

2008



PLATFORM

Republican Leadership

Indiana Republicans are united behind the principles and leadership that Governor Mitch Daniels and our Republican elected officials are putting into action as they lead Indiana's comeback.

The last four years have brought unprecedented change to Indiana, but more work remains. Indiana Republicans, at this time in history, are the only party of purpose in Indiana; not by inheritance or right, but by the ideas and ideals we offer our fellow citizens and our courage to address the very difficult issues facing our state. We believe the ideas, ideals and principles binding us together are also the foundation for a strong and prosperous Indiana.

Four years ago, Governor Daniels and Lt. Governor Becky Skillman promised Hoosiers they would aim high, and they have.

Indiana state government today is focused on solving the problems of Hoosiers without raising taxes. A relentless effort to attract and retain jobs in Indiana has become priority number one for state government, and Indiana has become, as one economist describes, "an island of growth in the Midwest." Indiana state government today is leaner and cleaner than it has been in decades, thanks to an administration that puts taxpayers first and is committed to providing Hoosiers with a reliable, ethical, and efficient state government.

Governor Daniels, Lt. Governor Skillman, and Republicans in the General Assembly are bringing change to Indiana, but there is more to come.

Indiana Republicans will continue to offer Hoosiers real ideas to provide new economic opportunities, fiscal responsibility, and improved government service to the people of this state. We agree with Bill Fennel, of Granger, who testified that the Republican Party must remain the party of less government, smaller government, and the party that believes people can make responsible decisions.

John McCain for President

Indiana Republicans are proud to have a true American patriot, John McCain, leading our ticket as our nominee for President of the United States. John McCain has the experience, exemplified by a lifetime commitment to service, necessary to serve as our Commander in Chief.

John McCain's fiscal conservatism and commitment to reducing federal spending and lowering taxes stands in stark contrast to the agenda of national Democrats who have promised to raise taxes and drastically increase the size of the federal government.

The Indianapolis Star editorial board said, "*McCain offers*

strong foreign policy experience, a record of fiscal discipline, and a history of reaching out to political opponents that few in Washington, D.C. can match.” We agree.

Indiana Republicans stand united with John McCain and his aggressive agenda to reform Washington, eliminate wasteful government spending, and strengthen our nation's armed forces.

In the Senate, John McCain has demanded that Congress put an end to loopholes for special interests and has worked to fix the broken system in Washington that too often allows lobbyists to write legislation and members of Congress to waste taxpayer money.

John McCain deeply values duty, honor and service to country, and his education at the United States Naval Academy and his 22-year career as a naval aviator have prepared him well to serve as Commander in Chief of our nation's armed forces.

In contrast, national Democrats, including Senator Barack Obama and Senator Hillary Clinton, have campaigned on promises reminiscent of a 1970s style liberalism that's wrong for America. Senators Clinton and Obama have campaigned on plans to nationalize and socialize healthcare, in opposition to market-based solutions that we believe are the best possible way to meet the health care needs of Americans.

On taxes they are no better, as both Clinton and Obama promise to raise taxes. Senator Obama has stated he favors raising the capital gains tax rate to "20 percent or 25 percent." Senator Clinton proposes a return to the income tax rates "we had in the 1990s."

Indiana Republicans strongly support John McCain for President of the United States.

Creating Good-paying Jobs

Beginning with the creation of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) on his first day in office, Governor Mitch Daniels has made creating and retaining good-paying jobs for Hoosiers the number one priority of his administration.

Since taking office in 2005, Indiana has experienced an unprecedented infusion of job creation and more than \$15 billion in new investment.

Indiana now ranks #12 nationally for our business climate, #4 for our overall cost of doing business, and in 2007, Indiana led the nation in international investment.

Indiana Republicans applaud the efforts of Governor Daniels, Lt. Governor Skillman, and the IEDC to create good-paying jobs for Hoosiers. The average annual salary of the 65,000 jobs committed to Indiana since 2005 is more than \$39,000, or about \$5500 more per year than the average Hoosier salary.

Under the leadership of Governor Mitch Daniels, Indiana is becoming a national model for job creation and economic development. Indiana's unemployment is the lowest in the Midwest. For three consecutive years, Indiana has broken records for new job creation.

The American Legislative Exchange Council now ranks Indiana number one in the Midwest for Economic Competitiveness and a survey of 605 top CEOs ranked Indiana the overall 8th best state in the nation for business.

