

The Cheat Sheet, Vol 3, Issue 57 – 7 Dec 2014

The Bennett Backstory



So what's the deal the **Inspector General's** Report involving former Superintendent of Public Instruction **Tony Bennett** and the 95-page report that mysteriously made its way into the hands of AP reporter **Tom Lobianco** but apparently didn't make it into the hands of **Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry** or the **U.S. Attorney's Office** until it was reported that it did? (Did you get all that?)

Well, there are a couple theories out there. One of which is someone in the IG's office was not happy with the final report by **Dave Thomas** which said had Bennett crafted a policy that allowed for *de minimis* use of political activity on government time everything would have been fine so the report was leaked to the AP. By the way, TCS hears the investigator was not an attorney, which could explain why they threw every possible violation into the report, but a lot of that didn't make the final version.

The other theory that's out there is that if Bennett were to be prosecuted that this would open up an entire floodgate of complaints and bring virtually every elected official in

Indiana under the microscope and nobody wanted to go down that road.



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With respect to Curry, a theory brought to us was simply he saw the report and since Bennett had paid the fine and this was all handled by the IG he thought it would be a better use of resources to leave matters as they were and deal with more serious issues such as the city's murder rate.

Of course it's also worth noting that if you notice when this stuff usually breaks, it's right before a **Board of Education** meeting with a controversial agenda. One of the first stories about Bennett e-mails popped up around the time that the state had ISTEP testing issues. Another time was right before the Board of Education voted on new teacher licensure rules. Conspiracy or coincidence?

Speaking of **Glenda Ritz**, there is a big staff meeting tomorrow (Monday) at DOE. We think the Governor's recent announcement about **CECI** is going to be on the agenda.

Budget Blues



If Indiana lawmakers want to avoid a fight over budget reversions, TCS is hearing Indiana will need at five percent revenue growth. And good luck getting there. According to the state's latest fiscal report, while revenue collections were up 13 percent over November 2013, it still came in 4.5 percent under projections. That means more reversions are likely.

And speaking of budget, the big revenue forecast will be on December 18. TCS hears no one really believes what they're going to hear from **IHS Global Insight**. In fact TCS is also told that nobody really wants to be bothered with IHS but they only reason they do it is to keep the state's good credit rating with the east coast bond houses. By the way, those guys charge about \$100,000 to do their analysis.

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Hill v. Gregg v. McDermott?



It looks like former 9th District Congressman **Baron Hill** may be gearing up for a run for Governor in 2016. Hill tells Statehouse Reporter **Maureen Hayden** that he's "calculated the financial commitment to knock off an incumbent governor". That's about \$12-\$15 million. He's reportedly seriously giving it some thought. We ran into both former Speaker **John Gregg** and Hammond Mayor **Tom McDermott** at the BGD Legislative Conference this past week. Although Gregg said back in 2013 that he's not running, we hear that could still change. Also, we hear while McDermott announced he's running for another term as Mayor, if Hill can't get any traction, McDermott might change his mind.



Winnecke in 2016?

If **Mike Pence** doesn't run for Governor in 2016, don't be surprised if Evansville Mayor **Lloyd Winnecke** does. We're told he has a 70+ percent approval rating and quite a bit of bipartisan support in his neck of the woods. The big challenge for Winnecke would be getting through a primary, while he is strongly pro-life, he opposed the marriage amendment which could cause him trouble for some GOP voters.

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Your Arms are Too Short to Box with God



We told you a while back that **Rev. Charles Harrison** of the Ten-Point Coalition was looking at running for Mayor. The big question was whether anyone would take his candidacy seriously. Well, we think we have the answer to that question, it's "yes" and "no". While some **Marion County Democrats** consider his candidacy a joke, there are quite a few who are taking Harrison very seriously. In fact, they're taking it so seriously that they've started making threats against him; nothing physical, at least not yet. But word on the street is that they've been saying that if he goes through with his campaign for Mayor they're going to "do him in". We're not sure what that means, but we know it can't be good.

We also know Harrison hasn't made up his mind on what party label he will run under, but we're getting some feedback that if he runs as a **Libertarian** there might be some national money that finds its way to his campaign coffers since he is such an unconventional candidate.



And speaking of Mayor's race, no one believes that **Ed DeLaney** dropped out so he could serve on the **House Ways & Means Committee**. A Democrat serving on that committee is like being valedictorian in summer school. We think there's something else going on. We speculated in an earlier Cheat Sheet that DeLaney was approached by some **Joe Hogsett** supporters that if he got out of the Mayoral race they would see about his daughter getting nominated to a position on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals. When we find out we will let you know. Another theory we're hearing is that with Harrison getting in the race, DeLaney was motivated to get out and avoid a divisive primary should Harrison run as a Democrat garnering a large portion of the Black vote and Hogsett and him splitting the white vote.



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Delph and District 24



The one person who may be watching Tuesday's caucus in HD 24 to replace State Representative **Steve Braun** the closest is State Senator **Mike Delph**. Our sources up in the area tell us Delph is worried that whoever comes out of the caucus would like be his biggest primary challenger in four years.

We hear Zionsville Town Council member **Susana Suarez** is an early favorite. However, what makes this race a little complicated is, we're told, Boone County Chairwoman **Debra Ottinger** didn't fill the PC slots the way she should have and State party had to step in which could make for an interesting vote that night.

We also hear, **Elise Nieshalla**, the daughter of former State Rep **Cindy Noe** is running into some resistance from folks who don't want social issues to be front and center, but instead jobs, education and economic development.



Major Moves

We hear Pence policy aide **Dr. Ryan Streeter** will be departing soon. He's headed for a teaching position in Texas.

Indiana Young Republican President **Michael Neal** is going to work for the Pence administration. He'll be heading up community outreach.

Joey Fox, aide to Lt. Governor **Sue Ellspermann**, has taken a new job at the Indiana Department of Public Health as Legislative Director.

Indy Republican City-County Council Leader **Mike McQuillan** pulled in more than \$30,000 at his most recent fundraiser.



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