



BRIAN BOSMA & DAVID LONG
GOVERNMENT LEADERS OF THE YEAR

For 35 days in February and March, the stalemate in the Indiana General Assembly garnered national attention. But by session's end, notable policy accomplishments became the lasting story.

This turnaround was made possible in large part due to the determined and focused leadership of those at the top – House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President Pro Tem David Long.

Bosma and Long are no strangers to Indiana state government with a combined 40 years of experience. Bosma, whose father Charlie was a long-time member of the General Assembly, was first elected in 1986; Long 10 years later. Each has served in a variety of leadership roles, but 2011 marked their first time together as the ultimate decision makers for the House and Senate.

Whether Republicans or Democrats are controlling both chambers, or there is a split between the parties, Long emphasizes, “If you’re not communicating or not talking, you’re not going to be successful. Unfortunately, that (open communication) has not always been the case. Brian and I like each other, we’re friends, we trust each other and that’s not an easy thing in politics because we have such divergent groups with different needs and different dynamics.”

Bosma calls the relationship “a unique partnership. I’ve frequently said I’ve always admired David, but in the last year or so he’s become my friend. I really think that’s how we weathered the difficulties that happened this year. When there’s a lot of competing interests, sometimes you whip each other up, sometimes you try to calm each other down.”

The two came together to discuss the highs (there were many), the lows (a few) and their reflections on the past year.

November 2, 2010

The Indiana legislative world took a dramatic turn on the first Tuesday of November 2010. Republicans in the Indiana House went from a 48-52 minority to a 60-40 majority, pushing Bosma to his second term as speaker (the first coming from 2004-2006). Long, Senate leader since 2007, saw his party increase its Senate dominance from 33-17 to 37-13.

“I’ve been on both ends of the campaigns on election night,” recalls Bosma, a longtime attorney with the Indianapolis law firm Kroger Gardis & Regas. “In 2002, giving a victory speech as the (presumed) incoming speaker of the house, (then) being informed the next morning that it didn’t happen by 28 votes. Then in 2010, we worked not just a couple of years, but for a decade (to achieve the positive outcomes of this important election).

“I’m a big fan of aim high, predict low. I only used numbers like 52, 53, 54 with a hope of 57 in the last several weeks of the campaign as we saw polling results,” he continues. “I was honestly surprised that night as we passed 55, 56, 57, 58, 59. We were the fastest called House

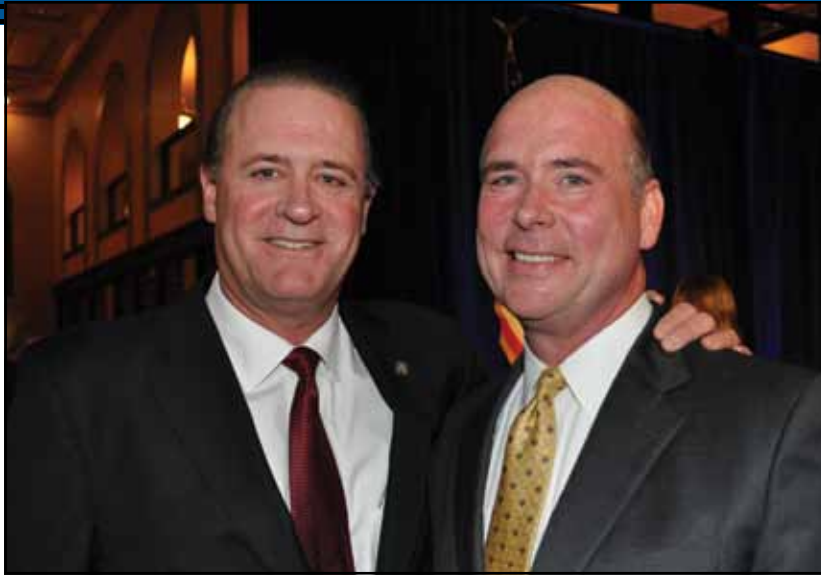
By Tom Schuman

Both Brian Bosma (left) and David Long cite a growing friendship and strong mutual respect as keys to their legislative success.



