we learn Indiana has been given an 'F' for its results and policies on women's health care. If that's what Mitch Daniels considers 'aiming higher,' then Hoosiers have yet another good reason to demand a change in leadership." In the report card titled "Making the Grade for Women's Health" released yesterday by the National Women's Law Center and Oregon Health and Science University, Indiana ranked 40th among the 50 states and was one of 12 states assigned an "F" grade. "Indiana deserves better than being ranked as one of the worst states in the nation on the health of its women," said Schellinger. "And Governor Daniels deserves to be held accountable."

Daniels' re-election campaign got a huge boost last week after Carmel high-tech entrepreneur Scott Jones put on a bash to end all bashes (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). Campaign spokesman Cam Savage said the donations are still trickling in, but he is confident the event met its \$1 million goal. The glitzy fundraiser was attended by about 200 people at no less than \$5,000 a person. Several bands played, including the Four Tops and Dragonfly. Daniels arrived on his motorcycle in jeans but a tuxedo jacket.

Washington Post blogger Chris Cillizza, who will keynote the **HPR Forum** on Oct. 23, posted this on the Indiana gubernatorial race, which he rates as the fourth most competitive in 2008: **Indiana:** This is a race is full of disconnects. Take the Democratic primary. The smart money - both in state and nationally - seems to be on architect Jim Schellinger (D) and yet former Rep. Jill Long Thompson (D) has a comfortable primary lead and the support of EMILY's List, which means she will be able to compete financially with Schellinger. The general election provides a similar conundrum as Republicans are absolutely convinced that Gov. Mitch Daniels (R) will be re-elected going away, citing the state's Republican lean and the turnout patterns in a presidential year. And yet, an independent poll conducted

last month showed 45 percent of voters rating Daniels' job performance as "excellent" or "good" and 47 percent rating it "fair" or "poor". We aren't sure what to think, but this race has all the makings of a real contest in both the primary and the general election. **Democratic Primary Status:** LEANS LONG THOMPSON. ❖



Gubernatorial Democrats, Washington Post's Cillizza headline 'free' HPR Forum

INDIANAPOLIS - When the annual HPR Forum gathers at 1 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 23, at the Madam Walker Theater ballroom, the opening 2008 presidential primaries and caucuses will be less than three months away. **Washington Post** blogger Chris Cillizza will give the keynote address at this year's HPR Forum. Prior to the keynote, the Democratic gubernatorial candidates, Jim Schellinger and Jill Long Thompson, will make one of their first joint appearances before the general public.

HPR Forum Schedule

1 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2007

Madam Walker Theater, Fourth Floor Ballroom,

- 1 p.m. Welcoming remarks, Brian A. Howey
- 1:15 p.m. Indiana Democratic gubernatorial candidate joint appearance
- 1:20 Jim Schellinger opening remarks
- 1:30 Jill Long Thompson opening remarks
- 1:50 Questions from audience
- 2:10 Questions from journalists: Brian A. Howey, Vince Robinson, Jack Colwell and Matt Tully.
- 2:20 p.m. BREAK: Music
- 2:30 p.m. Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman
- 2:45 p.m. Questions from journalists and audience
- 3:00 p.m. Keynote Address, Chris Cillizza, Washington Post
- 4:00 p.m. Blogger panel: Thomas Cook of Blue Indiana, Gary Welsh of Advance Indiana, Mark Curry of HPR
- 5 p.m. Reception





Daniels has a tax plan that will seek ‘permanence’

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - Gov. Mitch Daniels told HPR on Tuesday that he knows where he is going on the property tax reform plan that he will unveil before the end of the month.

“I’m pretty well set on what I think the right course is,” Daniels said after addressing the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs. “There’s a few more people I want to confer with, listen to and compare notes with. I said by the end of the month and I’ll meet that deadline.”

Asked if he is satisfied with the plan, a smile creased his face and he responded, “Satisfied? I’m excited about the potential to achieve some very dramatic relief but also reform. I think that the energy and urgency is there to do it. That makes it a great time to make big change.”

Earlier in the week, the tax commission headed by State Sen. Luke Kenley said that it was unlikely to come up with a single plan, but would instead lay out some general outlines. Daniels was asked if he felt he had gotten over the humps that Kenley was still dealing with. “I’m not sure exactly where they’re at. I’ve taken input from every conceivable direction and in every part of this state. I think I see the outlines of a good way forward and I’m going to lay them out there and at least give everybody a chance to react.”

Any hints?

“Oh, I’ve said fair, far-reaching and final,” the governor said. “This time the watch word is permanence, which to me means constitutional change. We have to reduce homeowner and residential property taxes and this time we have

to lock those reductions in.”

At the Blue Ribbon Commission on Local Government Reform on Tuesday at New Albany, several elected officials appeared to be bracing for change. “Consolidation may need to be in order,” said State Sen. Steve Stemler, D-Jeffersonville, at his table. Several at Stemler’s and White’s table agreed that with the ease of information access over the Internet, consolidating government, too, could be more painless than ever (**News-Tribune**). Indiana Township Association President Debbie Driskoll of Hamilton County said that at her forum table, people wanted consolidation “where it makes sense.”

