



Bush uptick, but Donnelly up

It's Terror vs. Iraq

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - Except for that confrontation last Friday at LaPorte City Hall, this was a week of poll watching.

Specifically, we were watching the national polls taken after the Bush-Cheney Sept. 11 media blitz. The two polls that sent GOP hearts aflutter were a Gallup Poll, taken Sept. 15-17 that put President Bush's approval rating nationally at 44 percent, and the Congressional generic at 48-48 percent, and a **Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg** Poll (Sept. 16-19) that shows Bush approval at 45 percent, although the congressional generic was 49/38 favoring Democrats. That compared to an **NBC/Wall Street Journal** poll (Sept. 8-11) that had Bush at 42 percent.

But then came the **South Bend Tribune/WSBT-TV** poll conducted on Sept. 16-17 that showed Democrat Joe Donnelly leading U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola 50-42 percent. On Wednesday, SurveyUSA (Sept. 14-17) had Bush's fav/unfav at 47-52 percent in Indiana. In Southern Indiana, Bush stood at 44/54 percent fav/unfav.

And a **New York Times/CBS** poll published today (Sept. 15-19) pegged Bush's approval at 37 percent. People citing terror as the top issue jumped from 7 percent in July



2nd CD Democrat Joe Donnelly has a 50-42 percent lead over U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. None of the three embattled Indiana GOP congressmen are polling over 42 percent

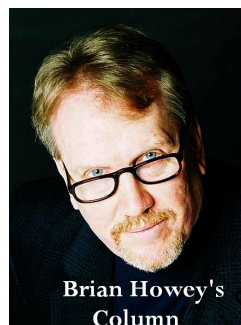
to 14 percent, while 22 percent cited Iraq. But the "one striking finding" was that 77 percent of the respondents -- including 65 percent of Republicans -- said most members

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Cutting the gov off at his knees

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS - The late U.S. Sen. Homer Capehart was once asked by a Washington reporter why Indiana produced so few national political figures. Sen. Capehart responded, "Here in Indiana, we cut them off at the knees if they start standing tall."



Brian Howey's Column

I thought of ol' Sen. Homer when I read the strange goings-on in LaPorte last week. It was the final destination for Gov. Mitch Daniels, who, in unprecedented fashion, was dropping off \$40 million checks to seven toll road counties. The Republican in House District 20, Tom Dermody,



"Tell John Gregg that you don't heat the grease until the bass is in the boat."

- Former GOP Chairman Rex Early, in response to Gregg's 'butter' quote here last week



stayed away from this "radioactive" governor. Dermody won a primary race against State Rep. Mary Kay Budak, who had the guts to vote for Major Moves and the toll road lease.

Dermody's opponent, LaPorte City Councilwoman Andrea Renner, did show, along with several dozen of her supporters who heckled the governor. And then Councilwoman Renner said an amazing thing: "Even though it's ill-gotten money, it's now incumbent on us to stretch it out for 75 years and use it wisely."

Duoh!

Then there was State Rep. Tim Neese's Democratic opponent, John Hardy, who complained that by waiting to disperse the checks, the toll road counties lost \$328,000 in interest. "Our counties are losing the opportunity to use these much-needed revenues for new roads and repair."

Duoh!

In dispersing \$240 million last week, there wasn't a single city, town or county council member, not a single county commissioner or mayor, who turned the "ill-gotten money" down. Not South Bend Mayor Stephen Luecke, who got a \$12.8 million check LaPorte got \$4.6 million. Michigan City received \$7 million. Elkhart got \$8.3 million; South Bend \$12.8 million; Mishawaka \$5.4 million; Goshen \$4.7 million. LaGrange County will have \$37 million, which will invest some of the Major Moves money into a jobs-producing industrial park.

A couple of weeks ago, Indiana Democratic Chairman Dan Parker handed me an Indiana Workforce Development website printout of "warn notices," that is, plants plan-

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ning to close or lay off workers. There were 16,000 jobs listed for 2006 that will soon vanish. That doesn't include the latest Ford Motor Company force reduction that will hit places such as



Connersville and Indianapolis hard. Parker's point was that Gov. Daniels hadn't delivered on jobs in his scant 19 months in office.

But here is Major Moves, which in the coming years will provide tens of thousands of construction jobs, followed by thousands more coming to

companies that will locate near the industrial parks that will spring up along a new U.S. 31 freeway, or the Hoosier Heartland Corridor, or the Honda and Toyota plants that plan to situate themselves along our interstates. An Indiana University Kelley School of Business study predicts that some 300,000 new jobs will come to Indiana by 2014.

The Democratic response has been shrill and illogical. State Sen. Karen Talian said Major Moves was tantamount to sending Northern Indiana money to Indianapolis. What it means for Steuben, DeKalb, Allen, Wells and Adams county travelers is that now there is a plan to alleviate the bottleneck at I-69 and I-465. A U.S. 31 freeway means that LaPorte, Elkhart and St. Joseph County commuters can one day dream of a trip south without a single stoplight at LaPaz, Kokomo, Westfield and Carmel.

As the Ford, Chrysler and GM jobs vanish, they will be replaced by



the new companies that will locate along our highways.

The political fallout from Major Moves is that Republican State Reps. Marlin Stutzman, John Ulmer, and Jackie Walorski are in tough re-election battles. Dermody is in a dogfight. And, I have to tell you, the bigoted gay bashing and Bible thumping at the House podium that emanates from parts of the GOP caucus are troubling.

The problem with Indiana Democrats is that there is no alternative vision. They've had all year to articulate an agenda, and we've heard nothing but, as Sen. Evan Bayh warned after the 2004 election, the "sum of our resentments."

I can tell you what Democrats are against. I couldn't tell you how they plan to govern once they install B. Patrick Bauer as the next speaker of the House other than cooking up a recipe for gridlock.

After Gov. Daniels made his toll road swing, Bauer observed, "The fact is that most of these projects already were on course to be completed, without any assistance from the sale of the toll road."

Not true. There were so many unfunded highway



Gov. Daniels presenting a \$40 million check to LaGrange County officials.

projects that most of us figured we'd never live long enough to drive a U.S. 31 freeway.

"More than any other issue, this toll road sale has outraged the people of Northern Indiana," Bauer said, summing up Democratic resentments.

Broken promises? How about eight preceding governorships which refused to return the Indiana Toll Road to freeway status once its bonds were repaid? When Bauer was speaker and a powerful Ways & Means chairman, I don't ever recall him

demanding the toll road's evolution as a freeway. He could have done it.

The real broken promise comes if Hoosiers have to endure the loss of another hundred thousand manufacturing jobs that have disappeared since 2000. The epic broken promise is an inability by Indiana Democrats to articulate any kind of alternative economic strategy.