Indiana Republicans believe our economic comeback was not by accident, but rather by the strong vision and leadership of Governor Daniels and Republican leadership in the Indiana House of Representatives and the Indiana Senate. Their accomplishments include:

- A research and development sales tax exemption which increases Indiana's competitive position in encouraging new business development in our state.
- A research and development tax credit for the first \$1 million of research and development costs, increased from 10 percent to 15 percent.
- Legislation authorizing regional venture capital funds that have now committed \$170 million to Indiana-based life sciences and agriculture funds at the forefront of research.
- Automatic property tax phase-in on all new investment in job-creating business property.
- Legislation creating "shovel-ready sites" which certify locations as ready for development. A cross-section of state agencies work together to fast-track permits—shaving one-third the time off of the permitting process. There are currently 30 "shovel ready sites" across Indiana with more to come. Honda was the first company to locate on a certified site.

Fair Trade

As Republicans, we support fair international trade and expanded opportunities for Hoosiers to sell their goods and products in foreign markets. Governor Daniels' economic trade missions to Asia and Western Europe and Lt. Governor Skillman's trade missions to Central America have been unqualified successes that have led to millions of dollars in unprecedented new and expanded development and thousands of new jobs for Hoosiers. As competition in the global market place continues, we believe Indiana must continue to explore opportunities for foreign investment and new markets to sell Hoosier goods and products.

Rural Indiana

Indiana Republicans have long supported policies that promote growth throughout our state. Governor Daniels and Lt. Governor Skillman have made the economies of rural Indiana a priority by creating the Department of Agriculture and the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs and renewing our focus on agriculture production and alternative energy. For his dedication to agriculture, Governor Daniels received the "Excellence in American Agriculture Award."

With a renewed focus on agriculture and farming, the number of livestock has increased 8%, generating at least \$43 million in local economic activity and creating hundreds of jobs.

The landmark telecommunications bill, signed by Governor Daniels in 2006, is expanding broadband service. Nearly \$600 million in new, private investment is upgrading the state's communications infrastructure. Between 2006 and 2007, the number of broadband access lines in Indiana increased by 72 percent. The reduction in red tape will accelerate the deployment of broadband services in the state.

Energy Independence

Indiana Republicans support the continued development of alternative fuels and believe Indiana can and should be a leader in biofuels production. In 2004, only one biofuel plant existed in Indiana. Today 15 biofuel plants are currently operating or under construction across the state, including the world's largest biodiesel plant and two of the largest ethanol plants east of the Mississippi. In addition, four biodiesel plants are increasing the state's biodiesel production to 100 million gallons per year. Indiana Republicans believe that clean energy pursuits should include the promotion of alternative energy sources including wind, solar, and methane.

Senator Dick Lugar has been leading the way for energy security for more than a decade. He recognizes that America's dependence on foreign oil is a threat to our national security and understands that a fuel source created by agricultural products, and agricultural waste, could inject new resources into American farms.

Senator Lugar worked to pass the Biomass Research and Development Act. This law requires the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Energy to coordinate research efforts to promote advancements in biomass energy production. In 2005, Senator Lugar co-authored the National Security and Bioenergy Investment Act. This measure increases funding for the program and modifies the original Biomass Research and Development Act to push ethanol and other biomass-derived products into commercial form more quickly.

Senator Lugar also leads the national campaign for E-85 motor fuel and Flexible Fuel Vehicles (FFVs) in the Senate and in Indiana. FFVs can operate on regular gasoline and E-85, which is motor fuel with 85 percent ethanol content. In addition to

Senator Lugar's support of E-85, he launched FUEL FREEDOM, a statewide effort to educate Hoosier motorists about the importance of increasing America's energy security and enlist their help in supporting a solution.

Indiana Coal

Indiana Republicans recognize that the Indiana coal industry is a significant asset to Indiana's economy. Indiana Republicans also recognize the challenges that the continued use of Indiana coal present to improving our environment. We are committed to working with the energy industry and the coal industry in Indiana to utilize and develop clean coal technology, such as coal gasification. We continue to promote the use of Indiana coal as a key ingredient to the future economic success of Southwest Indiana.

Since 2005, companies have been granted \$190 million in tax-exempt certificates to upgrade their facilities and utilize cutting edge, environmentally sound clean coal technologies to meet Indiana's demand for an additional 2,400 megawatts of electric capacity by 2008. These upgrades will reduce emissions at the plants thereby improving Indiana air quality and creating jobs for Hoosiers.

Solutions for Indiana

Property Taxes

Indiana Republicans applaud Governor Mitch Daniels and Republican leadership in the House and Senate for their bold leadership in putting forward a comprehensive property tax plan that delivered immediate and significant relief for homeowners, permanent protection for taxpayers, responsible limits on local government spending, and improved accuracy and fairness in the assessment of property value.

