



Census data delay stalls redistricting

HPI analysis reveals 2011 maps produced non-competitive IGA, congressional races



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Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

Thursday, April 7, 2011

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – By this point in time in 2001 and 2011, U.S. Census data was in the hands of Hoosier legislators and their computer-assisted consultants, creating new congressional and General Assembly maps.

This year, because of the pandemic and the Trump administration's late decision to demand data on illegal immigrants, Indiana's new maps will be delayed until late summer after the first special session of the Holcomb era is called. It promises to stall the informal start of the 2022 cycle.

In 2001 and 2011, the reapportioned maps were passed by the April 29 sine die and signed shortly thereafter by Govs. Frank O'Bannon and Mitch Daniels, setting off the traditional spate of candidacies during the summer and fall months heading into the next cycle. The delay this year means that potential candidates won't know what district they are in for an additional four months or so.

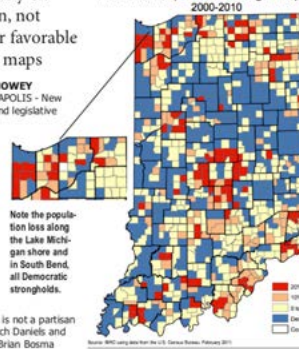
Grim map demographics face Dems

GOP can rely on population, not politics for favorable legislative maps

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**
 INDIANAPOLIS - New Congressional and legislative maps are being forged in the Indiana House and Senate and are expected to be made public next week. Whatever the specifics are, the new maps will likely paint a grim picture for Indiana Democrats.

This Howeys Politics analysis is not a partisan one, as Gov. Mitch Daniels and House Speaker Brian Bosma

Indiana Townships: Percent Change in Population 2000-2010



have essentially pledged to follow basic guidelines by former Secretary of State Todd Rokita to build districts based on "communities of interest," county lines and nesting House districts in Senate districts. It is the demographics that pose a daunting challenge to House Democrats. These include:

- The 40 Democratic-held Indiana House districts gained a total of 4,681 people, an average of 117 per district.
- The 60 GOP-held Indiana House districts gained a total of 386,636 people, an average of 6,444 per district.
- The state total population gain was 403,317; an average of 4,033 per district.
- Name of the top 10 population-losing districts – and 15 of the top 20 – are held by

Continued on page 3

The U.S. Census Bureau said it plans to deliver population figures used for congressional reapportionment by the end of April, with legislative district information sometime after July. The census data was supposed to be ready by the end of 2020.

"At the end of the day, it means we'll be here after July, trying to figure out redistricting, what those districts look like," Senate President Pro Tem Rod Bray said last Friday.

While Indiana Democrats had spent much of the last decade pushing for an independent redistricting com-

Continued on page 4

The GOP civil war

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Donald Trump has been retired to his Florida estate for all of 15 days now. In his void, there is a power struggle for the soul of the national Republican Party, with a vote scheduled today where GOP members will be forced to either defend or rebuke QAnon Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, who received a standing ovation from the caucus yesterday.



Five years ago, there wasn't a single GOP establishment figure who was actively backing Donald Trump for the nomination in Indiana. Gov. Mike Pence was backing Sen. Ted Cruz. Republican National Com-



"I was hospitalized for 18 days, with 11 of those days spent in the ICU. I was literally unable to breathe. COVID-19 is real. If you don't want to go through what I went through, take this virus seriously. Wear a mask."

- State Rep. Vanessa Summers



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Jack E. Howey
 editor emeritus
 1926-2019



mitteeman John Hammond III had called Trump "unfit" for office. Sen. Dan Coats was for Sen. Marco Rubio. Trump's strength came from the grassroots and it wasn't realized until he won the Indiana primary with 53%. From that point on, the GOP establishment was on board, and fully so by mid-July when Trump brought Gov. Pence onto his ticket.

President Trump failed to win the popular vote twice, winning in 2016 via the Electoral College. In 2018 Republicans lost the House majority. Last month, a day after Trump aided and abetted the loss of two U.S. Senate seats in Georgia and the Senate majority, Trump was obsessed with what has become to be known as the "big lie" that led up to the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol: That he had actually won the 2020 election. In a landslide.



And under his imprimatur, Greene won a Georgia congressional seat by defeating a more mainstream conservative in the Republican primary.

Fast forward to this week. Rep. Greene has now become a flash-point poster gal for this divide and a stalking horse for Trump's potential return. There have been social media postings revisited in which she expressed belief in the Democratic space alien pedophile conspiracy, that school massacres in Florida and Connecticut had been staged "false flag" events, and that a Jewish laser conspiracy was the cause for California wildfires. She backed pumping a bullet into the head of Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

This divide reached Indiana on Tuesday, when in a conference call with reporters, U.S. Sen. Todd Young joined a growing list of senators who have expressed concern that Greene could become the face of the party heading into the 2022 mid-terms.

"There should be no debate about Marjorie Taylor Greene," Young said. "She's nutty. She's an embarrassment to our party. There is no place for her in the Republican Party. Of

course people in her congressional district, it's their prerogative if they want to debase themselves by voting to an elect someone who indulges in anti-Semitic and conspiracy theories and all manner of other nonsense. I've got no tolerance for people like that."

Young's comments came on the heels of those by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who cited in a Senate floor speech on Monday Rep. Greene's "loony lies," calling her a "cancer for the Republican Party."

"Somebody who's suggested that perhaps no airplane hit the Pentagon on 9/11, that horrifying school shootings were pre-staged, and that the Clintons crashed JFK Jr.'s airplane is not living in reality," said McConnell. "This has nothing to do with the challenges facing American families or the robust debates on substance that can strengthen our party."

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, who presided over Greene's addition to the House Education Committee, met with her on Tuesday and was faced with not only sanctioning the QAnon/Republican, but was under pressure to demote U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney from the No. 3 leadership position. McCarthy did not remove her from committees on Wednesday, saying that her inflammatory statements came before she was elected.

Cheney called for Trump's impeachment on Jan. 12, saying, "The president of the United States summoned this mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack. Everything that followed was his doing. None of this would have happened without the president. The president could have immediately and forcefully intervened to stop the violence. He did not. There has never been a greater betrayal by a president of the United States of his office and his oath to the Constitution."

Joining Cheney, who survived a secret ballot caucus vote 145-61

last night, and eight other Republicans was U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, who described what's at stake for the national GOP: "The biggest danger right now is that we've become a party that dabbles – not just dabbles – we traffic in conspiracies and we traffic in lies."

He described Trump's role in the Jan. 6 insurrection as a "wake-up call" for the GOP. "Republicans must say enough is enough. It's time to unplug the outrage machine, reject the politics of personality, and cast aside the conspiracy theories and rage. It's time to turn back from the edge of darkness and return to the ideals that have long been our guiding light. It's now or never. The choice is ours. I've made mine, and I hope every Republican, and every American who shares our values, will choose to join me. Let's take back our party."

Sen. Young acknowledged Trump's legacy of 30,000 lies, half-truths and misrepresentations that led to the U.S. Capitol mob, saying Sunday on Fox59's INFocus, "I think we need to name and shame members of the media who were out there perpetuating mistruths and deceiving individuals. I think the same applies to politicians who are out there perpetuating things that are completely false and deceiving constituents."

On that same show, U.S. Sen. Mike Braun finally explained why he joined Sens. Cruz and Josh Hawley to challenge Electoral College certifications that led to Trump's unleashing the MAGA mob on the Capitol. "My intention all along never was on record as overturning the results or decertifying," Braun said. "It was just acknowledging that in a crazy year that we've had with COVID and the more I investigated it, in many of these places, election commissions and local jurisdictions actually changed the rules and it was done legally, maybe not constitutionally. It's gotten to where you can't even question something or you have words put into your mouth like you were trying to overturn something, that was never my intention."

This GOP at the fork in the road should be an easy choice, though with hard consequences. An Economist-YouGov poll in late January had Trump's favorability among Republicans at 81%. McConnell's favorability amongst Republicans was 27%, with 57% unfavorable. That same poll had only 41% of all voters viewing Trump favorably, which aligns with a Jan. 18 Gallup poll that put Trump's approval at 34% while Rasmussen Reports put the U.S. right/wrong track at 21/72%.

An Echelon Insights Poll released earlier this week reveals Trump in free-fall. It found only 45% of Republicans would "like to see Donald Trump run for president in 2024." In December, that number stood at 65%.

"You can't overestimate how much disdain Republican voters have for Republican leadership in Washington," one former Trump campaign adviser told The Hill. But the same can be said for the broader electorate's rejection of Trump. Or as Trump pollster Tony Fabrizio put it in a

campaign "autopsy" memo, "Biden had a clear edge over POTUS on being seen as honest and trustworthy. POTUS suffered his greatest erosion with White voters, particularly White men in both state groups. However, he made double digit gains with Hispanics in both groups, while his performance among Blacks was virtually the same as 2016. POTUS lost ground with almost every age group in both state groupings. In 2016, Trump won Independents by double digits in both the flipped and held groupings. They shifted against him significantly in 2020."

Former vice president Mike Pence, who had stood with Trump for more than four years supporting just about anything he said, finally parted with the president leading up to Jan. 6. He resisted taking part in what would have been a coup d'état, which prompted the mob to chant "Hang Mike Pence" as he and his family were taken to a secure location.