The one governor who decided to make tough decisions without consulting public opinion polls now stands to be cut of at the knees.

And then what? Duoh! ❖

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of Congress did not deserve re-election. That was the highest percentage since 1994.

In the LAT/Bloomberg Poll, Bush's fav/unfavs on the Iraq War were 40/56 percent and on terror, 48/49 percent.

What's this all mean?

While Bush got an uptick, it didn't appear to translate to Reps. Chocola, Sodrel or Hostettler, none of whom poll over 42 percent (Sodrel and Hostettler were at 40 percent in the WISH-TV polls prior to Sept. 11). A 40 percent for an incumbent in late September is ominous. The undecideds tend to break toward challengers. The fact that Donnelly reached the 50 percent mark is also significant.

And while Karl Rove's strategy to use Iraq and the War on Terror as a trump card befuddling Democrats who are virtually unable to articulate any kind of vision for the



U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola with President Bush at Bethel College earlier this year.

future (both nationally and here in Indiana), the sense is that Sept. 11 may have been a high water mark. The Tribune/WSBT poll showed that Iraq was still the most potent issue here in Indiana at 20 percent, with the economy coming in at 13 percent. The Bush-Cheney offensive was immediately overtaken by the admonishments of Colin Powell, and Republican U.S. Sens. Lindsay Graham, John Warner and John McCain over the torture of terror captives.

And tortured bodies were still turning up in Baghdad, a city that the U.S. is in the process of building a trench around to stop the suicide bombers.

Gallup's Frank Newport explained, "While Iraq remains the top issue (out of six alternatives offered) voters say they are thinking about as they ponder the elections this fall, voters who say terrorism is most important overwhelmingly favor the GOP as better able to handle it."

Newport added, "Sixty-nine percent of registered



voters who say terrorism is the most important issue to their vote this November say Republicans would better handle that issue; 17% say Democrats would do a better job. The results are essentially reversed among those who say Iraq is the top issue -- 60 percent of registered voters say the Democrats would better handle that issue and 23% say the Republicans. "

This correlation between issue importance and vote choice provides supportive evidence for the potential efficacy of a strategy that attempts to change voters' minds about what's important in the election, Newport explained. Convincing more voters to focus on terrorism as the pivotal issue in the fall campaign -- as the Bush administration is attempting to do -- could benefit the Republicans, just as convincing voters to focus on Iraq -- as the Democrats are doing -- could benefit them. So, there was no question that an uptick occurred.

Newport explained, "It is clear that congressional candidates who support Bush on the terror issue may have an advantage over those who don't. By a 19-point margin, registered voters say they are more likely to vote for a candidate for Congress who supports Bush on terrorism (43%), rather than a candidate who opposes him (24%). This is especially important given that, in the overall sample of registered voters in this survey, the Democratic candidate is favored over the Republican candidate by nine points. "

The generics

National preference polls on the so-called "generic ballot" question -- which party's candidate voters say they would choose -- show Republicans have narrowed the once-substantial lead Democrats held and are now trailing them by 3 percentage points, independent pollster John Zogby said last Friday, although the LAT/Bloomberg and NYT/CBS polls suggest that window is now widening in favor of Democrats. The Tribune-WSBT poll in the Chocola/Donnelly race appears to back up the widening notion on the generic.

Zogby credited the Republican Party's sudden political turnaround to "the president's focus on the war on terrorism, a rebound among his own base," and the Democrats' failure to lay out a clear plan of their own on "how are we're going to get out

Battle for the House

HPR Forecast: D 51, R 49

Likely Takeover (3-R)

Woodruff (Battles)
Heim (Dembowski)
Bright (Cheatham)

Tossups (9-R; 1-D)

Buell (Barnes) Orentlicher (Densborn)
J. Smith (Herrell)
Saunders (Sadler (D), and Bell (L))
Open (Messer: Eberhart vs. Lux)
Stutzman (Rorick)
Harris (Hile)
Walorski (Kovach)
Ulmer (Puro)

Open (Budak: Dermody vs. Renner)

Leans (8-R; 7-D)

Lehe (Sutton) Hoy (A. Smith)
Hinkle (Olds) Open (Stemler v Theobald)
Davis (Liggett) Crooks (Arnold)
Lutz (Mengelt) Austin (Metzger)
Dodge (Rauen) Tincher (Dallas)
Open (Ayres: Soliday v. Graham (D) Denbo (Patton)
Open (Hoffman: Knollman vs. Lanning) Micon (Basham)
Open (Thomas: Thomas v. Thompson (D)

Likely (2-R; 0-D)

Bosma (Fuldauer)
Borders (Bledsoe)

Safe (30-R; 40-D)

(30 Republican) Gutwein, Wolkins, Ruppel, Friend, McClain, Thompson, Richardson, Turner, Buck, Torr, Whetstone, T. Brown, Foley, Frizzell, Behning, Murphy, Noe, Pond, Borrer, Bell, Espich, Ripley, Crouch, Duncan, Koch, Open (Yount: M. Smith), Burton, Cherry, Leonard, Neese

(36-Democrats) Avery, Lawson, Harris, C. Brown, Bauer, Niezgodski, Dvorak, Pelath, Cheney, Grubb, Stevenson, Open (Aguilera: Reardon), Dobis, V. Smith, Kuzman, Bardon, Tyler, Reske, Kersey, Welch, Pierce, Goodin, Robertson, Cochran, Oxley, Stilwell, Open (B. GiaQuinta, P. GiaQuinta), Moses, Dickinson, Avery, VanHaaften, Day, Summers, Mays, Crawford, Mahern, Porter, Klinker (Rhoda), Pflum (Bell), Fry (Hiler), Bischoff (Ullrich)

Movement: HD20 (Dermody vs. Renner) from Likely Takeover to Tossup. ❖



HOWEY *Political Report*

of Iraq and what they would do about terrorism that's better than the Republicans."

Democrats "are not giving their Democratic base what it needs to hear on those issues," Zogby said. "Republicans are severely wounded. The Democrats should be crushing them, and they are not. I don't see the landslide that others are seeing. That doesn't mean it can't materialize, but as of today, it's not happening and this is mid-September."

Last time the generic gap and confidence in Congress were at this point, Republicans gained 50 seats in 1994. Earlier this week, Democratic U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer was predicting a 30-seat Democratic pickup.

The Republican Party's improving polls coincide with a number of positive developments on the economic front that Republicans hope will further lift their political prospects in November. The price of oil dropped to nearly \$62 a barrel Friday from a high of \$77 last month, as gasoline prices continued their descent to a national average of \$2.62 per gallon, though many battleground states were reporting lower prices for regular.

