

Who Will be Indiana's 50th Governor?



Pence: Ready to Lead 'Indiana's Moment'

In mid-July, Mike Pence (an Indiana congressman since 2000 and a leading spokesman in his Republican caucus) and running mate Sue Ellspermann (an Indiana state representative elected in 2010) participated in separate BizVoice® interviews that included similar questions as those presented to their Democrat opponents.

When Republican Mike Pence began rolling out specific policy proposals earlier this summer, it was no accident that topping the list was a plan to enhance career, technical and vocational training.

After citing a long list of positive legislative and executive accomplishments in Indiana in recent years, Pence adds, "I believe the largest remaining barrier to significant growth in the Indiana economy has to do with workforce."

The challenge is twofold: Preparing young people – "making sure that our schools work for all of our kids regardless of where they want to start in life," according to Pence – and tackling the hundreds of thousands of adults without the skills needed for today's economy. Pence: "I don't want to solve the problem just for today. My ambition is that we would put into place systems and practices that would solve this problem for the 21st century and make Indiana the most attractive place in America to invest in a business and hire."

Running mate Sue Ellspermann describes the potential for her and Pence to potentially follow the strong leadership of the Daniels-Skillman team. "We can continue on, grow and further develop a solid agenda that was implemented well and now (have) the opportunity, as Mike will say, for going from good to great."

Back to work

The initial Pence policy proposal calls for the establishment of regional Indiana Work Councils. Employers and educators would "operate in a very short time period (evaluation of regional needs due by November 1, 2013) to propose curriculum changes for schools in their area. The response we're getting from businesses is overwhelmingly positive – to invite them to partner with us in developing curriculum that creates career pathways at the high school level."

The vocational piece is part of the bigger policy plan that strives "to make Indiana **the** state that works." Pence describes it as his passion. Not surprisingly, the feedback from around the state is all about jobs.

"Everywhere I've gone in Indiana the last year, the top priority is jobs. Hoosiers are understandably proud of the progress we've made. But people are ready for Indiana to go from reform to results," he shares. "They're ready to see our fiscal responsibility, freedom in the workplace,

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By Tom Schuman

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more opportunities in our schools translate into good jobs, great schools and everything that makes life worth living.”

For Ellspermann, the messages from Hoosiers are that the state is on the right track.

“People understand we came out of a tough economy the last few years, but Indiana has shown the right spirit and fortitude at moving through that. I think people are generally hopeful moving forward,” she offers. “We all know there will be bumps in the road, but most people are pleased with the job they’ve seen from the current administration, and I think that sets us up for a trusting relationship with Hoosiers should we be elected.”

All about entrepreneurship

Not only do workers need the skills to compete, but a state needs an economic climate that allows and encourages organizations and individuals to succeed. In their separate interviews, Pence and Ellspermann spoke at length and with conviction about an “entrepreneurial energy.” When the question about the economic environment was prefaced with the comment that entrepreneurs like Bill Cook and companies like ExactTarget don’t come along every day, the lieutenant governor candidate quickly interrupted with, “They could!”

Pence cites the example of Warsaw and its role as an international giant in the medical device industry in establishing the priority of “encouraging the kind of capital formation and risk taking that will result in more entrepreneurial energy in Indiana.” Part of that involves continued tax reform.

“I’d like to use the first dollar of excess surplus on tax relief (specific policies yet to come as of this writing),” he declares. “I’m someone who believes that while Indiana is a relatively low tax state, we are an ‘all of the above’ tax state, and I believe there is room for improvement where we can promote the kind of tax reform that encourages investment and promotes growth.”

Business development has been part of Ellspermann’s life and career. The experiences include working in her father’s jewelry store; being part of large corporations (General Motors, Michelin, Frito Lay) in multiple states (Indiana, South Carolina, Texas and Michigan); running her own small business that focused on helping others grow their enterprises; and serving with the Center for Applied Research

Combination Crucial for Ellspermann

The decision to run for lieutenant governor includes two important factors for Sue Ellspermann – her running mate and the ability to make a statewide impact.

“As I was asked to consider this position, I wanted to know this was somebody that not only did I think I could complement, but 100% that I could speak to every Hoosier about his integrity, his abilities, his leadership, his vision,” she reveals. “To have the opportunity to work closely with him and the team, Mike is an extremely thoughtful visionary leader for Indiana.

“My great passion is economic development, particularly as it relates to rural Indiana,” she adds. “So though I could impact four or five counties in my role as state representative, the ability to help craft policy and implement a vision across the state of Indiana that makes us a strong business-friendly environment, a place where entrepreneurship thrives and where our rural communities can again thrive is very important to me. The combination of the opportunity to be on the Pence team and serve rural Indiana was very important to me.”

Ellspermann views one of the exciting opportunities in the lieutenant governor’s role as defense. She has previous technology transfer and intellectual property experience with the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center and also lists Camp Atterbury, Muscatuck (home of an urban training center) and other facilities as strong assets.

A resident of Ferdinand in Dubois County, Ellspermann looks to bring some hometown qualities to a statewide audience. “We’re pretty strong-willed business people ourselves. (During the recession) people continued to work hard, they kept their workers employed, they found ways to move forward. That attitude of, ‘We can do it; we will do it; we’ll look for new ways to do it,’ bringing that across the state is a good thing.”

Pence concludes that he and Ellspermann are proud to have the opportunity to potentially lead what he calls Indiana’s Moment.