In the early months of his tenure on the national ticket, Pence often compared Trump to President Ronald Reagan. But there was no real comparison and Pence eventually stopped. Reagan was a beacon of optimism and conservative common sense who won two landslide elections, had broad coattails and reshaped the world through policy while preaching GOP unity through his "11th Commandment"; Trump was a wannabe autocrat who saw the presidency as

his biggest trophy; with any change by personal fiat, any ally could become an enemy with a mere hint of disloyalty as Mike Pence and Dan Coats learned in abrupt and rude fashion.

In Kinzinger's mind, the GOP should return to its Reagan roots. Sens. Young and McConnell realize the party faces a huge problem with the broader electorate, and time is not on the former's side. Young faces reelection in 2022.

Young was asked about a potential primary challenger in the wake of his meeting with President Biden on Monday, while confirming most of his cabinet appointees thus far. "I really don't worry. I didn't worry when Evan Bayh entered my race," Young said. "I've got a lot of fallback options. Unlike some career politicians who are wedded to their titles and their positions, I've got a good life. I think in the end Hoosiers will judge me by my results and their expectation of me is coming through with my last campaign's commitments, which is to work with Republicans or Democrats whenever they have good ideas. I've demonstrated I can do that with President Trump; I'll demonstrate I can do that with President Biden. I just want to improve people's life prospects."

Last week, former Democratic senator Joe Donnelly told HPI he was taking a wait-and-see approach to a potential challenge to Young. In 2012, Rep. Donnelly opted out of a reelect in a reapportioned district to seek a Senate seat held for 36 years by Sen. Richard Lugar, who then lost in a GOP primary landslide to Richard Mourdock.

Donnelly, once again, may become a classic canary in the GOP coal mine. ❖



Redistricting, from page 1

mission with the support of then-Speaker Brian Bosma, those reforms were clamped shut in the Senate, which has been controlled for all but two years (1975-76) by the GOP over the past half century. Hoosier Democrats are basically powerless in the shaping of the new maps.

In 2001, the maps were initially drawn by State Rep. Ed Mahern, D-Indianapolis, who moved in a clockwise manner that began in The Region's 1st CD, working in the 2nd CD that would feature Kokomo dangling by a string of townships connected to the Michiana-based district, and then the 5th and 6th CDs. After that, he created the new 8th and 9th CDs, with the scraps forging the spindly-shaped 4th CD that ran in elongated fashion from several counties north of the Ohio River to several counties south of Lake Michigan.

By 2011, then-Secretary of State Todd Rokita vowed to end "gerrymandering" by creating "compact" districts that sought to preserve "communities of interests" while avoiding separating counties, cities and school districts.

The 2001 maps created one of the most competitive decades in state history. While the Indiana Senate stayed monolithically Republican, the Indiana House changed majority hands three times – from Democrat to Republican in 2004 with the election of Gov. Mitch Daniels, back to the Democrats in 2006 mid-term, and then to the GOP in 2010 in the Tea Party mid-term. In 2006, Republican Jon Elrod upset Rep. Mahern by eight votes.

In the April 12, 2001 edition of Howey Politics, we observed: What we are likely to end up with is a Congressional delegation that will feature three extremely safe Republican havens and one for the Democrats; three potentially bloody battlegrounds; and two districts – one for each party – that look nominally secure for the current party in control that would be subject to swamping by future national waves.

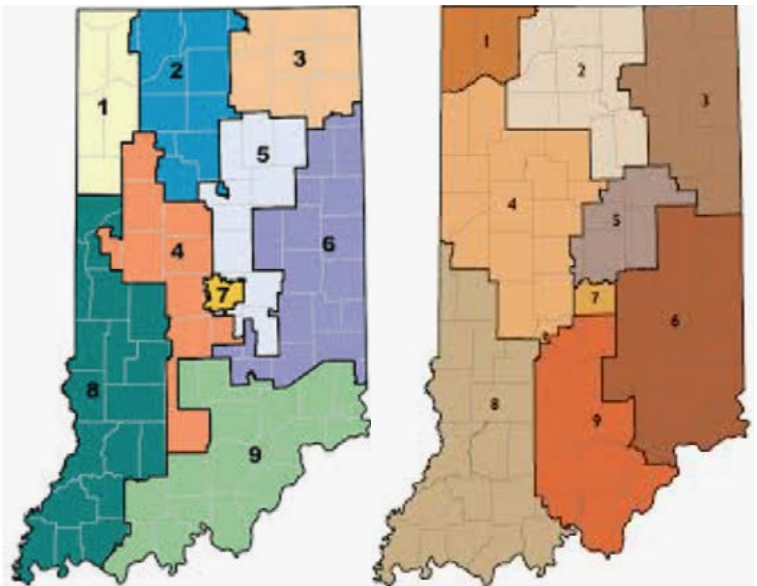
In congressional districts, five incumbents were defeated, including 9th CD Democrat Rep. Baron Hill by Mike Sodrel in 2004; Rep. Sodrel by Hill in a rematch in 2006, along with 2nd CD Democrat Joe Donnelly over Chris Chocola, and 8th CD Democrat Brad Ellsworth over Rep. John Hostettler; and 9th CD Republican Todd Young defeating Hill in 2010. A sixth seat changed parties when Republican Larry Bucshon defeated State Rep. Trent Van Haaften in 2010 in what became known as the "Bayh Dominoes" election that pushed Rep. Ellsworth in the U.S.

Senate race.

While the 2011 maps were compact and not considered "gerrymandered," the comparison starkly revealed the devil in the details. Not a single congressional incumbent lost in the five election cycles, and only one CD changed parties, when in 2012, Rep. Joe Donnelly decided to seek the Senate seat held by U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, and Republican Jackie Walorski won the 2nd CD.

In the 2017 Cook Partisan Index, only the 1st CD (+9% Democrat) and 5th CD (+9% Republican), offered a hint of competitiveness. Neither district changed parties. The other seven CDs were always "safe" Republican.

In the Indiana House, the days of endangered majorities came to an abrupt end. The Republicans went



The 2001 and 2011 Indiana congressional district maps.

from a 60-seat majority in 2010, to a 69-seat super majority in 2012, a 71-seat super majority in 2014, a 70-seat super majority in 2016, a 67-seat super majority in 2018, and a 71-seat super majority in 2020.

The shapes of the 2011 maps appeared to mesmerize the Hoosier political world while creating a competitive desert. Gov. Daniels called them a "huge improvement on the 2001 gerrymander." Late in the decade, Daniels appeared to realize what the lack of competition meant, suggesting "salamander-shaped districts" at a Purdue University event he presided over.

Common Cause's Julia Vaughn was also caught in the geometry trap, saying, "They seem to be far, far

Indiana House of Representatives Party Control: 1992-2020

Year	'92	'94	'96	'98	'00	'02	'04	'06	'08	'10	'12	'14	'16	'18	'20
Democrats	55	44	50*	53	53	51	48	51	52	40	31	29	30	33	29
Republicans	45	56	50	47	47	49	52	49	48	60	69	71	70	67	71

better, and to meet any reasonable test of compactness and respecting communities of interest.” She cited the one vote deviation per congressional district and the 64,800-person Indiana House districts that were compact, uniting 113 cities and towns and 22 school corporations, and told the House Committee, “You did a good job right there. Overall I give you an ‘A’ for keeping your promise.”

The uncompetitive, compact districts helped create an Indiana that by 2014 had one of the worst voter participation cycles in the nation.

The compact maps keeping “communities of interest” also took away another positive: Multiple representatives for several cities spanning both parties. In 2001, Howey Politics observed: The overall trend on the congressional level is potentially better, dual party representation for key Hoosier cities. While northern Republicans moaned about the splitting off of most of Elkhart County from the old 3rd CD into the new 2nd, the fact is that the Michiana area is poised to have three members of Congress looking after its affairs (including U.S. Rep. Fred Upton in Michigan’s 6th CD). The City of Elkhart, home to only one state legislator, will have two members of Congress, potentially one from each party, helping with its affairs. Fort Wayne, Columbus and Bloomington will essentially have two voices, the latter two with the possibility of a member from each party. Indianapolis, if you include U.S. Rep. Mike Pence representing its southeastern metropolitan statistical area flank, will have four.

Both Republicans and Democrats have nationalized reapportionment. Former Wisconsin governor Scott Walker heads the National Republican Redistricting Trust with Adam Kincaid as its executive director, while former attorney general Eric Holder formed the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, headed by former DCCC official Kelli Ward. According to *The Hill*, the creation of the new outside groups, observers say, reflects the growing recognition of the importance of political boundaries after a decade of contentious legal battles in a narrowly divided nation.

The National Republican Redistricting Trust, the GOP’s map-making arm, sets out goals for the 2021 reapportionment:

1.) Constitutional redistricting: State legislatures are entrusted with the responsibility of redrawing their state’s election districts by the Constitution. Districts must comply with the Voting Rights Act, adhere to all other federal and state laws, and give every citizen an equal voice in the House of Representatives and in the state legislatures.

2.) Clean redistricting: Districts should be sufficiently compact and preserve communities of interest by respecting municipal and county boundaries. Districts should avoid combining disparate populations to the extent possible.

3.) Common sense redistricting: Redistricting impacts all Americans and all Americans should be able to look at their district and understand why it was drawn the way it was. Districts don’t need to be bizarrely shaped. The Indiana Citizens Action Coalition also has come to recognize the “compactness” ruse.

