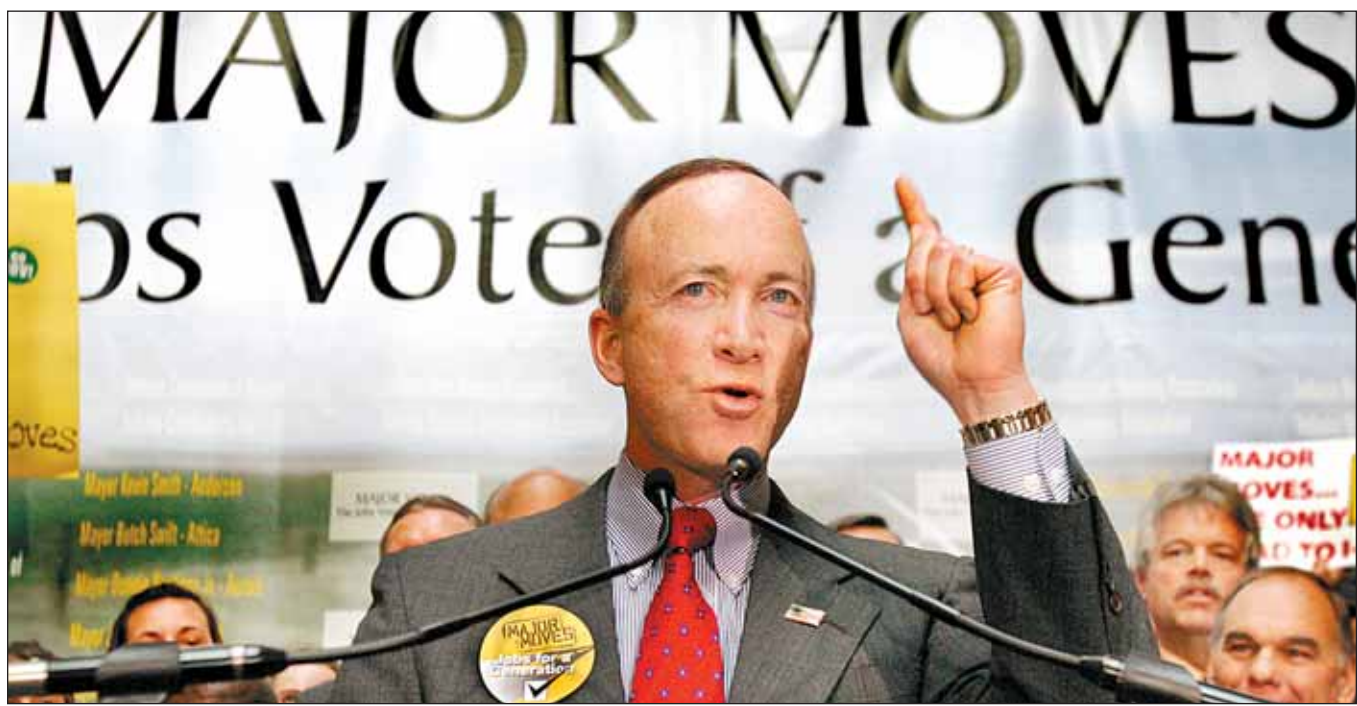


AT THE STATEHOUSE: 2006 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels speaks during the Major Moves rally in the statehouse Tuesday morning. Hundreds of people turned out for the program, seen below. Greenwood Mayor Charles Henderson is at right.

Major Moves program, along with protesters for and against the program, seen below. Greenwood Mayor Charles Henderson is at right.

Major moves debate

Daniels' pro-rally turns into shouting match at statehouse

By MIKE SMITH
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Hundreds packed the statehouse on Tuesday for a rally designed to build momentum for Gov. Mitch Daniels' "Major Moves" highway initiative. But as some cheered support, others shouted jeers that sometimes drowned out the governor and other speakers.

Daniels told the crowd that the legislation, which would allow him to lease the Indiana Toll Road for \$3.85 billion, would create tens of thousands of jobs by funding many highway projects that have languished for years.

"This will make promises and dreams a reality in this state," Daniels said.

