



Is Sen. Harrison planning for his 'last hurrah' in 2006?

Dick Thompson continues primary showdown trend

By BRIAN A. HOWEY in Indianapolis

Will Election Night in November 2006 find State Sen. Joe Harrison basking in the limelight of yet another victory, officially commencing the fourth decade of what must be considered a legendary career in the Indiana General Assembly?

Or will he find himself in the Spencer Tracy role from the classic political movie, "The Last Hurrah," an old-time candidate who didn't know when to hang it up? Or, even worse, cast in the role of his former colleague, Larry Borst, who faced an upstart county councilman and was reduced to an exhausting, pathetic recount that tarnished his career with a stunning primary loss?

Or, is there one scenario that only Sen. Harrison knows ... which is to retire?

"I had a conversation with Sen. Harrison," said Hendricks County Councilman Dick Thompson, who this past week sent a letter to SD23 Republican precinct officials announcing that he is planning to run. "He was the first person I really wanted to talk to. He has not told me what he will do." Harrison did not return a phone message left by HPR, but earlier this summer, Harrison's Senate assistant Jan Schirrell told HPR that the senator had not decided on his 2006 political plans.

For Dick Thompson, who served in the Indiana Senate from 1984 to 1996, it was a matter of time. "I felt if I was going to run, I had to go ahead and start the wheels moving right now," Thompson told HPR. "I couldn't wait until December or January."

Thompson acknowledged that if Harrison runs, "he will be a formidable candidate." He also said that whether he runs or not, Harrison will likely have a primary opponent. That could include State Rep. Tim Brown and "a judge from Zionsville."

Does Thompson view Harrison as vulnerable? "I would rather not say," Thompson responded.

Thompson's emergence continues a trend HPR has been monitoring all summer: that of local elected officials who are challenging established legislators in the



Sen. Harrison



"It's like from the Michigan line to Bloomington is wiped out."

— U.S. Rep. Mark Souder, after touring New Orleans and the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina

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Former Sen. Dick Thompson (seated, far left) listens to then-candidate Mitch Daniels speak at a farm rally near Coatesville in July 2004. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)

May 2006 primary. State Sen. Allen Paul, and State Reps. Tim Neese, Rich McClain and Mary Kay Budak all are facing credible challenges from city and county councilmen and school board members. And it's early. Many primary races shape up late in the year or just before the February filing deadline.

There is speculation that the primary challenge pace could pick up once cities, counties and school corporations finish their 2006 budgets that have been grueling due to rapidly escalating fuel and health care costs, a cap on the property tax replacement credits, new state mandates on child protection, and old juvenile detention bills. Many local officials perceive a "pass the buck" mentality, particularly after the last biennial budget was hammered out last April. House Republicans lauded it for not raising taxes, but many local officials bristle that the tax burden was passed on to them.

Thompson left the Indiana Senate in 1996 to run for Congress in what turned out to be a 15-man field. He lost to Ed Pease, then re-entered politics by winning a Hendricks County Council seat in 2004. In the 2002 redistricting, he was drawn out of his old Senate district, now held by Sen. Connie Lawson, and placed in Harrison's SD23. "I found I still had strong support," Thompson said of his re-emergence. "My background is valuable to the county and I hope it will be to

the state as well. I'm still interested in the impact of state legislation on local government and schools. I've been involved as teacher and principal. There need to be voices and more voices on what the impact will be."

In particular, he noted the growing nature of Hendricks County. "It is growing rapidly, but we have a delay in the collection of revenue when people move in. A person can move here in January and yet their money goes to another county. They don't pay property taxes for almost two years. So we have all these new people and no revenue for up to two years. It's happening not only in Hendricks County, but statewide," Thompson said.

Harrison was first elected to the Senate in 1966 and is majority floor leader emeritus. He ran unopposed in 2002, collecting 23,811 votes. In 1998, Harrison defeated Democrat Doug Shelby, 21,175 to 11,436.

Because of his age and recent primary upsets of Sen. Borst in 2004 and Steve Johnson in 2002, the emerging trend is to defeat entrenched incumbents in a primary.

If Harrison faces one primary opponent in Thompson, he will likely have a tough race. If there are multiple credible opponents, his odds for re-election would improve. ❖

IAC T preparing to continue Kenley's work on taxes

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - One of the most amazing quotes following the Indiana General Assembly's biennial budget came from House Ways & Means Chairman Jeff Espich.

He was asked if there would be a move toward property tax relief during the 2006 session, to which he replied, "I can't imagine an election year session will lead to any change

in that attitude."

The problem, according to the Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, is that property tax rates are expected to go up between 8 and 12 percent in both 2006 and 2007, or between 16 and 24 percent. And that's on top of increases that have occurred in 2004-05. A cap on the property tax replacement credit and the final shift from the inventory tax by 2007 could create a property tax firestorm. That will be a political problem in 2006.

