

Working for You

An Informal Q&A With Two of the Indiana Chamber Issue Experts

Cam Carter

Vice President, Economic Development and Federal Relations

Why did you decide to go into government affairs?

The consequences of public policy are too important to sit on the sidelines. I like to be involved with the public questions that have a wide-ranging impact on our society. This is rewarding work where you have the opportunity to make a difference and have an influence on where and how you live.

What is the difference between working with congressional leaders in Washington versus members of the Indiana General Assembly?

The main difference is that when working with the members of the Indiana General Assembly, I have a portfolio of issues that I specialize in, such as telecommunications, technology and transportation. At the federal level, as the sole federal lobbyist, I'm working on all of the issues. I'm more of a specialist when dealing with the Indiana General Assembly and a generalist when working with congressional leaders.

Have you ever been "starstruck" when meeting a politician?

I remember meeting Birch Bayh as a child at a dinner that my dad took me to, and I remember Ronald Reagan coming to the Markland Mall in Kokomo when my dad was the city controller. Those are the only two times I can remember being "starstruck," as a young kid. Once I went to Capitol Hill in college and interned for Dick Lugar, I started to come to the realization that they are just people too.

What outdoor activities do you enjoy on your days off?

The three big ones are downhill skiing, golf and sailing. Sailing is probably my passion, but I've been spending a lot of time lately on golf. I've dedicated a lot of time and energy to become marginally competent at the game – it's the one that has taken the most work.

If you could be a professional athlete, which sport would you play?

Football. We used to play sandlot tackle football when I was a kid. I was a little guy, but what I lacked in physical intimidation I made up for with pure meanness. I could run fast. Everyone always said, "Give the ball to Cam. He'll run."

Favorite movie: Lawrence of Arabia

Favorite childhood TV show: Banana Splits

Favorite vacation spot: Colorado and the Rocky Mountains

Favorite food: Pizza



Mike Ripley

Vice President, Health Care Policy

Prior to joining the Chamber as a lobbyist, you were a legislator yourself (1996-2008) and also involved in the insurance industry.

How have your past experiences prepared you to be an advocate for the state's businesses and employees?

Before I was a state legislator, I was also a county commissioner where I learned about roads, bridges and infrastructure. I was in the insurance business about 15 years when I started in the Legislature. I also had a criminal justice background as a probation officer.

Coming here, I think about all my life experiences and how they have fallen into what I'm doing now.

You've been busy the last few years in your area of expertise, with the smoking ban law and then obviously the federal Affordable Care Act.

It's pretty amazing – it's all been insurance reform. I have had to educate myself in all aspects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to communicate it to employers. I enjoy helping them with this; the whole ACA is difficult, but I find pleasure in helping businesses.

You're a very active individual – where do you draw inspiration for staying fit and healthy? And what are your favorite things to do to stay active?

I don't like working out, but I've been pretty athletic most of my life and at a certain age, you have to decide you're going to continue to maintain some level of fitness. It doesn't come easy for me. I try to be mindful of my eating, but I do reward myself with chocolate ice cream. Eighty percent of the time, do right; otherwise you'll go crazy.

What is an important lesson you've learned through working in the Legislature and politics?

There are always two sides to the coin. Also, don't speak until you've heard both sides. That's a lesson I learned early on as a commissioner. Until I heard both sides, I kept my mouth shut and listened. I've carried that through: listen to why people do what they do.

When you were a child, what did you dream you'd do?

I thought I'd be a professional baseball player. There was a timeframe I thought about being president; and during one of my funky stages I told everyone I'd be a garbage collector whenever they asked me the question.

Favorite movie: Arsenic and Old Lace or North by Northwest

Favorite childhood TV show: The Adventures of Ozzie & Harriet

Favorite vacation spot: Florida, specifically Disney World and Bradenton Beach

Favorite food: Edy's chocolate ice cream

