

Holcomb leads INGOP to its apex

Landslides to second term, super majorities maintained

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Eric Holcomb became the sixth governor to win reelection with a victory that could establish a modern plurality record once all the votes are tabulated sometime between now and Friday.

In doing so, he led the Indiana Republican Party to its apex, controlling both General Assembly chambers with three consecutive super majorities, a 9-2 edge in in the state's congressional delegation, all of the Statehouse constitutional offices, and between 80% to more than 90% of county courthouse offices and county commissioners.

He will govern a state that is part of the Divided States of America. The map across the nation has become a sea of red, with blue islands. The defeat of Democratic



State Rep. Terry Goodin by Republican Zach Payne means the Indiana Democratic Party has been essentially scoured from the last rural district the party represented and is now firmly relegated to Lake and St. Joseph counties, Indianapolis and the university cities.

Holcomb defeated Dr. Woody Myers by a 57%-32% margin, with Libertarian Donald Rainwater picking up 12% with 92% of precincts reporting. Myers had the perfect

resume for the times that included a once-in-a-century pandemic and the Black Lives Movement, but when he

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Pence's difficult future

By **CRAIG DUNN**

KOKOMO – The 28th vice president of the United States, Hoosier Thomas Marshall, once quipped, "Indiana is called the mother of vice presidents because it is home to more second-class men than any other state."



While time, absentee ballots and attorneys will decide whether Vice President Mike Pence gets to continue to live in One Naval Observatory Circle for four more years, the thought must have crossed Pence's mind sometime in the wee small hours of the morning after Election Day, "Where do I go from here?"

In my opinion, the outcome of the presidential election will reveal whether Mike Pence



“This has been a long, tough campaign and I look forward uniting Hoosiers around real solutions and serving every resident of Indiana’s 5th CD by ensuring we have the right policies for a strong econy, good schools, affordable health care.”

- U.S. Rep.-elect Victoria Spartz



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Jack E. Howey
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 1926-2019



eventually falls short of grasping the brass ring or gets a legitimate shot at becoming president of the United States. While the path to the presidency for Pence is not a smooth one without difficult hurdles if Trump wins, the road to presidential glory becomes immeasurably more challenging if the former Indiana governor finds himself looking for Two Men and a Truck in January.

For a relatively quiet man, Mike Pence has shown that he possesses the grit of a riverboat gambler when it comes to his political career. Safely ensconced in a congressional seat, a member of the leadership team in the House of Representatives, with the speaker's job a reasonable career goal, Pence chucked it all to make a run for Indiana governor in 2012. Pence understood members of the House of Representatives just do not get elected president. As a first-term governor, Pence could have served out another four years and then made a run for the highest office in the land in 2020, should Donald Trump not have been elected. It was the safe play, but not the play made by Pence. Instead, Mike Pence threw caution to the wind and hitched his wagon and political fortune to the wild ride of Donald Trump.

Pence, who initially was not on any short list to become Trump's vice presidential running mate, zoomed to the top of the list when the billionaire frat boy needed someone with unquestioned religious bona fides to calm the jittery nerves of the religious right, who were horrified at the revelations that the Republican

presidential candidate was a boorish, sexist partier who was a serial philanderer and proud of it. At the time Pence made the decision to leave Indiana for the campaign trail, I had a distinct feeling that a first-class man had just made a lamentable deal to dance with the devil. I shuddered to think of Pence being asked to defend the personal conduct of Donald Trump. "Mr. Pence, do you think it's appropriate to brag about grabbing a woman by the whatzit?"

Pence's gamble paid off handsomely when Trump miraculously defeated Hillary Clinton and gained the White House. The unlikely victory by Trump in 2016 afforded Mike Pence a golden opportunity and a surplus of challenges.

History has generally not been kind to vice presidents, and its former occupants rarely have any kind words for the position. Former Franklin Roosevelt's vice president, John Nance Garner felt that the job was not "worth a bucket of warm spit." Thomas Marshall liked to tell the story of two brothers, one who ran away to sea and the other who became vice president, "Neither was heard from again."

Nelson Rockefeller complained that the only two jobs a vice president had was checking on the president's health every morning and attending funerals for third-world dictators. Such was the case for Mike Pence in his first three years in the vice president's chair.

And then the pandemic hit. President Trump, burdened by the need to defend himself

against the ridiculous impeachment process and the quickly unfolding 2020 campaign, tapped the vice president to head up the coronavirus response committee. This presented Pence with both a golden opportunity to shine in the public limelight and the huge risk that he might be dubbed "a loser" by the president and dumped from the ticket.

By most accounts, Mike Pence performed ably and effectively as leader of the committee. Unfortunately, he was not given much of an opportunity to shine in the limelight. Shortly after Pence's first nationally televised press conference on the pandemic, featuring the leaders of our response, President Trump decided to horn in and then hijack the daily proceedings. What better way to get an hour and a half of free television time every day that every television network was pretty much forced to show! The vice president quickly moved from the podium to holding up a wall and then into obscurity. He emerged publicly in a widely circulated op/ed piece declaring that there would be no second wave to the pandemic. Sadly, for Pence, that proved to be over 100,000 deaths ago.



As I write this column on Wednesday morning, a second term appears to be quickly fading away for Donald Trump and his vice president. In the cruel world of presidential politics, there will be no time to cry or lick your wounds.

The 2024 election campaign started this morning if not months ago for those senators, governors and glitterati who get up in the morning and see the next president staring back at them from their mirrors. This is the reality that Pence must face this week. The road to the job that he has sought for so long begins now and it will not be a road less traveled.

A reelection of the Trump/Pence team would have given Pence a significant leg up on the 2024 campaign. He would almost assuredly become the early favorite to become the 2024 Republican candidate for president. He could jet around the country in Air Force Two visiting centers of wealth, scarfing up campaign contributions and making campaign appearances with 2022 congressional and senatorial candidates in key states.

He could find plenty of reasons to visit cornpicker conventions in Iowa and maple syrup festivals in New Hampshire. In short, he could spend the next three years campaigning on the taxpayers' dime and still find time to ask about the president's health and attend third-world dictators' funerals.

Time for plan B. Presuming that Mike Pence still wants the job of president, he now faces the daunting task of facing as many as 20 potential Republican candidates in a beauty pageant that will unfold no more reasonably than the circus sideshow that was the 2016 primary season.

He most certainly will face a wealth of Republican talent let by former Governor Nikki Haley, Sen. Tom Cotton, Sen. Tim Scott, Sen. Ted Cruz, Sen. Marco Rubio, Gov. Ron DeSantis, Sen. Mike Lee, Sen. Rick Scott, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Gov. Mike DeWine, Sen. Josh Hawley and either Ivanka Kushner or Donald Trump Jr.

The wild card in all of this will be the plans and whims of Donald J. Trump. He might decide to make another run in a bid for redemption or weigh in on behalf of one of his children or one of his loyalists. Make no mistake about it, President Trump will happily throw Mike Pence under a bus and label him a loser if it suits his purpose. He has done the same to a litany of qualified and good men and women and Mike Pence should not expect any different

treatment. President Trump, like him or not, is a death star and tends to destroy anything that enters his orbit.

The presidential primary system in the United States is broken without much hope of repair. It is immensely expensive, involves kissing cow derrieres in Iowa in an unfathomable voodoo caucus process, requires fawning over a state with only three Electoral College votes and pretty much crowns a winner before even half of the primary voters have cast a ballot.

The large number of candidates puts a premium on those candidates who can grab more than their share of both press and voter attention and who have a loyal base of fanatical support. This reality puts Mike Pence at a distinct disadvantage in a crowded Republican field. For these reasons, I believe that Pence's narrow path to the presidency may have shrunk to the point of being impenetrable. Mike Pence is a good man and an honorable public servant. History has demonstrated time and time again that these traits are not always the prime requisites to higher office.

In my capacity as a Republican county chairman, I gave of my time, money and energy to help elect Mike Pence governor of Indiana and vice president of the United States. I am glad that I did so. As I peer into my political crystal ball, I just do not see a President Mike Pence. And then just as I write this, in my mind's eye, I can see Mike Pence smiling that twinkling honest smile and thinking to himself about Mark Twain's quote, "Reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." ❖

Dunn is the former Republican chairman for Howard County.

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posted a mere \$14,000 on his year-end report after declaring for office six months earlier, and had just \$80,000 cash on hand at the end of the third quarter, it put in motion down-ballot carnage for Indiana Democrats, who lost the chance to cut into GOP super majorities in the Indiana House and Senate and pick up a congressional seat.

"I couldn't be more grateful that our neighbors, families, friends, and Hoosiers from all across Indiana put their trust in us to lead our great state for another four years," Holcomb said a couple of hours after he was declared the winner just after 7 p.m. Tuesday. "There's no beating around the bush; COVID-19 is an unprecedented challenge that slowed us down. But Hoosiers are the most resilient people in the world. We're getting back on track, and our victory today is the first step toward getting our state back to setting records."

Holcomb added, "Over the last few years, together we achieved a lot – record-high wages, a record-low infant mortality rate, providing tens of thousands of Hoosiers with the skills they need to compete in a 21st-century economy, and much, much more."