Long has served as general counsel for Pizza Hut of Fort Wayne for 13 years. Bosma – a partner in the law firm of Kroger, Gardis & Regas – meets with colleagues on a current project.





A happy election night on November 2, 2010 set the stage for the historic 2011 session.

majority in the nation out of 22 chambers that night that switched parties. It was my favorite election night, except maybe the very first time I was elected.”

Long has been general counsel for Pizza Hut of Fort Wayne for 13 years and also served on the Fort Wayne City Council, where he tackled head-on the controversial topic of annexation, before being elected to the General Assembly. He says while the focus, as has been the case in recent years, was on the House, the Senate went “into regions where historically we had never even attempted. We won three seats that the Republicans had not had since the Civil War.”

Recalling election night, Long notes that as the results were coming in his thoughts turned

to “not knowing when the last time the Senate had a constitutional majority; nor could I recall that significant a swing in the House. Because of that, we were able to achieve last session all the goals we set out to achieve and change the direction for this state in a number of areas.”

The two had a chance to talk briefly during the celebration and Bosma doesn’t remember which uttered the sentiment that “now the really difficult work begins.” That proved to be the case, but Long admits, “That was certainly a nice problem to have.”

February 22, 2011

If voters having their say at the polls was an initial highlight moment, the low point came February 22 (and continued through late March) when 39 members of the House Democrat caucus opted to leave the state in protest. The initial reason was cited as a committee hearing the day before on right-to-work legislation. A short time later, the Democrats clarified the exit by stating their opposition to nearly a dozen bills related to education and public sector labor reforms.

No one, including Bosma, thought it would be 35 days later (March 29) before the Statehouse returned to “normal” activity. He does admit to “frank discussions” about a variety of scenarios, “one of them (being) if they never came back.”

Kathy Richardson, Noblesville, who has represented her House district since 1992 and is the current majority caucus chair, remembers that people at the time would say, ‘Oh, you don’t have anything to do.’ “No, it was quite the contrary. We spent every day trying to be ready for what their move might be the next day. I keep calling it a mind game. Every day, we had to have a plan for if they came back or if they didn’t come back. It was a constant planning session; turn

Long confers with a staff member on the floor of the Senate. Bosma listens to union members rallying at the Statehouse during the 2011 walkout.





Long says plenty of credit goes to the Senate and House leadership teams, as well as “game-changing” Gov. Mitch Daniels.

around the next day, they wouldn’t show up and we would start all over again.”

Long attempted to keep the Senate operating on a “business as normal” schedule as much as possible (33 committee hearings were conducted on 69 bills and six resolutions), but that proved difficult as the walkout extended to its record length. He was obviously anxious about the impact on the 2011 session, but more worried about the long-term consequences.

“I was very concerned with the future of the institution. We cannot tolerate that happening, the people’s government ever being shut down like that again. If it was successful ... you could see 49 other states ...” he laments. “There are ways to fight the good fight without walking away from your job. It was very difficult, stressful, and, at the time, a great concern.

“As a citizen, if my voice, my eyes, my ears, the person I elect to sit in that seat is not there, I have no voice, I have no say, I have no representation. That hurts everyone,” Long continues. “I hope the lesson that is learned from this is fight your good fight, fight as fiercely as you can but you do it in your seat in the Statehouse, making your point to the people both now and in the time of election as well. That’s how it should be done; that’s how it’s intended.”

Bosma points out that, “If this were to become the norm, regardless of which party, it would be just a nasty turn for democracy.”

April 29, 2011

The ultimate evaluation of any General Assembly session is the “report card” at the conclusion. In other words, did legislators accomplish what they set out to do? At the top of that agenda (shared with Gov. Daniels and Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Bennett) was education reform – enhancing school choice, expanding charter schools and putting improved teacher performance standards in place.