Some of the lowest averages included Iowa, \$2.32; Indiana, \$2.36; Missouri and Ohio, \$2.25; Minnesota, \$2.35; Michigan \$2.37; and Kentucky, \$2.34. Gas was \$2.07 in Lafayette earlier this week.

"We're seeing a tightening up in the congressional races, too, in the last 10 days. The president is putting out a much more targeted message, talking about the security of the country. For the first time, he's playing more offense than defense and that's helping Republicans," Zogby said.

However, a PBS **NewsHour with Jim Lehrer** film crew HPR worked with last weekend spent considerable time in the 9th CD Friday through Sunday. Producer Terry Rubin said that it took the crew numerous attempts at a Floyd Central HS football game and the Comiskey Fall Festival to find voters informed enough on the Hill-Sodrel race to conduct an interview. "People didn't seem to be paying attention," Rubin said.

Monitoring the Gov's numbers

The other part of poll watching coming into play concerns Gov. Mitch Daniels. A WISH-TV poll taken Sept.

8-11 had the governor's fav/unfav at 38/57 percent and Bush at 43-55 percent.

But that was before his historic trip to Northern Indiana where he handed out \$40 million checks to seven toll road counties.

He was greeted warmly by county and city officials in Steuben, LaGrange, Elkhart, and St. Joseph counties. It's those counties where State Reps. Marlin Stutzman, John Ulmer and Jackie Walorski are facing fierce challenges. The governor's fav/unfavs in the August SurveyUSA tracking was 28/68 percent in Northern Indiana, prompting HPR to move those races into "Tossup" or "Likely takeover" categories. WISH put Daniels fav/unfav with independents at 27/67 percent.

It will be interesting to see if the next SurveyUSA gubernatorial tracking numbers come up following the governor's toll road county swing that took place on Sept. 14-15.

If Gov. Daniels and Indiana Republicans are unable to close the governor's fav/unfavs in Northern Indiana substantially, that would be ominous for Reps. Stutzman, Walorski and Ulmer.

Another trouble spot for Daniels centers on the BMV issues. By a 53 percent to 38 percent margin, those interviewed did not trust the Daniels administration to improve the efficiency of the state Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

While Daniels had testy exchanges with hecklers at LaPorte City Hall (though not in any of the other toll road counties), he also took a "playful poke" at State Rep. B. Patrick Bauer. "For once in his life, Pat Bauer was right about something," Daniels told the Association of Indiana Counties crowd (**South Bend Tribune**). "T'ain't a penny of tax increase in there anywhere. T'ain't a penny of passenger toll increase in there. T'ain't money we'd ever have gotten any other way."

There were other conspicuous economic development success, including a \$3 billion investment at the BP refinery at Whiting. Indiana beat out Texas City for that expansion that will create 2,500 construction jobs and 80 full-time regular jobs.

Watch for that economic development message to become the battleground between Indiana House Republicans and Democrats in the coming weeks.



Gov. Mitch Daniels announcing Major Moves projects in Kendallville, where he was joined by State Rep. Marlin Stutzman.





HOWEY *Political Report*

Weekly Briefing on Indiana Politics

2006 HPR Forum

Oct. 10, 2006

Columbia Club

Indianapolis

8:15 a.m. Opening remarks by Brian A. Howey of HPR and Dan Seitz of BoseTreacy Associates.

8:30 a.m. Senate Foreign Relations Chairman Richard Lugar, discussing the War on Terror, Iraq, North Korea, Iran, national security and energy insecurity. Introduction by Chris Katterjohn, Indianapolis Business Journal

9:30 a.m. Evan Bayh's Presidential Prospects Panel: Brian A. Howey, Mark Schoeff Jr. and Mark Curry of HPR; Michael O'Connor of BoseTreacy, James Pindell, Boston Globe. Introduction by Glenda Russell of Indiana Lawyer. Moderated by Patricia McGuffey, BoseTreacy Associates.

10:30 a.m. U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, discussing the war, energy and immigration. Introduction by John Stowell, Duke Energy.

11:30 a.m. Lunch

12:15 p.m.: Keynote by 9/11 Commissioner Tim Roemer. Introduction by 2nd CD Democratic nominee Joe Donnelly.

1 p.m. Assessing the Daniels Administration in Year Two. Brian A. Howey; Doug Ross, Times of Northwest Indiana; Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune; Peter Schnitzler, Indianapolis Business Journal; Morton J. Marcus, Indiana University Kelley School of Business. Introduction by Tom Fruechtenicht, BoseTreacy Associates. Moderated by Tom Fruechtenicht.

1:45 p.m. Ethics and the Battle for the Indiana House. Tim Jeffers of the House Democrats and Mike Gentry of the House Republicans. Introduction by Don Blinzinger, BoseTreacy Associates. Moderated by Brian A.

Howey.

2:30 p.m. The Coming Senate Leadership Changes. Brian A. Howey; Niki Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette; David Kitchell, Logansport Pharos-Tribune; and Abdul-Hakim Shabazz from WXNT-AM.

Cost: \$75 for current HPR subscriber; \$100 for non-subscriber; \$350 for new HPR subscriber; \$120 for HPR subscriber seeking 6.4 hours of Continuing Legal Education and 1.0 hours of ethics; \$150 for non-subscriber CLE.

To Register: Call 317-254-0535 or go to the HPR website at www.howeypolitics.com and click on the Forum banner under the masthead. Registration deadline is Friday, Oct. 6. ❖

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Will Bayh deliver Indiana in the 2006 mid-terms?

By MARK CURRY

The Howey Political Report

WASHINGTON - Will Bayh deliver Indiana in the midterms?

For years now Evan Bayh has been traveling all across this great land promising to deliver Democratic victory in Red State America. That time has come.

Voters in Indiana's 2nd, 8th and 9th Congressional Districts are now high-value targets in the midterm battle over control of the U.S. House of Representatives. Polls indicate these three districts are teetering away from Republicans, who are struggling to maintain a 15-seat margin in Washington. HPR rates all three as "tossup."

Time and money factor mightily in any political scrape, more so in the close ones. Dollars are flooding in from out of state. Candidates, staff and volunteers are on the march. Party leaders are mustering the faithful and recruiting the undecideds. According to Jack Colwell of the South Bend Tribune, "Indiana has become the Florida or Ohio in this national election."

There are rumors of another presidential visit, and why not? The stakes are considerable. At the national level voters are worried about such issues as Iraq, terrorism, immigration and the economy. Put healthcare, state spending and education near the top of that list and you've also described Hoosier concerns going into the elections.