Governor Daniels, with unprecedented bipartisan support, passed historic legislation that will provide significant property tax relief now and permanent protection against future property tax increases.

This year Hoosier homeowners will have an average property tax cut of more than 30 percent, providing a total of \$870 million in relief. Beginning in 2010, homeowner property taxes will be capped at 1 percent of a home's assessed value, apartments and agriculture land will be capped at 2 percent of assessed value, and business property will be capped at 3 percent of assessed value. Once fully implemented, the plan delivers \$1.72 in tax cuts for each \$1.00 of new sales tax.

Indiana Republicans strongly urge the members of the General Assembly to finish the work they began in 2008 by passing a constitutional amendment permanently capping property taxes, thereby putting the measure before the voters for ratification. Indiana Republicans believe adding this provision to the state constitution is the only way to protect the caps.

Hoosier homeowners should take note that only the Republicans in the General Assembly have pledged to again pass the constitutional amendment permanently capping property taxes. For this reason, and dozens of others, Republican majorities in the Indiana House and Senate are vital to the citizens of Indiana.

Indiana Republicans applaud the work of the Indiana Commission on Local Government Reform, chaired by Chief Justice Randall Shepard and former Governor Joseph Kernan.

As Governor Daniels said in his 2008 State of the State Address, “When it comes to the structure of local government, Indiana skipped the twentieth century. A time traveler from Civil War days would be dumbstruck by an iPod or I-70 or eye surgery, but he would have no trouble recognizing our system of local government. We have too many offices, too many taxing units, too many politicians, too many of everything, and they all cost money.”

We agree with the commission that “the status quo in local government is simply not good enough. Indiana can either embolden itself, designing new arrangements for its future prosperity, or continue to trudge along under a system of government erected 150 years ago. The time for a leaner, more effective government is at hand.”

While several of the Commission’s recommendations became law in 2008, we agree with Nelson Chipman of Marshall County whose testimony strongly encouraged the members of the Indiana General Assembly, the public, and the media to begin a spirited debate on the remaining recommendations.

Major Moves

Even with gas prices at record highs, in recent years numerous states have raised their taxes on gasoline in an attempt to meet their infrastructure needs. Indiana, in contrast, avoided a gas tax increase and is the only state in the nation with a fully funded ten-year transportation plan.

Indiana Republicans continue to support Governor Mitch Daniels innovative Major Moves public-private partnership, which is already paying great dividends for our state.

Critics continue to falsely demonize Major Moves as a “sale of the Indiana Toll Road.” In fact, Major Moves is a public-private partnership that leases the operation of the Indiana Toll Road, but in which Indiana maintains total control of the road and can cancel the lease if the operator fails to meet its obligations. The \$3.8 billion Indiana received in exchange for the operation of the toll road provides additional funding for our infrastructure needs in the coming decade. Facing aging infrastructure, Republicans and Democrats around the country are now emulating Indiana’s Major Moves plan.

This year alone Indiana will spend \$1.2 billion on road and bridge construction, twice what we spent in 2005. Major Moves will complete more than 200 vital road and bridge projects, including I-69 and the Ohio River Bridges in Southern Indiana, and the Fort to Port project, U.S. 31 from Indianapolis to St. Joseph County, and the Hoosier Heartland Corridor in Northern Indiana. Major Moves will build and repair roads and highways that will once again earn Indiana the designation of “Crossroads of America.”

In the 55 year history of the Indiana Toll Road, the road had rarely made money and the bonds had yet to be paid. The Toll Road was costing taxpayers money. We have gone from paying interest to earning it. Indiana Republicans applaud State Treasurer Richard Mourdock and State Auditor Tim Berry, whose prudent management of the Major Moves Trust Fund has already earned Indiana more than \$330,324,402 in interest in just 23 months.

Protecting Children

Indiana Republicans are proud of Governor Daniels’ efforts to protect children. Just a few years ago, Indiana’s child welfare system was one of the worst in the nation. Today it is dramatically improved.

On his first day in office, Governor Daniels created the Department of Child Services and Indiana has hired 800 new frontline caseworkers to protect children.

While every case of child abuse and neglect is a tragedy, we believe the reformed child welfare system in Indiana is making great progress. Governor Daniels and the Department of Child Services have been nationally recognized by Prevent Child Abuse America, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Administration on Children, Youth and Families for its efforts protecting children in Indiana.