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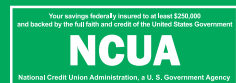
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Bosma, a regular participant in the Chamber's Central Indiana Legislative Preview, is cited by many for his strong communication abilities.

The final pieces of the education puzzle came together as the session concluded on time despite the five-week lull. In the effort to improve student grades and eventual career success, lawmakers receive all "A's" for 2011.

Bosma took the unusual step of serving as lead author on the charter school legislation. The bill number (HB 1002, just after the budget legislation) helped amplify its importance. In his remarks at the bill signing, he pointed out that the concept of a family choosing a school for its children and having the money follow that child only originated in the House in 1993 – with him serving as one of the authors. While charter school legislation did pass in 2001, this year's enhancements place Indiana among the national leaders.

"I had said before the session to those that were interested that if we were in the majority, not knowing that it would be a big majority, that I would consider it a personal failure if we didn't pass some of these (reforms) this year," said Bosma, praising Long, the governor and Bennett for their roles in making it a reality. "I would rank what happened this last year on that education reform front as probably the most important

accomplishment in my 25 years in the General Assembly. I think it really sets the stage for the future, and it set the bar for other states. I have been inundated from leaders from around the country asking: 'How did you guys accomplish this? How can we duplicate that here?'"

Long echoes the sentiment. "These bills were critical to put Indiana at the forefront of education reform in the country, no doubt about it. That's saying something for a state that has traditionally kind of fought change. What will happen as a result is that our kids are going to get the opportunity for the educational background they are going to require in order to be successful in the next 20 years. I'm very proud of what we achieved. For both Brian and myself, this will be the crowning achievement for either of us as leaders as it will have the longest lasting impact and legacy for the people of this state, particularly our kids."

While education was in the spotlight, it was joined by other important victories for companies, their employees and all Hoosiers. Included were revamping the state's unemployment compensation system, cutting the state's corporate income tax rate to benefit small businesses and authorizing enhanced public-private partnerships for transportation infrastructure projects.

For Bosma, high on the list is the "fiscal integrity we committed to early and insisted on together this session. That's not always easy because sometimes fiscal leaders may not agree. We put parameters in place and then let the experts work the details out. Look at the fiscal tragedies that have happened in other state; they have not happened here."

Long adds redistricting to the education-unemployment insurance-balanced budget trifecta. "Those were the four pillars of the session, and I think we hit a grand slam on all of them."

On the same page

In addition to the political dynamics, what was different about 2011 than previous legislative sessions? What did Bosma



Stormy weather doesn't stop Long from making remarks or talking with constituents during the grand opening of Fort Wayne's Wabash & Erie Canal Towpath Trail (photo at left courtesy of Tony Frantz).

and Long do to help ensure that April 29 would be fondly remembered? They talked – early and often. They communicated clearly, and they involved their leadership teams.

Long terms it a “lot of planning and forethought before the session.” Bosma jumps in to reiterate that without the early work that the “unforeseen events that happened, including the walkout, would have sidetracked everything.”

On the communication front, Bosma discloses, “There wasn’t any major development that David wasn’t at least forewarned about. He may not have always agreed or perhaps I didn’t agree with every step the Senate took, but we tried to keep each other informed. People weren’t surprised by the action of the other chamber ... that’s not always been the case, I guarantee that.”

Richardson emphatically states, “Brian’s greatest asset is his ability to communicate on the issues, to articulate to the public, to the governor’s office, to the media.”

Long agrees, saying, “You can’t have a leader who is unable to get the message out on behalf of your caucus or your party or your causes. Brian is kind of relentless about what it takes to go out there and be successful.”

Joint leadership team meetings also assisted in keeping both chambers on track, Richardson confirms. Connie Lawson, Senate majority floor leader who came to the General Assembly at the same time as Long in

1996, offers, “David allows input on difficult decisions and delegates to others when needed. No one person can do it all and the caucus has benefitted from his inclusiveness.”