IAC T is working on an initiative with the finger prints of Sen. Luke Kenley, Bill Sheldrake, Budget Director



Chuck Schalliol and Chris Ruhl from the Daniels administration all over the plan. The Daniels administration acted as a sounding board and provided data sourcing with Greller explaining, "They are actively looking for solutions to the impending increases in property taxes."

IACT has kept House Minority Leader B. Patrick Bauer and ranking Ways & Means Democrat Bill Crawford in the loop, as well as Sens. Lindel Hume and Vi Simpson. All four legislative caucuses have been briefed.

IACT has its annual convention in Fort Wayne next week. Executive Director Matt Greller told HPR that while the plan will not be officially unveiled, it will be discussed, with the goal of making the plan public on Organization Day next November.

"Cities and towns are at the breaking point," Greller said. "We have a number of them using up their cash reserves. Layoffs are taking place, there has been a reduction of park services. I think we've been stretched as far as we can be stretched."

A sample of the headlines from around the state give ample testimony. Fort Wayne pared back a 3.9 percent tax hike to 2.4 percent. Richmond cannot give its municipal workers raises. Indianapolis is preparing to lay off more than 150 police and firefighters. The Muncie City Council appropriated an additional \$1 million to pay for health benefits; Kokomo gave its workers a 3 percent raise, but unions were unhappy because it was passing on more health costs to employees. Munster absorbed a 10-percent increase in health costs.

The *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* reported that in 66 counties, the amount of property taxes requested for state mandated child protection services next year is \$60 million more than allocated this year. This is a jump of 47 percent.

"It's hard for me to imagine there won't be some kind of action," said Indiana Chamber President Kevin Brinegar. "I expect the administration will have some kind of proposal for property tax relief."

IACT established a study committee headed by Republican LaPorte Mayor Leigh Morris, who has been battling with his public employees over skyrocketing health costs, and Democratic Columbus Mayor Fred Armstrong.

Greller said the emphasis has been on three points:

1. Reduce local government reliance on property taxes;
2. Create more efficiencies at the local level, including the merging of services across jurisdictional boundaries;
3. Fund local government through alternative sources,

but not until a reduction in property taxes passes.

"Property tax reform and moving away from the property tax, I'm sure, is going to be addressed," Greller said. "I want to look at every way for get us there. I'm not sure, yet, what the right way is. I would have liked to taken that first step this year, and Luke gave it a good try."

Greller said the IACT committee started with Kenley's plan. "That pushed us toward more of an income tax based system," he said. "We thought that had some good points."

He said IACT created its own models, using 13 cities and towns of various sizes, using thousands of pages of data to create a template. "We could tell you what percentage a sales tax could generate and how it could reduce property taxes," he said.

Carmel Clerk-Treasurer Diana L. Cordray said another example is to index county wheel taxes. "Cities and towns are trying to manage with the wheel tax being capped 25 years ago," she said.

And if there is a shift away from property taxes and more toward sales and income taxes, how could the state weather a recession? "What we're looking at is a mandated rainy day fund or serve fund that each local government can maintain," Greller said. "We've got to have a way of revenue distribution that is better than we have now."

Sen. Kenley is watching. He noted the mayors opposed his property tax relief plan that failed last winter and is heartened that they are now working proactively on a

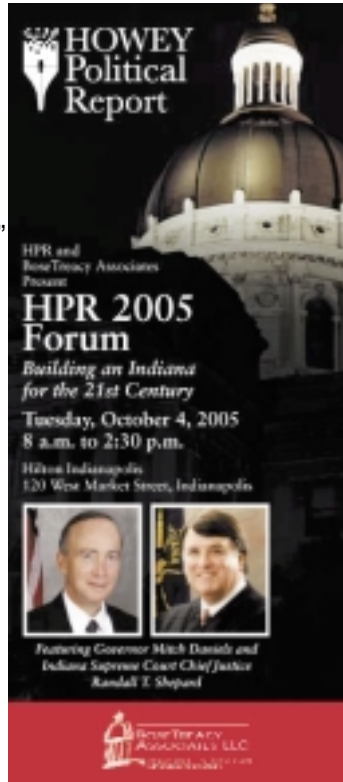
solution.

Kenley didn't include a sales tax in his property tax replacement plan, in part because there is a national movement under way for a streamlined sales tax that will be endorsed by such companies as Amazon, Staples and Wal-Mart if 10 states and 20 percent of the population go along. "They've asked for uniformity from state to state," Kenley explained.

As for passage in a 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly, Greller said, "I don't see any way it can succeed if it isn't a bipartisan."

Kenley, the Noblesville Republican, agreed. "I don't think this gets done unless there is a bipartisan effort. Frankly, the House Republicans may not be interested in an election year."

