



GOP Secretary of State race volatile

Sullivan, Morales trade shots in month before convention floor fight

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana Secretary of State Holli Sullivan is a conservative Republican who has spent her entire career checking off all the right political boxes as she made her way from Evansville, to the General Assembly and then the southeastern corner second floor Statehouse office.



On June 18, she hopes to secure her own nomination for a full term in a convention field that includes perennial candidate Diego Morales and Knox County Clerk Dave Shelton.

Her biggest liability? It may be the fact that she was appointed to the office by Gov. Eric

Holcomb.

Yes, the same Gov. Holcomb who won reelection with a record 1.7 million votes in 2020; who secured

56.5% of the vote, just a shade under what his mentor, Gov. Mitch Daniels, did in 2008 at 57.8% (and just 1.56 million votes). The same governor who inspired the challenges to 25 House Republicans by the Liberty Defense PAC that claimed just one victory over an incumbent not facing another incumbent.

The same Gov. Eric J. Holcomb who has never had a job approval rating below 60%.

At this writing, Sec. Sullivan is rated by Howey Politics Indiana's Horse Race as a slight favorite. Her allies

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Scorecards & coalitions

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – It was on a flight from Indianapolis to Fort Wayne in March 2021 that U.S. Rep. Jim Banks proposed to House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy that Republicans “embrace our new coalition.”

In the mind of Banks, who chairs the U.S. House Republican Study Committee, the days of the GOP being part of the big business/country club set were over. In a resulting memo titled “Cementing GOP as the Working Class Party,” it left little doubt that Republicans – at least in the U.S. House of Representatives – will be doubling down on Donald Trump for the foreseeable future.

“Our electoral success



“As a nation we have to ask, when in God’s name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby? Why are we willing to live with this carnage? These kinds of mass shootings rarely happen anywhere else in the world. Why?”

- President Biden, reacting to the slaughter of 19 kids & 2 teachers





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Jack E. Howey
 editor emeritus
 1926-2019



in the 2022 midterm election will be determined by our willingness to embrace our new coalition," the memo began. "House Republicans can broaden our electorate, increase voter turnout, and take back the House by enthusiastically rebranding and re-orienting as the Party of the Working Class. There is an embittered and loud minority in the GOP that finds our new coalition distasteful, but President Trump's gift didn't come with a price tag."

There now is tangible evidence from the Indiana General Assembly that the GOP's super majorities are taking Banks's reorientation seriously.

In 2022, two of Indiana's largest business organizations, the In-

diana Chamber of Commerce and the Indiana Manufacturers Association, saw a surprising erosion of support from the normally reliable Senate and House Republican caucuses.

Both organizations annually "score" the votes of all 150 legislators, notifying legislators of their organizations' positions on legislation and amendments ahead of key votes.

The 2022 business scorecards were based on the success or failure of over 30 pro-economy, pro-jobs bills. Some of the issues appeared as top priorities for both organizations but their priorities weren't identical, nor were there instances where the two business behemoths were in opposition to one another. Both organizations found themselves

Indiana General Assembly
2022 Legislator Vote Scores

Indiana House	2022 Score	4-Year Agg. %	Indiana House	2022 Score	4-Year Agg. %	Indiana Senate	2022 Score	4-Year Agg. %
Abbott, David	81%	85%	Lauer, Ryan	81%	87%	Alting, Ron	76%	77%
Andrade, Mike*	61%	58%	Ledbetter, Cindy*	72%	81%	Baldwin, Scott*	85%	85%
Austin, Terri Jo	67%	65%	Lehe, Don	78%	87%	Bassler, Eric	87%	84%
Aylesworth, Mike	78%	85%	Lehman, Matt	76%	86%	Becker, Vaneta	73%	74%
Baird, Beau	76%	85%	Leonard, Daniel	75%	85%	Boehnlein, Kevin*	79%	79%
Barrett, Brad	78%	85%	Lindauer, Shane	70%	78%	Bohacek, Mike	71%	74%
Bartels, Steve	69%	83%	Lucas, Jim	79%	78%	Boots, Philip	81%	79%
Bartlett, John	63%	54%	Lyness, Randy	78%	85%	Bray, Rodric	85%	86%
Bauer, Maureen*	56%	54%	Manning, Ethan	82%	86%	Breaux, Jean	60%	56%
Behning, Robert	88%	90%	May, Chris	80%	86%	Brown, Liz	84%	84%
Borders, Bruce	82%	84%	Mayfield, Peggy	81%	84%	Buchanan, Brian	79%	85%
Boy, Pat	55%	52%	McNomara, Wendy	71%	85%	Buck, James	78%	79%
Brown, Timothy	83%	89%	Miller, Doug	81%	84%	Busch, Justin	81%	85%
Campbell, Chris	45%	52%	Moed, Justin	65%	62%	Byrne, Gary*	***	***
Carbaugh, Martin	77%	84%	Morris, Robert	85%	84%	Charbonneau, Ed	83%	87%
Cherry, Robert	79%	89%	Morrison, Alan	72%	80%	Crane, John	62%	76%
Clere, Edward	84%	91%	Moseley, Chuck	57%	55%	Crider, Michael	69%	79%
Cook, Anthony	82%	84%	Olthoff, Sharon	81%	89%	Donato, Stacey*	73%	82%
Davis, Michelle*	81%	83%	Nisly, Curt	45%	62%	Doriot, Blake	83%	80%
Davison, J. Michael*	75%	75%	O'Brien, Tim*	81%	85%	Ford, J.D.	69%	60%
DeLaney, Edward	55%	54%	Olthoff, Julie*	73%	82%	Ford, Jon	78%	80%
DeVon, Dale	78%	84%	Pack, Renee*	50%	54%	Freeman, Aaron	69%	73%
Dvorak, Ryan	47%	48%	Payne, Zach*	57%	70%	Garten, Chris	67%	81%
Eberhart, Sean	78%	80%	Plaff, Tonya	56%	60%	Gaskill, Mike	81%	79%
Ellington, Jeff	79%	85%	Pierce, Matt	53%	55%	Glick, Susan	79%	84%
Engleman, Karen	81%	88%	Porter, Gregory	48%	56%	Griffin, Michael*	***	***
Errington, Sue	56%	54%	Prescott, J.D.	69%	81%	Holdman, Travis	83%	86%
Fleming, Rita	72%	68%	Pressel, Jim	63%	83%	Koch, Eric	86%	79%
Frye, Randall	81%	82%	Pryor, Cherrish	55%	57%	Kruse, Dennis	70%	82%
GiaQuinta, Philip	59%	58%	Rowray, Elizabeth*	81%	84%	Lanane, Timothy	64%	61%
Goodrich, Chuck	81%	86%	Saunders, Thomas	68%	77%	Leising, Jean	78%	80%
Gore, Mitch*	70%	65%	Schaibley, Donna	77%	86%	Melton, Eddie	65%	57%
Gutwein, Doug	73%	84%	Shackelford, Robin	46%	54%	Messmer, Mark	85%	86%
Hamilton, Carey	55%	59%	Slager, Harold*	76%	84%	Mishler, Ryan	77%	83%
Harris Jr., Earl	56%	58%	Smaltz, Ben	75%	83%	Niemeyer, Rick	70%	75%
Hatcher, Ragen	44%	48%	Smith, Vernon	41%	51%	Niezgodski, David	73%	67%
Hatfield, Ryan	67%	61%	Snow, Craig*	78%	83%	Perfect, Chip	78%	86%
Heaton, Robert	82%	87%	Soliday, Edmond	80%	87%	Pol Jr., Rodney*	64%	64%
Heine, Dave	81%	87%	Speedy, Mike	86%	83%	Quaddoura, Fady*	65%	55%
Hosettler, Matt	55%	73%	Steuerswald, Gregory	78%	85%	Raatz, Jeff	75%	85%
Huston, Todd**	82%	89%	Summers, Vanessa	48%	54%	Randolph, Lonnie	61%	58%
Jackson, Carolyn	47%	55%	Teshka, Jake*	85%	86%	Rogers, Linda	85%	84%
Jacob, John*	43%	43%	Thompson, Jeffrey	79%	86%	Sandlin, Jack	72%	77%
Jeter, Chris*	65%	74%	Torr, Jerry	78%	88%	Taylor, Greg	65%	58%
Johnson, Blake*	60%	58%	VanNatter, Heath	82%	87%	Tomes, James	67%	74%
Jordan, Jack	77%	85%	Vermilion, Ann*	66%	79%	Walker, Greg	73%	78%
Judy, Chris	68%	79%	Wesco, Timothy	83%	84%	Walker, Kyle*	85%	79%
Karickhoff, Michael	79%	85%	Young, John	77%	78%	Yoder, Shell*	59%	51%
King, Joanna*	78%	81%	Zent, Dennis	81%	87%	Young, Michael	73%	72%
Klinker, Sheila	56%	61%	Ziemke, Cindy	85%	91%	Zoy, Andy	70%	77%

fending off anti-business legislation including House Bill 1001, which proposed to limit the ability of businesses to manage COVID in the workplace.