The Indiana Citizens Action Coalition pushed back. “Communities of interest, including cities, counties, school districts, and neighborhoods are often divided by district lines, making it difficult for those citizens to be heard,” its website observed. “This can lead to a community’s interests being ignored or underserved. When districts are lopsided from a partisan perspective it creates polariza-



tion, with candidates appealing to the fringes instead of the middle. Compromise becomes a dirty word; there is no reward for consensus building.”

CAC added, “In 2014, 54 of the 125 candidates for the Indiana House and Senate had no opponents. As a result, Indiana’s voter turnout rate was the lowest in the country at 28%. In 2016, 35 of the 125 candidates for the Indiana House and Senate had no opponents. In 2018, 37 out of 125 seats were unchallenged. On average from 2010 to 2014, about 42% of Indiana’s state legislative candidates ran unchallenged by the opposite party.

“When politicians don’t have competition at the ballot box, Hoosiers cannot be fairly represented,” CAC said.

Another trend is the purchasing of congressional seats by candidates. Of Indiana’s nine CDs, three are now held by “self-funders” or candidates who can write big checks to win. This group includes 9th CD Rep. Trey Hollingsworth, 4th CD Rep. Jim Baird (who defeated another self-funder Steve Braun in 2016), and in the 5th CD where Republican Rep. Victoria Spartz dropped \$1 million to win a crowded primary in 2020. U.S. Sen. Mike Braun also spent \$5 million to win the 2018 GOP Senate primary.

Mark Souder, former congressman and current HPI contributor, sees a volatile mix of self-funders, a decline of political parties, and nationalized map consultants creating the current toxic climate.

“The combination of the steady decline of Indiana state parties (beginning with the revoking of patron-

age, license bureaus, the 2% club, dollars from banking deposits), and the number of women working changed the volunteer structure making precinct work rather rare. Knowing the power drained away, it would be logical that specialty groups or contracted groups would provide the data.

"Fundraising has moved heavily that direction as well. Even 20 years ago things like Aristotle systematized mailings, filings, etc. The whole thing about the Dominion Voting Machines demonstrates how one or a small group of vendors, when they do it well, dominate any sector.

"Both parties targeted state legislative races nationally because of redistricting," Souder continued. "Census data, with lots of variations so you don't get racially and other discriminatory provisions, means that increasing sophistication is important. In other words, this was ripe some time ago for a few dominant hired firms (i.e. specialist consultants) to emerge. We seemingly are on the verge of not just computer-controlled cars but nationally minted candidates funded by nationally systematized fundraising, ads, press releases, etc., running in computer consultant districts. And at some point, perhaps, the consultants and computers will say, "Hey, the trendy thing we need is a 'real live candidate.'"

Sprawling election reform bill

After an election cycle impacted by the pandemic altered some ways the state conducted voting, there were calls for a number of reforms that include an expansion of vote by mail.

State Sen. Greg Walker, R-Columbus, has introduced SB398 that addresses some aspects of absentee balloting, but does not substantially alter that component of balloting.

SB398 proposes:

- Requires counties to mail absentee ballots by nonforwardable mail.
- Specifies the household family members who may assist a voter in voting absentee.
- Prohibits a ballot label including a straight party ticket option in specified circumstances.
- Requires a county to compare signatures upon receipt of an absentee ballot and specifies the procedure.
- Sets forth a procedure if a county election board does not unanimously determine that an absentee ballot signature is genuine.
- States that the position of an absentee ballot counter or a provisional ballot counter is not a lucrative office for purposes of the Constitution of the State of Indiana.
- Allows a member of the Indiana state recount commission to appoint a proxy. Specifies the deadline for filling a candidate vacancy.
- Prohibits counting a ballot that is deposited in a drop box or container that is not under the physical



control and supervision of the county election board.

- Allows a county election board by unanimous vote to authorize an absentee voter board to visit a voter to complete an absentee ballot application and provide the voter with an absentee ballot.

- Sets forth the process for a replacement ballot. Extends the time in which an absentee ballot must be received on election day from noon to 6 p.m. if the county uses electronic poll books or is a vote center county. (Current law for counties using a paper poll list is noon for the receipt of an absentee ballot.)

- Removes the requirement that a county election board adopt a resolution concerning the processing of absentee ballots.

- Allows all counties to open absentee ballot envelopes by machine (current law only allows for Marion County to use a machine to open ballots).

- Establishes procedures and forms for the curing of mismatched signatures involving an absentee ballot and unsigned absentee ballots.

- Allows an individual who is not a voter to serve as an absentee board member.

- Repeals language concerning absentee ballots (moving some language to central voting statutes) and repeals certain absentee voter boards.

Other provisions of the bill would allow a person who is 16 or 17 years of age to serve as a precinct election officer without the written approval of the school principal if school is not in session on election day.

It would Require certification by the county chairman of a candidate in a political party primary or town convention if the candidate cast a nonpartisan ballot at the most recent primary election in which the candidate voted.

And it provides for a Level 6 felony for inducing or procuring another person to vote or refrain from voting for or against a candidate or public question at: (1) a caucus; or (2) the appointment of a candidate by a political party chairman or central committee officer; by giving, offering, or promising a person money or other property.

Hupfer named general counsel for RNC

Indiana Republican Party Chairman Kyle Hupfer has been named general counsel of the Republican National Committee (RNC). In a unanimous vote, the RNC executive committee ratified Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel's appointment of Hupfer to the post. Hupfer will continue to serve as chairman of the Indiana Republican Party while fulfilling his new role. "We look forward to working with Chairman Hupfer as we head into a crucial midterm election in 2022 while working to ensure free and fair elections across the country," said RNC Chairman Ronna McDaniel.

Hupfer recently joined Taft Law as a partner. Also joining Taft are RNC National Committeeman John Hammond III, who has moved from IceMiller after age requirements there had him give up the public affairs section to Lauren Mills. Also moving to Taft from IceMiller were Mark Shublack, Lacy Johnson and Carl Drummer. ❖

Young, Banks seek to reshape the GOP

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.

WASHINGTON – Two Indiana Republicans – Sen. Todd Young and Rep. Jim Banks – are positioned to play roles in reshaping the party after a tumultuous end to the Trump administration that saw the GOP lose the White House and the Senate.



The denouement of President Donald Trump's tenure was the storming of the Capitol on Jan. 6 by supporters inflamed by his claims of election fraud that had been rejected by state officials and courts.

But it wasn't just the end of Trump's term that was marked by anger. It characterized his rhetoric and the mindset of many in his constituency.

As he prepares to run for reelection in 2022, Young is working on a plan to change the GOP's approach to addressing economic and social grievances. He wants the party to be more positive in its policy framing.

"There is a question about whether our party is going to be a party that is grounded in resentment and anxiety and fear or if, instead, we're going to be an aspirational party that is dedicated towards addressing the convergence of globalization and the fourth technological revolution and urbanization and the lack of agency and control over one's lives that these those different forces have imposed upon certain segments of our population," Young told reporters on a Feb. 2 conference call. "That's what we need to wrestle with right now – and the hollowing out of certain communities on account of these forces."

Young said answers will come from societal institutions, including government.

"Count me on that end of the party that wants to provide solutions opposed to harnessing anger, and resentment and anxiety," said Young, the former chairman of the Senate GOP's campaign arm.

Over in the House, Banks (3rd CD) is chairman of the Republican Study Committee, a large caucus of conservatives whose influence is magnified in a chamber with a slim Democratic majority.

Banks spoke to HPI on Wednesday just after concluding his first RSC luncheon at the helm of the group. He said the RSC is developing an agenda that combines traditional Republican priorities embodied by President Ronald

Reagan – such as fiscal conservatism, strong defense and support of pro-life policies – with Trump's emphasis on reforming big-tech policy and getting tough on China.

"How do we marry the Reagan Republican wing of our party with the more populist wing of the party that Trump has brought into the fold?" Banks said. "If we can effectively do that, we'll have a party that's strong in the 2022 and 2024 elections and beyond."

Both Young and Banks are trying to bring Republican governance as practiced in Indiana to the wider party, said former GOP Rep. Luke Messer, who is now a principal at Faegre Drinker Consulting.

"To be a long-term governing coalition, we have to be a party of principles, not personality," said Messer, a former executive director of the Indiana GOP and former policy chair for House Republicans. "What they're both talking about is taking the conservative principles you've seen in action in Indiana over the past 16 years and applying them nationally."

Although most voters rejected Trump's bombast and provocations, he promoted a populism that struck a chord – as did politicians on the left, such as Sen. Bernie Sanders.

"It's a mistake to ignore populist sentiment," Messer said. "This is an international phenomenon, not just a domestic one."

Banks credits Trump with moving the GOP away from monied interests.



"Before President Trump, we were more of the party that would bend to the whims of Wall Street, rather than putting Main Street America, blue-collar America," first, Banks said.

Banks and Young differ on some issues that have roiled the GOP.

Banks voted against certifying presidential election

results in Arizona and Pennsylvania on the day that rioters broke into the Capitol. Young voted in favor of certification.

Banks said "election integrity" is another RSC priority. "It's the issue that every Republican cares about no matter what they did on Jan. 6."

Banks and Young also take different stances on Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga. Greene has espoused extremist views on school shootings and has voiced support for QAnon conspiracy theories. Banks said he condemns Greene's rhetoric but is hesitant to deny her committee assignments.

"It's a slippery slope to start to take members of Congress off committees for things they did or said before they were elected," Banks said.