My read? License branch and time zone controversies aside, the real ticking political time bomb is property taxes. As they say, the locals are getting restless. ❖





Massive county time zone switches unlikely for fed OK

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* columnist Frank Gray captured the essence of Indiana's time zone conventional wisdom, writing, "It appears about 25 counties have decided they want to be on Central time, while 67 will be on Eastern time. The state and its time zones will look like the drop cloth of a sloppy painter, with a big spill in this corner, another big spill in another corner and a dribble in the middle."

No so fast, Frank.

Yes, 19 counties have petitioned the U.S. Department of Transportation to switch from Eastern to Central time. The Indiana-Illinois border looks like a saw, with counties such as Knox, Benton, Fountain and Vermillion opting for Central, while Vigo stayed with Eastern. Fountain County finds itself in the craziest position, with commissioners opting for Central time, but asking that three townships close to Lafayette remain on Eastern time. But analysts tell HPR that only two or three will have a chance for federal approval.

Indiana Chamber of Commerce President Kevin Brinegar and his organization emphatically support most of Indiana remaining on Eastern time. "We had four or five counties contact us after they voted to switch to Central, asking, 'Can you give us the data to support the petition?'"

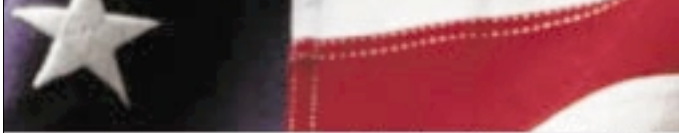
"We didn't know whether to laugh or cry," Brinegar said. "Because there isn't any. None of the counties have even come close to filing the requisite in economic impact and commuting patterns. They are supposed to justify their position."

The threshold for triggering hearings by the DOT to then consider each request (let alone grant it) is very high and based solely upon hard economic data about commerce, commuting patterns, media markets, etc. Political and emotional arguments will carry no weight, sources tell HPR.

A review of the county petitions shows a hodgepodge of arguments and different degrees of rigor and creativity in answering the DOT's preliminary questions. Very few are impressive on the raw data that DOT will look at. In each case, county authorities clearly have put their best arguments forward, with remonstrators waiting for field hearings. In several instances, county commissioners were not unanimous in their support of the requests, demonstrating the diversity of opinion even within a given county.

Several analysts HPR talked with expect that DOT hearings will only be granted to three and six counties. Only two or three, with St. Joseph County being the most significant, will likely be seriously considered.

And don't expect Gov. Mitch Daniels, who pressed for Daylight-saving time, to weigh in for any county's call for a switch.

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Roberts presents new math for Sen. Bayh

By MARK SCHOEFF JR.
The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON -- Political math surrounding the Supreme Court nomination of Judge John Roberts Jr. grew more complicated this week for Sen. Evan Bayh. His decision on the Hoosier jurist has transformed from algebra to multivariate calculus.

As the Senate prepares to vote as early as next week on Roberts, Bayh has not made up his mind, according to an aide. Other prominent Democrats are announcing their positions, and adding complications to the equation. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid and Sens. John Kerry and Edward Kennedy will oppose Roberts. Sen. Patrick Leahy, ranking minority member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, will vote in favor of Roberts, a D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals judge, to replace the late William Rehnquist as chief justice. Sens. Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold joined Leahy in the 13-5 Senate Judiciary Committee vote this morning. "I will vote my hopes today and not my fears," Kohl said (CNM).



Roberts

These decisions don't provide a clear path for Bayh to follow. Reid is the Senate Democratic leader, but he stressed that he didn't expect his colleagues to take their cues from him. Leahy is arguably the leading Democratic voice on court nominations. Reid is from Nevada, a "red" state like Indiana, while Leahy is from Vermont, whose hue is one of the deepest "blue" in the nation. Observers predict that Roberts could draw as many as 20 Democratic votes.

The other factors that could bedevil Bayh remain in place. Liberal interest groups that will influence the Democratic presidential primary process are opposing Roberts. But their voice has been somewhat muted on Roberts. They never launched sustained, vociferous television ad campaigns and they haven't been applying overt pressure on potential candidates such as Bayh.

Indiana's junior senator also must weigh Roberts' Hoosier roots in casting his vote. Roberts grew up in north-west Indiana near Lake Michigan and considers the state a significant part of his heritage.

But as he ponders Roberts, Bayh also knows that another Supreme Court nomination is coming, perhaps as early as next week, to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day

O'Connor. Liberal groups may be holding their fire for this battle because it is means much more to causes such as minority and women's rights. O'Connor was often a swing vote in 5-4 decisions in those areas.

On top of all of this, Bayh has been lobbied by President Bush, receiving a call earlier this week from White House counsel Harriet Miers. It's not clear whether she was contacting Bayh about Roberts or a potential O'Connor successor.