The threat of sexual predators continues to be a challenge in the efforts to protect Hoosier children. We urge strict enforcement of Zachary’s Law and other deterrents to deal harshly with those who would abuse our children. Indiana has made several important strides toward protecting our children, such as legislation to strengthen Indiana’s kidnapping laws and require that any convicted child sexual offender wear a Global Positioning System monitoring device and be placed on lifetime parole. We are deeply concerned about pedophiles preying upon our children and urge the most stringent penalties. We support the Republican proposal in the State Senate that will: Enhance penalties and create felonies for harboring sex offenders, child solicitation, child exploitation, and possession of child pornography. The plan will clarify the definition of “Conspiracy to Commit Child Molestation,” require Child Protective Services to forward cases to prosecutors when the victim is under 12 and the offender is over 14, and require offenders for Possession of Child Pornography to register as sex offenders.

We believe that society has a moral responsibility to protect all children from dangerous sexual predators who rob our youth of their innocence. We believe that protecting our children means punishing those who have committed these despicable crimes, but also finding ways to prevent future attacks. We commend Republican prosecutors throughout Indiana for their efforts to protect Hoosier children.

Public Safety

Indiana Republicans commend our Governor for achieving his stated goal of putting 250 additional state police troopers on the road by 2008. In addition, a new state-of-the-art crime lab has been opened and approximately 800 new in-car computers have been issued to road troopers. State troopers had been underpaid for years, and we applaud Governor Daniels and the Republicans in the Indiana General Assembly for rewarding Indiana State Police troopers with a much-deserved pay increase.

We also support the creation of the state's first regional fire academies – so firefighters in every part of the state have access to the same high-quality training that previously only large cities could provide.

Protecting Hoosiers from Methamphetamine

Just a few years ago, methamphetamine use was threatening communities across our state. Indiana adopted some of the strongest meth laws in the nation, leading to a reduction of meth lab “busts” by 36% and meth lab arrests by 47%. We applaud Governor Daniels and our Republican legislators for passing strong anti-meth laws that are a national model.

Military and Veterans

Indiana Republicans support with pride the men and women serving in the United States military, especially those serving in harms way. We support their mission and pray for their success and safe return. We are particularly grateful to the thousands of Hoosier members of the Indiana National Guard and the Reserves currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. We commend the families who stand behind these loved ones as they protect the freedoms we hold so dear. We support and respect all veterans of conflicts past and present and pledge not to forget them in their time of need.

In 2007, Governor Daniels signed into law the first increase in benefits for Indiana's veterans and military families in decades. The legislation:

- Exempts all military pay earned while serving in combat theater from Indiana state income tax.
- Increases the maximum allowable state income tax deductions on military pay (including retirement pay and survivor's benefits) from \$2,000 to \$5,000 per year.

- Provides state matching funds of up to \$450,000 annually for Indiana Military Families Relief Fund.
- Allows in-state tuition rates for out-of-state soldiers assigned to Indiana.
- Establishes a military relief fund for Indiana.

Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV)

Before Governor Daniels and his team addressed chronic problems at the BMV, Hoosiers had come to expect very little in the way of customer service from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. However, customer visit times at branches have been cut and the agency's accuracy, efficiency, and financial controls have been dramatically improved. Indiana Republicans agree with Governor Daniels that if his administration "can fix the BMV, it can fix anything."

- Increased the number of 24-hour, self-service terminals by more than 50 percent and provided discounts for mail-in and Internet registrations. The average wait time at any statewide BMV branch now at 9 minutes, with an overall satisfaction rate of 97 percent.
- 73 of the state's busiest and largest branches now offer branch appointments to save time and offer more convenience to their customers.
- Unveiled real-time visit time feature on its website, enabling customers to see current wait times at any branch in the state.
- Achieved operational savings of \$4.5 million through better procurement and contract management and reduced staffing. Savings are being used to fund the \$5 discount program for customers who renew plates online.
- Online renewal transactions are more appealing to customers through a \$5 discount per vehicle. As a result, online usage increased from 5.9% in 2007 to 24% in 2008, taking thousands of customers out of branches due to this more convenient method.
- 108 auto dealerships across the state now offer title and registration services.
- Added evening hours every Tuesday. Also, on Mondays and Tuesdays before elections, branches are open extended hours for customers needing an ID to vote.

Leaner, Cleaner State Government

Balancing Budgets

The government Governor Mitch Daniels and the Republican-led legislature inherited in 2005 was bankrupt and hundreds of millions of dollars in the red. Governor Daniels and the Republican-led General Assembly passed the tightest budget in 55 years, and the first honestly balanced budget in fourteen years *without cuts to education*.