Mitigating circumstances

While stability is a fair description for the Senate, the House found itself in much more of a transition mode. With that in mind, Bosma was quick to attempt to establish a new order. He appointed two Democrats as committee chairs, with Long saying, “I thought Brian was really trying to set the tone of bipartisanship. I totally understood what he was doing and supported it.”

Bosma also emphasized reshaping a committee process that he says had become flawed.

“We had gotten into the legislative habit of just shoving a bill through in the House – not working it through, not solving its problems. Many times we were sending it over to the Senate without substantial change from how it was drafted by somebody not in the process or with glaring holes.

“For instance on the charter school bill, we had 15 hours of committee hearing and debate. It sends a message that this

is how you accomplish good legislation. You work with the other party; you work with the other house.”

Long calls the committee phase the “meat and potatoes work” with an end goal being when the bill “hits the floor it’s ready for amendments, not to clean up. That’s a significant responsibility that we take very seriously in the Senate. We’re really on a parallel track now with the House.”

The biggest impact, however, goes back to that Tuesday evening in November 2010. Twenty-five – 19 in the House and six in the Senate – of the 150 members of the General Assembly were newcomers. That brings both challenges and opportunities, with the numbers and the dynamics impacting Bosma more than Long.

Long explains how the Senate’s four-year term provides more time to “learn your trade. Everything in the House is

faster, more rapid, edgier. It’s intended to be that way. The Senate is more deliberate, in some ways more policy oriented. It balances it out really well. You have to have this ying and yang to make it work right.

“The freshmen bring new ideas, push the envelope a bit,” with both adding that experience and often patience are the attributes in short supply. “This is a people business,” Long continues. “We added six diverse people in our caucus, and they all brought something to the table.”

For Bosma, nearly a third of the members of his majority caucus were newly elected. He terms their arrival a welcome “shot in the arm.”

“Many had never held elected office before and had no idea exactly what happens here. This group was ready to effect change; fortunately it was the same change we’d been talking about for, in many cases, a decade. At the same time, we had to keep them calm. Many had been on the campaign trail for two years and wanted to change the world today. We spent a lot of time orienting, mentoring. They’re the next generation of leaders in our state.”

Leading the way

Lawson lists a number of attributes about Long, including his active statewide support of Senate candidates, as well as problem-solving and compromise skills. She says, “He is the kind of person you can talk to and he will listen.”

Bosma enthusiastically seconds Long’s listening ability.

“Leaders, whether legislative leaders or elsewhere, go through some very unique experiences. I had a few of those challenging issues in the forefront in the last year. My son just



Listening to constituents helps Bosma and his House Republican team members prioritize key issues.



The scenic House chambers are the backdrop for a Bosma presentation to interns and members of the Governor's Fellows class.

recently said to me, 'Everyone comes to you for advice and with their problems, and you don't have anybody that you can go to.' I thought about that, and in many contexts that's true.

"But I said I do have somebody, and I feel like I can go to David Long with anything and get good, solid, sound advice in confidentiality," Bosma continues. "David has been very positive in that regard, supportive even if he may disagree with the approach or direction I'm pointed on something. I really truly value that. That trickles down to our teams as well."

As this interview neared its conclusion, Long offers, "The number one thing we were able to do in this session is we were able to sit down and talk like this. We had an awful lot of conversations where

we were just trying to find that path, bring along our caucuses to the point that we could successfully take a vote on something.

"And knowing it's going to stay in that room too. That's invaluable. I remember (House minority leader) Pat Bauer telling me, when I first became leader, 'I used to have a group of nine people and we'd sit down and talk about something and 30 seconds later it would be out in the hallway; now I have three people around me and it stays in the room.' It's hard to keep a confidence in this place; it really is."

Confidential conversations when necessary, effective communications inside the Statehouse and beyond, and strong leadership on all fronts – a winning formula for the General Assembly and Indiana.