House Majority Leader Matt Lehman (R-Berne) authored the legislation, calling it a "Hoosier employee protection bill."

"We began to hear from constituents, 'Hey, I'm losing my job (for not getting vaccinated),'" Lehman said. "So it really drew the attention of, 'How do we put something together that guarantees that employee is protected, while not trampling on the rights of the employer?' So what this bill tries to do is walk that line."

After a House hearing on Jan. 18 that saw HB1001 pass 58-35, the Indiana Chamber observed, "It should be noted that the key driver behind this bill was House Republicans learning of health care workers who were concerned about being terminated for not being vaccinated. But while the U.S. Supreme Court recently struck down the Biden administration's vaccine requirement for employers with 100 or more employees, the Court maintained the mandate for health care workers. So that would supersede whatever state law is made on this matter and



Majority Leader Matt Lehman files HB1001 that was written to rein in pandemic mandates.

those health care employees who prompted this legislation cannot be aided by this bill. That begs the question why it would even make sense to move forward with the related provisions at the state level. The Indiana Chamber doesn't think it does."

A closer examination of the Chamber scorecard shows that only 28 of 70 House Republicans, or 40%, scored 80% or higher on the Chamber's priorities. Some 14 GOP senators, or 36%, scored 80% or higher on

Chamber positions.

Republican House members performed better on the Indiana Manufacturers Association score card with 55 House Republican House members (78%) scoring 80% or higher on IMA priorities. It was a different story for the Republican Senate with only eight GOP senators (20%) voting in favor of the IMA positions 80% or more.

By any measure this was a difficult and contentious session for many interests, not just business. That was the result of the COVID pandemic that generated an array of shutdowns and mandates.

Time will tell if these scorecards are anomalies or a concerning trend for business. ❖

GOP SoS race, from page 1

believe she will likely win nomination on a second ballot. They are gaming out that Clerk Shelton will likely finish third on the first ballot, with Sullivan attracting much of his support on a second ballot.

A number of Republicans we talked to don't rule out an upset victory by Morales, who has spent much of the past two years criss-crossing the state attending dozens of Lincoln Day dinners.

Why isn't Sullivan a slam-dunk favorite for nomination?

Call it the Pandemic Governor Syndrome.

Look no further than Massachusetts, where three-term Republican Gov. Charlie Baker had a 74% approval rating, but opted not to seek reelection. As The Bulwark's Jonathan V. Last observed, "That 74% approval rating that Gov. Baker has . . . who could possibly not like that guy? Oh, his own party. The Republicans. They hate him. Baker, the party's nominee each of the last three cycles, is not seeking reelection, and in a sign of intense friction between Baker and the party's conservative leadership, neither he nor Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito attended Saturday's convention."

In Arkansas, Gov. Asa Hutchinson was, accord-

ing to the AP, "conspicuously missing from the ads and the campaign trail is the state's top elected Republican" as the GOP chooses his successor. Like Baker, he has high approval ratings and a national profile that finds him on Sunday morning talk shows. But the AP notes, "It's also a sign of just how much the party that Hutchinson spent decades building here has shifted farther to the right and how much the state's politics have become nationalized."

In 2008, Gov. Daniels was on his way to that 58% reelection victory, yet he suffered a convention black eye when his endorsed candidate for attorney general, Valparaiso Mayor Jon Costas, lost a convention floor fight to Greg Zoeller.

As one GOP insider told HPI, "The biggest thing about Holli Sullivan is most people never heard of her when Gov. Holcomb appointed her. Diego Morales has invested his entire adult life into Lincoln Days, dating back to 2006. He knows hundreds of delegates and they know him and like him. I get Thanksgiving and Christmas emails from him on those days."

Part of Sullivan's predicament is that all three candidates have Southern Indiana roots, and none of them has a large delegation from Lake, Allen, Hamilton or Marion counties that become a cornerstone of support, though Sullivan is expected to do well with Vanderburgh Republicans.

Morales is well liked by the Mike Pence network, giving him some strength with social conservatives.

That the Sullivan-Morales showdown is potent has both sides claiming dirty tricks.

Sullivan allies point to a March 26 email from a "Forrest Gatrell" claiming to be the co-chair of the never Trump group "Country First" PAC which reads, "I strongly encourage you to support Secretary Sullivan's reelection campaign." The Morales campaign tweeted this "Never Trump" endorsement the following day as a way of painting Sullivan as aligning against the former president.

On May 17, IndyPolitics reported that "Morales' work history at the Secretary of State's office is resurfacing, except this time it was during his second tenure under Charlie White. Morales was disciplined in February 2011 for departing from the office early without receiving prior approval from a supervisor; poor execution of required daily tasks as assigned; incomplete event planning and management. Morales was offered a 30-day improvement plan; however, he resigned shortly thereafter afterward."

Morales has characterized the release of his employment records as a campaign attack. In an e-mail to supporters, he stated: "The desperation of the establishment appointee Holli Sullivan is obvious. I am outworking her and outraising her, crisscrossing all 92 counties listening to Hoosiers, and talking about the central issue of election security. Meanwhile, establishment appointee Holli Sullivan hides in her office in Indianapolis and tries to smear my record of service. I volunteered for the U.S. Army and served the public for five years in state government. I worked for the governor's office and Lt. governor's office, and twice in the Office of the Indiana Secretary of State. I left the secretary of state's office on good terms both times, as verified by my bosses Todd Rokita and Charlie White."

Morales went on to "highlight" Sullivan's "dreadful mismanagement" of her office. "Since Holcomb appointed her, morale has deteriorated and employee turnover has reached a stunning 30%. Her deputy secretary of state left, taking with him over eight years of election experience. She should be working on moving the office forward. Instead, she's taking credit for legislation that was introduced during the past administration, legislation she herself did not bother to push for as a State Representative."

The operative word in Morales' attack is "establishment."

Former state auditor Dwayne Sawyer sized up the three GOP contenders after the May 17, Hendricks County GOP breakfast: "Newcomer David Shelton was first up. He may be new to the race but seemed to have a grasp on what he thinks the job entails. I found his local elected experience gives him a broad understanding of what it might take to run a state-wide office. Sincere and focused, he believes his plan will improve our state's elections."

Sawyer continued: "Diego 'The Man' Morales gave us a great vision of why he is running. From his humble

beginnings, extensive education, vast and relevant work experience, military service, and more, Diego showed us his heart for the position. I think we can all agree that no one works harder than Diego. He went on the offensive as negative ads and attack pieces have recently come about. Communicating with great passion, he decried the accusations and the accusers and wanted to focus on the issues."

As for Sec. Sullivan, Sawyer observed that she "finished the morning with positive and encouraging numbers her office has accomplished. With grace and poise she extolled her award winning office's success. She can say she knows what the job takes after serving in the position."

Of these three candidates, none of them has ever been nominated for a statewide office. Morales finished third in the 4th CD primary with 15% of the vote in 2018, in a multi-candidate primary won by Jim Baird with 36% (former DWD Commissioner Steve Braun finished second with 29.5%). A controversial Braun mailer aimed at Morales backfired, allowing Baird to win.

This convention floor fight shows similar volatility. The next three weeks should be interesting. **HPI Horse Race:** Leans Sullivan.

GOP, Dem conventions on same days

For the first time in modern history, Indiana Republicans and Democrats will be holding conventions on the same dates, June 17-18, to nominate candidates for secretary of state, auditor and treasurer.

The Republican Convention will be held at the Indiana Farmers Coliseum, located at 1202 E 38th St., Indianapolis.

Indiana Democrats will gather at the Indiana Convention Center for the Hoosier Hospitality Dinner on Friday, June 17, and the Democratic Convention on Saturday, June 18.

U.S. Senate

McDermott reacts to Texas massacre

After learning about the mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas, Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr. issued the following statement: "Todd Young has done nothing since Sandy Hook. Young has done nothing since Pulse, Parkland, Indianapolis, Buffalo, and now Uvalde – and thousands of Americans have lost their lives. As we grieve the loss of our students and teachers in Texas, Todd Young is sitting in his office collecting donation after donation from the NRA to keep the status quo – all while wishing for thoughts and prayers in hollow statements. Senator, it's time to act or get out of Washington for those – like me – who do want to stop this violence and save our loved ones' lives."

McDermott challenges Young to 9 debates

Democratic U.S. Senator McDermott Jr. is challenging Sen. Young to meet him at nine debates across

the state to help Hoosiers decide who should represent Indiana in the U.S. Senate for the next six years (Carden, NWI Times). McDermott, the five-term mayor of Hammond, issued the challenge last week on his "Left of Center" podcast, where the U.S. Navy veteran previously offered to fight Young, a former Marine, in a boxing match for charity. "I challenge Todd Young to nine debates," McDermott declared. "I want one debate in each congressional district." The Young campaign declined to comment on McDermott's debate invitation. It generally has eschewed acknowledging McDermott's existence, except to say they're confident Young will defeat McDermott at the Nov. 8 general election. McDermott said he doesn't understand that attitude coming from any elected official. He said if he just hid out in his office as mayor the people of Hammond would not stand for it. Earlier this month in Fort Wayne, McDermott left an empty chair out for Young who he said was invited to join him to talk with northeast Indiana voters and both declined to show up. "You're that cocky? Good. Keep staying cocky because you know what happens when people are overconfident," McDermott said. "Todd Young doesn't intimidate me in the slightest bit. He doesn't intimidate me at all."