Bayh is playing the Supreme Court issue close to the vest. "Sen. Bayh is going to continue to review all relevant information until he comes to a decision on whether Judge Roberts meets the burden for a lifetime appointment as chief justice," said Bayh spokesman Dan Pfeiffer.

When Bayh introduced Roberts at the opening of his confirmation hearings on Sept. 12, he tried to walk a fine line between expressing pride in a fellow Hoosier who had reached the pinnacle of the law profession and keeping his political options open.

"If confirmed as chief justice to the Supreme Court, Judge Roberts could serve for thirty or more years," he said in four paragraphs worth of remarks. "[F]or this nominee or for anyone who aspires to this nation's highest court, it is their beliefs, even more than their biography, which should determine the result of the confirmation process."

Bayh's comments at the hearing contrasted starkly with those of Sen. Richard Lugar, who effusively praised Roberts in an 18-paragraph introduction that quoted the Federalist Papers extensively and provided an exegesis on American jurisprudence.

"Growing up in Indiana, one learns early-on that talent and accomplishments count, but honesty and integrity count more. One learns, too, that arrogance is scorned and pomposity will be quickly punctured," said Lugar. "I believe most Americans realized, while listening to his thoughtful, humble remarks on the evening the president first introduced him as a Supreme Court nominee, that those values were at the core of John Roberts, both as a judge and as a man."

Perhaps the biggest risk for Bayh in opposing Roberts stems from a statement he made in his remarks at the Roberts hearings. "There isn't enough civility in Washington or in public life today," he said. "Accordingly, when asked to uphold longstanding, bipartisan Senate traditions by introducing someone from my state, I did not hesitate to accept."

But if he votes against Roberts, who sailed through several days of questioning and scored points with his wit, intellect and demeanor, Bayh could be portrayed as an opportunistic partisan rather than a centrist. ❖



God help poor ol' Indiana

Dear God: I am on my knees praying for my home, the State of Indiana. I know the last time I did this, last Dec. 26 when I used this prayerful forum before Peyton Manning threw his 49th touchdown pass, catastrophic events followed in the Indian Ocean. Now, I pray for Indiana as Hurricane Rita barrels toward Americans natural gas and oil center at Houston. But I do so ... I pray to you today ... because I fear that Indiana may not be able to recover from a crisis of epic proportions ... the closure of auto license branches. God, I know you'll be busy on the Gulf Coast this week, but please, please, take just a bit of time to help Indiana find its way. Amen.

* * *

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS -- Here we are in a time of war that is taking the lives of dozens of Hoosier soldiers; we are in a time of national crisis, with the ravages of Hurricane Katrina eclipsed only by this new monster, Hurricane Rita, which is taking aim at Houston.

But last week, hundreds of protesters from Gary boarded buses and rallied at the Indiana Statehouse in order to save ... a license branch.

Much confusion followed. The Daniels administration appeared to give the Gary branch a reprieve, then issued a statement saying, essentially, not so fast. Then a deal was worked out with Gary with the city picking up part of the tab, and, finally, BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman apologizing to Gary.

Whew.

I'm beginning to think I'm misreading this issue in a political sense. I originally thought that only about 4 percent of the population cared about these tiny license branches. These are places I am loath to go to, but in many Indiana towns, they have become status symbols. The same people who don't think twice about getting in the car twice a month to drive 25 miles to a Wal-Mart, are now rallying at the Indiana Statehouse to save the jobs of BMV bureaucrats.

Over this summer, the big city newspapers have picked up the story ... over and over and over and over again. Yes, they note that Indiana has more license branches than any state but Texas and California. But there is such angst.

The *Richmond Palladium-Item* picked up on this theme to its most absurd degree. It reported on the plight of poor Sharon Widau, who recalled all the fun she had at the annual Halloween Party at the Cambridge City BMV.

"We have a good time down there. Now it's going to be ruined," Widau said.

Shame, Joel Silverman, Shame!

You are ruining Halloween parties! Shame!

We've heard other such stories, such as the folks in Hope, Ind., who claimed they had trouble crossing the street. Senate President Pro Tempore Robert D. Garton stepped in to save the good residents from that inconvenience.

With press like this, the Daniels administration runs the risk of a story that impacts so very few of us becoming a story with a totally exaggerated perception (alas, I am using a page in this edition to write about it).

This past weekend, two of Indiana's biggest newspapers hammered away at Silverman. "Joel Silverman is too good a businessman not to understand the importance of public perception," the *Indianapolis Star* opined. "Yet the Bureau of Motor Vehicles commissioner ... has repeatedly botched the public relations aspect of his job. The fallout from Silverman's mistakes includes not only angry legislators and constituents but also a growing belief that he's unwilling to listen to criticism and uninterested in tweaking his plans for the BMV. Let's be clear: The problem doesn't lie with Silverman's mission. The BMV was in need of an extensive overhaul long before the new commissioner arrived. And retooling the agency must include shutting down the most underused and inefficient license branches."