Young didn't temporize about Greene.

"She's nutty," Young said. "She's an embarrassment to our party. There's no place for her in the Republican Party. People of her congressional district, it's their prerogative if they want to abase themselves, if they want to elect someone who indulges in anti-Semitic conspiracy theories and all manner of other nonsense. I've got no tolerance for people like that."

Greene is one of the many challenges facing the GOP. Young and Banks will help determine how the party responds. ❖

Schoeff is HPI's Washington correspondent.

Analyzing Trump's second impeachment

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – When House Democrats began moving toward the first impeachment of Donald Trump, I wrote that Trump should NOT be impeached. He was. He has been again. Let's consider some questions about what happened after the first impeachment and what will happen after the second.



Q. Will Trump be convicted by the Senate this time?

A. No. Not unless there's something like Trump calling anew for insurgents to storm the Capitol. At least 17 Republicans must join the 50 Democrats for the two-thirds vote to convict. Well, 45 of the 50 Republicans voted not even to hold the impeachment trial because Trump is out of office. Clear

message about the odds.

Q. Why did you think he shouldn't have been impeached the first time? Did you think he wasn't guilty of anything?

A. I wasn't discussing guilt or innocence, just saying it was useless and politically damaging for Democrats to impeach Trump that first time. There was absolutely no chance of conviction in the Republican-controlled Senate. Indeed, he was acquitted easily on both charges, with only one Republican, Sen. Mitt Romney, voting to convict on one count.

Q. What was the effect politically?

A. Trump climbed in approval ratings amid the Senate proceedings, hitting the highest approval he ever had during his presidency, 49% in a Gallup poll. All that stuff about Ukrainian machinations, though serious, didn't sway voters away from Trump or Republican congressional

candidates. Trump swayed them away from himself with unhinged performances on the coronavirus and in debates and at rallies. But a significant negative perception of the Democratic impeachment effort was one of the factors in Democrats losing so many congressional races.

Q. So, was this second impeachment of Trump a political mistake by Democrats?

A. Yes and no. Sound arguments can be made either way.

Q. What's the "yes" argument for it hurting Democrats?

A. Trump, now at a low point, out of office and off Twitter, will be back in the national spotlight and then likely will be able again to claim "exoneration" after another "witch hunt." His legions of followers will be rejuvenated after the dispiriting election. The impeachment trial also will take focus off and slow down President Biden's governmental efforts.

Q. What's the "no" argument this time about whether impeachment hurts Democrats?

A. This time the charge of "incitement of insurrection" is easy to understand, involving the deadly storming of the Capitol that all of America watched. There are



Trump's own words, in summoning supporters to Washington and then urging them to go to the Capitol "to fight like hell" to stop certification of Biden's win. Acquittal votes by Republicans could hurt some of them politically, especially if testimony about the mob violence convinces more voters that this time Republicans are the ones playing politics.

Q. Why won't more Republican senators, all of them there and in danger on Jan. 6, vote to convict Trump?

A. For some, it's as simple as not wanting to commit political suicide. A guilty vote could bring a Republican primary election challenge from a Trump candidate with widespread support from the still-strong Trump base. Others could decide that providing votes to convict would split the GOP, Trumpicans vs. traditional Republicans, destroy-

ing chances in future elections. And some could be wary of death threats by the "Hang Mike Pence" crowd.

Q. What if there could be a secret Senate vote?

A. Trump would be convicted. Most Republican senators privately deplore Trump's conduct and blame him for loss of Senate control.

Q. When will we know the political effect of this trial?

A. In 2022, when Democrats try to hang on to narrow House and Senate margins and Republicans seek to reclaim control, and for sure in 2024, when Trump or at least his legacy will be on the ballot. ❖

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

Can anyone save the Republican Party?

By **KELLY HAWES**
CNHI News Bureau

ANDERSON – I grew up in a Republican household. Dad was a longtime party activist, and I remember him carrying the poll book from door to door, asking neighbors whether they planned to vote and which way they might be leaning. I remember his shock when the Democrat



down the street slammed the door in his face.

Politics for Dad was never a blood sport. I'm sure he had as many friends who were Democrats as Republicans.

I developed an interest in politics at a young age. I was 10 years old when a friend and I spent much of Election Day standing across the street from the neighborhood voting place handing out materials in support

of Barry Goldwater. We were drawn, I guess, to the excitement of the campaign, and we wanted to be part of it.

We did the same thing for other candidates in the next election and a few more after that. We even decorated my wagon in red, white and blue. I doubt that we swayed a single vote, but we had fun. We might even have learned about how the democratic process is supposed to work.

All of this is to say I have a soft spot in my heart for the Republican Party, and I'm sad to see it at the crossroads where it finds itself today. The party has a choice. It can stay on the path blazed by Donald Trump, pursuing the politics of grievance and looking to exploit the divisions in our country. Or it can go back to its roots and reclaim

its role as a champion of limited government and fiscal restraint. The party finds itself forced to choose between Liz Cheney and Marjorie Taylor Greene, between Mitt Romney and Josh Hawley.

I won't claim that Dad and I wound up agreeing on politics. He was a dyed-in-the-wool Republican. I'm not sure he ever voted for a Democrat. Still, I wonder what he would have thought about Donald Trump. I don't think he would have been all that impressed.

Dad was a lifelong newspaper reader. He frequently tuned to Fox News, but he also flipped the channel now and then to MSNBC. He wanted to see what the other side was saying. I don't think he would have cared much for Trump's claims of "fake news." Just as I'm not sure he was impressed by similar claims from Richard Nixon. Dad and I never really talked much about Nixon. I was heading into my junior year in college when the disgraced president resigned. Watergate was a watershed moment in my life. I'm sure Dad was disappointed by the events leading up to Nixon's departure. He had voted for Nixon in the losing campaign of 1960, and he voted for Nixon again in 1968 and 1972.

Of course, Dad had also voted for Barry Goldwater, one of the Republican senators who went to the White House that summer to tell Nixon it was time to go. We needed someone like Goldwater in November when Trump kept insisting he had actually won the presidential election. Maybe if someone had stood up to him then we could have avoided the disaster of Jan. 6.

Things were a lot different in 1974. There was no conservative echo chamber back then, no right wing voices on social media to back up the president's claims that the real bad guys in the Watergate scandal were working at the Washington Post. Some have suggested that if guys like Sean Hannity had been around then, Nixon might never have resigned.

Surely someone would have stepped up to save the Republican Party. Just like we hope someone will do today. ❖

States offer alternatives to term limits

By PETE SEAT

INDIANAPOLIS – Should members of Congress be term limited? Most recently introduced as a constitutional amendment by Sen. Ted Cruz, along with Indiana Sens.



Todd Young and Mike Braun, term limits of course require office holders to step aside after a set number of years regardless of how much they doth protest.

Proponents of such an amendment say the true barometer of one's effectiveness should be how many problems they solve, not how many terms in office they win. Critics suggest there are already term limits

called elections and that limiting service in this way would further empower those without vote casting power (i.e. staff, lobbyists, etc.) and deprive Congress of representatives who become effective issue experts.

But term limits are an already accepted practice in many states. Twenty-one states in fact have enacted some form of term limits for legislators between 1990 and 2000, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Fifteen remain in effect while the other six have been repealed either by State Supreme Court rulings or the legislatures themselves.

So while it's a popular idea in some quarters, at least in terms of proposed legislation in Washington, implemented legislation in the states and rhetorical flourish across the country, is it the best answer to Washington's gridlock? When questions like this arise, I find it instructive to look even further to the states where specific elixirs

announcing a candidacy one year and 30 days prior to their current term ending, whereas Georgia's triggers only when someone actually wins a primary, general or special election and there is an overlap of more than 30 days with their current office. Florida and Hawaii, however, both have blanket prohibitions against running for offices that have overlapping terms, but neither applies to federal offices (in the case of Hawaii, that interpretation came through a State Supreme Court ruling, and in Florida from a U.S. District Court).

Then there's the effort to prevent Pavlovian political shenanigans, or at the very least, compel officials to break the deadlock to fulfill their duties and adjourn before loading up campaign coffers. In more than a handful of states, from red Alabama to blue Vermont and places in between, there are limitations on what types of contributions members of the state legislature can receive while in session. Some ban any and all contributions while others specifically prohibit donations from lobbyists.

Would Congress spend more time debating and passing laws rather than shaking hands on the rubber chicken circuit with a similar law in place? None of these, if enacted by Congress, would erase partisan political pressures from the board completely. And each face obstacles to even get to that point. So while there is certainly merit to each of these approaches, it's unlikely they will find a way to Washington. ❖

Pete Seat is a former White House spokesman for President George W. Bush and campaign spokesman for former Director of National Intelligence and U.S. Sen. Dan Coats. Currently he 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."



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Rep. Summers returns after brutal COVID-19

Howey Politics Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — State Rep. Vanessa Summers (D-Indianapolis) yesterday returned for the 2021 Legislative Session after being diagnosed with COVID-19 in December 2020. Summers issued the following statement:



“On what should’ve been the first day of my 29th legislative session, I woke up in the hospital, struggling to breathe due to COVID-19. I was hospitalized for 18 days, with 11 of those days spent in the ICU,

being treated for hypoxia. I was literally unable to breathe and get enough oxygen to my body to function. I was put on 90% oxygen. To put this in perspective, I couldn’t be released from the hospital until I was down to 4%. COVID-19 is real. It has killed almost 10,000 Hoosiers. If you don’t want to go through what I went through, take this virus seriously. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Practice social distancing. Exercise. Work on your health daily, don’t just wait until you get sick. I still have a long road ahead of me – I’ll be bringing my oxygen to session and committee meetings. I’m hitting the ground running, trying to get hearings for my bills before the committee report deadline in two weeks.”