Young on lack of Trump endorsement

As more states hold primary elections ahead of the general election later in November, many GOP candidates seem to be getting measures based on whether they have received an endorsement from former President Donald Trump (Darling, WIBC). So far voters have been indifferent to Trump-endorsed candidates in primaries with some candidates cashing in big on the endorsement, while others have fallen flat. Sen. Young is squaring off with Mayor McDermott for his Senate seat in November. Young has not gotten an endorsement yet from Trump. Granted, Young did not have a primary challenger. "I think the proper narrative there is I was able to stand on my own two feet," Young said on Fox News Radio. "Republicans can make their own name, they can build their own reputations, and their own reservoir of trust with those people they represent."

Congress

1st CD: Mrvan seat not in play

Not only did Indiana Republicans opt against squeezing one more seat out of their congressional delegation, they solidified the status quo and potentially left the state without a competitive House race for the next decade (Gonzales, Inside Elections). Republicans need a net gain of just five seats in 2022 to retake the majority, but the fight for the House won't be taking place in the Hoosier State next year. Unless there are a couple of political earthquakes, Indiana will likely send seven Republicans and two Democrats to Washington for the foreseeable future. Indiana's 1st (Frank J. Mrvan, D): This northwest Indiana district would have been a target if Republicans

had chosen to draw a takeover opportunity. Instead, Mrvan's seat is virtually untouched. Joe Biden won the district under its current lines 54% to 45% and would have carried the redrawn seat 53% to 45%, according to calculations by Nick Roberts, a student at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. Considering Mrvan won by 16 points in 2020 and the seat has been held by a Democrat since the 1920s, it's up to Republicans to prove this is a winnable race, even in a good GOP year. **Initial rating:** Solid Democratic.

General Assembly

Recount Commission meets today

The Indiana Recount Commission will convene a public meeting regarding the petition for recount for the Republican primary nomination for election for Indiana House District 32 state representative at 10 a.m. today in the Ways and Means Committee Room 404. Republican candidate Suzie Jaworowski requested the recount in her race against Fred Glynn and Paul G. Nix.

Presidential 2024

Conway acknowledges Trump 2020 loss

One of Donald Trump's most steadfast aides acknowledges in a new book that the president lost the 2020 election and says he was ill-advised by campaign staff and the election deniers who surrounded him (Politico). "Despite the mountains of money Trump had raised, his team simply failed to get the job done. A job that was doable and had a clear path, if followed," Kellyanne Conway writes in her memoir, "Here's the Deal." "Rather than accepting responsibility for the loss, they played along and lent full-throated encouragement (privately, not on TV) when Trump kept insisting he won."

Trump's big Georgia flop

It's almost impossible to overstate how bad Georgia was for Donald Trump (Politico). There was Gov. Brian Kemp's thrashing of David Perdue, the former senator recruited by Trump to run against him. Then there was Rep. Jody Hice, the Trump-backed candidate for secretary of state who ran so far behind incumbent Brad Raffensperger that he failed even to force Raffensperger into a runoff. It got even uglier for Trump further down the ballot. Trump's pick for attorney general, John Gordon, got walloped by incumbent Chris Carr, with roughly 500,000 votes separating the two.

Brooks, Britt in Alabama runoff

Alabama's Republican primary for U.S. Senate is going to a June runoff between Katie Britt and U.S. Rep. Mo Brooks, who overcame losing former President Donald Trump's endorsement to remain a contender for the GOP nomination. ❖

Can McDermott be Indiana's 'Rich Strike?'

By JACK COLWELL
South Bend Tribune

SOUTH BEND – If an 80-1 longshot can win the Kentucky Derby, can Democrat Tom McDermott win the U.S. Senate race in Indiana?

Upsets do happen, in politics as well as in sports. But chances of McDermott defeating Republican Sen. Todd Young this fall in Indiana, where no Democrat has won a statewide race in a decade, appear worse than those faced by the Derby winner. Rich Strike at least began the race from the same starting line.



McDermott starts from way back, in name recognition, funding and organization. And he's running on an unfavorable bright red track in a red state carried twice in landslides by Donald Trump.

Still, McDermott could be a winner in losing, just as an underdog sports team wins respect and encourages its fans about the future by competing impressively even though a championship is out of reach. That's the realistic hope of Hoosier Democrats. Also, of course, you never say never, no matter the odds.

Indiana Democrats sank so low in 2020 that their nominee for governor, the forgettable Woody Myers, their ticket leader, didn't even get a third of the vote. It was a joke.

McDermott is no joke. He is a five-term mayor of Hammond, winning big there now after breaking a 20-year Republican hold on the mayor's office. The 53-year-old Notre Dame Law School graduate long has been talked about as a potential statewide candidate. He is a Navy veteran who served on a nuclear submarine.

To be competitive against Young, a highly formidable incumbent, McDermott must count on fundraising help to get his message out statewide and on three issues looming in importance.

Funding? At the end of the first quarter of the year, Young had \$6.1 million cash on hand; McDermott had \$248,000. Money isn't everything, but McDermott must do

better for a first-class campaign.

Issues?

Abortion: The expected Supreme Court decision striking down Roe v. Wade will incentivize women supporting abortion rights to vote. McDermott agrees with them. Those with opposite views, supporting the end of Roe, also will have incentive to vote. Young agrees with ending Roe. In some states, there will be a significant advantage for Democrats on this issue. In Indiana, any Democratic advantage could be smaller.

Infrastructure: Young, although involved in bipartisan negotiations on the infrastructure bill, voted against it. Infrastructure improvements, including significant ones for Indiana, are popular. And McDermott hits at Young for voting against them. One theory for why Young voted "no" as the bill headed for passage is that he did so to avoid a Trump endorsement of a Republican primary opponent, something that would have been a problem in Trumpiana. Young ended up without a primary opponent. He also hasn't been endorsed by Trump, no doubt because he voted to accept the Electoral College results and described Marjorie Taylor Greene, a favorite Trump conspiracy theorist, as "nutty."

Marijuana: McDermott, advocating legalization of marijuana, released a campaign ad showing him smoking marijuana. The filming was in Illinois, where it has been legalized. The appeal is to young potential voters who usually don't cast ballots in non-presidential elections. If they vote, they will tend to vote Democratic.

Is there a chance for Democrats to win control of the Indiana House or Senate? No. But it would be a significant step if at least Republicans didn't continue with supermajorities that relegate Democratic legislators to hopelessness.

Could Democrats win a statewide race and more than just two U.S. House seats? Probably not. But chances could improve with an effective ticket leader.

Could McDermott, such a longshot, actually win the race? Well, both McDermott, seeking to revive Democratic hopes, and Young, seeking to avoid Republican complacency, would cite the sage advice attributed to that great analyst Yogi Berra: "It ain't over till it's over." ❖



Holcomb's transgender bill veto overridden

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indiana General Assembly overrode Gov. Eric Holcomb's veto of HEA1041 which bans transgender athletes from playing female sports.

The House voted 67-28 while the Senate voted 32-15.

"I want to thank the overwhelming support from Hoosiers across the state on this important matter. HEA1041, the purpose of this bill is to maintain fair competition in girls' sports

now and in the future," said State Rep. Michelle Davis, R-Whiteland, who authored the bill and defended it on the House floor Tuesday. "As a former Division I athlete, I know athletes deserve a fair competition and an even playing field and this bill ensures just that, a fair and equal opportunity for Hoosier girls. Ladies and gentlemen of the Chamber, HB1041 does this. It prevents a biological male from participating on a designated team or sport or girls or women athletic team or sport. It requires the schools and athletic associations to follow the grievance or protest procedures that are already in place. And if there's no protest or grievance currently in place, they are allowed to establish one. It establishes a civil action for violation. Lastly it establishes immunity for schools and athletic associations for acting in compliance. Today your vote will send a clear message that Indiana will protect the integrity of female sports."

In the Senate, State Sen. Stacey Donato, R-Logansport, speaking for the override in the Senate, said, "The rationale is this bill is simply protecting fair competition in girls' sports. Title IX has long recognized that it is reasonable to give boys and girls separate athletic opportunities in school because of a biological difference that gives boys a competitive edge in many sports such as running and swimming."

Donato said that in California, there were 50 boys who jumped higher than the girls' state all-time record holder in the high jump. "This bill is about protecting fair competition," Sen. Donato said.

She was questioned by Sen. Lonnie Randolph, D-East Chicago. "How many cases do we have in Indiana?"

Donato: "There was one."

Randolph: "How about right now?"

Donato: "None."

Randolph: "We're looking for a solution to a problem that doesn't exist."

Donato: "That is your opinion."