The *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* editorialized, "If a businesslike approach is what Gov. Mitch Daniels is striving for in Indiana government, he should immediately send a pink slip to Joel Silverman. The commissioner of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles has demonstrated nothing but poor business sense in his nine months on the job. It's time to send him packing. What CEO would allow a manager to repeatedly offend a large group of "customers"? Would shareholders anywhere approve of investments made without a market study? What well-run company would tolerate cronyism in its hiring practices? No single offense has risen to firing status. Collectively, however, Silverman's missteps leave little doubt that he is unqualified to lead the BMV."

The backdrop to all of this is that beyond BMV and time zones ... there is other news!

In Tuesday's *HPR Daily Wire*, we reported 120 new jobs coming to Elkhart, another 120 jobs coming to Fort Wayne, and 200 at Hammond. That's 440 new jobs announced in one day! Beyond the *Daily Wire*, that didn't make headlines or editorials.

The Daniels administration needs to get a grip on this (call Lou! Call Lou!). Or think of Myra Borshoff, who helped a semi-nude, guitar-picking NFL owner land a half billion dollar taxpayer-financed stadium, with the governor helping to raise those taxes and break ground this past week.

Joel Silverman, that Halloween wrecker, isn't nearly that type of perception challenge, right Myra? ❖





Five trips for President Bush don't reverse post-Katrina polls

TRENDLINE: Analyst Charlie Cook observes: A CNN/Gallup/USA Today poll released Monday suggests that despite five trips to the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast, a nationally televised speech on the subject and pledges of hundreds of billions of dollars to help Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama recover from Hurricane Katrina, President Bush's approval ratings have not rebounded. The poll of 818 adults -- conducted last Friday, Saturday and Sunday with a 3.5-point error margin -- showed the president's approval rating at just 40 percent, tied for his lowest Gallup approval, with a disapproval rating of 58 percent, his worst so far. Two Gallup polls taken Sept. 8-11 and Sept. 12-15 showed approval ratings for Bush at 46 percent and 45 percent, respectively. Bush might recover from these events, but judging from this poll, it hasn't happened yet.



Indiana 2006 Congressional

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. Democrat: Ed Cohen, Joe Donnelly.
Geography: South Bend, Michigan City, Mishawaka, Elkhart, Kokomo, Plymouth, Logansport; LaPorte, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, Carroll and parts of Howard, Porter, Elkhart and White counties. **Media Market:** South Bend-Elkhart, Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago. **People:** Urban/rural 73/27%; median income \$40,381; Poverty 9.5%; Race 84% white, 8% black; 5 Hispanic; Blue/white collar: 34/50%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 53%, Gore 44%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+5; **2002 Result:** Chocola 95,081 (50%), Long Thompson 86,253 (46%); **2004 Result:** Chocola 140,496 (54%) Donnelly (D) 115,513 (45%) **2006 Forecast:** Chocola joined more than 20 of his House colleagues to call on Congress to reprioritize its spending and find a way to "offset" federal spending on Hurricane Katrina relief efforts with savings from the federal budget. At that press conference, Chocola offered his plan on how Congress can pay for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts by calling for additional budget savings. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Congress has appropriated an unprecedented \$61.8 billion in disaster and reconstruction aid as part of two emergency supplemental spending bills. If Congress does not act to offset the spending, the cost will be added to our national debt., Chocola said. While each of the Members laid out their plans to offset parts

of the spending, Chocola's plan is the only comprehensive plan that would offset the entire cost to date of Hurricane Katrina spending. Under the budget agreement passed earlier this year, congressional committees were required to find a minimum of \$35 billion in savings within mandatory spending programs over the next five years and make those recommendations to Congress by Sept. 16. That date has been pushed back due to Katrina. Chocola's plan sets a goal of achieving savings in mandatory spending of at least \$100 billion. **Status:** *Leans Chocola*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. Democrat: Vanderburgh County Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. **Geography:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Greencastle; Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, Gibson, Pike, Martin, Daviess, Knox, Sullivan, Greene, Owen, Clay, Vigo, Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Warren and part of Fountain counties. **Media Market:** Evansville, Terre Haute, Indianapolis. Lafayette. **People:** Urban/rural 58/42%; median income \$36,732; poverty 10.7%; race white 93.7%, black 3.7%, Hispanic .9%; blue/white collar: 32/52%. **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2002 Results:** Hostettler 98,952 (51%), Hartke 88,763 (46%), **2004 Results:** Hostettler 145,576, Jennings (D) 121,522, Garvin (Green) 5,680. **2006 Forecast:** Hostettler was questioned about his Sept. 8 vote against sending \$52 billion in emergency relief funds to Katrina victims. "No congressman or senator is showing compassion by sending tax dollars down to Katrina [victims]." Hostettler said (Ciancone, *Terre Haute Tribune-Star*). He called it "compulsion." Hostettler said he did not support sending the funds without accountability. Relief efforts already are showing signs of fraud and waste, he said. In light of upcoming votes after the new fiscal year begins for more disaster relief, the war in Iraq and for a new prescription drug benefit, "We're talking about a perfect storm for our budget," he said. He said relief for disaster victims goes onto our debt. At current levels, money spent on Katrina wouldn't be paid off for 80 years, he said. Loading such debt onto "our grandchildren," he said, would eventually create resentment from taxpayers. He added that in his statewide travels, he has heard strong support voiced for his vote. Hostettler was asked how he could approve more than \$200 billion for the war in Iraq without asking for the same accountability. He said some of the same congressmen who complained about the war, but voted in favor of giving the president power to send in troops, are now complaining about the funds used to fight it. "If it had been up to me, we would not have been over there in the first place," he said. Hostettler voted against sending troops. But now that they're there, he said, he does vote in favor of sending them what they need to finish the job. Ellsworth addressed Knox County Democrats in Vincennes, saying "The 8th District is in trouble and Washington is in trouble," Ellsworth told about 600 dining Democrats (*Vincennes Sun-*