“I think Indiana is on the verge of an era of growth and opportunity like no other in our lifetime,” he contends. “But it’s going to take seizing this moment, understanding how unique this moment is and being willing to bring all the stakeholders together to say: ‘What are the policies that need to be implemented for us to take full advantage of this moment.’ If we produce the right leadership at every level with the right vision and common sense policies, I think Indiana could lead the Midwest – if not the nation – in capital formation, in job creation, educational attainment and growth for many years to come.”



Sue Ellspermann made a strong impact during her two years in the Indiana House.



The Pence-Ellspermann team is joined by family at the Indiana GOP State Convention. At left is Jim Mehling, Ellspermann's husband, with Karen Pence and son Michael (at right).

economic development entity at the University of Southern Indiana.

Referencing the dynamic and creative culture driver in the *Indiana Vision 2025* economic development plan being led by the Indiana Chamber, Ellspermann says, "I'm thrilled to hear the Chamber speak as much to small business and entrepreneurship. Why not have a renaissance of entrepreneurship in Indiana? Why not here? We have a lot of the beginnings of it. We have great companies. We have great research institutions. We have the business climate. Let's do it."

In 2011, Ellspermann authored legislation regarding young entrepreneurs. Implementation is the next step, she explains.

"Until that time, we didn't have a mechanism for young entrepreneurs coming out of our universities, getting degrees in entrepreneurship, to be linked with communities that wanted them. So the vast majority historically have taken jobs in existing organizations instead of going out and starting the business they built a business plan for."

Roads and coal

When the topic is infrastructure, a common question is where is the money going to come from to meet upcoming needs. Pence believes an initial step must take place first.

"I'm someone who has always believed roads mean jobs. But the challenge Indiana faces right now is that at the time Major Moves came along, there was a lot in the cupboard. INDOT (Indiana Department of Transportation) and a lot of stakeholders had done a lot of thinking and a lot of planning about what needed to be done.

"What I'm been told now," he continues, "is that we have somewhat of the opposite situation ... that while Major Moves has a foreseeable end to it, the five-year, 10-year, 20-year plan for Indiana could use some work. Before we talk about how we fund the next generation of infrastructure in Indiana, I think we need to pull all the stakeholders in Indiana together and ask what needs to be done.

Pence affirms a commitment to completing Interstate 69 from Evansville to Indianapolis as well as other identified priorities. Ellspermann adds that public-private partnerships (legislation establishing authority for additional P3s was passed in 2011) need to be part of the mix in order to help leverage additional funding.

When the topic turns to federal efforts to stymie coal, Pence is blunt. "I think we're in need of new management in Washington, D.C., especially in the administration and EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). He repeated his assertion

when cap and trade legislation was trying to be moved through Congress that it (and subsequent regulatory actions against coal) is "nothing short of an economic declaration of war on the Midwest."

The solution: "Indiana needs to continue to lead the effort to stand for environmentally responsible uses for our traditional sources of energy – coal, but oil and natural gas as well. I'm also pleased to see Indiana be on

the leading edge of alternative sources of energy," he contends. "I've always said my view of energy is I'm an 'all of the above' person. As Daniel Webster wrote in the last century, 'Let us develop the natural resources of our land, call forth our powers ...'"

Bridging gaps

Pence has never been shy to express his views on the so-called social issues. Supporters praise him; opponents attack him. He won't change his opinions, but defines how such topics would be addressed in his administration.

"It comes down to a difference between the urgent and the important. For me, a respect for life and the importance of traditional family are foundational. But I think this election is about jobs and schools," he states. "Because the reality is for all the progress Indiana has made, we've still got more than quarter million Hoosiers out of work and we still have thousands of young people that drop out of high school every year. We've



Pence speaks with employees at Damon Products in Mishawaka, while Ellspermann joins volunteers at the Linton Freedom Festival Parade.

still got progress that needs to be made.

“What I hear from Hoosiers, irrespective of where they are on issues related to traditional moral values, is they want to see the next administration focus on jobs and schools – and that’s what we’ll do. With one exception. I do believe that the health, well-being and safety of Hoosier families is foundational to our economic prosperity. If I’m elected governor, we’re going to look for ways to encourage two-parent families, to strength the opportunities that Hoosiers have to raise children in two-parent families.”

Another political topic of the day, whether in Washington or Indiana, is bipartisanship – or the lack of it. Pence says he brings to the table several core values that allow him to have good relationships with colleagues regardless of their party affiliation.

“I believe that civility, in heavy doses, is essential to representative democracy. And I’ve always practiced that whether it’s campaign politics – where I haven’t run a negative ad in the past 10 years of campaigning – or whether it’s debates in Congress or the public domain. I’ve always believed that negative personal attacks had no place in public life and I’ve practiced that.”

After a “rough-and-tumble” campaign in the 1980s in which he did not win congressional office, Pence notes that he promised himself any return to the public debate would involve treating others the way he wishes to be treated. He says he followed that approach during his radio career and in subsequent public service.

“I hope, as I prepare to leave Congress and apply for a new job at the Statehouse, that I bring that reputation with me. I’m someone who has often told leaders of the opposing party, my district, labor leaders: ‘My door is always open. My job is not to agree with you about everything – to lead is to decide, as John F. Kennedy said – but it is my job to **listen** to you.’ I will set a tone, having served in the majority and served in the minority, that says to every elected official in the Statehouse: ‘My door is open. I’m going to respect you for the position that you have. We’re going to look for areas where we genuinely have common ground and make the decisions that are necessary to move the state forward.’ ”

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