State Sen. J.D. Ford, D-Indianapolis, called it "unnecessary, unkind and unconstitutional" saying it could negatively impact the 1,300 transgender students in the state. He said that Attorney General Todd Rokita "is literally champing at the bit" to prosecute transgender cases.

The original votes on HB1041 were 32-18 in the Senate and 66-30 in the House.

Gov. Holcomb vetoed the bill on March 21, saying, HEA1041 "falls short" of its intended goal of providing a clear and consistent state policy. And, he said, it's a solution for a problem that doesn't exist in Indiana. "It implies that the goals of consistency and fairness in competitive female sports are not currently being met," Holcomb wrote. "After thorough review, I find no evidence to support either claim even if I support the overall goal."

Holcomb said in a statement following the override that his "position hasn't changed," adding, "There remains zero cases and the process, which is managed by the (Indiana High School Athletic Association), is working. I stand behind my decision to veto HB 1041," he said.

"Today's action only strengthens the promise of Title IX, which has had the most profound impact on ensuring women have equal opportunity in sports for nearly 50 years. It's important for Indiana to not only recognize the contributions and achievements made by female athletes, but to also ensure those opportunities are secured now and in the future," said House Speaker Todd Huston (R-Fishers).

House Democratic Leader Phil GiaQuinta of Fort Wayne lamented that Republicans focused on divisive cultural issues that "won't do anything to help move the state of Indiana forward, adding, "Certainly, we have some pressing issues out there that are affecting Hoosiers every day, specifically,

including the high price of gasoline that we're seeing all over the state. Wish we could have potentially used this day to better help Hoosiers."

Indiana Democratic Chairman Mike Schmuhl reacted, saying, "The Indiana High School Athletic Association admitted there was no unfair advantage occurring in women's sports, and Governor Eric Holcomb's veto proved the Indiana GOP's partisanship had crossed the line. It became very clear House Enrolled Act 1041 was less about facts and more about fulfilling a national party purity test. Indiana Republicans even admitted this strategy themselves - and it's why they partnered with a national hate group to pass House Enrolled Act 1041. The Indiana GOP's choice to override Gov. Holcomb's veto will be remembered as the time when elected Republicans used the power of



State Rep. Michelle Davis defended the override of HEA1041 on Tuesday.

their offices to bully innocent children. And unfortunately, this law and the impending 'Don't Say Gay' law set to be introduced next year will usher in a form of bullying LGBTQ adults survived and long hoped future generations wouldn't have to experience. They're creating this heart-breaking future and simply do not care."

ACLU files suit on HEA1041

The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana [filed a lawsuit](#) Tuesday challenging House Enrolled Act 1041, which bans transgender girls from participating in school sports. The Indiana legislature overrode Governor Holcomb's veto of HEA 1041, despite the fact that similar laws have already been blocked or temporarily enjoined in other states. The lawsuit was filed on behalf of A.M., a 10-year-old girl who plays on her school's all-girls softball team. The new law, which would go into effect July 1, 2022, would deny A.M. the right to rejoin her team because she is a transgender girl. According to the complaint, playing softball has helped A.M. to more fully experience her life as a girl. Not allowing her to do so in the fall would be a painful, constant reminder that she is not accepted by the world as the girl that she is. "A.M. knows who she is better than anyone else, myself included. Despite that, she has had trouble in the past with self-confidence. When she joined the softball team last fall, it helped her come out of her shell. I watched as she bloomed and felt more at ease in her skin," said A.M.'s mother. "When my daughter learned about this law, she was hurt and angry. She wants to stand up for girls like her, as well as herself, because she knows how upset they are right now. She wanted me to share that 'We can't expect kids to say the Pledge of Allegiance and Liberty and Justice for All while not giving liberty and justice to all.'" The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, asserts that preventing A.M. and other transgender girls from participating in girls' athletics is discrimination on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX, and also represents discrimination on the basis of transgender status, as well as sex, in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution.

"When misinformation about biology and gender is used to bar transgender girls from school sports it amounts to the same form of sex discrimination that has long been prohibited under Title IX, a law that protects all students – including trans people – on the basis of sex and it denies the promise of the Constitution of equal protection under the law," said Ken Falk, legal director at the ACLU of Indiana. "Girls like A.M. simply want to access the same opportunities as their peers and denying them that right jeopardizes their mental health and physical well-being."

Banks, Walorski reacts to veto override

U.S. Rep. Jim Banks released the following statement in response to the Indiana legislature overturning Governor Holcomb's veto of HB 1041, legislation to pro-

hibit biological males from competing in women's or girl's athletics in K-12 schools. "I'm proud of our Statehouse for setting a good example for legislatures nationwide, and most of all, for standing up for Hoosier girls and their parents. I strongly believe that protecting women's sports is an issue that will soon unite all Republicans and I am working hard to make sure that Congress passes similar legislation after we retake the majority." U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski added, "As a young Hoosier growing up in Northern Indiana, I experienced firsthand the benefits of girls' sports. Athletics build character and teach foundational skills, and we must continue to protect these opportunities for girls and women. I'm glad to see the Indiana General Assembly act to protect the integrity of girls' sports in Indiana."

Summer study committees

House Speaker Todd Huston (R-Fishers) released a [list of study committee topics](#), which state lawmakers will review during the summer and fall months.

Huston, chair of the Legislative Council, convened the group's annual meeting to assign legislative study topics on Tuesday at the Statehouse. The council comprises eight members of the Indiana Senate and eight members of the Indiana House of Representatives, and the chamber leaders alternate as chair each year. "House and Senate lawmakers will do deep dives into a wide range of issues, which could come before the legislature in the 2023 session," Huston said. "These committees are a critical part of the legislative process as they give us an opportunity to fully vet complex topics and identify potential solutions." Huston said study committees will meet during the interim months to review hot-button topics and potentially make recommendations for the 2023 General Assembly to consider for new laws. House and Senate leaders will assign members to each study committee in the coming weeks.

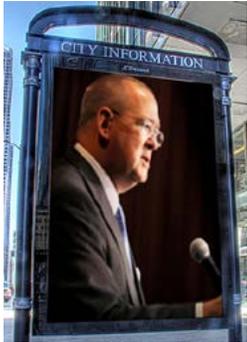
Huston orders marijuana studied

Maybe Indiana won't be the last state to legalize marijuana after all. Leaders of the Indiana General Assembly agreed Tuesday to study the potential health benefits and decriminalization of THC products, including marijuana, Delta 8 and Delta 9, as a prelude to possible legislative action during the 2023 session that begins in January (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). The Legislative Council voted unanimously to task the interim study committee on public health, behavioral health and human services with consulting experts and taking public testimony on THC issues during one or more meetings expected to be held this summer or fall. "It's a way to look at it comprehensively and what should be the policy of the state of Indiana," said House Speaker Todd Huston, R-Fishers, chairman of the Legislative Council. "There definitely is more study needed around Delta 8 and Delta 9." ❖

Lack of college grads is clobbering our economy

By MICHAEL HICKS

MUNCIE – Whenever I explain why Indiana needs more kids to attend college, I get some version of the comment, “a young person doesn’t need college to do well; we need more people in the trades.” While it is true



for a few talented individuals, that is not true for a city or state. Economists call this the ‘fallacy of composition,’ which I can explain with a few facts.

In a typical year, more than 85,000 Hoosiers turn 18 years old. Of these, fewer than 75,000 finish high school, and of these fewer than 42,000 head to college. Ultimately, about 60% of those will complete their degree. That means

the state’s pipeline of college-educated workers is today about 27,000 per year. However, the net loss from brain drain is about 10% and growing. That means Indiana can expect only about 25,000 college graduates per year to finish college and live in Indiana.

This is an economic development disaster. To see how this hobbles Indiana, we should consider how national labor markets value education.

Nationwide, about eight in 10 of all net new jobs go to four-year college graduates. The remaining two in 10 jobs go to those who hold either an associate degree or have been to some college. This means that if Indiana were growing like the national economy, all the new job growth would go to those who’d been to college. Demand for workers who haven’t been to college would be limited to replacing positions of retiring non-college workers. Perhaps it is a bad trend, but it is a 30-year trend that seems certain to continue.

In a typical year, roughly 25,000 retiring workers hold a high school diploma or less, but Indiana’s educational system delivers roughly 40,000 workers with no college plans. However, in that same year, about 31,000 retiring workers hold at least some postsecondary education (either some college or a degree). The reason there are more retiring workers with degrees is that maybe half the folks holding a high school degree or less don’t work.

This means that Indiana oversupplies the market for non-college educated workers by about 15,000 kids each year, and undersupplies college graduates by about 6,000 kids. That in part is why so many people who haven’t been to college never work, and why almost everyone with a college degree does. These facts explain nearly all of the slow growth that plagues Indiana’s economy. They also explain why wages are declining for the oversupplied non-college graduate, and why business-

es needing lots of college graduates will choose to locate in places outside of Indiana.

The “fallacy of composition” is the mistaken belief that what is true of one person is also true of the group. The math surrounding job openings in the skilled trades should silence those who think they offer a meaningful option for most Hoosier students.