Candidates fighting for every ballot will look for all the help they can get. While Republicans have turned to the likes of the president, vice president and even Barbara Bush, many Democrats will seek the support of Sen. Bayh, one of the most popular politicians in the state. The junior senator has donated as much as \$10,000 to several candidates as well as \$25,000 to the state party, but it's his popularity with Hoosier voters that may prove to be his greatest asset in this election. A SurveyUSA poll conducted in early August found Bayh's fav/unfav rating at 57/36. The breakdown indicated he is especially popular with Democrats (71/26), independents (55/36), moderates (70/25) and liberals (58/35).

"He is in fact a popular figure," said Russell Hanson, a professor of political science at Indiana University in Bloomington. "In fact the 8th and 9th districts are close to

his old home base in politics. He has connections. He has political appeal that if he was there in person, campaigning with that person, it would be to the advantage of a candidate, I should think."

Hanson pointed out that so far many Hoosiers haven't heard much from Bayh in terms of appearances or fundraising.

"From where I sit, which is in the 9th district, he's not been seen or heard in a way that would benefit the candidate," the professor said. "Maybe he's holding that back for later in the campaign. It is still fairly early for the campaign. It may be just a matter of timing, but we certainly

have seen any number of high-level national figures come to Indiana to work with candidates here, and I have not seen Evan Bayh at any rate."

That's about to change. According to a first-hand account, Sen. Bayh told a group of New York Democrats earlier this week that he has set aside the month of October "to getting the Dem congressional candidates elected in Indiana...."

(Dansac, Daily Kos). The senator's office isn't releasing any details but confirmed he plans to campaign for Indiana candidates in the state as election day approaches.

"He's offered to campaign with us and I expect that will be happening in the coming weeks," said Matt Weisman, a spokesman for Democrat Brad Ellsworth, who's hoping to unseat John Hostettler in the 8th CD. "We look forward to taking him up on that offer."

According to a WISH-TV poll released Sept. 19th, Ellsworth has a 44-40 margin over the incumbent. "This is the closest congressional race in the state," said reporter Jim Shella.

Weisman assured HPR that Bayh has long been supportive of his candidate.

"Evan Bayh has been very helpful financially both in terms of donating money and helping us raise money," he said. The senator's leadership PAC, All America PAC, has contributed \$10,000. And the senator is not the only Bayh



U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh (right) with then congressman Baron Hill and Columbus Mayor Fred Armstrong at a rally just before Election Day in 2004. (HPR Photo by Brian A. Howey)



to support Ellsworth, Weisman said. Evan's father, the former Sen. Birch Bayh, "has been tremendously helpful. He's also offered to come and campaign with us and we look forward to taking him up on that offer as well."

The younger Bayh also supported Joe Donnelly's effort to unseat Chris Chocola in the 2nd CD with a \$10,000 donation. As noted in yesterday's HPR Daily Wire, a South Bend Tribune/WSBT-TV poll taken over the weekend has Donnelly leading among likely voters 50-42.

"Sen. Bayh has been a tremendous help to us in the district," said Katie Nee, the Democrat's campaign manager. "We have worked out some events in the future but I don't know if they are in stone. They are not part of our public schedule yet. Bayh has offered to do quite a bit for our campaign and really a lot of things to support and elect Joe Donnelly." Bayh will deliver a Jefferson-Jackson Dinner speech on Nov. 2 in South Bend.

Bayh has also supplied paid staffing to four congressional races and a state contest through his Camp Bayh staffer program at a salary of \$1,000 a month for three months. The senator trained and then placed workers in the 2nd, 3rd, 8th and 9th CDs as well as in the contest for Indiana's District 31 House seat. Lucas John Burkett of South Bend is working for Donnelly.

"He's been a great help to us," Nee said. "He's a field staffer. He does a lot of voter contact and reaching out to voters in our district."

Conversations with Bayh's office suggest similar plans are in the works for other hotly contested races, although this writer was unable to reach Baron Hill's 9th CD campaign or the Indiana Democratic Party for comment.

	NRCC: "AT STAKE" "Control of Congress is at stake in the coming election. Will Brad Ellsworth vote for liberal Democrat Nancy Pelosi for Speaker of the House?"	ATLA: "Life"
	<i>the latest ad</i>	Ellsworth: "Pump"
		Donnelly: "Doesn't"
		Chocola: "Energy Plans"
		Brizzi: "Tough"

CAMPAIGN ADS COMING TO HPR WEBSITE: On Friday, the HPR website at www.howeypolitics.com will be teaming up with the website [IndianaOnMessage](http://IndianaOnMessage.com). You will be able to see the latest congressional, legislative and local TV campaign ads.

(Hill is in a close battle with Rep. Mike Sodrel - a WISH-TV poll released Sept. 12th put the challenger ahead 46-40.)

"We'll send out scheduling information once the details are finalized closer to time," Meghan Keck, Bayh's press secretary, told HPR. "It's going to be exciting."

Yes, Indiana, it is going to be exciting. There's still time before persuadable voters begin to move out of the undecided column, but not much.

"People begin to make up their minds and then at some point in the campaign it will shift to simply a turn-out strategy," Hanson, the IU professor, said. "The interesting thing about the 8th and 9th district is that polls suggest there are a lot of people - on the order of 15 to 20 percent or more - who haven't made up their mind yet. You've got to come in early enough to shape that initial choice to be really successful in the end."

Bayh also has irons in the fire in key places like Iowa. This weekend he will be helping campaigns in New Hampshire, where he will speak at the Manchester City Democrats' "Countdown to Victory Dinner" and visit Rochester, Nashua and Salem. But

observers within and far beyond the state's borders will be paying close attention to the caliber and impact of his efforts to help Indiana Democrats.

Markos Moulitsas Zuniga, or the Kos of dailykos.com, recently wrote, "One reason I am blissfully unwilling to pick sides in the presidential race is that I want the candidates to prove that they can help build their local Democratic Parties and deliver Democratic victories beyond their own."

Winning Red State votes may be key to winning elections, but winning the support of outspoken Democrats like the Kos will enable Evan Bayh to gain traction toward a run at his party's presidential nomination in 2008. The results of this year's midterms in Indiana will provide more clues about his chances in that endeavor. ❖



Bayh talks with legislative candidates in New Hampshire. (Bayh Flickr Photo)



Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune -

Somehow in Washington there is a growing misconception that Congressman Chris Chocola, the Republican incumbent in Indiana's 2nd District, may lose because he was caught by surprise, blindsided, by the challenge from Democrat Joe Donnelly. Well, Chocola may lose.