Earlier in the week, Becky Williams of the Indiana Assessors Association proposed consolidating the 1,008 township assessors into 10 regional districts. According to the Post-Tribune, the plan still calls for local assessment offices, but not necessarily in each township. Instead of being run by the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance, Williams proposes moving the assessment division under the Indiana Department of Revenue. Williams said such a move means assessments no longer would be paid through property taxes. None of the positions would be elected, under Williams’ plan. All would

be appointed, starting with the assessment administrator, who would oversee the entire state. The assessment administrator would appoint district assessment supervisors, who would appoint local assessors and chief deputies within each district.

“**With everything** that has happened over the state in the last year,” Williams said, referring to trending issues that have forced reassessments in several counties, “we felt this was more important than ever.” Williams said she has sent the proposal to Daniels’ office but has yet to see a response. ❖



Gov. Mitch Daniels after speaking to the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs on Tuesday (top photo). Blue Ribbon Commissioners Louis Mahern and Sue Anne Gilroy chat at Franklin College on Wednesday. (HPR Photos by Brian A. Howey)



2008 Indiana Congressional

Congressional District 2: Republican:

David C. "Chris" Minor. Democrat: U.S. Rep. Joe Donnelly.

Geography: South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media**

Market: South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago.

People: Urban/rural 73/27%; median income \$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black;

5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2002 Result:** Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%);

2004 Result: Chocola 140,496 (54%) Donnelly (D)

115,513 (45%) **2006 Result:** Donnelly 103,561, Chocola

88,300. **2008 Forecast:** If Joe Donnelly had any concerns

over Minor's coming campaign "from the sands of Iraq," this past week brought him solace. Since Minor announced the challenge, it has been determined he works for Blackwater USA, which is on the verge of being expelled from Iraq. Think about that one for a moment: In a nation full of terrorists, killers and thugs, Minor is associated with the one company being asked to leave. Over the weekend, the Kokomo Tribune's Scott Smith and Ken de la Bastide conducted a 40-minute interview with Minor in which he detailed his brief career with the Kokomo Police Department that ended after a Halloween Party fight with another cop, and a DUI. In what may be the greatest understatement ever written by the Horse Race, this is not the best way to get a campaign started.

Minor said he resigned from the force in 1991 after getting into an off-duty altercation at a Halloween party. He had been on the department less than a year and had not completed his probationary period, he said. "Being a police officer, people expect you to meet a higher standard," Minor said. "Obviously I failed that test." Minor didn't offer any further details of the fight, but said he'd been drinking, no weapons were involved, and there were no serious injuries. He said he resigned about a month after the altercation and couldn't recall if he'd been charged with any departmental violations. "The department was looking into it. It was one of those things, you know, I'm certainly not proud of. He said it came down to him resigning for the right reasons. "It's conduct unbecom-



MINOR

Sept. 30 FEC Totals

1st CD: U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky raised \$234,100 in the third quarter and had \$1,464,774.14 cash on hand.

2nd CD: Rep. Joe Donnelly raised \$224,188 in the third quarter and had \$553,592.58 cash on hand.

4th CD: U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer raised \$73,805.00 and has \$443,465.71 on hand while Democrat Nels Ackerson raised \$134,104.00 and has \$94,863.40 on hand.

5th CD: U.S. Rep. Dan Burton has an \$871,000 to \$81,000 lead over Dr. John McGoff in the Federal Election Commission filings for the third quarter (**HPR**). Burton raised \$189,684 to \$20,999 for McGoff in the third quarter.

6th CD: U.S. Rep. Mike Pence raised \$154,768.57 and had \$491,156.01 on hand while Democrat Barry Welsh did not report.

7th CD: U.S. Rep. Julia Carson, who has extended her sick leave until the end of October, had raised \$6,178 for the first six months and raised \$8,734 for the third quarter.

8th CD: U.S. Rep. Brad Ellsworth raised \$115,043.41 and has \$481,730.89 on hand while Republican Greg Goode raised \$51,148.84 and has \$32,678.23 on hand.

9th CD: U.S. Rep. Baron Hill received \$228,000 in contributions during the fundraising quarter that ended Sept. 30, according to the Indiana Democratic Party. Hill has raised \$925,000 for his 2008 re-election bid. He has nearly \$700,000 on hand, the party said in a statement (**Louisville Courier-Journal**).

coming of an officer whether on or off duty. Certain standards you are supposed to be living by, I failed to do so," he said.

Minor said he was arrested on a driving under the influence charge in Kokomo in 1994, a charge he said he pleaded no contest to at the time. He said there was no accident nor injuries in the incident. "I had been out with some friends, home for the first time in a long time from the Army," Minor related. "I was out celebrating with some friends. I ignored their advice to take a cab and paid the price. It was a poor decision that ended in an unfortunate circumstance."