Today, Indiana has about 36,000 adults in the skilled trades – carpenters, plumbers, masons and electricians. Most of these workers earn good money, have reasonable job security and see opportunity for upward mobility. There is abundant opportunity for owning a business or doing specialty work within the trade. For an individual, the skilled trades are as fine and honorable a career choice as anything available.

Of those 36,000 trade workers, 2% to 3% retire each year, and a few change jobs, mostly into other trades. Over the past 20 years, the number of jobs for the skilled trades has declined by about 0.5% each year. That means that of those 40,000 Hoosiers turning age 19 next year who won’t be in college, maybe 1,000 jobs in the trades will become available. That is roughly the same number of Ph.D.s awarded in the state each year. I’d encourage any young person who is interested to earn a doctorate or master a trade. Both are great options for a smart, hardworking young person, but together will only account for about 2.5% of job openings each year.

Now, I know some folks will still argue, “but I cannot find a plumber; we need more kids in the trades.” That’s simply mistaken. Since 2000, employment in the skilled trades in Indiana is down more than 10%. Brick mason employment is down 29.3%, electricians down 4.9%, carpenters down 15.4% and plumbers down 9.2%. Wages in each of these trades are also down, at an inflation-adjusted average of 11.2% since 2000. As high school economics classes make clear, when employment shrinks and wages are down, there’s not a labor shortage.

The fact is that Indiana is chock full of other occupations that will decline in number over the coming generation. Over the next two decades, Indiana will have fewer factory jobs, fewer transportation jobs, and fewer construction jobs than are available today. Basically, every job that requires only a high school diploma or less is at risk of long-term job losses.

The simplest economic argument for sending more Hoosier kids to college is that it is where the jobs of the future will be. There is yet another benefit of having better-educated state. Wages for workers without a college degree are higher in places that also have a larger share of college grads. For example, for a construction worker, moving to a county with 10% more college graduates would boost their income by more than 10% or roughly \$6,000 per year.

The best way to boost wages for those without a college degree is to surround them with more college graduates. This is also the best way to boost your local population growth. Nationwide, 43% of population growth

occurred in the top 10% of counties by educational attainment. Only five of those counties are in Indiana – about half the number we should have given our size. The problem of oversupplying low-skilled workers and undersupplying high-skilled workers is not just an individual problem for Hoosier workers. It means that only a few select parts of Indiana will enjoy economic or population growth. The rest of the state will suffer economic decline.

Let me write this as plainly as I can. As long as Indiana continues to undersupply college graduates to the modern economy and oversupply those who haven't

gone to college, we will slip farther and farther behind the national average. Fixing this won't be easy, inexpensive or quick. Even with dramatic improvements, we are decades away from making it to "average" in terms of educational attainment or per capita incomes. It is a sad thing to admit that getting to "average" is an aspirational goal. ❖

Michael J. Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics at Ball State University.

Don't listen to Chicken Little

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – We are deluged with "news" that the American labor market is a shambles. Business owners say, "We can't get people to work, even with higher wages and improved benefit packages." Well maybe, just maybe, workers have had it with low wages and inadequate respect, and the worm has turned.



Maybe, COVID didn't make people lust for the days of old when workers were commodities instead of individuals. Or, perhaps, the whole labor shortage is that mountain made from a convenient mole hill.

"People today just aren't willing to work!" Strange, but the size

of the national labor force (those employed or seeking employment) was down in 2021 by just 1.4% from its pre-COVID 2019 peak. Of course, it's more impressive if we say the labor force is down by 2.3 million persons and then fail to mention the base we're talking about is in excess of 163 million persons.

"You can't ignore the fact that the portion of Americans in the labor force is 61.7%, its lowest level since 1976." Certainly, we can't ignore it. But don't forget we're coming off a peak of 67.1% in 1997. That's 25 years ago and there's a chance the nation has changed in that time.

Remember too, the labor force participation rate excludes from its population base persons 16 years and older who are incarcerated, in the military, in nursing homes or other long-term confinement. Growth in these

populations has been increasing over time, reducing the number of persons who might have been part of the labor force.

In addition, very large numbers of persons have been and continue to be Baby Boomers aging out of the labor force. Those born in 1946 are 77 in 2022 and the babies of 1963 will be 60 next year.

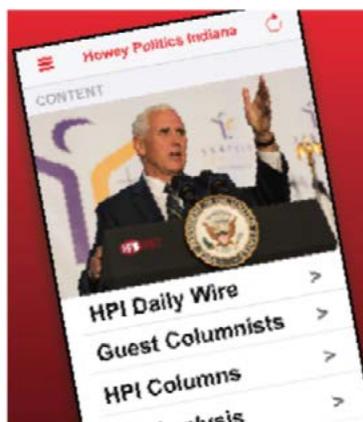
Another factor depressing the labor market would be parents staying home to school their children. Estimates of this activity vary from 1.8 to 2.5 million students. How many parents are involved is anybody's guess at this point.

"Part-time... that's what all these people want. You can't find anybody anywhere any more willing to work full-time." Actually, part-time employment peaked in 2010, at 19.7% of those with jobs. By 2021, it was down to 16.7%.

Employers believe the remedy for their labor woes is more vocational education, less education for life in a civil society. "Skill enhancement" is the mantra of the day. Will STEM at Pre-K sites be the next legislative mandate for education?

How about some things truly radical? Retrain management with lessons about the differences between the 19th and 21st centuries. Decongest institutional structures to reduce non-productive human overhead. Reform the media so that "terror-for-profit" is not their leading operational principle. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist. Reach him at morton-jmarcus@yahoo.com. Follow him and John Guy on



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The valiant Indiana 20th at the pivotal ‘Mule Shoe’

By CRAIG DUNN

CARMEL – In the spring of 1864, Ulysses S. Grant was ordered by Abraham Lincoln to leave his command of the Union forces fighting in the Western Theater of the Civil War and to proceed to the East where he would take command of the entire Union Army.



Grant, who has sometimes been criticized as a less-than-adoroit tactical commander, was brought East by Lincoln because he possessed the characteristic that the president valued most – he wasn't afraid to fight, and he was relentless. Grant also was a mathematician at heart who understood the basic numbers of the Civil War and was prepared to make whatever sacrifices were necessary to enable

the superior numbers of men and material which the North commanded to ultimately break the back of the rebellion.

Grant moved the Union Army into the entangled morass of the Wilderness and during May 5 until May 7 fought a bloody encounter with Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's gray-clad forces. The casualties were heavy with 2,246 killed and 12,037 wounded in Grant's forces and 1,495 and 7,928 wounded fighting for the Confederate Army. Prior to this time in the Civil War, Union generals in the Army of the Potomac had the annoying behavior of stopping after a bloody battle and either regrouping in place or withdrawing from the field of battle to restock men and supplies. This dubious behavior enabled Lee to slip off the hook after both Antietam and Gettysburg and allowed his smaller army to thwart every Union advance.

Seemingly true to form, after the three days of hard fighting, Grant ordered his wounded to be evacuated

from the field of battle and for his men to be prepared to march. Grant moved his army of 85,000 men to the east of the Wilderness battlefield where the weary veterans of the Army of the Potomac assumed that the Union forces would fall back to the north and the relative safety of Fredericksburg, Virginia. This time they were surprised when Grant ordered his army to turn to the south and toward the heart of the Confederacy. Grant was a different kind of general and he did not intend to let Lee slip away this time.

The 20th Indiana Volunteer Infantry had seen some of the hardest fighting in the entire Civil War and had been decimated by brutal fighting during the Peninsula Campaign, Second Manassas, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. The regiment had lost its commanding officers at Second Manassas and Gettysburg. Its new Col. William Taylor was exhausted from the ordeal of the Wilderness and as the regiment now moved to the south, it was commanded by Lt. Col. George Meikel.

The 20th Indiana was part of Gen. Winfield S. Hancock's Second Corps, and it was moving inexorably to its next rendezvous with history near a small town named Spotsylvania Court House. The regiment moved out on the afternoon of May 9, serving as skirmishers for the brigade of Brigadier Gen. Hobart Ward. As skirmishers, the job of the 20th was to serve as an active screen between the main Union forces and the main body of the Confederates.

As the men of the 20th prepared to cross the Po River, rebels hidden in the bushes on the far side of the river opened fire. Corporal James Torrence was struck in the head by a musket ball and killed instantly. Privates Reynolds and Fuller both went down when they were struck by the same ball that killed Torrence. Part of the Ward's Brigade was called forward and the Hoosiers and 99th Pennsylvania Infantry drove the rebels back from the Po. The Hoosiers were then subjected to a heavy bombardment by rebel artillery and the Confederate infantry then made a determined attack to drive the Indiana men back into the Union lines.

The Hoosiers thought that they might be al-

lowed to rest and recover from the past week of movement and hard fighting, but it wasn't to be. Lee's Army had entrenched itself along a line running east to west, obstructing the advance of Grant's Army. By a quirk of fate, the Confederate line had developed a massive bulge that resembled an inverted "V". The men all came to call this bulge in the Confederate line, "The Mule Shoe."