Awaiting him in the coming two months will be a commission report on teacher pay, the distribution of a potential COVID-19 vaccine, and a biennial budget session that has already been greatly impacted by the pandemic.

Holcomb also vowed to address historic inequities facing minority Hoosiers following the George Floyd murder in Minneapolis, which set off the Black Lives Matter movement.

Joining Goodin in defeat were Democrat Reps. Melanie Wright (whose TV ads were set on a farm), while former legislators Hal Slager and Julie Olthoff were running ahead of Democrat State Reps. Chris Chyung and Lisa Beck.

"We've reached the apex, setting a high water mark," said Indiana Republican Chairman Kyle Hupfer, who served as Holcomb's campaign manager. "When you have 70 state representatives, 71 mayors, I don't know where you go from here."



In addition to House pickups, the GOP increased its total of county

courthouse offices where Republicans controlled around 80% going into 2020, as well as county commissioners, where the party already controlled north of 90%).

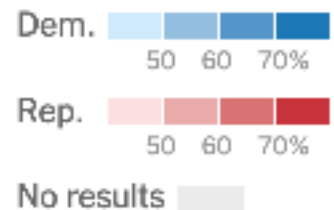
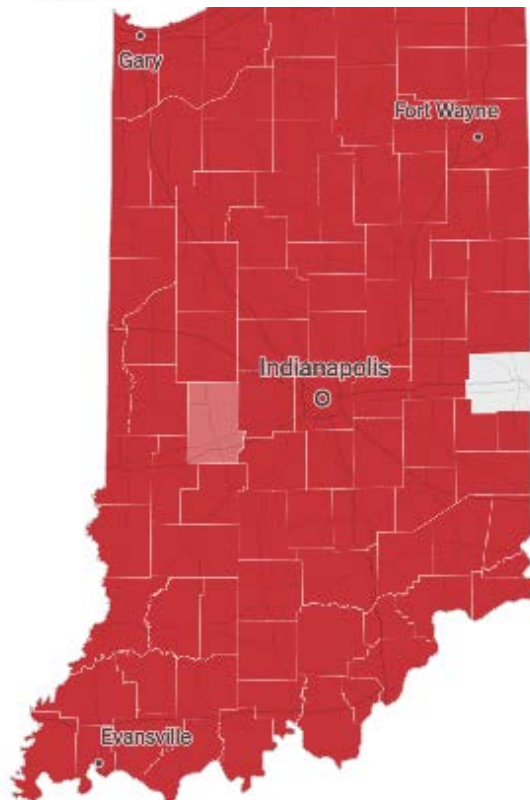
"We've certainly felt all along we have one of the best developed ground game infrastructure of data, staff, volunteer and methodology and may be one of the best in the country," Hupfer said. "I think it paid dividends. The other piece that pays dividends is teamwork. Over past four years, since Gov. Holcomb was elected, we have focused on a seamless effort, party, HRCC, SMCC, and federal candidates. We ran one program and had people invest in it. It plays out when in this cycle we were concerned and put extra efforts in the 5th CD and down-ballot races there, it played out with HRCC and SMCC. It helped us and them."

Hupfer noted that in the home stretch, "We invested an additional \$400,000 in state House races, Todd

Updated Nov. 4, 2020 87% REPORTED

Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
 Eric Holcomb* ✓	Republican	1,527,049	57.3%
 Woodrow A. Myers	Democrat	810,746	30.4
Donald Rainwater	Libertarian	325,094	12.2
Total reported		2,662,889	

* Incumbent



Rokita's race, in the 5th Congressional District."

Will Hupfer, who has served four years as GOP chairman, run for governor in 2024? "Way too early," he responded. "I'm not going to take anything off the table. We're still basking in last night. We'll begin to focus on 2022."

Not a major party

Indiana Democrats are barely a major party. Myers, who was lethargic in fundraising and unable to mount a TV campaign until the final weekend, said in his concession speech, "I ran because I knew we could be better, and we could do more, more for those who have so little, and more for those who need so much. I announced my candidacy before we had ever heard of COVID-19 and before we had ever seen the murder of George Floyd and both intensified my desire to offer an alternative to the status quo for all Hoosiers."

Myers' dysfunctional campaign left a gaping hole for down-ballot Democrats like Hale, attorney general nominee Weinzapfel and General Assembly candidates. A credible Myers campaign could have prevented the straight-ticket voting that doomed legislative Democrats.

Hale's loss means that beyond former senator Joe Donnelly, there is virtually no one within the party with any stature left on the Democratic bench.

Another potential statewide candidate, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr., lost the 1st CD Democratic primary to incoming congressman Frank Mrvan Jr. in June. Beau Bayh, the son of former governor and senator Evan Bayh, campaigned with Myers in October, setting speculation that he might be the third generation of the dynastic Hoosier family to attempt a Democratic revival. But at age 24, it would be another six years before he met the gubernatorial age requirement of being 30 years old when being sworn in.

GOP 2024 speculation

On the Republican side, the open gubernatorial race in 2024 could also include Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, U.S. Reps. Jim Banks, Trey Hollingsworth and Greg Pence, Health & Human Services Sec. Alex Azar, and Attorney General-elect Todd Rokita.

Crouch has been an energetic LG and able fundraiser, contributing more than \$1 million to the Holcomb campaign with a wide network of allies in the General Assembly. Hupfer was a former DNR commissioner who is a proven fundraiser and has a vast network within the party.

Rokita sounded like he could use the AG's office as a Statehouse stepping stone. "You know our state has come so far under commonsense conservative leadership over the last 15 years," Rokita said in a statement from home, where he was suffering mild symptoms of COVID-19. "We have become a leader in the nation in every category that matters. Now we must keep it that way. As a statewide officer holder I will continue to provide that same kind of pro-growth, limited government leadership which has allowed our state to succeed." Rokita defeated Attorney General Curtis Hill in the GOP Convention in July.

Hollingsworth and Greg Pence are potential self-funders. Hollingsworth won a crowded 2016 9th CD Republican primary, defeating better known legislators and Attorney General Greg Zoeller by spending millions of family funds. U.S. Sen. Mike Braun spent more than \$5 million to win the 2018 GOP primary over U.S. Reps. Luke Messer and Rokita.

And Victoria Spartz spent more than \$1 million to win the crowded 5th CD primary last June.

"You either have to have a lot of money or a lot of name ID," said HPI analyst and former congressman Mark Souder, suggesting that someone with \$10 million could win a gubernatorial primary. ❖

The purple wave

By MARK SOUDER

FORT WAYNE – Election day and election night were for much of my life intense experiences of adrenalin rush, excitement and tension.



My first thrilling experience was in 1980. I was standing in front a television set, watching Ronald Reagan win the presidency and Republican Senate candidates topple one Democrat legend after another, including our Congressman Dan Quayle upsetting Sen. Birch Bayh.

It was a Republican wave. In 1994, I was part of

another Republican wave (a tsunami), when I upset Congresswoman Jill Long as part of the Republican Revolution in the U.S. House, when for the first time in 40 years Republicans took control. The Dems had held power for so long, as new Speaker Newt Gingrich said, we found rooms we didn't know existed in the Capitol Building.

The Dems thought they could continue their blue wave of 2018 this year, humiliating President Donald Trump, winning control of the Senate, and advancing to a more stable control of the U.S. House.

Instead they ran into a purple wave.

Here is how you define a purple wave: You have red areas (definition: Indiana) and blue areas (definition: California), and among them you have a bunch of states that cast millions of votes, yet the next day (e.g. Wisconsin, Michigan) the presidential candidates are separated by less than 1%.

In purple waves not a single incumbent governor

loses, including even the Republican governor of Vermont, who had declared that he was voting for Biden. Or a Republican governor of New Hampshire who wins 2/3 of the vote while the Republicans for president and congressional seats get swept in the state. That's the color of purple.

Purple waves are when the Democrats win the national popular vote by a large margin, though by much smaller than nearly every poll predicted, yet lose House seats and don't win control of the Senate even though far more Republicans were running for reelection.

Furthermore, the House Republican takeaways were in places like Dade County (Miami) and New York state. And the Republican winners included three Hispanics, a number of other women, and an African-American. And the biggest African-American surprise of the U.S. Senate races was sterling GOP candidate John James of Michigan, not the heavily touted Jamie Harrison, who was the sleeper favorite against my friend Lindsay Graham in South Carolina. If James can still pull off the upset, a race he was still amazingly leading at noon on Wednesday, he would be the first African-American senator in Michigan history (**Editor's note:** James lost to Sen. Gary Peters).

It was a night of the Purple People Eaters.

Here are a few of my thoughts from the most addictive night of television watching in many years. It was a political junkies alternative to getting a Weinzapfel dope high.

1. Vote counting had mild COVID symptoms.

Results came out as coughs, sneezes, respiratory blockage and certainly were feverish. We seldom knew whether the newly posted votes were early voters, election day voters, or absentee voters. We didn't know who was not yet counted, or even how many of them. Many states – especially Wisconsin and Michigan, and Pennsylvania and North Carolina, and Nevada and Georgia (to name a few of the most relevant ones) – had an estimate of the percentage of people had voted but did not know, actually, how many had voted. Thus, the percentage of votes cast that was listed was a guess, not a fact, and sometimes gave terribly wrong estimates statewide with even larger variations in major counties. It can lead to such things, as a hypothetical example, a candidate claiming they won and it was being stolen with previously unnoted ballots. Not that such a thing would ever happen.