Minor said he decided to make the two incidents public because he believed they would become known in the future. "Someone was going to bring it up in one fashion or another. Voters have a right to know if I have some dirty laundry," he said. "Not anything I'm proud of." He said everyone has done regrettable things in their younger years. He said people "learn from it and go on to make due for them." "My service in the military and government have more than made up for these mistakes. I wanted



to get this out early, let people know who they're getting involved with," Minor continued. "Know a little bit more about me, [it's] fair that they get to see I've done some things I'm not proud of."

Minor also issued a press release Friday, which blamed unnamed "opponents" for launching a smear campaign against him. The press release states Minor believes what the press release calls "several negative and misleading news stories and an error-filled editorial" appearing since he announced his candidacy "have been inspired by persons hoping to derail his bid for the U.S. House."

Status: LIKELY DONNELLY

Congressional District 9: Republican: Open.

Democrat: U.S. Rep. Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville (11%), Indianapolis (23%), Louisville (55%), Dayton, Cincinnati (10 percent). **People:** urban/rural 52/48%, median income \$39,011; race white

94%, 2.3% black, 1.5% Hispanic; blue/white collar: 34/50%; **2000**

Presidential: Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index:

R+8. **2004 Presidential:** Bush 59%, Kerry 40%. **2002 Results:**

Hill 96,654 (51%), Sodrel 87,169 (46%). **2006 Results:** Hill 110,455, Sodrel 100,469, Schansburg 9,893. **2008**

Forecast: The latest pay-per-view boxing match? No, a race for Congress in southern Indiana that pits Baron Hill, the Democrat, against Mike Sodrel, the Republican, for the fourth straight election (Cillizza & Murray, **Washington Post**). It began in 2002 when Sodrel, a wealthy trucking company owner, sank \$1 million of his own cash into a challenge to Hill. The incumbent prevailed narrowly. Two years later, Sodrel was back and, benefiting from strong Republican turnout in the presidential and gubernatorial races, nipped Hill by fewer than 1,500 votes. Hill reemerged as challenger two years later and, after a decidedly nasty campaign, reclaimed his seat by 50 percent to 45 percent. Luckily for political junkies everywhere, Sodrel announced last week that he is going in for a fourth time around in 2008. "A lot of voters voted for change in 2006," Sodrel said. "I don't think higher taxes, more spending and more programs were what they had in mind." "We're in uncharted waters," said Brian Howey, an independent analyst of Indiana politics. Howey noted that former Democratic congressmen John Brademas and Phil Sharp as well as current Rep. Mike Pence (R) were elected to Congress on their third try. (The most famous, and oft-cited, example of electoral persistence is Newt Gingrich, who lost congressional races in Georgia in 1974 and 1976 before being elected in 1978.) But none of those rivals the Hill-Sodrel epic, a battle fueled by their mutual distaste for each other. Howey suggested that voter fatigue with both candidates is a real possibility, adding: "We may see Tivo sales going up." Fred Yang, Hill's longtime pollster, said the



fact that voters know so much about his client and Sodrel will work to the incumbent's advantage. "The Sodrel camp needs to realize that sequels really only work when a new twist or element is added to the familiar story, and given how 2008 is shaping up, it's hard to envision Sodrel offering anything different that will change the result," Yang said.

Hill plans to switch his no vote on legislation that would expand a children's health-insurance program to a yes as the House tries to override President Bush's veto (**Louisville Courier-Journal**). In a message e-mailed to supporters, Hill said "providing healthcare for our nation's children is simply too important to abandon," even though he believes the legislation is unfair to Indiana. Estimates show the bill's 61-cent-per-pack increase in the federal cigarette tax means Hoosier smokers will pay more into the program than the state receives for health-care programs. "I will vote to override the President's veto in an effort to again show my support for the program and desire to move towards a fairer bill," Hill said in the message. Hill was one of only eight House Democrats to vote against it.

Status: TOSSUP.

2007 Mayoral

Anderson: Republican: Mayor Kevin Smith.

Democrat: Kris Ockomon. Independent: Roofer Bob Jozwiak. **2003 General Results:** Smith (R) 8,947, Rock (D) 7,821. **2007 Forecast:** The candidates debated Wednesday night. Asked about attracting jobs to Anderson, candidates offered several theories as to how to do it. Smith said jobs were the most important issue four years ago when he was elected, and they are still the most important issue in this election (**Anderson Herald-Bulletin**). "Now we have a new attitude," he said. "We worked to change our reputation around the state, the nation and globally." Smith said partnerships and an aggressive approach to economic development helped Anderson grow and would continue that process. Ockomon agreed with Smith that an aggressive approach to economic development was the answer to the jobs problem in Anderson. However, he said, the kinds of jobs coming into the city should be more important. He said better education and lower crime rates would attract more businesses to Anderson. **Status:** LEANS SMITH.