It's a close race. But if he does, it won't be because he was caught by surprise or blindsided by a challenge he didn't take seriously. Among some of the Washington experts who analyze these things and the sources upon whom they depend, there is a perception, however, that it's close because Donnelly, so underfunded and easily defeated in his '04 race with Chocola, managed to sneak up on an overconfident Chocola this time. In its latest rating of House races where changes could occur, the National Journal's Hotline lists the 2nd District as No. 25 among the 435 House districts. This is an indication that Chocola could be in big trouble, although not yet as vulnerable as two other GOP congressmen from Indiana who long have been on most lists of the darn near doomed. No problem with No. 25 listing. It is indeed a close race in a battleground district. But wait. The Hotline listing was followed by this observation: "Every cycle, there's one incumbent who's caught blindsided. Chocola's looking like he could be that incumbent this cycle." The Washington Post political blog propelled the race to No. 6 on its list on Sept. 1, analyzing that Chocola has "taken his re-election for granted -- a cardinal sin for a Republican in this type of climate." The climate, the Post notes correctly, includes Chocola's problems with low ratings in his district for President Bush and Gov. Mitch Daniels. Then, last Tuesday, the Post blog, listing the race still among the top targets for change at No. 7, had this message that will startle any 2nd District television viewer: "Count us as confused as to why Rep. Chris Chocola (R) hasn't begun advertising on television." Anybody seen a Chocola TV spot? Maybe dozens? Hundreds? Clearly, some bad information was provided, perhaps by the "Republican strategists" cited in the "cardinal sin" evaluation. Blindsided? Certainly not. ❖

Leslie Stedman Weidenbener,

Louisville Courier-Journal - A new poll on the popularity of Gov. Mitch Daniels could portend some trouble for the GOP at the polls in November. No, the Indianapolis Republican isn't on the ballot. In the telephone survey of 800 likely voters, WISH-TV found that nearly a quarter of Hoosiers rated his performance as poor and a third rated him as only fair. Even among Republican voters, only 58 percent gave Daniels favorable ratings. A whopping 80 percent of Democrats had an unfavorable opinion of the governor. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. According to the poll, a majority of Hoosier voters

don't trust the Daniels administration to fix the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, most don't like his lease of the Indiana Toll Road, and nearly half don't like the statewide change to daylight-saving time, a proposal the governor pushed.

And that's the rub for Republicans. The GOP majority in the House helped implement the time change and approved the toll road lease. Those are issues that Democrats can use against them in a number of crucial districts, especially along the toll road in Northern Indiana and in counties along the time zone line, including southwestern Indiana.



Stephanie Salter, Terre Haute

Tribune-Star - Despite what I understand about the sausage-making nature of politics

(you don't want to watch what goes on in the process), it is weird to see a woman I actually know portrayed as the antichrist and a city in which I lived for three decades as the gateway to hell. But those nightmare visions are the theme of a Republican ad campaign that takes aim at U.S. Rep. Nancy Pelosi and her city. "San Francisco values don't belong in Indiana," says an anti-Brad Ellsworth mailer with the Golden Gate Bridge in the middle of a Hoosier farm. "...a vote for the Democrats is a vote to give San Francisco more power," says the Indiana Republican Party chair. The last time I talked to Pelosi was this past spring in the basement of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in San Francisco. The House minority leader and her husband were among several hundred people who'd gathered for a fund-raising dinner for a homeless charity organization that was founded a few years ago by film director Francis Ford Coppola. Paul Pelosi was eyeing a candy-apple red Vespa that would be auctioned off for the charity. Nancy, dressed like all the guests in casual clothes, kiddingly reminded him he already has one of the classic Italian scooters. She had given up trying to finish her pasta dinner as a steady parade of visitors — most of them friends — plunked down next to her to talk about San Francisco, Washington, their families, the homeless, the economy, Iraq and politics. As in my short catch-up with her, she asked more questions about each visitor's welfare than she offered about her own work and worries. Spending just a little "real time" with her reminded me what a remarkable human being Pelosi is. Born into a political family in Baltimore, she nevertheless served as a stay-at-home mother until her five children were old enough to allow Mom to pursue outside interests. Late start notwithstanding, she made her way from mere campaign worker to the first female member of Congress to be selected as her party's house leader. The encounter also reconnected me to a reality with which most of us lose touch, whatever our party affiliation: Our political leaders are people, not laminated cardboard cutouts nor incarnations of Satan or Jesus. ❖



NRCC \$ aimed at Ellsworth, Hill

TRENDLINE No. 1: The National Republican Congressional Committee reported several payments over \$100,000 on Friday, including a payment of \$118,882 for "media placement" in opposition to Brad Ellsworth's campaign in Indiana's 8th District, and a payment of \$131,976 for "issue ad placement" in opposition to Friends of Baron Hill in Indiana's 9th, and a payment of \$111,751 for "issue ad placement" in opposition to Leonard L. Boswell in Iowa's 3rd (**CQPolitics**).



Congressional Races

Congressional District 2: Republican: U.S. Rep. Chris Chocola. **Democrat:** 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:** A Tribune/WSBT-TV poll of 400 likely voters showed Donnelly with a 50 percent to 42 percent lead over Chocola, with 8 percent undecided and a 5 percent margin of error. The poll was taken Sept. 16-17, after the Sept. 11 observances. That compares to a July poll that showed Donnelly with a 46 percent to 41 percent lead over Chocola, with 13 percent undecided and the same 5 percent margin of error. Both polls were conducted by Research 2000 of Rockville, Md. "We're pleased to be ahead," Donnelly said in response to the poll, adding his belief that the outcome will be close because of the makeup of the district. "We've got a ways to go," Donnelly said. "I think we've got 50 days left," Chocola said, adding, "I've always said it will be a competitive race. It still will be." The poll indicated that the war in Iraq is the single most important issue for voters, with 20 percent of respondents saying that it will determine how they cast their vote on Nov. 7. Other top issues listed by those polled are the economy (13 percent), the