2. COVID may not be around in the next elections but the counting problems will. Waits pre-election could be six hours or more. Election Day waits were often just a few minutes. In today's society, voting from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. runs counter to the lifestyle of those who are not retired. It is doubtful we will go back to the old days. Given a choice, people chose to vote early. This system, however, is ripe for corruption and manipulation. Lack of voter privacy is the most obvious, but it also makes foreign manipulation easier when you don't even know how many have voted or who is missing.

3. Finding people to work the polls is becoming harder, compounded by COVID. Allen County

needed to reduce voting sites significantly, so the night before voting, the television news was saying to double-check where to vote because there was a good chance it had been changed. They may be used to this in Lake County, but it was new to Fort Wayne. In Madison County, the final decision on Elizabeth Rowray's race against incumbent State Rep. Melanie Wright was delayed in part because of a combined polling place where, at 6 p.m., voters in a long line were told it might still take six hours before they could finish the voting. To Madison County's credit, they kept the polls open until 11 p.m. so all could vote. To the voters' credit, they stayed to vote. And to the credit of the Madison County election board and workers, they stayed and counted the votes of those 15 precincts and posted the results at 2:37 am. Obviously, we cannot be reducing and moving polling places the day before elections or voting five hours after the polls closed.

4. Elizabeth Rowray won. Elizabeth was once my legislative director. I am very proud of her and she will be a dynamic female legislative addition to the Republican caucus in Indianapolis.

5. Astoundingly, there were suburban women who voted Republican. In fact, if there was one trend that was over-stated it was the media proclamations of Republican collapse in the suburbs due to women abandoning the GOP. I was beginning to think that remaining Republicans were going to be pinned in the exurbs, a term defined by media as pinning the retreating Republicans up against cornstalks far from the city while the Dems took over both the cities and the suburbs. Speaker Pelosi may have already given Christina Hale her office space. Obviously, the Republican Party needs to recruit more women and minority candidates, but we actually had a pretty good night in advancing a few. We need to do more. And suburban voters still prefer Republican values, even if President Trump wasn't the best salesperson for that cause.

6. Polling took another severe hit. 'Nuf said. This will obviously be a major future topic.

7. Never underestimate Todd Rokita. He doesn't always win, but he always battles hard, at least until quarantined.

8. Never overestimate the Democrats' ability to finish. It didn't take COVID to get them to quarantine as the election winds down. I think it is part of their party platform. Nevertheless, if former Vice President Biden pulls out this victory, he will have shown amazing stamina to achieve his goal. Unifying a 50-50 nation is not possible. But how to bring more order and peace, and get some semblance of cooperation is a focus that a President Biden would hopefully pursue. ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.

GOP delegation mum on Trump's declaration

By **MARK SCHOEFF JR.**

WASHINGTON — Republican members of the Indiana congressional delegation are staying silent about President Donald Trump's declaration of victory and his call to stop the vote counting prematurely.

Early Wednesday morning, Trump asserted he had prevailed over Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden even though hundreds of thousands of mail-in ballots had not been tallied. He said any votes tabulated beyond that point would be fraudulent.



"Frankly, we did win this election," Trump said at a White House event. "So our goal now is to ensure the integrity for the good of this nation. So, we'll be going to the U.S. Supreme Court. We want all the voting to stop. We don't want them to find any ballots at four o'clock in the morning and add them to the list."

Several Republican members of the Hoosier congressional delegation appeared to keep their distance from Trump throughout the day on Wednesday.

HPI contacted Sens. Todd Young and Mike Braun as well as Reps. Jim Banks, Jackie Walorski, Trey Hollingsworth and Larry Bucshon. None of them responded to a request for comment.

Young and Braun previously indicated support for ensuring each ballot is processed before determining an election winner.

"Count every single vote," Young said in response to an HPI question during an Oct. 2 talk with Indiana media. "Whoever gets the most ballots wins a given state. Whoever gets to 270 electoral votes wins the presidency. I will make my voice heard post-election that is my position as well, and I know the vast majority of Americans and Hoosiers agree that is the appropriate approach."

Young added that there would be complications and legal challenges pertaining to the "unique situation" in which the country is "disproportionately relying" on mail-in voting due to the coronavirus pandemic. But he added that he didn't want that to be construed as his walking back from support of counting every ballot.

In a Sept. 30 conference call with Indiana reporters, Braun cautioned against a rush to judgment after

Election Day if some votes were left to be counted.

"We're going to have to be patient," Braun said at the time. "If it is very close, we may not know the results for seven, 10 days, a couple weeks. I feel quite confident in the process."

The most prominent Hoosier politician who has spoken about the ongoing ballot counting is Vice President Mike Pence. He followed Trump to the podium early Wednesday morning and framed the situation differently than his boss.

Pence expressed confidence Trump would eventually be declared the victor. But did not level fraud accusations and acknowledged the vote had not completely been tallied.

"While the votes continue to be counted, we're going to remain vigilant," Pence said, standing next to Trump at the White House event. "The right to vote has been at the center of our democracy since the founding of this nation, and we're going to protect the integrity of the vote."

As the counting continues, Biden is inching closer to the 270 electoral votes he needs to take the White House. He won the crucial swing states of Michigan and Wisconsin on Wednesday. Trump has indicated he will pursue legal challenges against vote counts.

GOP hold on Senate benefits Young

Although the winners of several Senate races have yet to be determined, it appears Republicans will maintain control of the Chamber. That outcome is a victory for Young, who served as chairman of the Senate campaign arm in this election cycle.

Despite being vastly outspent by Democrats in the most competitive races, most GOP outperformed expectations. Young will be able to take part of the credit.

He distinguished himself as a fundraiser over the last two years. The National Republican Senatorial Committee raised \$275 million, far outpacing the previous high of \$151 million during the 2018 election cycle, said a source familiar with the situation.

"Under Chairman Young, the major donor program raised more than any previous cycle while not being able to travel or host events for the vast majority of the

year due to Covid-19 restrictions," the source wrote in an email. "The NRSC made strategic investments in growing the digital operation with remarkable results, raising four times more than the previous cycle through digital efforts."

Young took a risk in heading the Senate campaign arm during a cycle in which Republicans had 23 seats up for re-election compared to 12 for Democrats. Now it looks like a gamble that may pay off for him if he wants to continue to climb the Senate Republican leadership ladder.

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Spartz wins 5th CD as suburban wave fails

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The suburban female college-educated vote was supposed to deliver Democratic victories to candidates like Christina Hale in Indiana’s 5th CD. But when the dust settled Wednesday evening, Republican Victoria Spartz declared victory.

“I am so honored and humbled by the trust the people of Indiana’s 5th District have placed in me,” Spartz said. This has been a long, tough campaign and I look

forward uniting Hoosiers around real solutions and serving every resident of Indiana’s 5th District by ensuring we have the right policies for a strong economy, good schools, affordable health-care and a great quality of life.”



Spartz won the open seat being vacated by U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks, 50-46%, or by 206,879 to 188,928 with 99% of the precincts reporting.

Hale conceded, saying, “Congratulations to Victoria Spartz, our next Congresswoman from Indiana. Today, I would like to acknowledge the effort of everyone who supported our campaign. From our talented and hardworking staff to the hundreds of volunteers who spent hours phone-banking on our behalf, to the thousands who put up a yard sign, and everyone who contributed. I am in awe of the depth of support from my husband Chris and all of my dearest friends and family. We would not have gotten this far without you and I’ll always be thankful for your help.”

“We have to get a lot of work done. We can work together to bring prosperity, good education, good jobs, good health care to all Hoosiers and all people in our country,” Spartz said Tuesday night. “It will take a lot of us to get it done because it’s not an easy task, but I truly believe that American people believe that we are a country of limited government of liberties. We’re a country where, [it’s] not the people on top that are going to decide how we’re going to live, we’re the country where every person can pursue happiness in whichever way they want.”

Appearing with out-going U.S. Rep. Susan Brooks

at the Hotel Carmichael in Carmel, Spartz hinted that victory was coming Tuesday night. “We know we’re still counting the vote, but we feel we’re on good track to win,” Spartz said. Hamilton County had almost 30,000 early ballots yet to count when it finished last night.

“Hoosiers deserve to have their votes counted and voices heard,” said Hale campaign manager Joann Sari-dakis just before 1 a.m. Wednesday. “The Spartz campaign’s declaration is premature and flies in the face of our democratic process. As we said earlier, there are almost 100,000 mail-in votes in the 5th District that have not yet been counted, specifically in Marion and Hamilton counties. We will continue to monitor vote totals before making any formal announcements and we would ask that Victoria Spartz extend voters that same courtesy.”

Spartz’s victory capped an improbable path to Congress. The state senator from Noblesville was selected to that office by caucus after State Sen. Luke Kenley retired in 2018 in what was considered an upset. Faced with a primary challenge from Scott Baldwin, she opted to go up the political ladder and run for the 5th CD.

Sen. Spartz won a 15-candidate Republican primary in June, spending more than \$1 million of personal funds after convincing the Club For Growth to endorse her candidacy, with 40% of the vote.