Bill would lift nursing home restrictions

Indiana lawmakers are seeking to change visitation restrictions at the state’s health and residential care sites amid concerns about residents’ declining interactions with loved ones during the coronavirus pandemic ([AP](#)). A measure that advanced to the full House Wednesday after a unanimous committee vote would require health facilities to allow at least one caretaker to visit a resident during compassionate care situations. Those include if the resident is dying, grieving a recent death, experiencing emotional distress or needing encouragement to eat or drink. Under the bill, long-term care facilities would also be required to participate in the state health department’s Essential Family Caregivers Program during a declared emergency, a public health emergency, or similar crisis. That program further designates at least two caregivers who can enter facilities and provide residents with support like meal set up, grooming and general companionship, even during periods of restricted visitation. While some facilities in Indiana currently participate in the program, not all do. “I thought I was having a bad dream ... 10 months later, I’m still having that bad dream,” said Republican Sen. Linda Rogers, who authored the bill. “This is a first step in providing a way that we can visit our loved ones that have been locked away in these facilities.”

MIA official bill advances

State lawmakers are working to ensure Indiana counties have an option for removing a perpetually absent officeholder, similar to former Lake County Recorder Michael B. Brown (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). Brown simply stopped showing up for work in 2017 after he was sued by a former subordinate for sexual harassment. He eventually was spurred to return in late 2019 after the Lake County Council threatened to withhold Brown’s pay for the final year of his term in 2020. Through it all, however, the Democratic-controlled council expressed frustration there were no practical options for removing the Democratic recorder, or any county official, who just refuses to do their job. Enter state Rep. Mike Aylesworth, R-Hebron. Aylesworth won committee approval Wednesday for House Bill 1030 creating a multi-step process for vacating an elected county position when the officeholder fails to come to work, without explanation, for an entire month. Under the plan, which now goes to the full House, removal would be initiated by the county commissioners following an investigation and public hearing on the officeholder’s absenteeism. If two of the three commissioners agree the officeholder should be removed, the county council then would conduct its own investigation and a super majority of council members would be required to remove the official, who still could appeal the removal to the courts. The measure states the process only may be used to remove a perpetually absent officeholder — not for any other reason. It would apply to all non-judicial elected county offices except for commissioner, council member and coroner. A vacancy created using the process would be filled by a vote of precinct committeemen of the same political party as the removed officeholder.

Holdman helps hospitality industry

State Sen. Travis Holdman (R-Markle) today announced the Senate Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy will not be hearing any bills to increase local food and beverage taxes this session. Holdman, chair of the Senate Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy, said that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in response to concerns expressed by Indiana’s restaurant industry, the Republican members of that committee have agreed now is not an appropriate time to consider these tax increases as the economy continues to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. “According to an industry survey, about one in five Indiana restaurants has permanently closed since the start of the pandemic, making it more critical now than ever to support Indiana’s restaurants,” Holdman said. “I know that there are some localities that may not like this decision, but we firmly believe that a tax increase on our restaurants is simply not appropriate at this time.”

Indianapolis renaming bill passes Senate

A bill that would ban the renaming of some Hoosier cities has been passed by the Indiana Senate (Herrick,

[WIBC](#)). Republican State Sen. Jack Sandlin sponsored the bill. In regards to Indianapolis, Sandlin says he did this in order to prevent any movement toward renaming Indianapolis because it includes the word Indian. Over the last couple of years, protests by Native Americans have led to the renaming of professional sports teams. The bill would stop 140 cities from being renamed, including Indianapolis, Evansville, Vincennes, and Clarksville. The proposed legislation advanced to the House by a vote of 36-11. Democratic Sen. Greg Taylor of Indianapolis opposed the bill, saying he thought it was a waste of the Legislature's time by prohibiting something that "never, ever would have happened."

Bill to halt employer mandated vaccines halted

Indiana lawmakers are pulling the plug on a bill that would prohibit employers from requiring workers from getting immunizations against COVID-19 or any other disease ([AP](#)). The measure, introduced by Republican State Sen. Dennis Kruse, would have allowed employees to decline vaccinations for medical, religious or reasons of personal "conscience." They would also be allowed to sue an employer that required immunizations as a condition of employment. Republican Sen. Phil Boots, who chairs the Senate Committee on Pensions and Labor, said Wednesday there would be no additional hearings or committee votes on the bill.

Jobless fraud bill passes

Legislation to crack down on unemployment benefits fraud passed a House vote yesterday and now heads to the Senate. Even with amendments, some groups say it still has the potential to harm those who make honest mistakes (Hicks, [Indiana Public Media](#)). The bill would disqualify and penalize people who lie or withhold information in their applications for unemployment benefits. Legislators say it's intended to help the Department of Workforce Development efficiently weed out fraudulent claims. "The department has assured us that their review of applications will not change and that they intended to only reduce the amount of fraudulent claims that were truly fraudulent," said State Rep. Ryan Hatfield (D-Evansville). "We were trying to strike a balance ... to protect Hoosiers while also cutting down on fraudulent claims."

Indiana eases school quarantine

Indiana health officials are allowing schools across the state to relax their quarantine rules for students with coronavirus exposure even as they offer no timeline for when teachers could become eligible for COVID-19 vaccination shots ([AP](#)). The state health commissioner also announced Wednesday that the pandemic has been even deadlier than thought with an audit of death reports finding about 1,500 more coronavirus-related fatalities than previously recorded. That will increase Indiana's COVID-19 death toll by 15% to almost 11,600 since March. The new

school recommendations call for no quarantines if students and teachers exposed to infection at school were at least 3 feet apart and wearing masks at all times. Schools may shorten current 14-day quarantines to seven days if the person exposed has a negative nasal swab test at least five days after exposure. Health Commissioner Dr. Kristina Box said the new recommendations starting Monday are in line with current federal guidelines.

Drug Commission virtual meeting Friday


Indiana's Commission to Combat Drug Abuse will meet virtually at 1 p.m. Friday. At the meeting, Executive Director for Drug Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement Douglas Huntsinger and other commission members will discuss continued efforts related to the drug crisis. Chairman Huntsinger will make an announcement. **LIVESTREAM LINK:** <https://www.in.gov/recovery/commission.htm>

State Super Bowl ad features Loggan son

The family of an Indiana athletic director who died of COVID-19 is urging Hoosiers to get vaccinated against the disease when they are eligible in a new commercial that will air during Sunday's Super Bowl. Will Loggan, the son of former North Central High School Athletic Director Paul Loggan, talks about his father's legacy and his family's experience during the 30-second commercial. It will air in six broadcast markets around the state during the game, with a projected audience of 1.7 million Hoosiers. Paul Loggan was diagnosed with COVID-19 after attending a basketball sectional last March. He died on Easter Sunday in 2020. At least four other people who attended the game also died of the disease. "Paul Loggan was a beloved figure in Indiana football, and his loss left a huge void for his family and the entire sports community," Gov. Eric Holcomb said. "We can honor his legacy by using all the tools we have to stop the spread of COVID-19, including wearing masks and getting vaccinated." ❖

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

HB1191 would snatch power from cities

By ANNE LAKER

INDIANAPOLIS – Remember the 2016 law that bans a ban on plastic bags in Indiana? Here we go again. This time it's "you can't ban natural gas, Fort Wayne" (or any other city). "And, you can't have an all-electric vehicle fleet, Indiana University." Or build a new building made from an energy-saving material if it doesn't save you money.



This is HB1191, which passed out of the House this week and is now headed to the Senate. It's another example of a desperate fossil fuel industry panicking about the inevitable transition to cheaper renewable energy and the waning of its own ... utility (pun intended).

HB1191 snatches sovereignty out of local hands and leaves it in the lap of the industry. It's another egregious example of the industry's stranglehold on the lawmakers who receive its generous campaign contributions. And it's another one of those bills that solves a non-existent problem, a preemption bill, in the parlance of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

The bill "provides that the legislative body of a city or town or a county executive does not have the power to prohibit a public utility from furnishing utility service to a utility customer." A handy insurance policy for protecting natural gas and coal interests.

HB1191 extends its heavy hand into the boardrooms of state universities, too. If this bill becomes law, state universities can't install, say, a wind farm unless it will pay for itself in 10 years, nor can it mandate certain materials for its buildings, or prohibit or privilege a motor vehicle be based upon the type of energy that powers it, unless the choice would result in "net monetary savings."

Oh, and by the way, net monetary savings "do not include secondary savings or avoided or mitigated externalities." Smells like sheer knee-jerk panic in response to President Biden's climate agenda, and a denial of the common good achieved by lower carbon footprints.

How do universities feel about the bill? "We are aware of the amendment that was added to HB1191 in committee affecting public universities and have been working with the bill author," said Purdue spokesman Tim Doty in an e-mailed statement. "We understand the aim, which is to make sure that our decisions concerning certain energy related issues are cost effective. Purdue is a good steward of such determinations today and looks forward to working on the bill as it moves through the

process."