Commercial). "I will work hard every day and I will listen to everyone, not just a few. I want to earn your support so you know you can trust me in Washington, D.C. He has lost touch with his constituents," Ellsworth said. "People in Washington are listening to each other instead of who they represent. When that happens it's time to get out. You have to represent everybody, and Congressman Hostettler is not doing that." Ellsworth said he understands Hostettler's concerns about the amount of money the country will spend to rebuild the U.S. Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, and like President George W. Bush, Ellsworth is not in favor of raising taxes to pay for it. But, this is an emergency situation, he said, and when local and state resources aren't enough, the federal government must step in to help. "We know it's going to take a lot of money to rebuild," Ellsworth said. "But we have to get people back on their feet. This is an emergency and we have to act and act quick. The congressman is concerned about accountability, and I understand that too, but this is not the time. He should have been concerned about accountability the last 12 years, not when people are dying." **Status: TOSS-UP**

Congressional District 9: Republican: U.S. Rep. Mike Sodrel. Democrat: Baron Hill. **Media Market:** Evansville (11%), Indianapolis (23%), Louisville (55%), Dayton, Cincinnati (10 percent). **People:** urban/rural 52/48%, median income \$39,011; race white 94%, 2.3% black, 1.5% Hispanic; blue/white collar: 34/50%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 56%, Gore 42%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: R+8. **2004 Presidential:** Bush 59%, Kerry 40%. **2002 Results:** Hill 96,654 (51%), Sodrel 87,169 (46%). **2002 Money:** Hill \$1.144m, Sodrel \$1.62m. **2004 Results:** Sodrel 142,197, Hill 140,772, Cox (L) 4,541. **2006 Forecast:** In an op-ed column, Sodrel lauded the energy bill signed by President Bush in August. "In recent days, gasoline prices have reached \$3 per gallon in some Southern Indiana counties, in part due to a disruption in petroleum supplies by Hurricane Katrina and in part to our nation's failure to make tough choices put in place a long-term national energy strategy." Sodrel wrote (HPR). "But the underlying problem is even greater. For too long the country has been at risk of an energy crunch like this one, because we have not had a national energy strategy. No new refineries have been built in the U.S. in twenty-five years and Americans have been prohibited from exploring for domestic sources of energy. It is no surprise that we are now paying the price for these past actions and in-actions, quite literally, at the pump. In August, Congress passed and the President signed an Energy Bill that had been held up in Congress for five years. The bill is a balanced and comprehensive national energy strategy that encourages increased production, exploration, and conservation. The bill was designed not just to

ensure a more affordable and stable energy supply, but also to promote the use of alternative sources of energy that will help reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil." In last week's HPR Interview, Hill characterized the energy bill as loaded with "pork for the oil companies. To give huge tax breaks to oil companies right now when people are paying over \$3 a gallon of gas, people need to know that. One of the big differences this time from last is that he's got a record." Thus, the opening shots in the energy battle have been fired. **Status: Toss-up.**

2006 State Races

State Treasurer: Republican: Carmel Clerk-Treasurer Diana Cordray, Allen County Treasurer Bob Lee, David Certo. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Berry (R) 832,656, Smith (D) 564,247, Goldstein (L) 63,665. **2006 Forecast:** Cordray enters this race, becoming the first sitting city clerk-treasurer to seek statewide office in modern Hoosier history. She is in her third term and has been active on IACT's Municipal Finance Subcommittee working on the property tax issue. She was appointed by Gov. Doc Bowen to the Indiana Real Estate Commission and has worked on the campaigns of Dick Lugar, Dan Quayle and Bill Hudnut. **Republican Convention Status: TOSS-UP**