She faced Hale, the 2016 lieutenant governor nominee, in the general. Hale raised more than \$3 million and believed she could flip the 5th, which last elected a Democrat 30 decades ago when it was oriented farther north with Jim Jontz. The Cook Partisan Index rated the 5th CD +9 Republican. But U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly carried the 5th during his 2018 loss to Republican Mike Braun.

Hale carried the suburban Indianapolis portion of the district 62-34% (with 79% of the vote reporting). But Spartz carried suburban Boone County 53-45%, Hamilton County 55-41, and Madison County 55-38%. In the more rural counties, Spartz ran up the score, carrying Tipton County with 69%, Grant County 64%-29%, and portions of Howard County with 69% and Blackford County with 64%.



General Assembly

Gore poised for upset over Kirchhofer

State Rep. Cindy Kirchhofer, the Marion County Republican chairwoman, was trailing Democrat Mitch Gore with 97% reporting 13,651-13,024 or 51-49%.

With Kirchhofer’s loss, it appears Republicans will

control the House 70-30 with the defeats of Democratic Reps. Terry Goodin, Chris Chyung and Lisa Beck.

Speaker Todd Huston won an emphatic 58.3% to 41.7% victory over Democrat Aimee Rivera Cole with 100% reporting as Republicans were actually in the process of expanding their 67-33 majority to 70. "I knew it would be a competitive race," Huston said. "I think it was a competitive race and I'm happy to win and appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve." Republican Zach Payne defeated State Rep. Terry Goodin 55.8% to 44.2% with 98% reporting. State Rep. Jerry Torr defeated Democrat Ashley Klein 54-46%. State Rep. Donna Schaibley defeated Democrat Naomi Bechtold 58-42%. In former Speaker Brian Bosma's open HD88, Republican Chris Jeter was leading Democrat Pam Dechert 59-41% with 98% reporting this morning.

In HD81, State Rep, Martin Carbaugh defeated Kyle Miller in a rematch. He had been leading 55-45%. "I really want to continue working on access of affordable health care options," Rep. Carbaugh said (WANE-TV). "That issue is really important because it's the one I heard about so much throughout this whole campaign while knocking on doors," Carbaugh said. Miller said, "I commend Martin on wanting to do something on health care - making it more affordable for people. One thing that he can do is start by capping the prices of some of these outrageous medications." Miller said, adding that Carbaugh ran an excellent campaign and that he will be cheering him on. "He's a great guy, we just disagree on some of the issues," Miller told WANE-TV.

House Democrat bloodbath

The House Republican super majority expanded Tuesday night. Republican Elizabeth Rowray held a 55-45% lead over State Rep. Melanie Wright with 98% reporting this morning. Republican Zach



HOWEY
POLITICS INDIANA



President (U.S. & Indiana)



President Donald Trump (R), Joseph Biden (D), Jo Jorgensen (L)

HPI Horse Race:

National: Likely D; Last week: Likely D
Indiana: Safe R; Last week: Safe R

Indiana Governor



Gov. Eric Holcomb (R), Woody Myers (D), Donald Rainwater (L)

HPI Horse Race:

This week: **Holcomb wins**
Last week: Safe R

Indiana Attorney General



Todd Rokita (R) Jonathan Weinzapfel (D)

HPI Horse Race

This week: **Rokita wins**
Last week: Leans R

Congressional 2nd



U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorki (R) Pat Hackett (D)

HPI Horse Race

This week: **Walorski wins**
Last week: Safe R

Congressional 5th



Victoria Spartz (R), Christina Hale (D), Kenneth Tucker (L)

HPI Horse Race

This week: **Spartz wins**
Last week: Tossup

Congressional 9th



U.S. Rep. Trey Hollingsworth (R) Andy Ruff (D)

HPI Horse Race

This week: **Hollingsworth wins**
Last week: Safe R

Payne defeated State Rep. Terry Goodin 55.8% to 44.2% with 98% reporting.

Republican Hal Slager appears to have reclaimed the HD15 he previously held between 2012 and 2018 (Carden, NWI Times). Unofficial Lake County election results available Wednesday show Slager, of Schererville, with a likely insurmountable lead over Democrat Chris Chyung, of Dyer, who defeated Slager in House District 15 by just 82 votes two years ago. If the lead holds, Slager said he's grateful to voters in Schererville, Dyer, St. John and Griffith for giving him the opportunity to return to the Statehouse and work to complete his unfinished legislative agenda. "It was really always about the agenda. That's what drove me and drove all my volunteers," Slager said. "Without a doubt this was the best campaign we've ever put together, but it was also the most competitive and the most difficult."

Besides Slager, that includes Republican Julie Olthoff, of Crown Point, who reclaimed her former House seat Tuesday night in a rematch of the 2018 race in HD19 against Democrat Lisa Beck, of Hebron. With 78% of precincts reporting, Olthoff was leading Beck 51.8% to 48.2%. Though early returns show Olthoff leading, she said she's not celebrating just yet. Olthoff told the NWI Times, "This race and this District 19 is a 50/50 district, so I expect to win by 1% just like before."

State Rep. Dale DeVon's lead declined over Democrat Donald Westerhausen from 56-44% to 52-48%; while in HD7, Republican Jake Teshka's lead over State Rep. Ross Deal declined slightly from 58-42% to 57-43% (South Bend Tribune).

Democrat Mike Andrade, of Munster, won the open seat race in HD 12 to succeed former state Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, D-Munster, who mounted an unsuccessful campaign for Congress this year instead running for reelection.

Qaddoura defeats Ruckelshaus

Democrat Fady Qaddoura defeated State Sen. John Ruckelshaus 53-47%, with a total 41,339 votes to 37,387 for the Republican with 99% of precincts reporting. It was the lone Democratic pickup in the Senate. Qaddoura took command of the race when Indianapolis absentee ballots were counted.

State Sen. Jack Sandlin had a 56-44% lead over Democrat Ashley Eason 57-43% with 99% reporting this morning. In SD35, State Sen. Mike Young had a 53-47% lead over Democrat Pete Cowden with 98% reporting. In SD32, Sen. Aaron Freeman was leading Democrat Belinda Drake 59-41% with 99% reporting this morning. In HD8, State Sen. Mike Bohacek was optimistic about gaining a second term as Indiana State Senator in the District 8 race, leading Democrat Gary Davis 16,380 to 9,957 votes in LaPorte County Tuesday night. The NWI Times reported that only the machine votes cast before and during Election Day were counted. "It's looking pretty good for right now but there's a lot of votes left to be counted," he said.



HOWEY
POLITICS INDIANA

Indiana General Assembly SD8



Sen. Mike Bohacek (R)
Gary Davis (D)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Bohacek wins**
Last week: Tossup

Indiana General Assembly SD30



Sen. John Ruckelshaus (R)
Fady Qaddoura (D)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Qaddoura wins**
Last week: Tossup

Indiana General Assembly HD5



Rep. Dale Devon (D)
John Westerhausen (R)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Devon leads**
Last week: Tossup

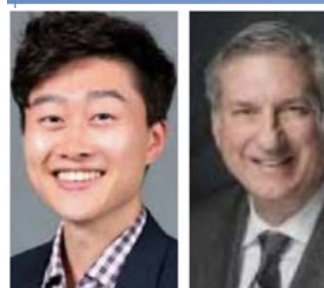
Indiana General Assembly HD7



Rep. Ross Deal (D)
Jake Teshka (R)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Teshka leads**
Last week: Leans Deal

Indiana General Assembly HD15



Rep. Chris Chyung (D)
Hal Slager (R)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Slager wins**
Last week: Tossup

Presidential

Trump carries Indiana

Indiana was the first state on the board for President Trump last night, with networks making us the first red state just seconds after the final polls closed at 7 p.m. With 84% of of precincts reporting, Trump had a 58% to 41% lead with 88% of precincts reporting this morning. Trump's plurality is likely to decline with many Marion, Lake, St. Joseph and Vigo county precincts still out. "Once again Indiana is first on the board for President Trump and our own Hoosier Vice President Mike Pence," Indiana Republican Party Chairman Kyle Hupfer said. AP VoteCast found that 45% of Indiana voters said the U.S. is on the right track and 55% of voters said it is headed in the wrong direction.

Vigo County votes for Trump

With 97% of precincts reporting, Trump is winning bellwether Vigo County by 17%, as the county is poised to be wrong for the first time since 1952 (should Joe Biden's lead holds up).

Biden on cusp of victory; at 264

Democrat Joe Biden was pushing closer to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to carry the White House, securing victories in the "blue wall" battlegrounds of Wisconsin and Michigan and narrowing President Donald Trump's path (AP). With just a handful of states still up for grabs, Trump tried to press his case in court in some key swing states. It was unclear if any of his campaign's legal maneuvering over balloting would succeed in shifting the race in his favor.

Two days after Election Day, neither candidate had amassed the votes needed to win the White House. But Biden's victories in the Great Lakes states left him at 253, meaning he was one battleground state away — any would do — from becoming president-elect. Trump, with 214 electoral votes, faced a much higher hurdle. To reach 270, he needed to claim all five remaining battlegrounds: Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Georgia, Arizona and Nevada. With millions of votes yet to be tabulated, Biden already had received more than 71 million votes, the most in history. At an afternoon news conference Wednesday, the former vice president said he expected to win the presidency but stopped short of outright declaring victory. "I will govern as an American president," Biden said. "There will be no red states and blue states when we win. Just the United States of America."