The bill's author is Rep. Jim Pressel (R-LaPorte). When asked by a fellow lawmaker if there had been challenges with state university budgeting or building decisions that led to the writing of this bill, Pressel said he had no complaints about university spending decisions, but, "times do change, things happen, this is just a little safeguard maybe." Pressel also admitted that no Indiana town has tried to ban natural gas.

Pressel is a former president of the Indiana Builders Association, like at least two of the other lawmakers issuing bills this session that presume nature inconvenient or renewable energy threatening. Pressel also owns a company that builds residential homes. According to the Citizens Action Coalition, Pressel has taken \$16,750 in contributions from the energy & natural resources industries. His co-author, Rep. Ed Solliday, took a staggering \$113,550, a small price to pay for the gas industry to lock itself in the room and limit home rule, something that used to be so sacred in this state.

Instead, the most sacred value is so-called economic competitiveness. Advocating for HB1191, the Indiana Manufacturers Association argues that limiting and reducing energy options is bad for the economy. Here's what's worse for the economy: Turning our backs on clean energy and electric vehicles and green building technologies. Over in Ohio, even Duke Energy is helping municipalities plan the transition to electric vehicles. If Indiana harnessed its formidable manufacturing power for good, we could be a leader in green manufacturing.

Could.

Until Indiana voters elect lawmakers with independent spirits and forward-thinking imaginations, we'll be stuck in the 19th Century while the building and fossil fuel industries prop up and buy off lawmakers with the legislative version of insider trading.

The overriding hostility toward action on climate or preservation of natural resources that's oozing from the Statehouse this session is stomach-turning. But the vitriol is in proportion to the perceived threat.

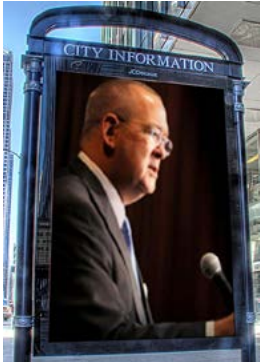
Consumers, corporations, the federal government and the climate itself are marching forward while the majority of Indiana lawmakers cling to a polluted yesteryear, with dictatorial cowardice. ❖

A consultant and grant writer, Laker is principal of Laker Verbal LLC. She is the former director of communications at Indiana Forest Alliance and hosts a movie review show, Flick Fix, on WQRT 99.1 FM.

Indiana's lagging educational attainment

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – A common belief I hear repeated often is that too many young people go to college, and that more should go into the trades where they can avoid the wasteful debt of college and still earn a good living. The problem with this argument is that the few parts that are true are largely benign, and the parts that are demonstrably false guide much of Indiana's education policy.



It is clearly true that a young person can earn a decent living in the trades or other careers that do not require a college degree. There are plenty of anecdotal examples of clever, industrious people enjoying a successful and financially secure life without a college degree.

But, that is far from the typical experience.

From 1992 to the end of 2019, the U.S. was a job creation engine. Among workers older than 25, we saw a cumulative growth of 39.8 million jobs. Of those, 31.7 million jobs went to workers with a bachelor's degree or higher, and a further 11.4 million of those workers had been to college without earning a bachelor's degree. That means the economy lost over a half-million jobs for workers with only a high school diploma, while shedding a full 2.8 million for those without a high school diploma.

Since 1992, a full 108% of new jobs went to those workers who'd been to college. That's right, over the past 28 years, more than all the net new jobs created in America went to workers who had been to college. Of course, that is pre-COVID. As of Summer 2020, so many jobs were destroyed that college graduates alone accounted for 124% of job growth since 1992.

The percentages of jobs by educational attainment tell the same story. In 1992, 27% of jobs were held by college graduates, and today it is 42%, while only 33.3% of adults hold a college degree. The share of workers who'd been to college without receiving a bachelor's degree barely rose from 25.1 to 26.2%. Workers with only a high school diploma crashed from 35.6% of the workforce to just 25%, while those who didn't graduate from high school dropped from 12.2 to 6.7%.

Now, a thoughtful reader might ask whether the disproportionate share of college jobs meant that many graduates were underemployed. That's a good question. If an increasing share of college grads are underemployed, then wages for college grads must be in relative decline as more of them take over jobs formerly held by non-graduates. This would also cause the wage premium between

college graduates and non-graduates to shrink.

As it turns out, average wages have risen substantially more for college grads than for any other category. More to the point, since 1992, the college wage premium actually grew. This is clear evidence that the employment growth among college graduates is not driven by underemployment of college educated workers. It is driven by higher demand for better-educated workers.

These facts debunk the notion that too many people are attending college. In fact, labor markets across America are screaming loudly for more college graduates. Moreover, despite what many businesses say in public, as evidenced by wage growth, there is an excess supply of workers who have not been to college.

This broad, unambiguous, multi-decade trend in American labor markets seems to have had no influence on Indiana policy or budgets. Over the past decade, Indiana has substantially cut per student funding at both the K-12 and college level. In inflation-adjusted dollars, we now spend less per K-12 or college student than we did in 2010. Yet, these figures understate the magnitude of the budget situation. Were Indiana to spend the same share of GDP on education in 2019 as we did in 2010, Indiana's schools would have 15% higher budgets, or \$1.28 billion extra per year. And, if we did the same for our colleges, spending would be 29.4% higher, with another \$583 million per year.

Another way to frame this is that Indiana's longest economic expansion was accompanied by its most systematic and largest reduction in educational funding in state history. The effects of that are now being felt across the economy. From 2018 to 2019, the United States saw its share of college graduates rise a tad bit over 1% to 33.3%. In shocking contrast, Indiana's actually declined by 0.2% to 26.9% of adults with a college degree. Today, Indiana ranks 43rd among the states and territories for college educational attainment, sandwiched between Tennessee and Puerto Rico.

The effects of this disinvestment in human capital weighed heavily on Indiana's economy. During the nation's longest economic expansion, from 2010 to the end of 2019, our state grew employment at a rate 30% lower than the nation as a whole. Over the same time, our relative per capita income saw its biggest decline in history. To top it off, Indiana's Gross Domestic Product grew at just over half the rate of the United States, and slower than every Midwestern state. So, despite what you are likely to hear from politicians touting our state's economy, even the Illinois economy outperformed Indiana's over the past decade.

Some readers might suppose a college professor's focus on education is an elitist position. It is not. It is true that places with better-educated workers are more prosperous, but the best place for a high school graduate to work is a place surrounded by lots of better-educated workers. After all, the best way to boost wages for less-educated workers is for them to be a smaller share of the

labor force.

Finally, it may well be that Hoosiers prefer lower taxes to higher educational spending. That is the type of choice that must be made by voters, not economists. But, it is important that everyone understand that choice has caused, and will continue to cause, Indiana's economy to perform poorly.

In order for the Hoosier economy to create more jobs and prosperity, it will take a substantial and sustained focus on educational attainment. That focus will have to be guided by research and will require substantially more funding.

If voters are content with an economy in which Indiana continues to become relatively poorer, with fewer and less-productive workers, there's no need to change our educational policies or budgets. The status quo virtually guarantees that outcome. ❖

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.

Is the whipped cream thicker than the cake?

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – For a decade now, ever since the Great Recession, we've heard how Indiana is a great place to do business. It's a story that workers hear and that legislators hear. And it might be true, if you are a business. But is it true, if you are a worker? Well, let me tell you why it is and is not true.

Between 2010, when the economy was just coming out of the Great Recession, and 2019, when the economy was about to experience the Great Pandemic of 2020, earnings per job in Indiana grew faster than in the United States as a whole.



That's right, if you take the earnings of those on wages and salaries, plus net income of proprietors (farm and non-farm) and then divide that number by the number of jobs, the result is average earnings per job. For the U.S., those earnings per job grew by a 23.0% while Hoosiers racked up a gain of 23.7%.

(My phone ringing? A happy call from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce or the governor's office?)

Spoilsports might note, when you bring that down to an annual rate, adjusted for inflation, it's a real increase of only 0.62% and 0.69% per year respectively for the nation and Indiana.

(The phone stopped ringing.)

Back in 2010, Indiana had just three counties with earnings per job ahead of the national average of \$52,187. They were Martin, Marion and Posey counties. By the end of the decade in 2019, the nation's average climbed to \$64,180; the same three were up above that level along

with newcomer, Bartholomew County.

Now if I were talking with our state solons, I might casually mention this simple fact means 88 of our 92 counties don't measure up to the nation's average earning per job.

If that statement got some attention from even a handful of those 150 persons committed to our welfare, I'd point out our state average earnings per job in 2010 was \$5,801 (11.1%) below that national average. By 2019, that deficit was \$6,805.

(Is that a tweet from the Indiana Economic Development Corp. (IEDC) saying we're now only 10.5% short of the nation's average, over half a percentage point of improvement since 2010?)

I wouldn't tell those proud legislators the real reason our numbers look good is we had slower job growth than the nation between 2010 and 2019, 13.7% vs 17.9% nationally. As the denominator in the earnings per job figure, that pushes up the Indiana result, which was already trailing the nation in earnings growth (U.S. 45%, Indiana 40.6%).

With long-term lower earnings and slower job growth than the U.S., Indiana doesn't seem so good for workers. ❖

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

Analyzing 2020's crossover districts

By **J. MILES COLEMAN**
Sabato's Crystal Ball

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — In a year where a historic presidential race dominated headlines, one of the biggest surprises of the 2020 election cycle was the House. Democrats, who controlled the chamber, were widely expected to gain seats. Instead, Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D, CA-12) lost several members of her caucus and came perilously close to losing her majority altogether.