Indianapolis: Democrat: Mayor Bart Peterson.

Republican: Greg Ballard. Libertarian: Fred Peterson. **2003 Results:** Peterson (D) 92,763, Jordan (R) 55,354. **2007 Forecast:** Unlike the candidates' first televised face-off earlier this month, when candidates just answered questions, Wednesday's event televised by WRTV (Channel 6) from the Indiana History Center was a more traditional debate (**Indianapolis Star**). Discussion heated up on a handful of key issues, the first of which was Peterson's backing of the City-County Council's vote to increase city



HOWEY *Political Report*

Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

income taxes. "I think that 65 percent income tax increase at that particular time on top of property taxes was almost arrogant," said Ballard, a political newcomer who served in the Marine Corps for more than two decades. "We could have waited until we got the property taxes under control, and then we could have seen what we needed to do, and that's what I would have done." Peterson, a two-term Democratic incumbent, countered that the increase was vital to curbing crime and hiring more officers. "If you believe we need to step up the war against crime. then you can't do it without paying for it," Peterson said. "Anyone who says they believe in fighting crime, but we'll figure out how to pay for it some other way, I just don't think is being straight with the city of Indianapolis." Ballard also criticized the city's handling of abandoned homes, which Peterson said has become an increasing problem, not only for Indianapolis but for cities across the country. Peterson pointed to recent legislation his administration pushed for that allows the city to gain control of the residences faster. Ballard called the homes "warehouses for crime," adding that it should take the city only six months to seize them. Ballard's sharpest criticism came in response to a question to Peterson about whether Gray should be replaced, given an ethics investigation into his concrete company and allegations of ghost employment associated with his job as fire department liaison. Peterson said he believed in due process of law and that Gray should not be the subject of a "trial by media." "He will face the people of his district in 20 days," Peterson said. "I think that's the way these things are best handled." Ballard blasted Gray's fire department position and Peterson for allowing it to continue. "The worst-kept secret in the fire department is that Monroe Gray makes \$80,000 a year and has no job. This is not the system of accountability I would expect from the city's administration," Ballard said. "Cost savings? There's \$80,000. That's a cop on the street right there." **Status:** Likely Peterson.

Madison: Democrat: Tim Armstrong. Republican: Mayor Al Huntington. **2003 General Results:** Huntington (R) 1,746 (unopposed). **2007 Forecast:** "It's a very tight race," Huntington said. On paper, the 62-year-old Huntington's experience and background in government and business and his role as a civic leader would appear to give him a significant edge over Armstrong, a Madison Police detective (**Louisville Courier-Journal**). Huntington's calling card is that he runs the city like a business, so economic development is a top priority. He mentions recent gains -- an \$8 million sewer overhaul, upgrades at the airport and an expansion at the Ivy Tech campus. He also touts his leadership in buying 62 acres next to the city's industrial park -- land that Huntington believes is key to attracting new employers to the city of about 12,000. But the mayor also is on the defensive, trying to fend off an opponent waging an aggressive bid to oust him. Armstrong,

47, is running on the theme that it's time for a change. The race is interesting because local Democrats, who haven't always been unified, seem well-organized this year, said Bill Kubik, a professor of political science at nearby Hanover College. **Status:** TOSSUP

Mishawaka: Democrat: Councilman Mike Hayes. Republican: Mayor Jeff Rea. **2003 Results:** Rea (R) 5,691, Bodle (D) 4,225. **2007 Forecast:** Hayes, appearing with Rea at a forum Wednesday night at Mishawaka High School, suggested that the mayor be allowed to appoint one school board member (**South Bend Tribune**). Members of the Common Council now appoint all five school board members. Efforts to get enough signatures for an election on whether to switch to an elected school board failed recently. Hayes' proposal came in response to a question about whether or not the mayor could improve the quality of education or funding for education. He said giving the mayor an appointment would keep him involved with the schools. And if appointing a member is not possible, Hayes said the mayor should attend board meetings. Rea said the mayor needs to be involved and be a cheerleader but has no real authority over school operation. He had already answered the question and didn't have a chance to react to Hayes' idea about the mayor appointing a board member. In fact, the two rarely reacted directly to each other. In fact, when invited by moderator Gary Sieber, from WTRC radio, to describe their differences, both declined. **Status:** LIKELY REA.