We applaud Governor Daniels for his innovative tax amnesty plan, which raised four times what was predicted. We also applaud Governor Daniels for paying back \$700 million owed to local governments and universities and over \$300 million to K-12 schools from the previous era's deficit spending.

Today, Indiana's surplus is the envy of every state in the Midwest.

Though Governor Daniels has achieved balanced state budgets in two consecutive General Assemblies, once with a Republican-led House and once with a Democrat-led House, we know the best way to ensure fiscal discipline in Indiana is with a Republican governor and Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate. We look forward to House Republicans regaining the majority in 2008.

A More Efficient State Government

We stand firmly behind Governor Daniels and his belief that government should not take one dime more than it needs from its citizens. Indiana Republicans are providing the leadership to make sure that state spending is within its means.

Through fiscal discipline and efficiencies, Governor Daniels has trimmed more than \$250 million in unnecessary spending from state government. Today, there are 5000 fewer state employees than when Governor Daniels took office. Daniels reduced the number of state vehicles by 2,100, generating savings of \$2.6 million per year, and reduced state aircraft from 20 to 12, saving \$700,000 annually. Daniels renegotiated over 30 contracts producing savings greater than \$190 million over the life of the contracts.

Smarter purchasing has led to cost savings of over \$4.3 million annually for hearing aids, \$5 million a year for computers, \$3.1 million annually for office supplies, and \$1.2 million annually by consolidating over 200 different cell phone plans.

Hoosiers deserve leadership that demands accountability and efficiency in state government. We believe the best way to ensure these efficiencies is with a Republican governor and Republican majorities in the Indiana House and Indiana Senate.

Spending Hoosier tax dollars with Hoosier firms

Indiana Republicans believe state government should strive to do business with in-state companies whenever possible. In 2005, Governor Daniels initiated his "Buy Indiana" program which gives preferences to Indiana companies competing for state business. Currently, 84 cents of every tax dollar is spent with Indiana companies - up from 62 cents prior to 2005. Under the Governor's "Buy Indiana" plan, nearly \$1 billion more is spent with companies employing thousands of Hoosiers.

Ethics, Integrity and Transparency in Government

With the creation of the Indiana Office of the Inspector General, Governor Daniels began revamping Indiana's State Government in an effort to make it more open, honest, and transparent. The Office of Inspector General has written the Indiana Code of Ethics, which was previously scattered among several rules, statutes, and policies. The office has also developed a Resource Center on its website which provides state employees with a centralized location to access state government authority beyond the ethics rules, including rules on purchasing and procurement, contracting, bidding, financial regulations, promulgation, open door and open records, and executive branch lobbying.

Governor Daniels has also aggressively pursued revamping Indiana's ethics rules by signing into effect a new law which targets bribery, criminal bribery, and criminal public gratuity, and by implementing a new state employment rule which requires former state employees to wait at least one year after employment before contacting or lobbying any state agency.

Health

Healthy Indiana Plan

We applaud Governor Daniels and the Republicans in the General Assembly for creating landmark health care legislation, the Healthy Indiana Plan, which provides 132,000 uninsured Hoosiers with health care coverage. The plan promotes health screenings, early prevention services, smoking cessation, and entrusts Hoosiers to become value-conscious consumers of health care.

The Healthy Indiana Plan is based on free-market principles and creates a "POWER" health savings account to help pay medical expenses for enrollees. It also provides tax credits for small businesses that create qualified wellness and Section 125 plans. A health savings account was first offered to state employees in 2006 and thousands of workers now participate.

Because nearly 22% of Indiana's children do not receive recommended immunizations before the age of 2, Governor Daniels' Healthy Indiana Plan included funding to ensure that *all* Hoosier children have access to immunizations to prevent diseases such as hepatitis B, polio, mumps, measles, and whooping cough.

INShape Indiana

We also recognize improving personal health requires personal responsibility.

Governor Daniels' INShape Indiana provides the tools Hoosiers need to improve their health and the health of their families. Thanks to INShape Indiana, thousands of Hoosiers are making astounding progress in a very short amount of time and having some fun along the way. More than 63,000 Hoosiers from all 92 counties participated. So far, thirty-two percent report weight loss of 10 pounds or more. INShape has received national recognition for its impact on the health and well-being of citizens. Indiana Republicans urge Hoosiers to participate by logging on to www.INShape.In.gov.