Across the board, Republicans ran better than expected in key districts, even flipping some that now-President Biden carried. By the same token, Democrats owe their narrow majority to a handful of members who held on in seats that Donald Trump carried. So these "crossover districts" – seats that voted for one party's presidential nominee but elected a House member of the other party – played a key role in determining the majority.

Though the official presidential breakdowns for some states are still being crunched, it appears that, all told, the 2020 election featured 16 crossover districts.

In some ways, Table 1's roster speaks to how House Republicans overperformed expectations. Six of the nine Republican members who sit in Biden districts were not in office at the beginning of 2020. By contrast, the seven Trump-district Democrats all had at least one full term under their belts – or in the cases of Reps. Cheri Bustos (D, IL-17), Matt Cartwright (D, PA-8), and Ron Kind (D, WI-3), are veteran members of the caucus. On average, the Republicans ran further ahead of Trump in their districts (11.0%) than the Democrats did in theirs over Biden (6.9%).

Several Republicans won rematches

Geographically, California stands out on Table 1, as it has four districts that voted for Biden but sent Republicans to Congress. This quartet has certainly exhibited some electoral whiplash over the past several cycles: They were all in Republican hands prior to the 2018 midterms, flipped blue that year, but reverted back to the GOP. Last April, the Crystal Ball looked at how Democrats were probably overexposed in the Golden State after the anti-Trump 2018 cycle – they secured a 46-7 advantage in the state's 53-member delegation, which was cut to a still-lofty 42-11 in 2020.

After the midterms, Washington Post opinion writer Henry Olsen noted that, for House Republicans who had just lost power, studying 2018's gubernatorial results may offer a path back to the majority.

Specifically, Democrats flipped several House districts that voted simultaneously for Republican gubernatorial candidates that year. In California, both CA-39 and CA-48, which include parts of the historically GOP but racially diverse Orange County, fell into that category – they both voted against now-Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA). In the former, now-Rep. Young Kim (R, CA-39) ran more than 20 percentage points ahead of Trump in many precincts, while now-Rep. Michelle Steel (R, CA-48) also overperformed him slightly but consistently throughout her district. Kim won a rematch against then-Rep. Gil Cisneros, while Steel defeated then-Rep. Harley Rouda. Rouda, a Democrat who seems intent on running again, is a strong candidate in his own right, but his clear 7% margin of victory in 2018 may have been inflated by his controversial opponent that year.

Going farther north in California, Republicans had other bright spots in the state. In May 2020, Republican Mike Garcia won a special election to replace former Democratic Rep. Katie Hill in CA-25, a district that sits atop the Los Angeles metro area. Garcia, a Hispanic Republican with a background as a Navy pilot, seemed like an ideal fit for an area which is home to several defense facilities. Garcia beat former state Rep. Christy Smith by a surprisingly strong 55%-45% in May and held on by just 333 votes in the November rematch, even as Biden carried the district by just over 10%.

The final Biden-district Republican in California is Rep. David Valadao (R, CA-21), who reclaimed a heavily Hispanic seat in the state's Central Valley. Valadao first won his district in 2012, then held it until being upset by Democratic businessman T.J. Cox in 2018. Once in office, Cox struggled to make a positive impression on voters, as his image was weighed down by multiple ethics complaints. In a rematch where the challenger seemed more like an incumbent, Valadao reversed 2018's result. CA-21



District	Member	Party	Year first elected	D - R Margin		
				House	President	Gap
CA-21	Valadao, David	R	2012*	-0.9%	10.9%	11.8%
CA-25	Garcia, Mike	R	2020**	-0.01%	10.1%	10.1%
CA-39	Kim, Young	R	2020	-1.2%	10.1%	11.3%
CA-48	Steel, Michelle	R	2020	-2.1%	1.5%	3.6%
FL-27	Salazar, Maria E.	R	2020	-2.7%	3.2%	6.0%
IA-3	Axne, Cindy	D	2018	1.4%	-0.1%	1.5%
IL-17	Bustos, Cheri	D	2012	4.1%	-1.6%	5.6%
ME-2	Golden, Jared	D	2018	6.1%	-7.4%	13.5%
MI-8	Slotkin, Elissa	D	2018	3.6%	-0.8%	4.4%
NE-2	Bacon, Don	R	2016	-4.6%	6.5%	11.1%
NJ-3	Kim, Andy	D	2018	7.8%	-0.2%	7.9%
NY-24	Katko, John	R	2014	-10.2%	9.1%	19.2%
PA-1	Fitzpatrick, Brian	R	2016	-13.1%	5.8%	19.0%
PA-8	Cartwright, Matt	D	2012	3.6%	-4.4%	8.0%
TX-24	Van Duyne, Beth	R	2020	-1.3%	5.4%	6.8%
WI-3	Kind, Ron	D	1996	2.7%	-4.7%	7.3%

Sources: Our Campaigns, Daily Kos Elections, @BenJ_Rosenblatt

is a notoriously low-turnout area – in recent cycles, it’s typically cast the fewest raw votes of any California district – which can make for some electoral volatility, though this dynamic may have benefitted Valadao, as he was more of a local household name.

Florida and Texas have one first-term Biden-district Republican apiece. In the Miami area, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R, FL-27), the first Latina ever elected to Congress and a beloved figure in south Florida, retired in 2018, after nearly 30 years in office. In a district that Hillary Clinton won 58%-38% two years earlier, former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala (D, FL-27) won the seat by a seemingly underwhelming 52%-46% against journalist Maria Elvira Salazar. Despite the presidential topline, the area has a large Cuban-American population – a bloc that retains Republican proclivities down the ballot. While Trump made especially large inroads with Cubans in 2020, he improved throughout the entire area. Biden narrowly carried FL-27 but Shalala proved to be a weak candidate – as the area’s representative, she wasn’t even fluent in Spanish. In what’s becoming a common thread with Biden-district Republicans, Salazar won in a rematch.

Rep. Beth Van Duyne (R, TX-24) was the only non-incumbent Republican to hold an open seat that Biden carried. TX-24, which straddles Dallas and Fort Worth, was the sole Trump-to-Biden district in the state. Van Duyne’s win fit into a larger picture of Democratic down-ballot underperformance in Texas – though they eyed control of the state House, Democrats gained almost no ground in the legislature.

In Omaha, the Crystal Ball touched on Rep. Don Bacon’s (R, NE-2) overperformance shortly after the November election. Essentially, like Garcia, he seemed to fit his district especially well – and he also won in what was a rematch. In a race where Democrats had trouble uniting, Bacon snagged some visible cross-party endorsements.

In 2018, the blue wave crashed so hard in the House that only three Republicans remained in districts that Hillary Clinton carried. Rep. Will Hurd (R, TX-23) retired in 2020 – and his district, with its contrarian tendencies, flipped to Trump – but Reps. John Katko (R, NY-24) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R, PA-1) are still in office. Katko represents an Upstate New York seat centered on Syracuse and ran 19.2% ahead of his presidential nominee -- the greatest gap of any member on Table 1. Fitzpatrick, who comes from a political family and frames himself as a pragmatist, has a district anchored in the swingy Bucks County, northeast of Philadelphia. He ran a similar 19% ahead of Trump.

Pennsylvania was the only state to have members from opposite parties on Table 1. Aside from Fitzpatrick, Rep. Matt Cartwright (D, PA-8) was reelected. With a political base in Scranton, he represents President Biden’s native district and won by 4%. Though he ran 8% better than Biden, Cartwright’s low single-digit margin seemed a bit underwhelming -- several weeks before the election,

the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee pulled ads from his district, which seemed to signal their confidence in his race. Still, northeastern Pennsylvania skews whiter, is home to relatively few college graduates, and has been described to us by a state source as a “...genuinely populist” area. In other words, the Trumpian demographics of the area mean that even popular Democrats, such as Gov. Tom Wolf, have lost ground there recently.

Democrats retained three other districts that could be characterized as demographically similar to PA-8. Rep. Cheri Bustos (D, IL-17) chaired the DCCC for the 2020 cycle – on paper, her profile as a heartland Democrat from a Trump district made her an ideal member to recruit and train candidates, but she faced criticism throughout her tenure. Instead of adding to their majority, House Democrats ultimately lost about a dozen seats with Bustos at the helm, and she herself only pulled out a narrow 52%-48% win at home (she cleared 60% in her previous two races). In fact, Bustos did better as a challenger, when she originally won in 2012, than as a seasoned incumbent in 2020. To be fair, some of that was probably due to western Illinois’ overall reddening.

In an adjacent district to the north, Rep. Ron Kind (D, WI-3) is the longest-serving member on Table 1 but had the closest result of his career. It was surprising that Trump carried Kind’s western Wisconsin seat in 2016, but WI-3 got slightly redder last year. Republicans invested in this race but their candidate, retired Navy SEAL Derrick Van Orden, faced some bizarre headlines during the final stretch of the campaign. Kind ran ahead of Biden throughout the district, but there was still a lot more red than usual on his map.