It was a stark contrast to the approach of Trump, who early Wednesday morning falsely claimed that he had won the election. Trump's campaign engaged in a flurry of legal activity to try to improve the Republican president's chances and cast doubt on the election results, requesting a recount in Wisconsin and filing lawsuits in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Georgia. ❖



Indiana General Assembly HD19



Rep. Lisa Beck (D)
Julie Olthoff (R)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Olthoff wins**
Last week: Leans Beck

Indiana General Assembly HD35



Rep. Melanie Wright (D)
Elizabeth Rowray (R)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Rowray wins**

Indiana General Assembly HD37



Rep. Todd Huston (R)
Aimee Cole Rivera (D)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Huston wins**
Last week: Likely R

Indiana General Assembly HD88



Chris Jeter (R)
Pam Dechert (D)
Open: Brian Bosma

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Jeter wins**
Last week: Likely R

Indiana General Assembly HD89



Rep. Cindy Kirchhofer (R)
Mitch Gore (D)

HPI Horse Race
This week: **Gore leads**
Last week: Tossup

Looking for ways to fix social media

By **KELLY HAWES**

ANDERSON – Democratic U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii called the proceedings a sham. “This is bullying, and it is for electoral purposes,” he said. “Do not let the United States Senate bully you into carrying water for those who want to spread misinformation.”



He was speaking to the chief executive officers of Facebook, Google and Twitter at a hearing before the Senate Commerce Committee. Democrats like Schatz were unhappy with the timing of the hearing, coming as it did less than a week before the presidential election. That didn’t stop Republicans, though, from airing their complaints.

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas seemed particularly upset with Jack Dorsey, the CEO of Twitter. “Mr. Dorsey, who the hell elected you and put you in charge of what the media are allowed to report and what the American people are allowed to hear, and why do you persist in behaving as a Democratic super PAC silencing views to the contrary of your political beliefs?” Cruz demanded.

His comment referred to a New York Post story about Hunter Biden, son of Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden. Twitter had blocked users from sharing links to the story while Facebook adjusted its algorithms to slow the story’s distribution.

The hearing was ostensibly about Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. In his book, “Twenty Six Words that Created the Internet,” author Jeff Kosseff wrote that it was this one brief section of the law that made internet giants like Facebook, Google and Twitter possible. Drafted in the early days of the internet almost 25 years ago, the measure provided the greatest protection afforded such companies by any country in the world.

“No provider or user of an interactive computer service,” the section says, “shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider.” What that means is that these companies can’t be held responsible for whatever horrible lie one of their users might post on their platforms.

Perhaps ironically, one of the law’s biggest critics has been President Donald J. Trump.

He’s been calling for the section’s repeal ever since Twitter placed a label on one of his tweets suggesting it might be inaccurate. Democrats, on the other hand, say the companies aren’t doing enough to stop guys like the president from spreading lies and conspiracy theories.

In his testimony, Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg said he wasn’t opposed to making some changes in the rules governing his industry. “We support the ideas around transparency and industry collaboration that are being discussed in some of the current bipartisan proposals,” he said, “and I look forward to meaningful dialogue about how we might update the law to deal with the problems we face today.”

Coming up with the right set of regulations to govern these companies won’t be easy, but it seems to me our greatest challenge is addressing the way social media companies deepen the divisions in our country. A recent study by Steven Johnson of the University of Virginia looked at the social media habits of nearly 200,000 people over a four-year period.

“The algorithms for Facebook are shaping what people see and what they choose to visit,” he told National Public Radio. “Our evidence is strongly consistent with the Facebook algorithms having been designed to encourage that.”


And contrary to critics’ claims that Facebook might be suppressing conservative content, the researchers found that the platform’s algorithms seemed to be prioritizing that content, at least for the most conservative users. They also found that the more time people spent on Facebook the more polarized their news sources became.

Of course, we’re not exactly innocent bystanders here. We choose the bubble we wind up living in. ❖

Kelly Hawes is a columnist for CNHI News Indiana. He can be reached at kelly.hawes@indianamedia-group.com. Find him on Twitter @Kelly_Hawes.

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

Now the hard part for voters begins

By PETE SEAT

INDIANAPOLIS – Congratulations, fellow voter, you cast a ballot. Now it's time to sit back, relax and let our newly elected, or reelected, representatives take it from here, right? Not exactly. Actually, I have bad news. Your work is far from over. That "I Voted" sticker we saw in your Facebook selfie is nothing more than a signing bonus.

You see, this whole representative democracy thing only works if we are constantly engaged in the process. And, my, is it a process. It's not like mixing up a few ingredients in a pan, throwing it in the oven and coming back an hour later to find a finished product. Nope. This process is more like cooking a pot of soup on the stove. You've got to lift up the lid every so often to inspect what's going on inside. Stir it up. Make sure nothing sticks to the bottom. It's the only way to get it to taste just right.

I know candidates talk about the finish line of Election Day like the hard work is over when it's merely the starting gate of their governing and our paying attention.

"On election nights, we remind each other that victory is not a vindication, it is an instruction, not an endorsement, but an assignment," former Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels said in a widely praised 2011 speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference.

Voting is the same. Casting a ballot isn't about checking a box and waiting for the next election to come around, it's our chance to hit refresh and start all over again – if we want. So while in Indiana we do get a year off from voting next year, we don't get a year off from being civically engaged. Our voices matter just as much on Election Day as they do the other 364 days of the year. It may not always feel that way, especially if you end up on the wrong side of victory. Losing an election can leave supporters feeling voiceless and alone. But you're not.

I'm reminded of a scene from "The West Wing," the highly regarded Aaron Sorkin-conceived drama, which ironically enough took place in Indiana. In this particular scene, characters Josh Lyman and Toby Ziegler are left

behind to fend for themselves in rural Indiana after a time zone snafu causes them to miss their flight on Air Force One.

Eventually they find their way to a bar where a proud father who toured Notre Dame with his daughter earlier that day is taking a load off. The ensuing conversation inspires legislation to make tuition paid for by hard-working Americans such as that man tax deductible.

The scene was dramatized, yet it's one I've seen more than once play out in real life.

Dan Coats, then a candidate for the U.S. Senate, would jump in the car after events and say to me, "Did you hear that story?" He would go on to relay what he heard and then he would share that same story with his audience at the next stop. And then the next stop.

Six years later, in his first run for governor, a man ran up to Eric Holcomb on the steps of the Carroll County Courthouse during the Delphi Bacon Fest to share his personal story of battling drug addiction. "The look in his eyes will never leave me," Holcomb would regularly say on the campaign trail and after taking office. "I pledged from that day that this would be a central part of me."

The people who spoke to Coats and the man who spoke to Holcomb might never know the powerful impact their human stories had on the then-candidates. But it's an impact each of us can have every day. Between now and the next time we vote – in 2022! – call and write those elected to serve you. Let them know how you feel about the issues. Don't let them ever say, "No one has contacted me about that." At the same time, extend them grace if what you say is new to them. We all hear something for the first time.

And when you get frustrated that politicians only show up around election time, remind yourself that it goes both ways. Influence in politics, like becoming a half way decent cook,

comes from constant observation and knowing exactly the right moment to turn up the heat or get out of the kitchen.

❖

Pete Seat is a former White House spokesman for President George W. Bush and campaign spokesman for Dan Coats, former director of national intelligence and U.S. senator. Currently Seat is a vice president with Bose Public Affairs Group in Indianapolis. He is also an Atlantic Council millennium fellow, Council on Foreign Relations term member and author of "The War on Millennials."



What helps voters decide?

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Like any American who cares about this country, I have a deep interest in the results of this election. But as a politician (I think one never really retires from that job), I take a professional interest, as well. Not only for policy or partisan concerns, but because I'm always interested in how people make up their minds on how to vote.



This is an occupational hazard, I think. I was on the ballot 34 times over the course of my career and have spent a lot of time thinking about why people vote as they do. To be sure, we each have our own reasons for where we come down: Sometimes

based on policy preferences, sometimes because projects we care about will be advanced by voting a certain way, sometimes because there's one issue we care about above all others. Still, I think there's one key factor that doesn't get taken as seriously as it should, likability.

We've all heard this notion expressed as, "Who'd you rather have a beer with?" Or, as a group of Democratic women who were planning to vote for Ronald Reagan once explained, they liked the unfailingly gracious and courteous way he treated his wife, Nancy.

This is not frivolous. I'd argue, in fact, that "likability" is actually a complex decision. We tend, for instance, to like people who are positive, constructive, and forward-looking, and who enunciate or profess a feeling of hope. The Rev. Jesse Jackson used to have a phrase he used, "Keep hope alive." Whatever you thought about his politics, that optimistic, forward-looking view appealed to a lot of people.

We also, whether we know it or not, pay attention to authenticity. It's a favorite word in politics these days, but I think it's always been the case that we want candidates who are not fake and who give you a sense of a genuine personality undergirding their public persona. We know it intuitively, and it plays a role in whether or not we

like someone.