Reducing the Cost of Prescription Drugs

Rx for Indiana is another initiative by Governor Daniels in partnership with nearly 60 health care, community, business, and consumer groups to improve access to prescription medicines for eligible Indiana residents. Today over 200,000 Hoosiers now receive free or discounted prescriptions – at no cost to taxpayers. Interested Hoosiers can access information at www.rxforindiana.org or toll free at (877) 793-0765.

Getting the proper health service at the appropriate time will benefit Hoosiers and also encourage the economy by lowering the state's health-care costs. Indiana Republicans realize technology must come to health-care, as the costs of the past ways affect our economic prosperity and our lives. Information technology, best practice care guidelines, and transparency will empower the consumers and providers with better consumer choice and decreased cost. Progress and technology without government interference will, as Dr. Samuel Wakim of South Bend testified, "protect the patient-doctor relationship."

This is in sharp contrast to the health care system endorsed by Senator Barack Obama, which would nationalize and socialize health care to a central government system.

Education

Kindergarten through Grade 12

Indiana Republicans believe the worlds of education and the workplace are converging in historic ways. We believe public education is a necessary foundation for the future prosperity of our state and our families. Republicans support high-quality learning opportunities for all children across our state – regardless of race, socio-economic status, or geography. When possible, our party supports local home-rule decisions by parents, teachers, administrators, and school boards. We firmly support continued freedom from government intrusion for private, non-sectarian schools, religious schools, and home schools.

Indiana Republicans agree with Governor Mitch Daniels' education agenda that includes directing more money to classrooms, improved teacher quality, smaller class sizes, smaller schools, and increased teacher salaries.

We applaud Governor Daniels and the State Board of Education for developing a comprehensive state education assessment system that includes moving I-Step to the spring at a cost savings to taxpayers. Moving the test to the spring also ensures that results will be in hand months sooner.

Indiana Republicans also agree with Governor Daniels that often schools spend too much money on construction and not enough on instruction. Total statewide school construction project costs have decreased by millions of dollars since Governor Daniels signed an executive order requiring a 120-day moratorium on consideration or approval of school construction projects, asked the DLGF to immediately inventory all school building project financings, and set square foot thresholds based on national construction standards.

We also agree with Governor Daniels when he said, "It is unacceptable for any teacher in this state to be afraid to keep order in their classroom." We encourage the Indiana General Assembly to examine more ways to allow teachers to instill discipline in their classrooms.

Indiana Republicans see the need to take politics out of education and support legislation that would make the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction an appointed, rather than elected, office.

Governor Daniels has made good on a campaign promise to expand access to kindergarten. We applaud Governor Daniels and the Republicans in the General Assembly for quadrupling the funding for full day kindergarten programs from \$8.5 million in 2007 to \$33.5 million in 2008 and \$58.5 million in 2009. More Hoosier children can attend full-day kindergarten, and because the kindergarten enrollment cut-off date has been moved, Indiana no longer has the oldest kindergarteners in the nation. Indiana Republicans believe full-day kindergarten should remain optional for parents and their children.

Higher Education

Indiana Republicans recognize our state's institutions of higher education play a critical role in the economic vitality of our state. We support efforts to encourage research and development at our universities and move those innovations quickly into the commercial marketplace. Our universities are globally recognized for their work in preparing young people for the jobs of the 21st century and developing the tools that better our lives.

Governor Daniels said, “We have within our power, without raising taxes, to offer every high school graduate at least two years at Ivy Tech or the equivalent. We must have our young people reach their full potential.” Indiana Republicans agree with Governor Daniels’ stated goal to create a trust fund to make higher education more affordable and accessible for Hoosier students and their families, without any increase in taxes, and to encourage the administrators and trustees of Indiana’s public universities to work with the governor and the General Assembly to achieve this goal.

Core Republican Beliefs

The liberties of every American citizen, as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, must be protected from erosion by governments at every level. We believe freedom is God’s gift to the human race and that we should not only work to preserve individual freedom in our own nation, but that we also have a responsibility to encourage such freedoms – to men and women of all races and circumstance – wherever they may reside.

Taxes should be as low as possible, governmental spending should be kept under control, and regulatory requirements should be reasonable and restrained. Limited government is good government.

Indiana Republicans believe that the United States is, and should be, “one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for ALL.” We believe that our strength is in our diversity. We encourage lawful immigration policies that attract new and diverse populations to our nation, but we also realize that our borders must be adequately protected. We embrace, encourage, and will work to ensure the opportunity for full participation of all of our citizens in government, in the Republican Party, and in the pursuit of economic success, regardless of gender, race, creed, religion, national origin, age, economic status or physical challenge.