State Auditor: Republican: Richard Mourdock, Marion County Clerk Doris Ann Sadler, Deputy Auditor Jeff Heinzmann. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Nass (R) 824,358, Huston (D) 587,484, Parisi (L) 49,030. **2006 Forecast:** Mike Miner, 3rd CD chair, has signed on as Mourdock's campaign chairman. **Republican Convention Status: Likely Mourdock**

House District 64: Republican: State Rep. Troy Woodruff. Democrat: Open. **2002 Results:** Frenz 10,516, Davis (R) 8,774. **2004 Results:** Woodruff 12,698, Frenz 12,507. **2006 Forecast:** Sunday's Knox County Democrat dinner at 600 had the largest turnout in four years, organizers said. Chairwoman Mary Lou Terrell said she was pleased with the turnout and new attitude by Democrats. "The energy is running high," she said (*Vincennes Sun-Commercial*). "It's very emotional and we are all ready to go. Times are changing. People are more confused than ever about this time issue. This never would have happened if the Legislature wouldn't have changed to daylight-saving time." Terrell was referring to Woodruff's 11th-hour vote for daylight-saving time earlier this year. A Vincennes Republican, Woodruff changed his vote at the last minute (reportedly from pressure from Gov. Mitch Daniels) after repeatedly promising his constituents he would not vote for it." **Status: TOSS-UP**





Frank Gray, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette - Among the billions of pages on the Internet is one that tries to explain what time it is in Indiana. It uses three columns and color coding to show who is on Eastern time and who is on Central time and who observes daylight-saving time and who doesn't. People outside Indiana probably find it a little amusing that it takes a color-coded map to figure out the time in this state, and they are probably equally amused at how often the tables have to change. Before long— next April, in fact— it will take only two columns to explain the time, but our map will look just as silly. It appears about 25 counties have decided they want to be on Central time, while 67 will be on Eastern time. The state and its time zones will look like the drop cloth of a sloppy painter, with a big spill in this corner, another big spill in another corner and a dribble in the middle. What the map cannot explain is the angst that the people in different counties will experience twice a year when they have to take part in daylight-saving time and change their clocks. The average person doesn't see it as angst, though. Indiana will continue to come across as a state where people just can't agree to work together, and our time-zone map will be a tangible illustration of that. People will note that Purdue University will be on Eastern time but that the University of Notre Dame, which is east of Purdue, will be on Central time. They will find it curious that in the center of the state, on its western border, there will be one county sitting all by itself that will be on Central time, while everyone around it will be on Eastern.. ❖

Rich James, Post-Tribune - Man, oh man, Mitch. George Bush had Michael Brown and you've got Joel Silverman. Bush finally felt enough pressure — and I didn't think he was capable of feeling anything — and dumped his inept FEMA director. But, you Mitch, are still dancing with Joel Silverman, your hard-hearted hatchet man at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. What gives, Mitch? You the man, ya know. That's what your campaign theme was all about — "My Man Mitch." Really had a nice ring to it. Kind of gave you one of those fuzzy, Hoosier feelings. I was a doubter. There's nothing warm and cuddly about the Republican Party, although the elephants are kind of cute. But, I left the door open, Mitch. Everyone deserves a chance to prove themselves, even Republicans. And there you were, bouncing in and out of Northwest Indiana as if you lived here. And when you helped bring the Regional Development Authority to reality, even local Democrats were chanting "My Man Mitch" as part of their bedside prayers. Suddenly, you were the greatest thing since pop tops on beer cans. Because you were spending so much time in Lake County, word was that you bought one of those Region Rat T-shirts over at the visitors center. And

then, bam! Like Lucy pulling the football away from Charlie Brown at the last second, you sucker-punched Lake County by announcing the closure of the only license bureau in Gary — the state's fifth-largest city. In the long term, one license bureau pales in comparison to what the RDA can deliver. Will the people get over it? Doubtful. This is personal. This is more about a predominantly black city that is trying to pull itself up from the depths. And closing the license bureau is another kick in the teeth for people who can't take too many more punches. And it reinforces the notion that Republicans care a lot more about the bottom line than they do people. Perhaps, Mitch, you are too new to this political thing. The animosity you are creating isn't going away any time soon. You may not realize it, but you have helped broaden the racial divide in this state. You better rein in Silverman. After all, he's your man, Mitch. ❖

Gary Gerard, Warsaw Times-Union - I will be the first to admit that the government's response to Hurricane Katrina was delayed. And there is no question that there is plenty of room for improvement. But for crying out loud, the one time our government should come together in unity over an issue, what do they do? Turn it into one of the most divisive, contentious issues of the modern era. It's a disaster, people. Come on. Let's all get on the same page. As I said, the government's efforts after the hurricane were far from perfect. But here are some of the phrases I am hearing being bandied about: "National disgrace." "Abysmal failure." "Abject ineptitude." "Shameful." "Scandalous." "Negligent." "Derelict." "Futile." And those were just the pundits and politicians talking. Then, as a matter of course and right on cue, the Hollywood types – actors, actresses, rap artists – showed up and started blathering on about how W doesn't care about black people or poor people. You know, sometimes it gets a little ridiculous. ❖