According to a news release from the mayor's office, Greenwood Mayor Charles Henderson and Franklin Mayor Brenda Jones-Matthews have endorsed the deal.

While the statehouse was full of supporters, many from labor unions representing building trades, cheering and applauding, there were many who shouted in opposi-

tion, saying the plan to lease the toll road to a private, Australian-Spanish consortium for 75 years was selling a major state asset to companies that were sure to hire nonunion labor at low wages.

Many held signs that said, "Ditch Mitch" and "Indiana For Sale," and heckled speakers with shouts of "liar" and "You're selling your kids' future." At times, opponents booed repeatedly and chanted "No, no, no!"

The highway bill passed the House and a revised version is now before the GOP-ruled Senate, where a vote is expected this week. A Senate committee has removed some provisions that appealed Republicans in the GOP-controlled House that helped nudge the bill to pass.

Another revision would require Daniels to get legislative approval before he could make any additional highways or bridges tollways. Daniels wants to make the planned extension of Interstate 69 a tollway and lease it, something he could have done on his own under the House-passed bill.

The legislation is likely to end up in a House-Senate conference committee where

compromises on a final version would be sought. Democrats say the toll road lease is a risky financial deal, among other things. Sen. Glenn Howard of Indianapolis is the only Democratic legislator to support the plan.

Senate Tax Chairman Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, said late Tuesday that differences between the House Republican bill and the one likely to emerge from the Senate might be so great that it could take a special session to resolve them.

But lawmakers still have time to negotiate a compromise, since the regular session adjournment deadline is not until March 14.

People filled the south atrium of the statehouse for Tuesday's rally. About 40 supporters flanked Daniels and Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman, including Henderson on a stage with a banner overhead that said "Major Moves: The Jobs Vote of a Generation."

Many in the crowd support the I-69 expansion between Indianapolis and Evansville, and under Daniels' plan, an initial \$700 million would be used to begin construction on the project. Its final price tag has been estimated at about \$1.8 billion.



Studies predicting nearly 10,000 new jobs in region

Daily Journal staff report

More than 9,500 new jobs are expected in central Indiana over the next six years, according to studies released Tuesday.

Statewide, the studies estimate 40,000 jobs in medical and related sciences, known collectively as life sciences; at least 2,300 and perhaps as many as 4,600 in manufacturing; about 9,000 in logistics and as many as



PETERSON

3,000 in automotive and motor sports.

The studies were released by the Indianapolis Private Industry Council Inc. and Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson.

Council president Joanne Joyce says success in creating jobs is tied to training.

The studies focus on the nine-county central Indiana region: Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan and Shelby counties.

Peterson said the studies are intended to prompt action among educators, employers and economic developers.

A study of the life sciences

industry in 2003 was the catalyst of such a collaboration, which resulted in development of a new biotechnology degree now offered at Ivy Tech Community College and IUPUI.

Subsequent to that, the council created its Biotech Bound program, which is providing tuition and comprehensive support to more than 50 at-risk young adults who are studying biotechnology or health-care delivery at Ivy Tech.

The council will sponsor a roundtable discussion among leaders in the logistics industry next week.

It will be followed by similar roundtable discussions about life

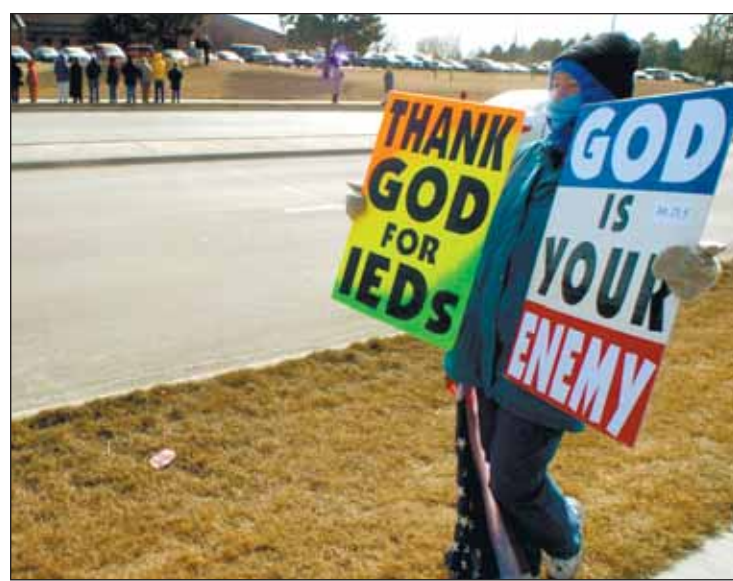
sciences and advanced manufacturing.