At the hearings held across the state to solicit input from Indiana Republicans about the contents of this platform, a large number of Hoosiers expressed their concerns about illegal immigration. Ultimately, we believe this issue requires a solution by the federal government, as states do not have the resources or the capacity to effectively control the movement of people into and out of their territories. Indiana Republicans believe the federal government must take the necessary steps to control our country’s borders.

The United States has always been a nation of immigrants and Indiana must be open and welcoming to those immigrants who come here legally and want to make their lives better. We recognize the historic and current contributions that Americans of all ethnic origins and cultures have made to the fabric of this great nation. We welcome our newest citizens and encourage their full participation in the Republican Party. However, Indiana Republicans believe those who are here illegally should not receive public benefits which are meant to be provided for

citizens only. We should encourage all immigrants to learn English.

We understand and support the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution that gives the “people” the right to “keep and bear Arms,” which is to be construed as gun ownership by lawful citizens.

We believe that the First Amendment guarantees freedom of religion, not freedom from religion. We do not support court ordered mandates that remove prayer from the public forum.

While recognizing the diversity of opinion among members of our party, we support current Indiana law that says, “Childbirth is preferred, encouraged, and supported over abortion” (IC 16-34-1-1). We support the millennia old concept of marriage as a union between a woman and a man, and we agree with the Republican leaders in the Indiana Senate and the Indiana House of Representatives that any proposal to change that concept should be decided by the people rather than the courts. We believe that strong families are the foundation of virtue and that such families bring forth citizens capable of self-government as well as properly motivated public servants so essential for successful democracy.

We also believe that support for, and the promotion of, responsible parenting will pay huge future rewards. We understand that individual responsibility is a prerequisite for the preservation of freedom. Every individual must be responsible for his or her actions and every individual must have the opportunity to succeed.

We are supportive of “faith-based initiatives” and applaud Governor Daniels for creating the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, which provides information, training, technical assistance and limited grant funding to both community-based and faith-based organizations seeking to make Indiana a better place to live for all citizens.

Outreach

Indiana Republicans respect the diversity of our people as a fundamental American strength. We embrace, encourage, and will work to ensure the opportunity for full participation of all of our citizens in government, in the Republican Party, and in the pursuit of economic success, regardless of gender, race, creed, religion, national origin, age, economic status or physical challenge. The Indiana Republican Party recognizes the historic contributions Americans of all ethnic origins and cultures have made to the fabric of this great nation. We welcome our newest citizens and encourage their full participation in the Republican Party. We are the party of Lincoln and we agree with Micah Maxwell of Muncie, who testified that we must continue to reach out to reclaim the deserved reputation of being known as the party of liberty, freedom, and human rights.

We applaud and encourage the efforts of the Richard G. Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series and the Indiana Leadership Forum which work to educate and develop the future leaders of the Republican Party and our state.

Free and Fair Elections

Indiana Republicans commend Secretary of State Todd Rokita in his successful efforts in support of Indiana's voter identification law, which was recently upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. As President of the National Association of Secretaries of State, and a member of the Board of Advisers of the Federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC), Secretary Rokita has put Indiana in the national forefront for guaranteeing free and fair elections.

Secretary Rokita's office led the effort to create the statewide voter registration system linking all county voter lists, allowing them to be updated in real time, eliminating duplicate registrations, saving taxpayer dollars, and improving the integrity of our election process.

We believe strongly in the right to vote. We join with Republicans in the General Assembly who have repeatedly supported efforts to increase voting accessibility and improve the integrity of the election process with measures like the Voter ID law.

We also join with Republicans in the General Assembly who have repeatedly opposed measures to weaken the integrity of our elections, such as an unbridled weakening of absentee voting laws to allow people to vote by absentee by mail for any reason. Absentee voting by mail should remain an option for Hoosiers, but the widespread documented absentee vote fraud uncovered in recent Indiana elections reinforces our opposition to "no fault" absentee voting by mail.

Environment and Natural Resources

Indiana Republicans support a safe, healthy, and clean Hoosier environment. The quality of our Hoosier environment is dependent upon vigilant partnerships by government, business, and individuals alike. We support coordinated, science-based, consistent efforts to reduce, regulate, and remediate pollutants to protect human health, the environment, and our overall quality of life.

Arts

Indiana Republicans appreciate the arts as an integral part of our culture, whether it is for economic development, education, or entertainment. We believe that the arts should be supported by expanding opportunities through strong public-private partnerships.