war on terror (12 percent), and taxes/spending (11 percent). Donnelly said the response on issues shows how smart and well-informed voters are. "Everyone is aware of Iraq," Donnelly said. Ali said the fact that 6 percent of those polled listed "toll roads" as an important issue "works against Chocola." Donnelly agreed, saying "our congressman should have spoken up for us" by talking to the governor about his plan to lease the Indiana Toll Road and by trying to block the move in Congress. Chocola disagreed, saying, "I don't sense the Toll Road is driving this election." Polling conducted Sunday on behalf of Chocola shows the incumbent with a 45.5 to 40.5 point lead over Donnelly. The poll, conducted districtwide by Mercury Public Affairs, a company based in New York City, surveyed 300 likely voters and had a margin for error of plus or minus 5.65 percent. Daniels said in South Bend on Tuesday that Chocola should be absolved for the toll road lease. "I think it's really unfair. They can blame it on me. Chris Chocola had nothing to do with it." National Republicans have jumped into the 2nd CD congressional race with a television ad that attacks Democratic challenger Joe Donnelly by linking him to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (Mark Schoeff Jr., **HPR**). Like a similar spot in the 8th CD targeting Brad Ellsworth, the GOP argues that electing a Democrat locally means that voters may be enabling Pelosi to become Speaker of the House, if the Democrats take over. Pelosi is portrayed by Republicans as a San Francisco liberal who is weak on national security and taxes. At a Tuesday media availability, NRCC Chairman Tom Reynolds (R-NY) said that Chocola had been the victim of a "pile on" by interest groups who have been on the air in the district. "We're at a point where it was a good time to come in and help him," said Reynolds, who would not reveal how much money his organization is spending on the ad. The NRCC didn't telegraph its buy because time, at approximately \$50 per point, is fairly inexpensive in the market. "You really don't have to show what you're up to because the price is not as much" as it is elsewhere in the United States. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee countered that recent polls, which show Donnelly and Ellsworth leading their races, prove that the NRCC attacks aren't sticking. "Brad Ellsworth and Joe Donnelly have made it very clear that when they go to Washington they will be an independent voice for Indiana families, unlike Chris Chocola and John Hostettler, who have repeatedly rubber stamped GOP policy," said Adrienne Elrod, DCCC spokeswoman. "Voters are yearning for a change." Former U.S. Rep. John Brademas will deliver the keynote speech at a fundraising breakfast for Democratic congressional candidate Joe Donnelly. The event will be from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Sept. 28 at Windsor Park Conference Center, 4020 Edison Lakes Parkway, Mishawaka. Reservations are required and cost \$20 per person. **Status:** TOSSUP

Congressional District 7: Republican: Eric



Dickerson. Democrat: U.S. Rep. Julia Carson. **Geography:** Indianapolis. **Media Market:** Indianapolis. **People:** Urban 99.7%; median income \$36,522; poverty 13.5%; race white 63, black 29.4%, Hispanic 4.4%, Asian 1.3%; blue/white collar 26/58%; **2000 Presidential:** Gore 55%, Bush 43%; Cook Partisan Voting Index: D+6. **2002 Results:** Carson 77,478 (53%), McVey 64,379 (44%). **2004 Results:** Carson 121,303, Horning (R) 97,491, Campbell (L) 4,381. **2006 Forecast:** So, it's the old "when did you stop beating your wife?" trick. Dickerson is accusing Carson of negative campaigning after she released information to reporters about his arrest in a domestic abuse case in 1991 (Schneider, Indianapolis Star). Dickerson faced preliminary charges of battery and disorderly conduct based on allegations that he beat his wife and bit his teenage daughter. But the case was dismissed after his wife and daughter declined to testify, according to court documents found in storage by the Marion County prosecutor's office and released Wednesday. Carson disclosed the arrest during a meeting with the Indianapolis Star editorial board Monday, saying Dickerson has "been running as Mr. Righteous, Mr. Righteous, when in fact, he beat his wife up to a pulp." In checking out the claim, a Star reporter called Dickerson on Monday to ask about the accusation. "That's not true," said Dickerson. He then went on local radio shows Tuesday to complain about Carson's tactics. Dickerson supporters quickly cried foul, maintaining Carson was trying to deflect attention from her own record and put the Indianapolis businessman on the defensive. The two are running in Indiana's 7th Congressional District, which includes most of Marion County. Dickerson said the only thing that happened 15 years ago was a loud argument after his son crashed his Corvette. He said that shouting scared his then-teenage daughter into calling police. "No hitting ever took place," he said, contradicting the police report taken Aug. 23, 1991. In a letter later that month to prosecutors asking them to drop the case, his wife insisted she was safe. "I am not a battered woman," Paula Dickerson wrote in the Aug. 31, 1991, letter obtained Wednesday from the Marion County prosecutor's office by The Star. "I am not going to testify as a state's witness against my husband for him touching me while angry." Question for the Carson campaign: If she had this election in the bag, why did they employ the nuke? **Status:** SAFE CARSON

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:** A Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee television ad argues that Hostettler has voted against federal disaster aid on several occasions. Offering pictures of damage wrought by storms, flooding and Hurricane Katrina, the Democrats' ad unveils a new line of attack: It says Hostettler has changed and asks what has happened to him. "What's happened to John Hostettler? After storms ravaged Indiana, he voted to adjourn Congress before flood relief was secured," the ad asks. "Instead of members of the House waiting for an unknown amount of time ... John Hostettler, who had a number of meetings with constituents, voted to adjourn," Jahr said. But Tell City, Ind., Mayor Bill Goffinet said after the May 22 vote that Hostettler's refusal to stay an extra day in Washington could delay grants to repair and rebuild communities damaged by the floods (Evansville Courier & Press). Goffinet said Hostettler "abandoned families struggling to rebuild their homes by jumping on a plane to get out of town." Washington Republicans are confident that their TV ads in the 8th CD are rattling Ellsworth, who is challenging incumbent GOP Rep. John Hostettler (Mark Schoeff Jr., **HPR**). A spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee points to the fact that Ellsworth put out his own ad addressing an attack linking him to House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi. "Candidates don't respond to ads if they're not moving numbers," said Ed Patru, NRCC deputy communications director. Ellsworth campaign manager Jay Howser shot back that Ellsworth was trying to set the record straight. "Of course we're going to respond to lies," he said. "We're not going to let the NRCC special interests make Brad into something he's not." The Pelosi ad follows a summer NRCC ad campaign that tried to cast doubt on Ellsworth's record as sheriff. The buys are financed by "big oil, big drug companies and big insurance companies," Howser claimed. "The special interests in Washington are doing all of John Hostettler's work for him," he said. "They're fighting against Brad Ellsworth's effort to change the way Washington works." Under heavy bombardment from Republicans linking him to congressional liberals, Brad Ellsworth fought back Monday with language linking Rep. John Hostettler's, R-Ind., campaign to a lobbyist convicted of criminal charges (Langhorne, **Evansville Courier & Press**). The Vanderburgh County sheriff and 8th District Democratic candidate released a statement saying there



is "something insidious" about Hostettler's campaign and accused it of accepting "dirty special interest money." The Ellsworth statement drew a direct connection between Hostettler and lobbyist Jack Abramoff, who pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy, tax evasion and mail fraud. "Hearing Brad Ellsworth complain about special interest money is a little like hearing Ronald McDonald complain about a high-calorie diet," Patru said in a written statement. Hostettler's campaign declined to comment on the Ellsworth charges. The Leagues of Women Voters of Knox County, Southwest Indiana, and Vigo County will host a debate between the candidates for U.S. Congress from the 8th District in Indiana (**WTWO-TV**). A date has been agreed upon by Congressman John Hostettler's Campaign and the Campaign of Sheriff Brad Ellsworth of Wednesday, October 4, 2006 at 7 pm CDT to be held in the studios of WVUT (PBS) in Vincennes. The following television stations will be televising the debate live: WVUT, WNIN, WTIU, and WTWO. In addition the debate will be aired on the Public Radio stations in the above markets. **Status:** TOSSUP