Gen. Grant penned a brief note to President Lincoln after the hard fighting on May 10. He told the president that, "I propose to fight it out along this line if it takes all summer." The note was written in ink, but it would be underlined in blood. In the sharp fight on May 10, Col. Emory Upton, commanding a brigade, had tried an innovative attack on the Confederate line that briefly succeeded but ultimately failed for lack of men and follow-up forces. The innovative attack was one that would be closely studied by military schools around the world and copied repetitively by World War II German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. Upton had attacked across a narrow line with his brigade regiments stacked vertically like a spear aimed at the rebel heart. The attack captured the attention of Gen. Grant who commented to his subordinate officers, "Today a brigade, tomorrow a corps."

Getting a full corps of 15,000 men aligned en echelon took all of May 11, but by early morning of May 12, the full Second Corps was ready. The men were ordered to build extensive campfires to mask the movement of the corps to the position of the launch point of the attack. They were also ordered to move as quietly as possible with anything that might rattle and alert the rebels to their presence to be left behind.

Gen. Hobart Ward had spent most of May 11 drinking, but instead of falling into a stupor, he was instead fortified by his liquor and ready to fight. The entire Second Corps was ordered to use the 20th Indiana as its guide regiment. All eyes would be on the Hoosiers and their Pennsylvania mates as they led the attack in the first line on the Confederate salient. Four hundred yards from the rebel line, the Union troops broke into a headlong run toward the Mule Shoe. The rebels were taken totally by surprise. The Hoosiers quickly were in and among the panicking Confederates and drove the southern men of Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson's division to the rear. The Indiana men commandeered rebel artillery and turned the big guns on the retreating Confederates. Johnson's division was shattered and thousands of his men were captured along with most of the artillery of Richard Ewell's corps.

The initial attack had been so successful that the men of the 20th Indiana became emboldened, and they rushed on toward the second and third lines of the Confederates. The Hoosiers moved forward bereft of any orders from their officers as the attacks became a disorganized wild rush toward their enemies. This reckless attack invited a strong rebel counterattack and as the Indiana men reached the third and last line of the Confederates, a terrific volley of musketry blasted all down the southern line and the most advanced men of the 20th Indiana were

mowed down like wheat. Privates Archer, Frantz, Briner and Coppeck were ripped to pieces by the first volley, killed instantly. Pvt. Stephens and Capt. Corey were severely wounded as the Confederates counterattacked and drove the Hoosiers back to the first line of rebel entrenchments.

The fighting at the apex of the Mule Shoe marked a nadir in the ferocity and inhumanity of the Civil War. Prior to this moment of battle, there had been ample examples of chivalry, honor, compassion and respect, even in the midst of the war's bloodiest battles. Men had often behaved as men and not as mindless, blood-lusting animals. Here, along the trenches of the Mule Shoe, no shred of honor remained.

Soldiers of both armies, who had been subjected to every imaginable deprivation, inconvenience and suffering, finally snapped and reverted to their primal instincts. Opponents stood toe to toe, bayoneting each other and swinging clubbed muskets, smashing heads and firing point blank into the faces of their opponents. No mercy was requested and none offered; only the mutual desire for annihilation. "Cheer and fire was all anyone did. Men tore off pieces of their clothing to wipe out their guns and then went to work firing again," Maj. Erasmus Gilbreath reported.

The men of the 20th died by the score in the bloodbath, many falling face down in the ever-rising mud which had thickened from the driving, cold rain now falling. Officers and men died hideous deaths that morning in the Spotsylvania trenches. Capt. Joh Thomas was felled by a bullet and his lifeless body was virtually dissected by the barrage of both rebel and friendly bullets. Capt. Lafayette Gordon nearly had his shoulder blown off by a musket shot fired from close range, a wound that would soon prove fatal. Lt. Michael Sheehan was struck down for the second battle in a row. Lt. John Bartholomew was severely wounded, and Capt. Thomas Logan was wounded again, his second in one week.

Darkness brought an end to the fighting at the Mule Shoe. That night a Confederate band played Handel's "The Dead March". The Union forces responded with a rendition of "Nearer My God to Thee." Thus ended the seven days of murderous combat at Spotsylvania.

As the roll was called by the surviving officers of the 20th Indiana, fewer than one 150 men answered. Eighty-five Hoosiers who climbed the hill at the Mule Shoe were either dead, wounded or missing. The flag presented to the regiment on their departure from Indianapolis, in April, was now riddled with forty-seven bullet holes.

As we come to Memorial Day, 2022, let us remember the courage, suffering and sacrifice made by those who came before us and gave their all so that we might enjoy our God-given freedoms. It is the least we owe the perished and maimed Hoosiers of the Mule Shoe. ❖

Dunn is the former Howard County Republican chairman.

Why good investigative journalism matters

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Recently, a couple of reporters at The New York Times published an intriguing story about conversations between House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy and other members of his leadership team. It was



shortly after the events of Jan. 6 at the Capitol, and they were talking about what to do about then-President Trump.

His conduct, McCarthy said, had been “atrocious and totally wrong.” Moreover, wrote Alexander Burns and Jonathan Martin in their article, McCarthy “faulted the president for ‘inciting people’ to attack the Capitol, saying that Mr. Trump’s remarks at a rally on the National Mall that day

were ‘not right by any shape or any form.’” He added, “I’ve had it with this guy.”

Burns and Martin have since published a series of articles on the subject, including McCarthy’s fears that some of his more extreme colleagues could themselves incite more violence. Not surprisingly, there have been plenty of denials, but the two reporters have countered with one key point: They have the audio recordings.

I happen to believe these stories are important for the insight they provide into key politicians’ thinking at a dark moment in our history – and on those politicians’ willingness to backtrack in the year since. But whether you agree or not, the willingness of two reporters to dig deep into what actually happened and set the record straight has sent shockwaves through Washington and cast the behavior of powerful officials in a new light.

This is what good investigative journalism does. It is an essential part of our representative democracy, offering all of us – the people who have the most at stake in who represents us in Washington and how they and other officials behave on our behalf – the chance to understand more fully what’s going on. I often think to myself how dull our lives would be without the difficult, important work that enterprising journalists do. They get for us the facts and, mostly, put them in context so that we can understand what we need to know.

I’m not going to recite a list of all the important stories that journalists have uncovered or helped to

explain; it would take us hours. But a quick look back at some relatively recent investigative work gives you a sense of the key importance they play.

There was the 2019 Washington Post story on a confidential “trove” of government papers documenting nearly two decades of U.S. officials’ misleading statements about the war in Afghanistan. And Ronan Farrow’s groundbreaking investigation of the sexual predation of Harvey Weinstein.

There’s been ongoing coverage of the dark corners of America’s war on terror, from Abu Ghraib to Guantanamo. The work by the Seattle Times on how failures of government oversight helped lead to the crashes of the Boeing 737 MAX. The Boston Globe’s earth-shattering investigations of abusive behavior by priests and the Catholic Church hierarchy’s efforts to cover it up.

It’s possible that just by reciting that tiny fraction of important work, I’ve spurred you to think of other examples, from Watergate to the exposure of corruption or malfeasance or toxic pollution or some other community harm where you live. And that’s my point; journalists are constantly finding and exposing the truth in ways that, ideally, spur us to improve our lives, communities, government, and democratic system as a whole. They have a lot of power – they can destroy the career of public officials and private-sector leaders – and certainly some of them have their faults, obsessing over feuds and conflict and giving them more attention than they deserve. But overall, I’ve found journalists as a whole and investigative journalists in particular to be intelligent, compassionate, and people of integrity.

And I’ll say it again; they’re vital to our representative democracy. We need the work journalists

do to remain a free and independent nation, with power residing ultimately in the hands of its citizens. There’s a reason that one of the first things authoritarians do is try to bring the press to heel. They understand, perhaps better than we who get to take these things for granted, how a thriving free press lets people form their own opinions. ❖



Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O’Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Looking at battle for legislatures across U.S.

By **LOUIS JACOBSON**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – In the coming years, state legislatures will almost certainly play a crucial role in American politics. Given the longstanding polarization and gridlock in Washington, D.C., state lawmakers will decide many key policies state-by-state – particularly on reproductive health issues if the Supreme Court overturns *Roe vs. Wade* this year. Legislatures could also try to meddle in presidential elections, as then-President Donald Trump asked some to do after the 2020 election.

Two years ago, when Trump was president and inspiring Democratic opposition, it looked like Democrats might be able to make gains up and down the ballot. On the eve of the 2020 election, the Democrats seemed to have a plausible chance of flipping as many as 15 Republican-held legislative chambers, compared to just 5 Democratic-held chambers that looked vulnerable to a GOP takeover. National Democratic organizations and donors went all in on “flipping everything.”

In the end, however, voters pulled the lever for Joe Biden – while hedging their bets by carrying Republicans to gains at almost every other level, including state legislatures. When all the ballots were counted, Democrats failed to flip a single GOP-held chamber; the GOP flipped two, both in New Hampshire.

Today, the playing field looks likely to be considerably smaller.