Charity

We salute Governor Daniels and Lt. Governor Skillman for developing Feeding Indiana's Hungry, a public-private partnership to provide surplus food to soup kitchens and shelters. In the first year alone, 51,000 pounds of food were donated to nine Indiana food banks to help our fellow Hoosiers in need.

Hoosiers in Congress

Senator Richard G. Lugar continues to provide international leadership that brings pride to all Hoosiers. He has eight times been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the deactivation of more than 7,200 nuclear warheads in the former Soviet Union, and Time Magazine labeled him as one of the Ten Best U.S. Senators in the 109th Congress. Indiana Republicans are proud of the national and international leadership provided by Senator Lugar in moving the United States toward energy independence, as well as his leadership in foreign affairs and national security.

Indiana Republicans also express their pride in Congressmen Mark Souder, Steve Buyer, Dan Burton, and Mike Pence for their leadership and we enthusiastically urge their re-election.

Republican Mayors

Indiana Republicans are proud of the dozens of Republican Mayors leading communities across our state. Municipal governments, large and small, face many unique challenges. However, Republican leadership in the city halls across Indiana has proven time and again that the principles we believe in, fiscal responsibility, low taxes, sensible regulatory policies, and open and accessible government, can help create thriving communities. We applaud today's Republican Mayors who are on the front line of public service in their communities.

ABOUT THE DRAFTING PROCESS

The 2008 Indiana Republican Platform Committee held public hearings in South Bend, New Albany, and Indianapolis, giving Hoosiers across the state the opportunity to address the platform committee in person. The committee also invited thousands of individuals to testify by e-mail and via the state committee web site. The platform committee, composed of Republicans representing each of Indiana's congressional districts, met in general session providing each member the opportunity for input into the content of this platform. This platform thus reflects a broad consensus among Indiana Republicans on the party's core values and principles.

The Indiana Republican Party
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DR. SUELLEN REED

Superintendent of Public Instruction
1992-2008

For the past four decades, no one person has done more for education in the state of Indiana than Dr. Suellen Reed. She is a role model for thousands of children across Indiana and a leader among Hoosier educators. As Indiana's 36th Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Suellen K. Reed has developed a reputation as a consensus-builder.

Dr. Reed grew up on her family farm in Rush County and graduated from New Salem High School as valedictorian. She received her BA from Hanover College, her MA from Ball State University in Elementary Education, and her Ed.D. from Ball State University. Dr. Reed has served as a teacher at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent.

In 1992, Dr. Reed was the first female to be elected Indiana's Superintendent of Public Instruction. During her tenure, Dr. Reed has significantly influenced major educational reform initiatives in Indiana, including: Indiana's Academic Standards, ISTEP+, Indiana's Education Roundtable, P-16 Plan for Improving Student Achievement, and school accountability.

Dr. Reed has been an advocate of international education by establishing agreements with six foreign countries for the exchange of teachers, has supported the use of technology to make school performance data more readily available, and has emphasized strategic planning and staff development within the department. She has strongly represented the Department of Education in schools, service clubs, and community organizations around the state through visiting and speaking in all 92 counties. Her impact was felt around the state, and we thank Dr. Suellen Reed for her service and wish her all the best as she departs public service.



STEVE CARTER
Attorney General
2000-2008

Indiana Attorney General Steve Carter is an exemplary Hoosier. His career in public service should make Indiana Republicans and the rest of our state proud. Carter was born in Lafayette and grew up on his family's farm in Lake County. Graduating with honors from Harvard University, Carter received his Bachelor of Arts degree in economics. He earned his JD and MBA from Indiana University Schools of Law and Business.

Before becoming Attorney General, Carter served as counsel to the city of Indianapolis, the Indiana Senate, and Lieutenant Governor John Mutz. He was elected Attorney General in 2000, and re-elected in 2004 with more votes than any Indiana state office holder in history.

Carter consistently has been a strong advocate for privacy and developed the nation's strongest Do Not Call law. This law has protected more than 3.7 million Indiana citizens from unwanted telemarketing calls. Additionally, Carter has worked to return lost and forgotten assets to Indiana citizens. Under his supervision, over \$54 million in unclaimed property was returned in 2006 alone.

Steve Carter has also taken an active stance in fighting public corruption in Indiana. He initiated a massive vote fraud investigation in Lake County that resulted in over 40 felony convictions. He filed the first civil RICO action, which named a city government as a corrupt enterprise, and in 2003 successfully argued before the Indiana Supreme Court to order an unprecedented new election in East Chicago, Indiana.

Steve Carter has carried the torch of fairness and consumer advocacy well, and the Indiana Republican Party thanks him for his service to our state and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