There's a policy element to all this, as well, in that we like people who have views and values we can relate to. Or, to put it another way, we don't favor candidates whose values are alien to ours. Nobody fits our likes and dislikes perfectly, but we make judgments on candidates based on whether they more closely align with our values than the other candidate does.

We also judge "likability" by whether or not we think a candidate is going to serve our interests. We evaluate them on whether they hold roughly the same goals and interests we do, and if so, we're much more likely to support them. Which is also why we want our candidates to be reliable and steady in their views. We want officeholders we can trust, not people who jump all over, saying one thing one day and another the next.

I think Americans also prefer candidates who display a basic sense of honesty and decency, who possess a strong moral compass, and who show compassion for people who are struggling in their lives. This does not mean we always vote for them – political circumstances or straight-on political calculation can get in the way – but I believe that for most Americans, those qualities matter a great deal.

Clearly, a lot goes into whether or not a candidate is likable, and one voter's gut sense will differ from another's. But I can tell you that right now, candidates for office all over the country are focused on this question.

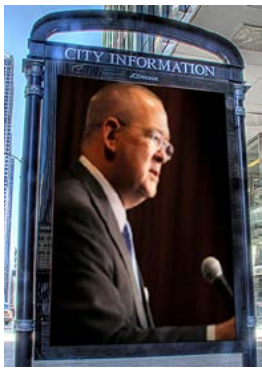
Campaigning is a matter of going from one group to another – sometimes small, sometimes large – and the question always on your mind is how you appeal to this group or person, and how you make yourself likable to them. In the wake of the election, the winners will be patting themselves on the back for having figured it out. And the losers will be left wondering how they might have behaved differently and been more likable. ❖

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member

Some places of economic compromise

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – The quasi-end of the election has most of us thinking about what the results mean for the economy. Other than forecasting a recession among political pollsters, there are few certain answers. However, we have to face the fact that bipartisan lawmaking has been absent since about 2002. That leaves a lot of issues needing the



kind of thoughtful, principled compromise that is really the hallmark of American democracy. I'm not excited about some of the likely outcomes, but that is how compromise works. Here's where compromise is most probable.

We are in the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, and that gives us a chance for Congress to compromise. The pandemic is worsening across most of the nation and

nearly one out of every six Americans who was working last January is now jobless. This should prompt a major COVID relief bill. It will support workers, some businesses and state and local governments. It will also add something between \$1.5 trillion and \$2.5 trillion to our national debt.

Federal taxes are certain to increase. The whopping \$1.05 trillion deficit from the "world's best economy" of 2019 illustrates the need for change. The Democrats will want to roll back much of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the Republicans will not, but there some areas ripe for compromise. The TCJA cut corporate tax rates, simplified tax filing, eliminated some state and local tax deductions and eliminated several tax loopholes. All but the state and local deductions were also supported by the Obama Administration. A compromise might include somewhat higher rates offset by the phase out of more corporate tax loopholes.

Few in Congress wish to see the U.S. return to the highest corporate taxes in the developed world, but the trade-off lies in cutting loopholes. Every elected leader has a large employer in their district demanding their favorite be maintained. Still, a bipartisan, multi-year sunset of deductions and credits would be palatable to most businesses who crave tax certainty.

A second area of bipartisan agreement is infrastructure spending. Though I appreciate their clearly unbiased view of things, the U.S. is not in the crisis civil engineering group that they would have us believe. Still, a multi-year agreement on transportation, water and environmental cleanup is a likely area of bipartisan consensus. Our roadways need a slew of new bridges, and more im-

portantly the technology to accommodate smart vehicles. We have a history of long-term transport funding. So, this would simply be more comprehensive and longer term. It may also set up other changes to spending process that a majority in Congress will support.

The Affordable Care Act is here to stay. It was, after all, nothing much more than a Medicaid expansion of which most states eagerly signed on. Still, it needs lots of marginal changes, including a public or not-for-profit option. While touching healthcare will be the toughest of bipartisan compromises, it is also among the least important.

The biggest remedy to skyrocketing healthcare prices lies not in the halls of Congress or the Supreme Court, but in the Department of Justice and state attorneys general. It is time to enforce anti-trust legislation on hospital systems. This is primarily a state role, except where systems spill across states. Bipartisanship doesn't just happen in Congress.

Almost every program involving funding causes disagreement about who administers and distributes funds. Until recently, the GOP pushed for more state and local control, while Democratic policymakers sought a strong federal role. This tension over fiscal federalism won't disappear, but city leaders, who are disproportionately Democrats, have recently pushed for more local influence over spending.

This fiscal federalism should not be a partisan issue. Any party who believes their ideas are better should welcome more effective state and local governments to nurture them. Allowing state and local governments to succeed or fail differently is an important ingredient to policy success over the long term. This is a wonderfully heterogeneous nation, with very different state and local priorities. Seeing what does or does not work elsewhere is of great advantage in developing successful policies.

A growing number of Americans wish to see a narrowed federal effort on the war on drugs. Changes to sentencing guidelines and the type of federal assistance to police departments should be easy areas to assemble votes. Decriminalization or reduced enforcement of marijuana laws also seem a more palatable area for compromise. Such changes to policy still allow states to deal with this complex problem differently.

Serious immigration reform is a huge economic issue, about which there is a lot of magical thinking. By my calculation, it would take every bus from every school, government and private sector organization a full year to transport all the undocumented workers back to the closest national border. They are more likely to ride sparkly chartreuse unicorns. We need serious, honest understanding of the problem and the possible solutions.

George Bush's 2007 bill is a good platform. It enjoyed broad bipartisan support but was derailed by those who sought to preserve immigration as a cultural wedge issue. There are clear areas for compromise on border security and guest worker programs. Here, a

president wields real power through the use of amnesty for those who have entered the nation illegally. So, like changes to the TCJA, compromise on immigration likely depends on who wins the presidency, which as of this writing is not clear.

These economic issues offer important areas of compromise. The tight election makes clear neither party has a strong control of the electorate. As I wrote last week, the Democratic Party has a clear economic agenda, while the GOP could not agree upon one. With worries about the economy looming large in exit polls, it

seems clear that GOP vagueness is at least as appealing as democratic specificity. That should hold lessons for both parties and provide incentives to move toward a common middle. ❖

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.

Pernicious percentages mystify many

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Billy and wife Billie visited over the weekend. “Well, go ahead, tell him,” Billie declaimed as she slid into a rocking chair, glass of iced tea in hand. “I’m tired of explaining what he couldn’t be bothered to learn, bull-headed creature that he is.”



“What’s the problem Billy?” I asked. “My boss,” Billy, who isn’t too generous with words, said.

“His boss, my foot,” Billie interjected, obviously intending to be the color commentator to Billy’s play-by-play.

“What about your boss?” I asked. “Cut our pay by 50%,” Billy

said.

“That’s not all of it,” Billie insisted.

Billy paused, then spit it out like a rotted prune, “He say he’ll give us back 50%. Seems fair to me, but she isn’t satisfied.”

“Satisfied?” Billie snorted. “Fair? Fool! Nothing fair about it.”

I had to agree with her, but I couldn’t take sides in the county’s premier perpetual domestic disturbance. “Billy,” I asked, “if you were making \$100 a week, and your pay was cut by 50%, how much would you be taking home?”

There was a long, uncomfortable pause before Billy answered, “\$50.” “Yes, exactly,” I effused. “So there you have \$50 in your paycheck and the boss says next week it will be 50% higher. How much are you going to get in that next paycheck?”

This time the silence lasted long enough for all the ice in the iced tea to melt. But when the quiet broke, Billy muttered, “Why that dirty cheat! He’s giving us \$25 back, just half of what he took away.”

Billie sat there rocking and smiling, until she broke the new silence. “That’s my Bill, no fool when he puts his mind to it. The only way to get back that \$50 is to have a 100% increase on the new, lower pay level.”

“Indeed,” I added. “If you had a stock worth \$500 and it fell by 20%, it would then be worth \$400, or \$100 less than previously. In that case, to get that \$100 back would require a 25% increase, or \$100 based on the lower \$400 figure. That’s true for the stock market, your home’s value, most other comparisons of numeric highs and lows.”

“Last week,” Billie said, “newscasters and politicians swallowed the claim that a 33% increase in the nation’s economy offset a previous 32% decline. They should’ve figured out it takes a 47% increase from the low to get back a 33% loss. But when a government or business leader makes that kind of mistake, eyebrows are not raised.”

That’s when Billy put the finishing touch on the discussion. “Putting fertilizer on a yardstick won’t make it grow,” he asserted.

“You ponder that one,” Billie told me as she ushered Billy to the car. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist. Reach him at mortonj-marcus@yahoo.com. Follow his views and those of John Guy on “Who gets what?”



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Sifting through Tuesday's results

By **KYLE KONDIK, LARRY J. SABATO and J. MILES COLEMAN**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — One has to go back to 1884 to find a newly elected Democratic president, Grover Cleveland, who won without his party also winning both chambers of Congress.

If Joe Biden pulls out the presidential race — which seems likelier than not as we write this Wednesday afternoon, although much is uncertain — it seems likely he will be the next Democratic president to face at least one hostile chamber of Congress.