South Bend: Republican: Juan Manigault. Democrat: Mayor Stephen Luecke. **2003 General Results:** Luecke (D) 10,598, Schmidt (R) 4,188. **2007 Forecast:** A campaign mailing from the state Republican Party to South Bend residents is generating controversy (**Wensits, South Bend Tribune**). The card pictured a tombstone surrounded by a desolate landscape. The epitaph: "RIP. Here lies South Bend, a once vibrant city now abandoned by business, overrun by violent crime and driving people from their family homes because of high property taxes." On the reverse side, the



mailing accuses Mayor Luecke of having "neglected our city and allowed it to die." The message is destructive, Luecke says. "It saddens me, it tears down our city. It's the worst kind of campaigning," he said. "A lot of people are very upset about it and they should be," Luecke said, noting he has heard from residents as well as a couple of business people. Republican mayoral challenger Juan Manigault expressed support for the message, but said he had nothing to do with sending it. He said the mailing is not negative campaigning. "This is the truth," he said. "This is where the city is headed. This is what the city has become." **Status:** LEANS LUECKE ❖



THE BOAR'S NEST

About that other Hoosier veep possibility (psst... Lugar)

By **BEVERLY PHILLIPS**
and **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

About that other Hoosier vice presidential candidate ... **Dick Lugar!**

While there's been so much focus on U.S. Sen. **Evan Bayh** on a ticket with **Hillary Clinton**, The Politico.com had Lugar, who has been mentioned as a potential vice presidential candidate since 1972 when he was President **Richard Nixon's** favorite mayor. In 1980, Lugar was on **Ronald Reagan's** short list until he chose **George H.W. Bush** (and changed the course of history). The Politico writes: The Republican vice presidential contest is more interesting than the Democratic one because it is far less predictable. With the Democrats possessing so many advantages and President Bush likely to weigh the ticket down with his basement-level approval ratings, many top Republicans may be unwilling to give up their current jobs to join a losing effort. Still, the nomination has to go to someone — here's a look at the likely choices: Sens. **John Cornyn** (Texas), **John Thune** (South Dakota) and **Lamar(!) Alexander** (Tennessee), and Govs. **Matt Blunt** (Missouri) and **Tim Pawlenty** (Minnesota). All have their strengths, but two at the top of the white boy list are South Carolina Gov. **Mark Sanford** and:

"**Sen. Dick Lugar of Indiana.** A legislator respected on both sides of the aisle for his foreign policy experience, he symbolizes bipartisanship and cooperation. He would be utterly unable to fulfill the typical role of "attack dog" for the ticket and would not fire up the base. Still, picking someone this qualified, serious and untelegenic would be an unexpected move. "

Daniels offers Latinos a path

Gov. **Mitch Daniels'** greeting came in Spanish, and then he urged on Tuesday members of the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs to "seize" the advantage of education efforts and Major Moves and help the state become an economic powerhouse. Daniels said that the "Power Hour" program through Indiana Boys & Girls Clubs can help Latino children increase their English proficiency from two to four grade levels. Daniels talked of the Major Moves program as not having added "a cent of new taxes" or bonds "to be paid by our children," explaining that "if we are to be the Crossroads of America, the intersection better be well paved." The governor said that the construction trades will "flourish as all this work gets done and then flourish when the economy takes off because of this work. These are great opportunities for our young people. These jobs pay well. They are highly skilled jobs." Daniels said that the state must have "full participation of all our citizens." He said that "all Hoosiers will benefit if we put our fears aside" and deal with the problems associated with immigration." Noting that 53 percent of Latino children in Indiana were born out of wedlock in 2004, Daniels urged the commission address that problem. Daniels said if a child is born into a two-parent family, graduates from high school and can keep a first job for more than a year, the chances are overwhelming that the child will avoid poverty. Daniels is shown here with members of the Commission which was meeting Tuesday in Indianapolis.



Gov. Mitch Daniels with members of the Indiana Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs at the Sheraton at Keystone in Indianapolis on Tuesday. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

"No anchovies or political endorsements please."

Earlier this week, HPR columnist and WXNT radio host **Abdul Hakim-Shabazz** interviewed an IUPUI student who makes his living delivering pizzas. While delivering pies to the offices of the Marion Democratic Party, he decided to play a joke by writing "Vote for Ballard" inside the pizza box. Ballard is the Republican underdog in next month's Indianapolis mayor's race against Mayor **Bart Peterson**. One angry phone call later to his boss by a Democrat party official resulted in the driver being suspended for ten days. "I think it's more ironic that the same people who won't raise a peep about Council President **Monroe Gray's** antics that are on a collision course with a grand jury one of these days, will complain about a pizza deliveryman," writes Abdul on his Indiana Barrister blog. ❖

Got a tip for the Boar's Nest? Send it to: phillipsgroup@comcast.net

Clinton, Obama get Indiana boosts

By **MARK CURRY**

WASHINGTON - The Clinton presidential campaign announced seven leading Hoosiers as Indiana Co-Chairs, including U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh, House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, State Sen. Vi Simpson and former First Lady Judy O'Bannon and former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis (**HPR**). "Hillary Clinton has the strength and experience to deliver the change this country needs," said Indiana House Speaker B. Patrick Bauer. "Her 35-year record fighting for children and families makes Hillary uniquely qualified to be President and hit the ground running on her first day in office," said former Indiana First Lady Judy O'Bannon. "We need a leader with Hillary's ability to end the war in Iraq, provide universal health care for every American and move us towards energy independence," said State Senator Vi Simpson. "We've seen growing support in Indiana, and I'm honored that these community leaders are joining our effort to change America," Clinton said. Also co-chairing are former Secretary of State Joe Hogsett, former House Speaker John Gregg, Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson and Bren Simon.