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:** A Southern Indiana television station has given up plans for a 9th Congressional District debate in New Albany, citing problems securing a date and a location agreeable to the candidates (**Louisville Courier-Journal**). In an e-mail message released yesterday by Libertarian Eric Schansberg's campaign, Indiana9 station manager David Smith said the debate was canceled. Late yesterday, Smith declined to comment about the reasons for the cancellation. But he said the station has re-broadcast a previous debate in Bloomington between Schansberg, Republican incumbent Mike Sodrel and Democrat Baron Hill three times and hopes to do so again. All three candidates had agreed at least tentatively to the Oct. 1 debate organized by the Jeffersonville-based Indiana9, WVHF-TV. The station had planned to hold the debate at Indiana University Southeast. Hill and Schansberg signed a debate agreement for the two-subject, 60-minute debate. But Sodrel's campaign manager, Cam Savage, then said that Sodrel might have to be in Washington that day for votes and proposed changing the date. "The majority leader is telling us we may be in

session," Savage said yesterday. "I don't want to agree to something and not be able to be there." Indiana Attorney General Steve Carter is seeking a preliminary injunction and has filed a lawsuit against the Economic Freedom Fund for making illegal, pre-recorded telephone calls to Indiana consumers in violation of the state's statute regulating automated phone calls (**HPR**). "The key is receiving information that provides some details of the call, including the number that was called and the time the call was made," Carter added. The campaigns of both Hill and Sodrel praised Carter's action Monday. Hill's campaign thanked Carter for "setting aside partisan alliances and doing what's right for all Hoosiers" (**Evansville Courier & Press**). Sodrel's campaign said it had been the target of similar automated calls. "It's the worst kind of politics, and they've got to stop," Sodrel spokesman Cam Savage said. **Status:** TOSSUP. ❖

Legislative Races

House District 20: Republican: LaPorte School Trustee Tom Dermody. Democrat: LaPorte City Councilwoman Andrea Renner. **2002 Results:** Budak 12,551, Gillon (L) 2,540. **2004 Results:** Budak 12,944, Spevak (D) 10,013, Schadowsky (L) 1,038. **2006 Forecast:** Dermody was a no-show with the governor (by design). Renner rallied about two dozen protesters at LaPorte City Hall, but accepted the \$4 million Major Moves cash for her city. Our Democratic sources tell us that tracking two weeks ago had Renner leading by 5 percent. Dermody backers say we're getting this race wrong, but offer no proof that points us in another direction. **Status:** TOSSUP

House District 21: Republican: State Rep. Jackie Walorski. Democrat: Bob Kovach. **2002 Results:** Mangus 10,722. **2004 Results:** Walorski 13,753, Kaser (D) 7,737. **2006 Forecast:** Democratic sources tell us their tracking shows this race as a dead heat. Walorski said she has been working on a bill to change the law to allow communities like Nappanee to invest in organizations such as the community foundation. **Status:** TOSSUP.

House District 30: Republican: State Rep. John Smith. Democrat: Ron Herrell. 2002 Results: Herrell (D) 9,017, Rudolph (R) 6,966, Fridholm (L) 379. **2004 Results:** Smith 12,398, Herrell (D) 11,279. **2006 Forecast:** Herrell suffered minor injuries during a Tuesday car accident in Kokomo. He is not expected to miss more than a day of campaigning. **Status:** TOSSUP.

House District 49: Republican: State Rep. John Ulmer. Democrat: Mike Puro. **2004 Results:** Ullmer 17,592. **2006 Forecast:** Local leaders in both parties continue to tell us this race is in play. **Status:** TOSSUP

House District 52: Republican: State Rep. Marlin Stutzman. Democrat: LaGrange County Demo-



cratic Chairman Dennis Rorick. **2002 Results:** Stutzman (R) 6,950, Sturtz (D) 6,701. **2004 Results:** Stutzman (R) 12,872, DeLucenay (D) 6,496. **2006 Forecast:** Rep. Stutzman appeared with Gov. Daniels during the toll road county tour last week. **Status:** TOSSUP.

House District 57: Republican: Shelby County Councilman Sean Eberhart. Democrat: J.D. Lux. **2002 Results:** Stine (R) 8,384, Wheeler (D) 5,429, Jester (L) 508. **2004 Results:** Messer (R) 16,004 **2006 Forecast:** 150 people turn out for a hog roast on Sunday to hear the Indiana Farm Bureau endorsement of Lux. Kent Yeager, director of government relations for Indiana Farm Bureau, said that ELECT trustees said "At Farm Bureau, we know that J.D. would be a great representative for this area," Yeager said. Bob Kraft, IFB state government relations director, said Lux's concern over property taxes - an issue that has been a high priority for IFB for many years - was the primary factor in the committee's decision. "His express willingness to consider significant and difficult alternatives to property taxes was a big factor in the endorsement," Kraft said. Lux fired off a press release about Eberhart over a Sept. 1 story that appeared in the **Shelbyville News**. The story said that three members of the Shelby County Council, including Eberhart, now receive coverage under the county's health insurance plan. "At a time when more and more Hoosiers no longer receive the benefit of health-care coverage for their full-time work, it is outrageous that these part-time officials expect the taxpayers to pay for their health-care coverage for attending one council meeting per month," Lux said. "Now that everyone knows they should never have received the benefit in the first place, they should do the honorable thing, and immediately withdraw from the health-care program and pay back all of the premiums and expenses that have been wrongfully paid for by the taxpayers." "My opponent stood with other House Republican candidates earlier this year and signed a pledge to eliminate the health-care coverage for former legislators and their families," Lux said in the release. "And to think, all the while the taxpayers of Shelby County were paying for similar benefits for him and his family, in violation of the county's own requirements." After Eberhart reviewed Lux's prepared statement, he fired back one of his own. "The personal attacks on my wife, Rebecca, and our three children demonstrate my opponent's inability to focus on the issues that matter to the people of the district," Eberhart said. "If we are going to start issuing requests of our opponents, I call on J.D. Lux to return the tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars that he received as a lobbyist for the gambling industry. It is hypocritical for my opponent to say that he will be a true representative for the people of District 57 when he has lined his pockets with money from a special-interest group." **Status:** TOSSUP

House District 77: Republican: Andrew G.