Amidst the highest turnout in modern history, both Biden and President Donald Trump turned out their bases and battled in an epic duel that remains undecided. In our final preelection assessment, we warned of the possibility that many polls could be missing a significant share of the Trump electorate, and it seems like that indeed came to pass. While Biden currently leads in Michigan and Wisconsin, his thin margins are much smaller than many projected. While we study a lot of polls, we are not pollsters ourselves and do not conduct polls — and we are thankful for that fact right now. We have regularly cautioned our readers about polling drawbacks in this and previous presidential election cycles. It is obvious to most observers that serious problems remain that must be addressed by the polling industry. Not all were wrong, as we note below, but many (on both sides) showed results even very close to Election Day that ultimately did not materialize in the general election.

Encouragingly, at least for our own track record, we appear to have correctly rated every state in the Electoral College that has been called so far. As a reminder, this was our final rating map of the presidential race:

That includes Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District, won by Biden. If Trump ends up carrying Georgia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania, and Biden wins the rest of the uncalled states, NE-2 would be the decisive vote in a 270-268 victory for Biden.

The Biden campaign is projecting confidence that

they ultimately will carry Pennsylvania and maybe even Georgia based on the remaining and extremely Democratic-leaning votes. The Trump camp, meanwhile, holds out hope that they ultimately will win Arizona based on late-counted votes, but the Associated Press and Fox News have called the state for Biden. Nevada also remains close, with Biden clinging to a narrow 0.6-point edge. We did think Nevada was the shakiest Hillary Clinton-won state for Biden, and that appears to have been the case; Biden apparently ran well ahead of Clinton in the other most competitive states she carried four years ago: Colorado, Maine, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and Virginia.

As many of you have already noted, we're delighted to have called Florida correctly, as Biden's horrific performance in Miami-Dade County — it appears that he only won the county by seven percentage points after Clinton won it by nearly 30 — signaled Trump's victory there. Iowa and Ohio remained strong for Trump: The famous Iowa pollster, J. Ann Selzer, nailed another election, it appears, and in fact her poll showing Trump up seven in Iowa over the weekend was suggestive of enduring Trump strength across the Midwest, although it perhaps will not be enough for him to win this time.

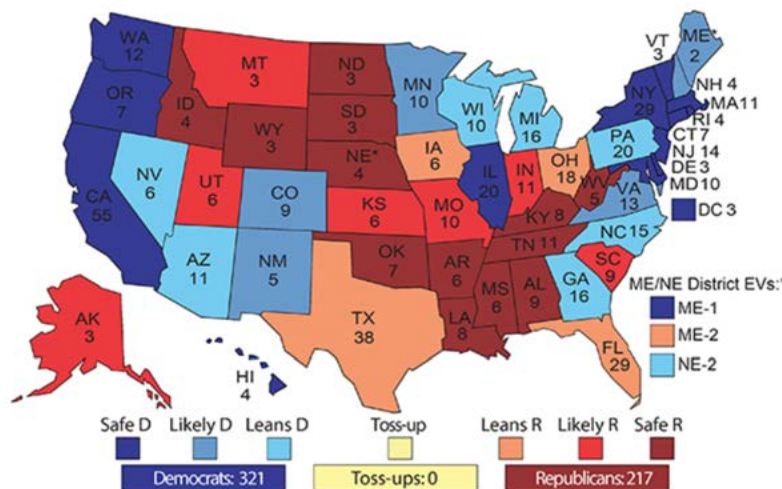
The rhythms of the vote count were and continue to be a challenge. As expected, there were major disparities in how Democrats and Republicans voted, and different states (or even counties within states) counted Democratic-leaning early and mail votes and Republican-leaning Election Day votes in inconsistent ways. This will be a challenge in the coming days and weeks as the results are finalized across the country.

In the Senate, we were correct to ultimately favor Republicans in all of the Democrats' "reach" targets in red states, as Republicans held Senate seats in Kansas, Montana, South Carolina, and Texas with ease. We are assuming they also will hold Alaska, where Sen. Dan Sullivan (R-AK) currently holds a big lead but many votes remain to be reported (that race is uncalled). Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), who we picked to win after seeing her as an underdog a few weeks

ago, also won a clear victory. Republicans easily flipped Alabama. The Georgia Senate special election will go to a Jan. 5 runoff between appointed Sen. Kelly Loeffler (R-GA) and the Rev. Raphael Warnock (D); the state's other Senate race, between Sen. David Perdue (R-GA) and Jon



Map 1: Final Crystal Ball Electoral College ratings



The Biden campaign is projecting confidence that

Ossoff (D), might as well; Perdue is currently at 50.6% of the vote, running a few tenths of a point ahead of Trump, as the incumbent tries to win outright. Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI) is doing a little worse than Biden in Michigan, but late-counted ballots may be enough to save him.

Ultimately, the Senate came down to the four Republican-held seats we and others highlighted as the most crucial races: Arizona, Colorado, Maine, and North Carolina. It seemed like Democrats needed to win all four to forge a 50-50 tie in the Senate. Democrats easily beat Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) and apparently also defeated Sen. Martha McSally (R-AZ), but Sen. Thom Tillis' (R-NC) margin is a little better than Trump's, and he appears on track to win. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) won, maintaining her signature crossover appeal with Democratic presidential voters. Ultimately, it looks like we'll have picked all the Senate races correctly except for North Carolina and Maine (we left both Georgia races as Toss-ups). The Republican Senate majority appears likely to endure.

We and other handicappers had a rough night in the House, where it appears that the Republicans will end up netting seats even as the Democrats maintain their majority. We said on Monday that we were giving incumbents of both parties the benefit of the doubt: That was wise when it came to GOP incumbents, none of whom have lost so far (so we should have picked even more to win), but not with Democratic incumbents, as several of the most vulnerable ones have lost. There will be a lot to sort out in the coming weeks, but it appears that strong GOP turnout and a ticket-splitting dynamic that helped Republicans as opposed to Democrats is going to cost the Democrats a number of seats.

If in fact Biden holds on, the GOP likely will be well-positioned to re-take the House majority in 2022 given the usual midterm backlash against the president's party. We also are heading into a redistricting year, where Republicans will retain advantages in more states than Democrats (although more states have shifted to non-partisan redistricting systems since the 2010 redistricting round, when Republicans held a dominant hand in redistricting).

But before we look ahead to 2022, we'll have to continue to examine the 2020 results, which are going to take a while to finalize in many places.

Cleveland, the Democrat elected in 1884 with a Democratic House but a Republican Senate, lost in 1888 but came back to win in 1892 in the midst of a political era, the Gilded Age, that featured extremely close presidential elections, a high degree of party unity, and very high turnout among eligible voters (although the franchise was denied to women and many others back then).

Today's political era has many of those same features. One also wonders if 2024 could feature a defeated president trying for a nonconsecutive second term – but Trump is also not yet defeated in 2020. ❖

Democrat 'wave' misses Congress

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats went into Election Day hoping to reclaim the White House and majorities in both chambers of Congress in a victory that would demonstrate an unmistakable repudiation of President Donald Trump and a Republican Party remade in his image.

It didn't work out that way.

More than 12 hours after polls closed, Biden held a narrow lead in some key states with hundreds of thousands of votes yet to be counted, and he has a comfortable advantage in the national popular vote. But as of midday Wednesday, there was no clear Democratic wave.

Republicans held key Senate seats that Democrats hoped to flip, and the GOP may ultimately shrink the Democrats' House majority. And even if Trump were to ultimately lose, the closeness of the presidential contest raised the prospect that a Biden presidency would have difficulty enacting progressive priorities or quickly move past the cultural and partisan fissures of the Trump era.

"The Trump coalition is more stubborn and resilient and capable than maybe we anticipated," said Rep. Gerald Connolly, a six-term Democratic lawmaker from Virginia. "The country is even more polarized and divided."

While Trump's critics were deeply disappointed that the hoped-for blue wave never materialized, Biden's allies encouraged the political world to step back and see the big picture. Dan Pfeiffer, a former aide to President Barack Obama, posted a message to Democrats on Medium entitled, "Biden is winning, act like it."

Indeed, should Trump lose, no matter the margin, he would be the first incumbent president to fail to win reelection since 1992. Biden has already flipped two states Trump carried four years ago, Arizona and Wisconsin, and held a modest lead in at least one other, Michigan, as he moved toward rebuilding the Democrats' so-called "Blue Wall."

Polls heading into Election Day suggested a much better election for Democrats up and down the ballot but clearly missed a surge of support for Trump and Republicans with turnout high across the political spectrum.