In the wake of the Service Employees International Union's decision not to unite behind one candidate on a nationwide level, two Democratic presidential hopefuls began picking up endorsements from the major labor union's state branches on Monday (**CNN**). Former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards announced the Iowa branch's support, while Sen. Barack Obama, D-Illinois, has won the official backing of the SEIU in both his home state and Indiana.

The Republicans have a plan

Pity the Grand Old Party. Their base is splintered, the president's ratings are at around 25 percent, and many of their most steadfast and generous donors have yet to write a single check during the current election cycle. For most, the past 11 months have been a living hell, and the

only good thing to come out of losing control of the legislative branch is the dismal record of their successors.

But that could all change, beginning soon. Mike Allen and Patrick O'Connor of Politico.com say House Republicans have a plan to rescue their party by next year's elections.

In an article dated Oct. 17, the duo describes a three-pronged strategy:

- Paint the Democratic majority as part of an unpopular Washington status quo;
- Force Democrats to make unpopular votes on tough issues;
- Lock arms around a new GOP issues agenda.

Brian Kennedy, communications director for House Minority Leader John A. Boehner (R-OH), told the authors that the GOP is working to "re-establish the Republican brand" by using parliamentary maneuvers that require Democrats to take tough votes on problematic provisions that have been added to popular legislation. Kennedy said Democrats, especially those from conservative districts, have been backed into a corner on immigration and whether to provide government benefits to undocumented aliens, national security, intelligence and taxation - all "red-meat Republican

issues," he said.

President Bush appears to be on board. Late yesterday morning he hosted a press conference in the James Brady Briefing Room at the White House. His opening statement set the tone for a 1,000-word assault on the Democratic-controlled legislature.

"We're now more than halfway through October, and the new leaders in Congress have had more than nine months to get things done for the American people," he said. "Unfortunately, they haven't managed to pass many important bills. Now the clock is winding down and in some key areas Congress is just getting started."

Speaking hurriedly and pausing only for a smile or frown to emphasize a point, the president expressed his dissatisfaction with the House and Senate in eight areas. According to Bush, "Congress has work to do" in health care, national security, funding the government, education, housing, trade, veterans affairs, and law enforcement and judiciary. "It's little time left in the year, and Congress has little to show for all the time that has gone by," he said before inviting questions. "Now is the time for them to act."



Former First Lady Judy O'Bannon has endorsed U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton. She and Gov. Frank O'Bannon are shown on Election Night 2002. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



It fell to Democrat Nancy Pelosi of California to counter the Bush offensive. She may run the U.S. House of Representatives, but the speaker was trumped by the president, who commandeered national airwaves to deliver his message. Pelosi did issue a statement with the following money quote carried on a few major news outlets yesterday evening. "There is no better example of why Washington is not working for the American people than the President claiming to seek common ground at the same time he is bitterly attacking Congress," she said. "Today's Presidential press conference perfectly illustrates who is standing in the way of progress for the American people."

It remains to be seen what, if any, impact the Republican plan will have on next year's congressional and presidential elections. Although Congress hasn't polled well, the Democratic Party bests the competition regularly, and that has many in the GOP worried about their prospects for retaking either branch of government.

"There is currently a lack of energy, a lack of enthusiasm, a lack of optimism about the near-term future of the party," John Weaver, a former senior adviser for Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain's campaign, told Chris Cillizza and Matthew Mosk of the Washington Post. "If it doesn't change quickly, it's a leading indicator of what kind of problem we are going to have next fall." ❖

Hoosier Support List

Giuliani: Marion County Prosecutor Carl Brizzi, Stephen Goldsmith, Tim Durham, Beurt SerVaas, Steve Hilbert. **McCain:** Gov. Mitch Daniels; Attorney General Steve Carter, Dan Coats. **Romney:** Secretary of State Todd Rokita, James Bopp Jr., Dan Dumezich, Bob Grand, Chris Chocola. **Thompson:** U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, U.S. Rep. Dan Burton, David McIntosh, Mike McDaniel, Rex Early. **Clinton:** Sen. Evan Bayh, Joe Hogsett, Mel Simon, Bren Simon, Speaker B. Patrick Bauer, Judy O'Bannon, Kathy Davis, John Gregg, State Sen. Vi Simpson, Marion County Sheriff Frank Anderson. **Edwards:** Robin Winston, Ann and Ed DeLaney, 9th CD Chair Mike Jones, Vidya Kora, State Reps. Russ Stilwell, Dennie Oxley, Terri Austin, Terry Goodin, Sheila Klinker, Linda Lawson and Scott Pelath; Robert Kuzman, Greencastle Mayor Nancy Michael, Bill Moreau Jr., Shaw Friedman, Vanderburgh Co. Chairman Mark Owen, 8th CD Vice Chair Mary Lou Terrell, Greg Hahn, Bruce Kehoe. **Obama:** Kip Tew, State Rep. Charlie Brown, Melina Kennedy, State Rep. Mae Dickinson, State Rep. Bill Crawford, State Rep. Jeb Bardon, State Sen. Earline Rogers, Frank Short, Jack Wicks, Andy Miller, John Fernandez, Dennis Lee. ❖