A roundtable about automotive and motor sports will be scheduled for May.

Peterson and Joyce announced that the conversations started at the roundtable gatherings will culminate May 5 with The E3 summit.

During that half-day gathering, Purdue University President Martin Jischke will discuss the relationship among educators, employers and economic developers and how it affects the workforce.

Inside Indiana Business contributed to this report.



Elizabeth Phelps protests Saturday across the street from the funeral for Army 1st Lt. Garrison Avery in Lincoln, Neb., who was killed in Baghdad, Iraq, on Feb. 1.

Funeral protest bill advances

Proposal targets disorderly acts

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS

The House voted unanimously Tuesday for a bill that would make disorderly conduct within 500 feet of a funeral, burial, funeral procession or viewing a felony offense.

The bill stems from protests by a Kansas-based group at the funerals of Indiana soldiers.

Members of the Westboro Baptist Church have protested several military funerals across the nation, including some in Indiana, claiming that soldiers are dying in Iraq because the United States supports homosexuals.

The bill was amended on Tuesday so it would take effect immediately if the Senate concurs with the change and Gov. Mitch Daniels signs it into law.

The change was made in hopes that the bill would become law before a funeral next week for a soldier from Kokomo, Sgt. Rickey Jones of the 101st Airborne Division, who was killed in Iraq.

"His family is already being harassed by this same group of people," said Rep. John Ulmer, R-Goshen.

The Senate's sponsor, Republican Rep. Brent Steele of Bedford, said he would seek a concurrence in the Senate. Daniels said he would sign it as soon as it reaches his desk.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The House passed legislation

Tuesday that would require convicted child molesters who committed the offense when they were age 18 or older to be placed on lifetime parole once released from custody. The bill also would require those deemed as "sexually violent predators" to wear electronic monitoring devices once they were free. That would apply to those convicted of certain sex crimes who suffer from mental abnormalities or personality disorders that make them likely to repeat such crimes.

The bill was approved unanimously, but it must return to the Senate for consideration of House changes.

Schools would be required to offer healthier food choices in vending machines and cafeterias under a bill approved by the House.

The bill, approved 71-24, would require that half of foods in school vending machines include things such as water, fruit and baked potato chips. Schools would also have to create health advisory councils and provide some physical activity for elementary students.

The bill must return to the Senate for consideration of House changes.

The bill would make disorderly conduct at funerals as Class D felony punishable by up to three years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. Disorderly conduct is currently a Class B misdemeanor carrying a maximum of 180 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Telecom bill clears last legislative hurdle

Last-minute snafu cleared up for vote

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS

A bill that would free telephone companies from state regulations

won final legislative approval Tuesday night and is headed to Gov. Mitch Daniels, who supports deregulating the telecommunications industry.

Supporters say the bill will spur high-speed Internet development in Indiana by eliminating the regulations that have kept phone companies out of the broadband market in the past. They claim more competition among phone,

cable and Internet providers would keep prices low while expanding voice, video and data choices for consumers.

But opponents of the legislation say consumers will be stuck with higher phone bills. The bill would free phone companies from state regulations by 2009 and let them set their own rates, which are currently capped by the state.

The House had been set to consider giving final legislative approval for the bill earlier in the evening, but Rep. Terri Austin, D-Anderson, raised an objection because of a House rule.

According to that rule, the House has to reject certain House bills that the Senate drastically changes without getting written permission from the bill's sponsors.

House Speaker Brian Bosma had said he needed time to review the precedent of the rule and also review the bill's history, but House Republican leaders said they cleared it up and lawmakers voted 78-18 in favor of the bill.

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