The last predominantly working-class district that Democrats held was in northern Maine. First-term Rep. Jared Golden (D, ME-2) was reelected while his district gave Trump its electoral vote. A Marine Corps veteran who tried to cut out an independent profile during his term, Golden originally won in 2018 because of the state’s then-novel ranked-choice voting system. Golden appeared to be in a much stronger position for his second time around: He routinely led by double-digits in polls, and by the end of the cycle, it seemed the district had fallen off the board. He won by 6%, but there was some impressive ticket-splitting throughout his geographically vast district. T

The final three Trump-district Democrats are all second-term members in seats that are, to some degree or another, suburban. House Democrats hold 10 of New Jersey’s dozen House seats, but their only Trump-seat member is Rep. Andy Kim (D, NJ-3).

In Michigan, Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D, MI-8) ran as a “Midwestern Democrat” and urged other members of her party to run active campaigns, despite then-candidate Biden’s rosy poll numbers.

Rep. Cindy Axne (D, IA-3) was the sole Trump-district Democrat to face, and prevail in, a rematch from 2018. Her district is nestled in Iowa’s southwestern corner and is the most urban of the state’s four districts. ❖

Michael Gerson, Washington Post: It is revealing how a political movement that claims to be dedicated to the recovery of national greatness has so readily and completely abandoned many defining national ideals. Donald Trump's promise of American strength has involved the betrayal of American identity. One of the most important strands of our founding ideology is civic republicanism. In this tradition, the common good is not automatically produced by a clash of competing interests. A just society must be consciously constructed by citizens possessing certain virtues. A democracy in particular depends on people who take responsibility for their communities, show an active concern for the welfare of their neighbors, demand integrity from public officials, defend the rule of law, and respect the rights and dignity of others. Without these moral commitments, a majority is merely a mob.

What type of citizen has Trump — and his supportive partisan media — produced? Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) still holds her job in Congress because she is representative of ascendant MAGA radicalism. Those who reflect her overt racism, her unhinged conspiracy thinking and her endorsement of violence against public figures are now treated as a serious political constituency within the Republican Party. Trump has come down firmly on Greene's side. One participant in the Jan. 6 attack sent a video to her children saying: "We broke into the Capitol. . . . We got inside, we did our part. We were looking for Nancy [Pelosi] to shoot her in the friggin' brain, but we didn't find her." The detail that gets to me? She sent this to her children. She was living in a mental world where vile, shameful things are a parent's boast. And she saw her actions as the expression of a public duty — an example of doing her part. Call this civic barbarism. Instead of promoting the values of responsible citizenship, Trump and his media enablers are elevating and blessing the very worst among us. They are making many Americans less suited for self-government and more dangerous to their neighbors. And they are doing so for the reason some of the Founders most feared: To lead the mob against true democracy. ❖

John Krull, Statehouse File: Maybe there is some hope that the days of insanity and self-destructiveness are coming to an end. Just a little more than a week after President Joe Biden took the oath of office, a group of 10 Republican senators — Indiana's Todd Young among them — responded with a counter proposal to the new president's hints that he would push through a pandemic-relief measure without GOP support if need be. There was a great deal separating the two packages. Biden's plan calls for \$1.9 trillion in spending. The Republican alternative calls for \$600 billion. Biden's would offer cash payments of \$1,400 to individuals making less than \$75,000 per year. The GOP aims at lower targets—reportedly, a maximum of \$1,000 to people making less than \$50,000 annually. Critics see ominous portents in the distance dividing the

two plans — proof that Republicans are trying to either set a trap for Biden or hamstringing the relief plan in some other way. That's silly. In the first place, Republicans fear primary challenges from the Donald Trump wing of their party far more than they do general election threats from Democrats. This is particularly true for red-state Republicans such as Young, who faces reelection next year. It's hard to see how there's a political benefit for them in even reaching out to Democrats in the highly charged partisan atmosphere of today. Second, only an idiot opens a high-stakes negotiation with her or his best offer.

These Republicans — again, Young among them — aren't idiots. Biden should find a way to give it to them, for two reasons. The first of those reasons is political. Biden has asked America to define whether his presidency is successful or not by the standard of whether he reduces the rancor roaming the land and achieves a greater sense of unity. This Republican proposal is a response to that plea. It is an implicit acknowledgement that the GOP lost the election, and that Republicans must work with Democrats if they want to get anything done. It's also an attempt by these 10 senators to wrest control of their party from the crazies who have dominated it in recent years. If they can broker a deal on something this big, they can establish themselves as the senators who can get things done. ❖



Thomas Edsall, New York Times: It's impossible to understand the Jan. 6 assault on the Capitol without addressing the movement that has come to be known as Christian nationalism. Andrew L. Whitehead and Samuel L. Perry, professors of sociology at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and the University of Oklahoma, describe Christian Nationalism in their book "Taking America Back for God": It includes assumptions of nativism, white supremacy, patriarchy and heteronormativity, along with divine sanction for authoritarian control and militarism. It is as ethnic and political as it is religious. Understood in this light, Christian nationalism contends that America has been and should always be distinctively 'Christian' from top to bottom — in its self-identity, interpretations of its own history, sacred symbols, cherished values and public policies — and it aims to keep it this way. In her recent book, "The Power Worshippers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism," Katherine Stewart, a frequent contributor to these pages, does not mince words: It is a political movement, and its ultimate goal is power. It does not seek to add another voice to America's pluralistic democracy, but to replace our foundational democratic principles and institutions with a state grounded on a particular version of Christianity, answering to what some adherents call a 'biblical worldview' that also happens to serve the interests of its plutocratic funders and allied political leaders. This, Stewart writes, "is not a 'culture war.' It is a political war over the future of democracy." ❖

Buttigieg promises ‘bold leadership’

WASHINGTON — Pete Buttigieg, sworn in Wednesday as transportation secretary, urged his 55,000 employees to embrace “imaginative, bold, forward thinking” as the Transportation Department embarks on a vital mission to rebuild America’s infrastructure and foster equality (AP). “We will continue to prioritize safety as the foundation of everything we do,” Buttigieg said in his email message, which was obtained by The Associated Press. “And at the same time, we will break new ground: in ensuring that our economy recovers and rebuilds, in rising to the climate challenge, and in making sure transportation is an engine for equity in this country.” He added that the department’s mission “has never been more important than in this season of change and possibility.” In a broader video message he tweeted to the American public, Buttigieg stressed both the challenges and opportunities ahead in improving America’s transportation system. “Today we face an unprecedented health crisis, we’re navigating an economy in danger and our nation is reckoning with the impacts of systemic racism,” he said in the one-minute campaign-style video. “But with new leadership comes a new opportunity, a chance to build our transportation system back better than it ever was before. There is so much work to do, but I am deeply optimistic about where this journey will lead.”



Fauci advises v. Super Bowl parties

WASHINGTON — The nation’s top infectious disease expert doesn’t want the Super Bowl to turn into a super spreader (AP). Dr. Anthony Fauci, says when it comes to Super Bowl parties during the pandemic, people should “just lay low and

cool it.” He said during TV interviews Wednesday that now isn’t the time to invite people over for watch parties because of the possibility that they’re infected with the coronavirus and could sicken others. Big events like Sunday’s game in Tampa, Florida, between the Kansas City Chiefs and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers are always a cause for concern over the potential for virus spread, Fauci said. “You don’t want parties with people that you haven’t had much contact with,” he told NBC’s “Today” show. “You just don’t know if they’re infected, so, as difficult as that is, at least this time around, just lay low and cool it.”

Pence opens office in Virginia

WASHINGTON — Former Vice President Mike Pence has opened a transition office in northern Virginia (AP). Pence announced Wednesday that the Office of the Former Vice President will handle correspondence, scheduling requests, public statements and official activities for him and his wife, Karen. The office is located in Arlington, across the Potomac River from Washington. The Pences are also living in northern Virginia. A spokesperson said they have summer plans to move back to Indiana, where Mike Pence was governor and represented the state in the U.S. House.

State adding 1,500 to COVID death toll

INDIANAPOLIS — State health officials announced Wednesday they are adding about 1,500 COVID-19 deaths to the tally after an audit of all death certificates during the pandemic (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). State Health Commissioner Dr. Kristina Box said 1,205 deaths were added to 2020 and 302 to 2021. That brings the state’s total death toll to 11,220. “These are heartbreaking numbers that show us just how many, how devastating this disease can be for

families,” Box said. She said the audit was needed because deaths are being reported in real time, which is not typical. And the state has transitioned to a new vital records registry system. On Wednesday, the state also added 1,480 new cases and continues to see improvement in trends.

Lilly joins state for antibody access

INDIANAPOLIS — Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly is partnering with health care systems around the state to increase access and affordability around its COVID-19 antibody treatment (Indiana Public Media). The company is working with the state of Indiana and health systems and has established three new infusion centers for its COVID-19 antibody therapy to treat those at high risk.

Henry reacts to tax moratorium

FORT WAYNE — An effort to raise Fort Wayne’s Food and Beverage tax appeared to be put on hold Wednesday (WANE-TV). State Sen. Travis Holdman announced the state’s Senate Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy would not hear any bills about food and beverage taxes in the session. According to a press release, Holdman, chair of the Senate Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy, said that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in response to concerns expressed by Indiana’s restaurant industry, the Republican members of that committee have agreed now is not an appropriate time to consider these tax increases. “Mayor Henry has a tremendous amount of respect for Sen. Holdman and certainly understands his position on a food and beverage tax for Fort Wayne,” City Spokesman John Perlich said in a statement Wednesday. “We do know Fort Wayne is in need of additional capital to help support future economic development projects that will benefit the City of Fort Wayne and the State of Indiana.”