2008 State Presidential Polls

Iowa (R)	Date	Romney	Giuliani	Thompson	McCain	Huckabee
Des Moines Reg.	Oct. 1-3	29	11	18	7	12
ARG	Sept. 26-29	22	21	16	11	4
New Hampshire (R)						
ARG	Sept. 26-29	24	20	8	20	3
Zogby	Sept. 26-28	24	21	7	16	5
South Carolina (R)						
Inside Advantage	Oct. 2	16	16	21	16	11
Florida (R)						
Quinnipac	Oct. 1-8	17	27	19	8	--
Iowa (D)						
ARG	Sept. 26-29	30	19	24	10	
Des Moines Reg.	Oct. 1-3	29	23	22	8	
N. Hampshire (D)						
ARG	Sept. 26-29	41	10	22	8	
Zogby	Sept. 26-28	38	12	23	8	



Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana

- At Monday's public forum for the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform, I heard a lot of wishy-washy suggestions -- and some good ones. What I had hoped to hear more of from the 200-plus people gathered at Indiana University Northwest was a rip-up-the-blueprints-and-start-from-scratch philosophy. Here's the advice I gave to the people at my table: This is your first -- and last -- chance for decades to bring about major changes in the way local government operates. Indiana has had the same Constitution since 1859. Since then, the telephone, the automobile, the airplane, the computer and the Internet have all been invented. But local government trudges along largely unchanged. I listened to the complaints people made about poor customer service from the government bureaucracy. I listened to the complaints about having so many agencies providing the same or similar functions, including assistance in finding jobs. I had hoped to hear more people talking about streamlining government to offer one-stop shopping for social services so people wouldn't have to go through multiple screening processes at multiple venues. But mostly, the suggestions dealt with minor tweaks. I strongly encourage you to dream of the government you would like to have, not just what you expect, and send your big ideas to the commission. Without your input, the mandate for major reforms will be weak, and your taxes will continue to reflect that. Opportunity's knocking, but you still need to open the door to invite it in. Call the commission's voice mail line at (317) 261-3025, e-mail lgreform@iu.edu or visit <http://indiana-localgovreform.iu.edu>. And send your comments my way as well. I'd enjoy reading them and, hopefully, publishing them. Or are you satisfied with the tax bills and government you've got right now? ❖

Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune

- Jill Long Thompson, buoyed by results of a statewide poll, now is viewed in some political analyses of the 2008 Indiana race for governor as the front-runner for the Democratic nomination. Long Thompson says the poll has been helpful as news of it spreads to Democrats around the state. Not just in showing her with a big lead over Jim Schellinger, the Indianapolis architect who is her opponent for the nomination, but also in indicating that she already is only 8 percentage points behind Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels. "It shows I can beat Mitch Daniels," she contends. Although the Marshall County Democrat seemed to be a long-shot when she first talked of running, Long Thompson makes clear that she has no intention of dropping her bid for the nomination, as one other candidate has done. Why would she when the poll shows her ahead? A nomination race there will be. Whether that's a good thing or something negative for Democratic hopes will depend on whether the



nomination winner emerges with enhanced popularity and momentum or with wounds and finance woes. "I'm in this to win," Long Thompson says, talking about the race against Daniels as well as the primary contest next May with Schellinger. Backers of Schellinger, accorded early front-runner status due to powerful endorsements and fundraising prowess, scoff at Long Thompson's showing in the statewide poll conducted for WISH-TV in Indianapolis (41-10 percent over Schellinger). They say it reflects just early name recognition from her past races for Congress and not voter focus yet on issues and qualifications. Two influential Democrats in

the 2nd Congressional District, where Long Thompson lost a race for Congress to Republican Chris Chocola in 2002, say her poll showing is based strictly on name recognition and will not sway them from support of Schellinger as the candidate to defeat Daniels. Owen D. "Butch" Morgan, the district and St. Joseph County Democratic chairman, says "Jill is a friend," but Schellinger "is the better candidate to take on Daniels." He attributes her poll showing to voters recalling her name from serving in Congress in what then was the Fort Wayne-based 4th District, her 2nd District race and other political activity. Morgan says Schellinger, while not yet attracting widespread voter attention, is efficiently raising the big money needed for a race against Daniels and is getting party officials enthused about his effort. While Morgan played a key role in Long Thompson's capture of the congressional nomination in 2002, he says, "I was disappointed in the way she ran her fall campaign." Shaw Friedman, LaPorte County Democratic leader, also endorses Schellinger. "I just talked to Jim three minutes ago," he noted before citing Schellinger as the better choice. "I'm personally fond of her," Friedman says of Long Thompson. "But we need to put our best team on the field. Jim is our strongest possible candidate." Friedman also says the poll reflects "just early name ID." ❖