This is my first handicapping of state legislative control for the 2022 election cycle. It represents the 11th cycle I have handicapped state legislature control, dating back to the 2002 cycle. (Previous versions have been published in the Cook Political Report, the Rothenberg Political Report, Stateline.org, and Governing magazine.)

Our analysis is based on interviews with dozens of state and national political sources. We rate chambers on the following scale: Safe Republican, Likely Republican, Lean Republican, Toss-up, Lean Democratic, Likely Demo-

cratic and Safe Democratic. The categories labeled “Lean” and “Toss-up” are considered competitive or in play. “Likely” chambers aren’t expected to shift partisan control, but they could see seat gains by the minority party or are marginally less solid than “Safe” for the majority party.

At this point, we see four chambers as Toss-ups. Of these, three of four are held by Democrats and are considered prime GOP targets of opportunity: the Maine Senate and House, and the Minnesota House. Meanwhile, the fourth Toss-up is the Democrats’ best target: the Republican-held Michigan Senate.

Meanwhile, three chambers rate as Lean Republican. One is Democratic-held, and thus leans toward a flip: the Alaska House. (Control of the Alaska House is difficult to characterize: It has a coalition leadership with a breakaway Republican speaker and a Democratic majority leader, even though Republicans nominally control more seats. We’re considering it Democratic-controlled for the purpose of this analysis.)

The other two Lean Republican chambers are the Michigan House and the Minnesota Senate. Both are currently held by the GOP. (Not counting Alaska, Minnesota is the only state that has elections scheduled this year that has its two chambers under divergent partisan control -- Virginia is another, but it holds legislative elections in odd-numbered years.)

Finally, we rate three chambers Lean Democratic: the Colorado Senate, Nevada Senate, and Oregon Senate. All told, that’s 10 chambers that rate as competitive – a relatively small number for recent cycles. Most of them are held by Democrats, putting the party on defense.

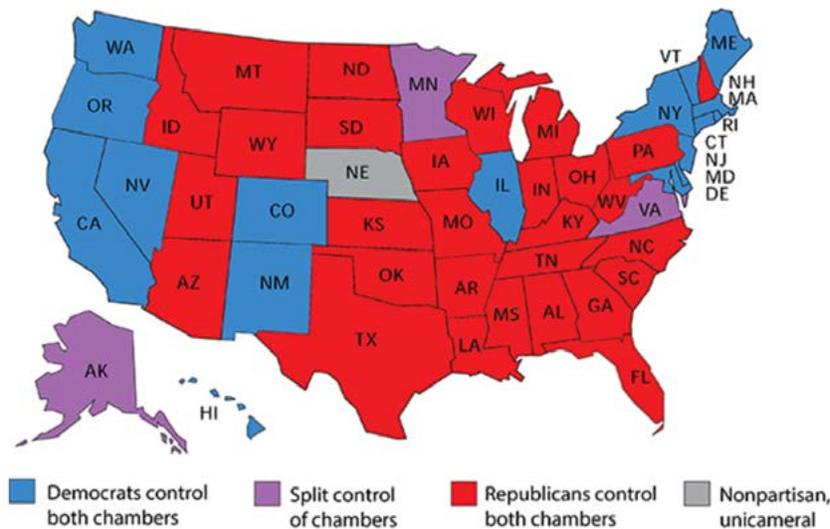
For the sake of comparison, our first handicapping of the 2020 cycle found significantly more competitive chambers – 15 – and the Republicans held two-thirds of them.

And in our first handicapping of the 2018 cycle, we found 18 competitive chambers – almost double the number we are seeing at this point for 2022. A majority – 10 of the 18 chambers – were held by Republicans.

In other words, the competitive landscape for legislative control in 2022 is notably smaller, and it’s more



Map 1: Current party control of state legislatures



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In other words, the competitive landscape for legislative control in 2022 is notably smaller, and it’s more

tilted against Democrats than it has been in recent cycles.

Currently, the GOP controls 61 legislative chambers while the Democrats control 37 chambers. (We're counting the Alaska House as Democratic. Nebraska's unicameral legislature, which is nonpartisan, isn't included in this count.)

Despite the GOP's small gains in 2020, they still control fewer chambers than the 65 they held prior to the 2018 election. And that was down from the 68 chambers the GOP held just before the 2016 election.

That said, the GOP has held a consistent edge in state legislative chambers for more than a decade. As recently as the run-up to the 2010 election, Democrats held a 62-to-36 advantage in chambers, but that degree of Democratic control has suffered from a combination of a strong GOP redistricting cycle following the 2010 census and the slow but permanent loss of yellow-dog Democratic chambers in the South.

One way to illustrate how the playing field has shrunk is to look at the chambers that we considered competitive in 2020 but aren't any longer. They include such Republican-held chambers as the Arizona House and Senate, the Florida Senate, the Iowa House, the North Carolina Senate, the Pennsylvania House and Senate, and the Texas House.

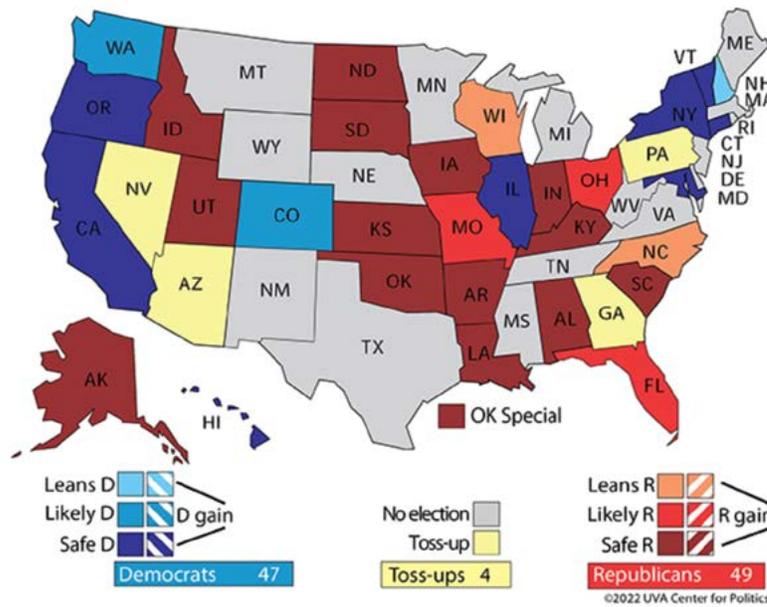
Today – at least for now – we have placed each of these chambers in either the Likely Republican or Safe Republican category. In some of these chambers, it's possible the Democrats could make some marginal seat gains, but it doesn't appear that actual chamber control is in reach for the Democratic minority.

A big reason for these shifts is that the Democrats control the White House, and the party that controls the White House tends to get punished in midterm elections. (Democrats benefited from that dynamic in 2018, making gains when Trump was in the White House.)

President Joe Biden's low approval ratings only strengthen the likelihood of a weak Democratic showing this fall. Republicans hope to use dissatisfaction with Biden's performance to claw back some of the suburban areas that had trended Democratic during the past 2 election cycles, even in such blue states as Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, and Oregon. The GOP's legislative gains during the off-year Virginia election in 2021 serve as a model.

Another factor aiding the GOP this year is redistricting. Favorable maps for Republicans have strength-

Map 1: Crystal Ball Senate race ratings



ened the GOP's hold on districts in Arizona and Texas, among other once-competitive states on the legislative battlefield.

Democratic hopes for state legislative gains in 2022 rest on 2 possibilities. One is that overturning *Roe vs. Wade* could energize Democrats, including younger voters who have been unhappy with Biden and might not otherwise turn out at the polls. The other is the possibility that high-profile

Republican candidates go too far for mainstream opinion, such as doubling down on conspiracies about the 2020 election or backing unpopular policies like ending abortion without exceptions for rape and incest or seeking to criminalize contraception. Some candidates in such states as Arizona, Michigan, and Nevada have taken far-right stands, and if they manage to win the nominations for their offices – or if legislative candidates stake out similarly controversial stands – it could have a negative effect on the GOP's ability to hold or flip certain chambers.

All in all, however, the size of the state legislative battlefield is small enough in 2022 that it could become a relatively status quo cycle. Only Alaska's House seems poised to flip control, possibly joined by a Toss-up chamber or two. (The 3 states with at least one Toss-up chamber – Maine, Michigan, and Minnesota – have relatively swingy electorates, making flips possible.)

We will reassess these ratings periodically before Election Day as the political environment develops, both nationally and locally. For now, what follows are our ratings and a thumbnail analysis for each state. To see the makeup of each chamber as of earlier this year, take a look at this table from the National Conference of State Legislatures. Map 1 also shows the current party control of state legislatures.