Smith. Democrat: State Rep. Phil Hoy. **2004 Results:** Hoy (D) 11,308, Hennig (R) 9,804, Garrett (I) 1,285. **2006 Forecast:** Smith last week called for increasing Indiana's minimum wage from the federal minimum of \$5.15 to \$7 an hour and then gradually increasing that to \$8 an hour (**Evansville Courier & Press**). "I've looked at the numbers, and what I've realized is the minimum wage today is lower in real inflation-adjusted dollars than at any point in the last 50 years," Smith said. "That tells me we can make an adjustment." Hoy found Smith's focus on the minimum-wage issue curious. "He's reading my playbook," Hoy said. "It sounds like he's trying to come at me from the left side." During a Tuesday debate, the two clashed on marriage. Hoy, asked by moderator Paula Boenigk in the opening question if he would support a state constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and woman, noted he opposed the amendment during the last legislative session and likely would do so again. Saying he was joined by all but one African-American member of the House in opposition, Hoy added, "They know, as I do, that this is a discrimination issue." Hoy said he favors traditional marriage, but would support "some sort of civil union" for same-sex marriage, and the amendment in question would require removal of "all sorts of rights for domestic partners" that some businesses offer. Smith, who supports an amendment to ban same-sex marriage, said, "I don't believe in discrimination," but marriage "is in trouble, under attack from all quarters," by judges wanting to redefine it. Traditional marriage supporters "didn't ask for this fight," Smith said, to which Hoy replied, "The people who are destroying heterosexual marriage are heterosexuals." **Status:** LEANS D

Senate District 41: Republican: Greg Walker. Democrat: Terry Coriden. Libertarian: Kenn Gividen. **1998 Results:** Garton 26,499. 2002 Results: Garton 21,918, Gividen (L) 3,350. **2006 Forecast:** Coriden and Walker will debate at 7 p.m. Tuesday Sept. 26 in the Napolitan Student Center at Franklin College. A second debate will take place in Columbus in October. **Status:** TOSSUP

Marion County Prosecutor: Republican: Prosecutor Carl Brizzi. Democrat: Melina Kennedy. **2006 Forecast:** Both campaigns are addressing the "experience" factor surrounding Kennedy. Brizzi wanted to "have fun" by "highlighting when inexperience takes over," so his campaign hired Carmel-based MediaSauce to produce a cartoon comparing Melina Kennedy's "inexperience" to a poor cosmetologist. Kennedy has an ad "150 People" in which she says Brizzi's office lacks leadership. She announced the endorsement of FILE (Fairness in Law Enforcement). Marion County Republicans began running an ad aimed at Mayor Peterson, saying he cut community policing levels by 25 percent and now Indianapolis has more violent crime than Washington, Newark, Cleveland and Miami. **Status:** TOSSUP ❖



BP to invest \$3 billion at Whiting refinery

WHITING - The news from BP PLC on Wednesday was big (**Post-Tribune**). Bigger than the Honda plant coming downstate. Bigger than the Toyota plant. Bigger even than construction of the new Indianapolis Colts stadium. With an investment of \$3 billion and promise of 2,500 construction jobs and 80 full-time permanent jobs, an expansion of BP Whiting's refinery, announced Wednesday, will provide a shot in the arm for economic development in the region and the state. Gov. Mitch Daniels, on hand for the announcement at the Purdue University Calumet Conference Center, also was thrilled with the news. He said the expansion is bigger than any other economic development project announced in his 20 months in office, including recent announcements by Honda, Toyota, SYSCO, Mittal Steel Co. and Sallie Mae. "We've had a lot of these days in the last 20 months ... But none bigger than today," Daniels said. BP said last year the Whiting refinery was one of two sites being considered for an expansion, along with Texas City, Texas, as the company wanted to increase its imports of Canadian crude oil, mostly from the Alberta province. But actually landing the \$3 billion investment over Texas City required some incentives. The Indiana Economic Development Corp. offered \$1.2 million in tax credits and about \$500,000 in training grants, Daniels said.



Daniels releases cost estimates for FDK

LAFAYETTE - Having approved its first balanced state budget in eight years, Indiana now can afford to begin implementing full-day kindergarten,

Gov. Mitch Daniels said Wednesday (Lafayette Journal & Courier). "In my opinion, it is affordable," said Daniels, speaking to journalists at a conference of the Indiana Associated Press Managing Editors in Lafayette. "Clearly affordable." Daniels is making full-day kindergarten a top priority in the legislative session that begins in January, when lawmakers begin writing a new two-year budget. Depending on whether it is implemented gradually or all at once, Daniels said, the first-year cost of full-day kindergarten could be as much as \$210 million. But Daniels said the state can assume its share of the cost.

Indiana jobless rate declines to 5.3%

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped for the month of August to 5.3 percent, down from July's rate of 5.7 percent and down from 5.5 percent a year ago, according to the monthly report released today by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent based on preliminary data, down from 4.8 percent in July. The number of employed Hoosiers on a seasonally adjusted basis in August 2006 was 3,068,700 compared with 3,037,600 in August 2005.

Legislative panel OKs coroner training

INDIANAPOLIS - The heart-rending case of mistaken identity involving two Taylor University students - where the parents of the deceased accident victim kept vigil at the bedside of the comatose survivor, believing incorrectly that she was their daughter - is prompting the state to require more training for

coroners (Evansville Courier & Press). A summer study committee of the Legislature on Wednesday approved a proposal to mandate more training for elected coroners and deputy coroners.

Elkhart, Fort Wayne team up on heating costs

ELKHART - In an effort to better plan for fluctuating natural gas prices this winter, the City of Elkhart has banded together with the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County in an effort to lower its utility costs (**Elkhart Truth**). The energy consortium includes Fort Wayne Community Schools, SouthWest Allen County Schools and NorthWest Allen County Schools. With the help of Maverick Energy Consulting, an independent firm, the city will be able to hedge a portion of its total gas usage at a wholesale rate. "We help them make sense of the marketplace," said John Righeimer, president of Maverick. "We're on their side of the table."

6 percent pay hike for Fort Wayne mayor

FORT WAYNE - Mayor Graham Richard said top city officials have met the city's goals, warranting double pay increases next year to compensate for not getting pay raises this year. The 2007 budget calls for giving the city's top 10 executives slightly more than a 6 percent raise after the officials received no bump in pay for 2006 (**Fort Wayne Journal Gazette**). The total increase for the 10 employees equals about \$55,000. "There hasn't been an increase of compensation to division heads since Jan. 1, 2005," Richard said. ❖



This Could be Dangerous



Abdul & Howey, 9 a.m. Every Monday
webcast @ www.wxnt.com