Several once-promising Democratic Senate challengers far fell short, despite a deluge of national fundraising support for headliners like Jaime Harrison in South Carolina, Amy McGrath in Kentucky and MJ Hegar in Texas. Some House freshmen who helped give Democrats a majority in 2018 also lost, victims of stronger-than-expected performances for many Republican challengers. Democrats' gains in metro and suburban areas were matched or offset in many battleground states by a Republican deluge in small towns and rural areas. And in a warning sign for Democrats, Trump demonstrated an uptick of support in some Black and Latino communities. ❖

James Briggs, IndyStar: It was not clear what Indiana was getting when Holcomb replaced Vice President Mike Pence late in a gubernatorial contest that Pence had been likely to lose. Four years later, we know what we got: a governor who loves Indiana and believes the best in its people. That is the Holcomb brand. Somehow, it works. Maybe it's because you don't expect an operative to be a good person. Holcomb is the rare creature of politics who exudes earnestness. People across the political spectrum know he's a prototypical politician, yet see him as something more genuine. Holcomb on Tuesday coasted to re-election. When he took the stage, he talked about running a second consecutive gubernatorial campaign that bore no resemblance to how these things typically work. Eric Holcomb, who has won the 2020 Indiana gubernatorial election, speaks to about 100 well-wishers on Election Day, Indianapolis, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020. "We have proven that normal campaigns are just a little bit overrated," Holcomb said. He might have been talking about the unusual nature of running for office during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also was talking about his approach. In a state where the brutal 5th District congressional district race raged on for months, Holcomb's campaign told a story about how great it is to live in Indiana. "From day one, we bought into this all-positive-all-the-time (campaign), really embraced it at the exact time when our state and nation needed it most," Holcomb said. It's impossible to know whether that campaign would have been possible during normal times or against a more fierce Democratic opponent. Dr. Woody Myers, the Democrat who challenged Holcomb, never seemed up to the task of defeating the popular incumbent. Still, it's hard to imagine any race that would have pushed Holcomb too far off his track. Even Tuesday night, with victory secured, Holcomb talked about the things he likes to talk about, which are eating corn dogs at the Cone Palace in Kokomo and getting a haircut at Rex's Barber Shop in Roanoke. ❖



Amy Sorkin, New Yorker: When Donald Trump came out to speak just before 2:30 A.M. on Wednesday, votes were still being counted in enough states—notably Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin—to make it impossible to say whether he or Joe Biden had won the Presidency. But, whichever of them does, what Trump said in his brief remarks was a reminder of why he does not deserve the office. Trump, standing in front of a phalanx of flags, claimed that the vote count had been "called off" because he won; that is not true on either count. He said that his lead in those swing states was insurmountable, which is also false, and that when "they"—he didn't really identify "they," except as "a very sad group of people"—realized that he was winning, they had swooped in to perpetrate "a fraud on the American public." In saying this, he was lying to the American public. And when he told the country that there was a conspiracy afoot to "disenfranchise" people who voted for him—adding, "We won't stand

for it"—he seemed to be willfully prodding his supporters toward violence. Trump's statement was squalid; if the country is lucky, it is just a last indignity before he is defeated. But, in those few minutes, he caused America's troubles to multiply. Even before he spoke, he had attacked the election's integrity with a tweet: "We are up BIG, but they are trying to STEAL the Election. We will never let them do it. Votes cannot be cast after the Polls are closed!" Twitter attached a warning that the tweet was "disputed" and might be providing "misleading" information about civic processes, which is a kind way of putting it. Trump sent that tweet after Biden had made a confident but cautious statement, noting, "It's not my place or Donald Trump's place to declare who won the election," but that of the American people. Perhaps that idea is what made Trump mad. ❖

Daniel Henninger, Wall Street Journal: If you visit the websites of the New York Times or the Washington Post to look at the results of the exit polling conducted Tuesday by Edison Research, you will find questions related to race, sex, inequality, ethnic heritage, health care and the economy. You won't find this question: How important to your vote was the impeachment of President Trump? Nor will you find any questions about Russian collusion, the Steele dossier, the Mueller investigation or Ukraine. Which is odd, insofar as battalions of reporters from those newspapers and the rest of the media pushed such "narratives" nonstop for more than three years to defeat this presidency. Sure would be nice to know how many people bought them. If it hadn't been for Covid, this would have been a normal election, with Donald Trump's policy record producing a second term and rioting in the streets. Some may say political rioting isn't normal, but it has become routine for progressive Democrats since Mr. Trump won four years ago. The coronavirus produced the two things that are the cause of the mess we're in this week: a Trump vulnerability for Joe Biden to run on, and the mail-in voting fiasco. Mr. Biden seized on the main political anomaly of the past seven months: While governors from both parties got positive ratings for their handling of the virus, President Trump did not. And for just one reason: Their pandemic press conferences were about the virus. His were about him, causing an avoidable erosion of public support. Absent this self-inflicted wound, Mr. Biden would have had to run on his only other issue, Mr. Trump's personality and character. Not implausible, but a harder sell. But then the mass adoption of mail-in voting made Mr. Biden's job easier. This pandemic-driven novelty is an experiment we should never repeat. According to the NBC News exit poll, people who voted in the final week selected Mr. Trump over Mr. Biden by 54% to 36%. Feel free to call this sour grapes, but allowing such ludicrously early mail-in voting could as easily damage a future Democratic president. This is an election, not a preset Apple Wallet payment. ❖

Holcomb won't move from Stage 5

INDIANAPOLIS — Gov. Eric Holcomb began his weekly COVID-19 briefing Wednesday by denouncing wild rumors that he would shut down the state again and schools would go back to virtual learning (Kelly, [Fort Wayne Journal Gazette](#)). "100% no truth to that whatsoever," he said. "We would just ask folks to keep in mind in the future that wherever those sources are to discount them because they are simply misleading the people. And the unfortunate thing is it's affecting people's daily lives and the decisions that they make. Not helpful. Counterproductive." The misinformation has been spreading like fire the last two weeks, and Holcomb said he will continue a "surgical" approach to hot spots in the state. The problem is the whole state is becoming a hot spot. According to new metrics released Wednesday, 72 counties are in the top two levels of virus spread. Only one county is in blue, the lowest level. All of northeast Indiana is now orange. Only red is worse. State officials are triaging help to counties seeing the worst rise in the novel coronavirus and trying to clamp down on cases in nursing homes. But Holcomb said just because state health officials are working with counties in the red to course correct doesn't mean "we're taking our eye off of 90 or 88 counties who are orange, whatever it is." On Wednesday, the state recorded 3,756 new cases – the third-highest daily total during the pandemic. An additional 25 Hoosiers also died for a total of 4,224. State Health Commissioner Dr. Kristina Box said the state's seven-day positivity rate of cases is now 8.7% and went up 200% between Sept. 15 and Oct. 25. The state is also starting to see more testing delays.



Vanderburgh Co. counting ongoing

EVANSVILLE — Voters are still waiting to hear the numbers from

Vanderburgh County. Officials tell us they're planning to still count votes Thursday morning (WFIE-TV). The 25 bipartisan teams were able to get through 40,000 ballots Wednesday, checking them and making sure they had everything they need before being counted. At 8 a.m. Thursday, all of the remaining will be electronically tabulated in the election office. They do plan to be finished with counting by Thursday afternoon and will release a final, unofficial tally of votes cast in this election. "It might be that the voter neglected to sign the ballot or the envelope," said Vanderburgh County Clerk Carla Hayden. "It may be that they didn't date it. It could be that one of the clerks didn't initial the back of the ballot. Those are the kind of things that we're looking for."

COVID hits Baltimore Ravens

BALTIMORE — The Baltimore Ravens are considerably short-handed at practice this week after moving two starting offensive linemen to injured reserve and placing eight players on the COVID-19 reserve list ([AP](#)). Coach John Harbaugh can only hope the situation improves in time for Sunday's key AFC clash on the road against the Indianapolis Colts (5-2).

Bucshon eyes health care costs

EVANSVILLE — Now that Dr. Larry Bucshon has been re-elected to a sixth term, he will continue to work on one of his biggest priorities: getting the cost of healthcare down ([WIBC](#)). Bucshon defeated Democrat Thomasina Marsili and Libertarian James Rodenberger Tuesday night. "There needs to be more transparency to the consumer. I want to make sure that we protect things like the Healthy Indiana Plan for the 400,000 people were able to provide insurance for," said Bucshon Tuesday night after his win. "The big problem is the consumer doesn't know what the healthcare

costs are because there is no transparency."

Hamilton County open to Hogsett call

NOBLESVILLE — Hamilton County health leaders are answering a call from the mayor of Indianapolis to work together to help stop the spread of coronavirus ([WIBC](#)). Last week, Indianapolis mayor Joe Hogsett and Marion County health director Dr. Virginia Caine called on the counties surrounding Marion County to work with the Capital City in stopping the spread. "The more we know about what each other is doing as a region, I think will strengthen our fight against the pandemic," said Mayor Hogsett. When Hogsett made that announcement, Hamilton County Health Department administrator Barry McNulty said he and his staff were already thinking about ways to collaborate with neighboring counties. "We were already talking about this," McNulty said to WISH-TV. "So we just incorporated that information to the local elected officials."

COVID in schools alarms officials

LAFAYETTE — As the figures continue to climb at alarming rates across the county, so do confirmed coronavirus cases and close contact quarantines found in K-12 schools ([Lafayette Journal & Courier](#)). As of Oct. 28, 124 confirmed COVID cases have been tied to schools in Tippecanoe County, according to new data rolled out Wednesday by the county health department. Of those, 109 students, 14 staff members and 1 student teacher have tested positive for the virus. Even as these cases have led to 1,996 close contacts being required to be quarantined, Dr. Jeremy Adler, Tippecanoe County's health officer, said "we haven't done too badly," considering that there are more than 20,000 students in Greater Lafayette schools.