Indiana Senate: Safe R; Indiana House: Safe R

Republicans have solidified their control in Indiana. The new legislative maps created a few new Democratic opportunities, but ongoing GOP control, and probably even supermajorities, are not at risk. ❖

Bill Oesterle, IBJ: Recently, local blogger and self-described urban consultant Aaron Renn penned an article ["Revisiting Mitch Daniels' 'Truce' on Social Issues," May 4, aaronrenn.substack.com] dismissing the gubernatorial achievements of Mitch Daniels and advising Hoosier Republicans to pursue his version of a socially conservative agenda instead. Aaron's piece is remarkable for its revisionism, tortured logic and factual errors. I don't have nearly the space to attempt a point-by-point rebuttal. [Mark Lubbers wrote a good one that you can find here.](#) Instead, I will focus on his broader themes. Aaron completely disregards Indiana's perilous economic condition in 2004. He seems to imply that erasing \$700 million in debt, reforming a broken property tax system, solving a massive infrastructure funding gap, negotiating the Great Recession and so on had no positive impact on the state. Instead, he bemoans that Mitch and his lingering "Indianapolis Establishment" influences have cost Indiana its socially conservative soul. It is a strange anti-elitist conspiracy argument that attempts to appeal to rural Republicans by painting them as oppressed little guys. It also completely ignores the fact that Mitch crushed the self-styled social conservative Eric Miller by 50 points in the 2004 primary. Eric made similar arguments back then, and rural Republicans overwhelmingly supported Mitch. In spite of the many problems with Aaron's historical analysis, his policy advice is worse. He thinks Indianapolis "Establishment Republicans" run everything. They don't, by the way. He warns that they better pay more attention to the issues that matter to rural Republicans. As an example, he advises Gov. Eric Holcomb to conduct a "victory tour" promoting the passage of a law that allows Hoosiers to carry a gun without a permit. That suggestion sounded odd to me, but, according to Aaron, I am a "Metro Elite." So, for a fresh perspective on this, I called my buddies at the Cass County Fine Arts and Crappie Fishing Society. These are some 70-year-old guys that I hunt, fish and drink beer with from time to time. Unlike Aaron, they have owned and shot guns their entire lives. They are card-carrying NRA members, never attended college and all became successful fathers, farmers and business owners. They stepped out of central casting as Hoosier Rural Republicans. When I asked their titular leader Gary Yeakley his opinion of the permitless carry law, he called it "the dumbest idea I ever heard" and "a solution missing a problem." I don't have statewide polling to support it, but I suspect Gary's opinion is widespread. The problem with Aaron's is that he assumes rural Republicans are stupid. He thinks they can't recognize pandering when they see it. Oddly, he seems to be the elitist. ❖



Jonathan V. Last, The Bulwark: I've been saying since November 2020 that, barring a health event, Biden will run for reelection in 2024 for one simple reason: There is no other option. The Democratic coalition

is currently made up of a giant mass of factions, some of which are in tension. They cannot win the presidency without getting close to 52% of the popular vote and even that margin gives them only about a 50-50 shot of winning the Electoral College. Democrats need to hold together (and turn out) progressives, African Americans, young voters, women, Hispanics, and college-educated suburban voters. They need to do this without losing even more ground to white, high-school-educated men. Joe Biden is the only Democrat even theoretically capable of shouldering this burden. Are there negatives to another Biden run?

Yes! He is very old! He is quite unpopular! But on the other hand: He has a fairly successful legislative agenda to run on. He did return American political life to something like normal. His administration has been scandal-free. He is completely and totally vetted. He will campaign with all the benefits of an incumbent president. He starts with 81.2 million Americans who have already voted for him. His weaknesses, age and unpopularity, also apply to his likely challenger, Donald Trump. I still think that it's about a 95 percent likelihood that Biden is the Democratic nominee. ❖

Thomas Kane, The Atlantic: One-fifth of American students, by our calculations, were enrolled in districts that remained remote for the majority of the 2020–21 school year. For these students, the effects were severe. Growth in student achievement slowed to the point that, even in low-poverty schools, students in fall 2021 had fallen well behind what pre-pandemic patterns would have predicted; in effect, students at low-poverty schools that stayed remote had lost the equivalent of 13 weeks of in-person instruction. At high-poverty schools that stayed remote, students lost the equivalent of 22 weeks. Racial gaps widened too: In the districts that stayed remote for most of last year, the outcome was as if Black and Hispanic students had lost four to five more weeks of instruction than white students had. By our calculations, about 50% of students nationally returned in person in the fall and spent less than a month remote during the 2020–21 school year. In these districts where classrooms reopened relatively quickly, student-achievement gaps by race and socioeconomic status widened a bit in reading but, fortunately, not in math. And overall student achievement fell only modestly. What happened in spring 2020 was like flipping off a switch on a vital piece of our social infrastructure. Where schools stayed closed longer, gaps widened; where schools reopened sooner, they didn't. Schools truly are, as Horace Mann famously argued, the "balance wheel of the social machinery." High-dosage tutoring, which educators define as involving a trained tutor working with one to four students at a time, three times a week for a whole year, is one of the few interventions with a demonstrated benefit that comes close, producing an average gain equivalent to 19 weeks of instruction. ❖

19 kids, 2 teachers massacred in Texas

UVALDE, Texas (AP) — An 18-year-old gunman killed 19 children and two adults as he went from classroom to classroom at a Texas elementary school, officials said, adding to a gruesome, yearslong series of mass killings at churches, schools and stores. The attacker was killed by a Border Patrol agent who rushed into the school without waiting for backup, according to a law enforcement official. Tuesday's assault at Robb Elementary School in the heavily Latino town of Uvalde was the deadliest shooting at a U.S. school since a gunman killed 20 children and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012. Hours after the attack, families were still awaiting word on their children. At the town civic center where some gathered, the silence was broken repeatedly by screams and wailing. "No! Please, no!" one man yelled as he embraced another man. "My heart is broken today," said Hal Harrell, the school district superintendent. "We're a small community, and we're going to need your prayers to get through this."



Biden asks why we live with 'carnage'

WASHINGTON — The attack was the latest grim moment for a country scarred by a string of massacres, coming just 10 days after a deadly, racist rampage at a Buffalo, New York, supermarket. And the prospects for any reform of the nation's gun regulations seemed as dim, if not dimmer, than in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook deaths (AP). But President Joe Biden appeared ready for a fight, calling for new gun restrictions in an address to the nation hours after the attack. "As a nation we have to ask, when in God's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby? When in

God's name are we going to do what has to be done?" Biden asked. "Why are we willing to live with this carnage?" "These kinds of mass shootings rarely happen anywhere else in the world," Biden said, reflecting that other nations have people filled with hate or with mental health issues but no other industrialized nation experiences gun violence at the level of the U.S. "Why?" he asked.

Carson, Spartz, Braun react

WASHINGTON — Hoosier lawmakers are reacting to the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas that has now left 19 children and a teacher dead (WIBC). U.S. Rep. Andre Carson, a Democrat, says he's "heartbroken by this horrific act of violence" and added the nation has "lost its way" by not changing gun laws. Republican U.S. Rep. Victoria Spartz called the shooter a "coward" on Twitter. GOP Senator Mike Braun said he's "horrified by this senseless murder."

Trump, Abbott, Cruz at NRA Friday

FAIRFAX, Va. — Donald Trump, Texas Gov. Gregg Abbott, Sen. John Cornyn, Sen. Ted Cruz, Rep. Dan Crenshaw, North Carolina Lt. Governor Mark Robinson, and South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem are scheduled to address the [National Rifle Association](#) at 2 p.m. (CT) Friday at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston.

Stellantis, Samsung to make batteries

KOKOMO (AP) — A joint venture between Stellantis and Samsung plans to build an electric vehicle battery factory in Indiana that will employ up to 1,400 workers and become the company's second such factory in North America. The venture announced Tuesday plans to spend more than \$2.5 billion on the plant in Kokomo that will supply electric battery modules for a range of vehicles

produced at Stellantis' North American assembly plants. Construction of the plant is expected to start later this year, with the facility expected to open in early 2025 in the city about 60 miles (97 kilometers) north of Indianapolis. The venture's investment in the plant could gradually increase up to \$3.1 billion, Mark Stewart, the chief operating officer of Stellantis North America, said at the announcement. Samsung SDI will use its PRiMX technology to produce electric vehicle battery cells and modules for the North American market at the Kokomo plant, the companies said in a statement.

2 file for mayor of Crown Point

CROWN POINT — On June 2, Democratic precinct committee members will choose Crown Point's new mayor (NWI Times). As of Monday evening, longtime Crown Point Police Chief Pete Land and District 2 Councilwoman Dawn Stokes were the only official candidates, Lake County Democratic Party Chairman Jim Wisener said. Crown Point Mayor David Uran will leave office at the start of June after being selected as the next president and CEO of the South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority.

Man with Indy ties nabbed in Bush plot

INDIANAPOLIS — An Iraqi national with ties to Indianapolis was arrested Tuesday and faces federal charges related to an alleged plot to assassinate former President George W. Bush, according to the Justice Department (WRTV). Shihab Ahmed Shihab Shihab, 52, currently living in Columbus, Ohio, has been charged with aiding and abetting the attempted murder of a former United States Official. According to the justice department, Shihab has worked at restaurants and markets in Indianapolis and Columbus, Ohio. He also had an apartment near his place of employment in Indianapolis.