Rich James, Post-Tribune

- It hurts when you see a friend hit rock bottom and there's virtually nothing you can do to help. That's pretty much what happened to me when Peter Katic hit the skids last Friday. When you cause an accident at 3 p.m. with a blood-alcohol level of 0.34 percent -- more than four times the legal limit in Indiana -- there's no more room for excuses. You've bottomed out. Katic had a quick rise through the ranks of Lake County Democratic politics. His future seemed limitless. He got his start almost 30 years ago as one of the youngest state representatives in Indiana. He enjoyed considerable success, but gave up the Statehouse gig in the 1980s to win election as Hammond city judge. Peter still has a future, as long as he can keep his law license. He needs help. He doesn't need to be punished for a problem that has spun out of control. ❖



Bush's SCHIP veto upheld in House

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Dan Burton [R-IN-05] today voted to sustain President Bush's veto of a Democratic bill to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Said Burton, "I am glad that the President vetoed the Democrats' plan that plays games with the health of millions of low-income children. The State Children's Health Insurance Program was created by a Republican-led Congress ten years ago in order to target health care dollars to low-income children who need them most. Instead of bringing to the House floor a clean reauthorization of this critical program - which the President would be more than happy to sign today - Congressional Democrats continue to insist on trying to Federalize health care and turn a program meant to help low-income children into one that covers children in some households with incomes of up to \$83,000 a year, and makes it easier for illegal aliens to break the law and qualify for Medicaid and SCHIP."



SCHIP bill strains Indiana political lines

WASHINGTON - If Congress votes today as expected to override the State Children's Health Insurance Program reauthorization bill President Bush vetoed Oct. 3, it would cover an additional 40,000 to 52,000 Hoosier children above the 75,000 now insured with the popular program (**Times of Northwest Indiana**). But the SCHIP debate is dividing Americans along political and ideological lines. Some conservatives, including Bush, view SCHIP as the first step in a move toward universal health

coverage. In the U.S. House a successful override will require a major shift in Republican votes to achieve a veto-proof margin of 289 from the 265 congressional representatives who passed the bill the first time. Several Indiana Democratic congressional representatives voted against the bill, but at least one, Rep. Baron Hill, plans to support the override vote this time. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville, voted for the SCHIP bill, as did U. S. Sens. Evan Bayh, a Democrat, and Richard Lugar, a Republican. The Senate's margin was veto proof. But despite reports of vote switching, backers of the SCHIP expansion and reauthorization concede they could fall short, forcing leaders to negotiate with the Bush administration to craft a bill the president would sign. Indiana would be a loser Even those normally supportive of children's health issues, such as State Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, oppose the House bill and side with Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels, Bush's former budget director. Brown and the governor's administration say Indiana would be a net loser under the SCHIP bill, which would add a 61-cent cigarette tax increase on top of the 44 cents the General Assembly passed this year. Indiana is one of 14 states to pass state programs that would expand SCHIP and cover more uninsured children and their families.

Women's health in Indiana rated poor

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana lags behind most other states in women's health, according to a report released Wednesday that considered health benchmarks and policies (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). Indiana ranked 40th and was one of 12 states to get a failing grade overall in the report, a project of the National Women's Law Center and Oregon Health and Science University. Most states graded poorly with none receiving an overall "satisfactory" grade. But Indiana fared worse still for higher smoking and lung cancer rates and lower

Pap smear and mammogram screening rates, among other measures.

Local governments don't file tax paperwork

FORT WAYNE - Almost half of local government agencies that receive property tax money did not submit paperwork at the request of a new board created to control local property taxes (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). The newly formed tax adjustment board met Wednesday to finalize its schedule and priorities as it undergoes the first round of scrutinizing local budgets, tax levies and tax rates for 2008. The board plans to meet Monday, part of Tuesday and possibly Wednesday. At least seven taxing units are already scheduled to meet with the board based on appeals for additional property tax revenue, or because the units are overseen by an appointed board. Jefferson and Aboite townships could be added because they are appealing for additional property tax dollars. But 14 of 39 taxing units didn't return the questionnaires. Many of the smaller townships with trustee/assessors did not respond to the board's request for information.

Convicted sex offender living at courthouse

MADISON - A registered sex offender who is homeless and has been sleeping and living on the Jefferson County Courthouse steps since July 12 is breaking no laws, according to his probation officer and city and county law enforcement officials (**Madison Courier**). John Gribbons, 61, was convicted in November 1999 for molesting a child under the age of 14, a felony. He was sentenced by Jefferson County Circuit Judge Ted Todd to 20 years in prison, with five years suspended and supervised probation for the remainder of his sentence. He was released in July 2007 after serving eight years of his sentence. Gribbons washes and shaves in the Courthouse men's room and said when it gets colder there is a heater in there to keep him warm.