Phil Wieland, Times of Northwest Indiana - With gasoline costing around \$3 a gallon, firing up the Hummer for a five-gallon trip to the corner drug store seems a tad extravagant. More people are pedaling the highways these days, but it hasn't reduced the traffic that on Monday kept me idling at the end of my driveway for more than a minute waiting to pull out and go to work. The biggest reason people still drive is they have no choice. What are they gonna do? Hop a bus? So I have begun to explore alternate modes of transportation. Hitchhiking is a little iffy, so I have dusted off my son's high-tech mountain bike, pumped up the tires and taken it for a test drive. ❖





Hastert names Buyer to Katrina committee

WASHINGTON, D.C. - House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) today tapped Indiana Congressman Steve Buyer (R-In.) to serve as a member of the Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina. The Select Committee will investigate the development, coordination, and execution by local, State, and federal authorities of emergency response plans and other activities in preparation for Hurricane Katrina as well as the overall response.



Souder shocked at Katrina devastation

NEW ORLEANS - High above the ghost town of New Orleans, encased in a helicopter, Rep. Mark Souder, R-3rd, could smell it. The stench from Katrina's rot, corrosion and mud is putrid and powerful (*Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*). "The whole place stinks," he said Tuesday after returning from a daylong tour of New Orleans and Mississippi that he said was "the greatest devastation I've ever seen times some kind of algebraic geometric. It leaves you in a state of shock. No matter how much you see on the news, it's staggering the size and scale" of the destruction, he said. "It's like from the Michigan (state) line to Bloomington is wiped out." Souder was part of a congressional delegation sent to the Gulf Coast region on Sunday by House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill. Souder said he returned with a clearer sense of the devastation, the massive cleanup and rebuilding tasks ahead, and the dilemma of how to reclaim whole towns where concrete slabs are all that remain

of homes, groceries, banks, churches, schools and government buildings.

Pence Outlines \$139 billion in Katrina Cuts

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Rep. Mike Pence (R-6th CD) led a group of House conservatives on Wednesday in outlining more than \$139 billion worth of cuts that could be made to the federal budget in 2006 to help pay for Hurricane Katrina aid (Schoeff, *HPR*). Dubbed "Operation Offset," the plan was issued by the Republican Study Committee. Among other recommendations, it calls for delaying Medicare prescription drug benefits by one year, repealing pork-barrel projects passed in the recent \$286 billion highway bill, cutting foreign aid, eliminating some school funding, reducing federal agency budgets, cutting corporate welfare and trimming defense and homeland security budgets. Although the savings are estimated to total more than \$1.2 trillion over 10 years, they're likely to meet stiff political resistance. It's not clear whether Pence and his cohorts have the political traction to make the plan more than a rhetorical device. "Congress must ensure that a catastrophe of nature does not become a catastrophe of debt for our children and grandchildren," Pence, who voted in favor of \$62 billion in Katrina aid, said in a recent speech on the House floor.

State courts sever software contract

INDIANAPOLIS - State officials have terminated a software company's contract to establish a computer network tying together courts in all 92 Indiana counties (*Associated Press*). The decision to end the work by Computer Associates International came after court staffers found its software was unable to track the status and outcome of criminal and civil cases throughout about 400 courts around the

state.

11 taverns, clubs cited for illegal gambling

NEW ALBANY - Eleven taverns and fraternal clubs in four Southern Indiana counties were cited this month for promoting illegal gambling after raids by the Indiana Excise Police (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). The Sept. 9-10 operation by the excise police -- who are agents for the Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission -- is part of a more aggressive effort started last winter to curb illegal electronic gambling. The charges were brought against four bars in Perry and Harrison counties, and four fraternal organizations and three taverns in Clark and Floyd counties.

Muncie cops give up pay, benefits

MUNCIE - Muncie police officers gave up as much as firefighters in a new 3-year contract that guarantees a \$38,670 base pay in 2006 while more than doubling out-of-pocket health care costs (*Muncie Star Press*). The last of three labor contracts with city workers and public safety employees would save taxpayers \$485,166 next year, mainly by reducing police manpower by five to 115. "This was a tough one to take," said police investigator Jason Webber, president of Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 87.

Hiller sentenced 1 year

INDIANAPOLIS - A judge sentenced Bradley R. Hiller, 33, formerly of Mooresville, to one year in prison. Hiller was placed in handcuffs moments after he threw up after the sentence was announced (*Associated Press*). "You can't steal this amount of money and not go to prison," said Marion Superior Court Judge Mark Stoner.

