

from our viewpoint...

## Sen. Bayh to retire, upset with Senate

No retirement from the United State Senate so far during the current term was as unexpected and shocking than that of Indiana Democrat Evan Bayh. A moderate, he's calling it quits because Congress isn't serving the people anymore, rather serving themselves as the country continues to deteriorate.

He was harsh with his criticism of fellow senators, and the president didn't escape the bite either.

It's about time someone of his caliber stepped forward to tell it like it is.

Sen. Bayh was in the midst of a re-election bid in the Hoosier State when he went before the cameras to announce his retirement this week. There was little question he would have won re-election hands down. He's popular, he's focused, and he wasn't a "Party of Yes" echo. He sometimes angered the Democratic leadership on Capitol Hill for challenging the way they were doing business.

Sen. Bayh is a rising star within the Democratic Party. But unlike a majority of Democrats on Capitol Hill, his mission is and has always been, to put his people of Indiana and the people of this country first. It's unfortunate that many in the United States Senate aren't taking stock of how he operated.

So far this term, 18 Republicans and 13 Democrats (Senate and House combined) have announced retirement instead of seeking re-election. And chances are we will see another dozen or so follow suit. Maybe more. The writing on the wall couldn't be any clearer.

The biggest sham going on is the belief that THEY (the crowd in the Senate and the House) work for us. That's hard to believe if you pay any attention at all to the daily televised coverage of both houses on C-Span and C-Span 2. And those televised battles often carry over onto the hallways of the Capitol as television cameras continue to roll. It's nasty, the gloves are off. It's more like a bully showdown on a grade school playground.

Maybe we the people are at fault to some degree. Maybe we need to force a halt to Congress setting its own salary. If they do in fact SERVE us, why is it they can quietly slip through a pay raise without letting us, their bosses, know? And looking over their salaries — around \$170,000 annually, + all the perks that go with the office — it's clear why they want to hold onto those sacred seats. A salary reduction is necessary and must be enacted. After all in these tough economic times when millions of their constituents are jobless, one would expect our leadership to at least set an example by cutting their pay as a demonstration of concern. And the perks must be scaled back accordingly.

Did someone just yell, "Term limits is the answer!" When the words "term limits" are mentioned, the name of Republican Sen. Sam Brownback of our great state comes to mind. During his initial campaign for the office, he placed a two-term limitation of service to Kansas as a U.S. Senator — that's a total of 12 years. And he stuck with it. As he serves out the last several months of his Senate career, he is campaigning for governor. At this point in time he's the front runner.

Sen. Bayh's decision to retire is a big loss for Indiana and for the country. He is leaving the United State Senate for all the right reasons — the wrongness of our governing body. And if the leadership of his party fails to recognize the seriousness of his departure, then they deserve whatever wrath the voters inflict at the polls in November. —Tom Dreiling

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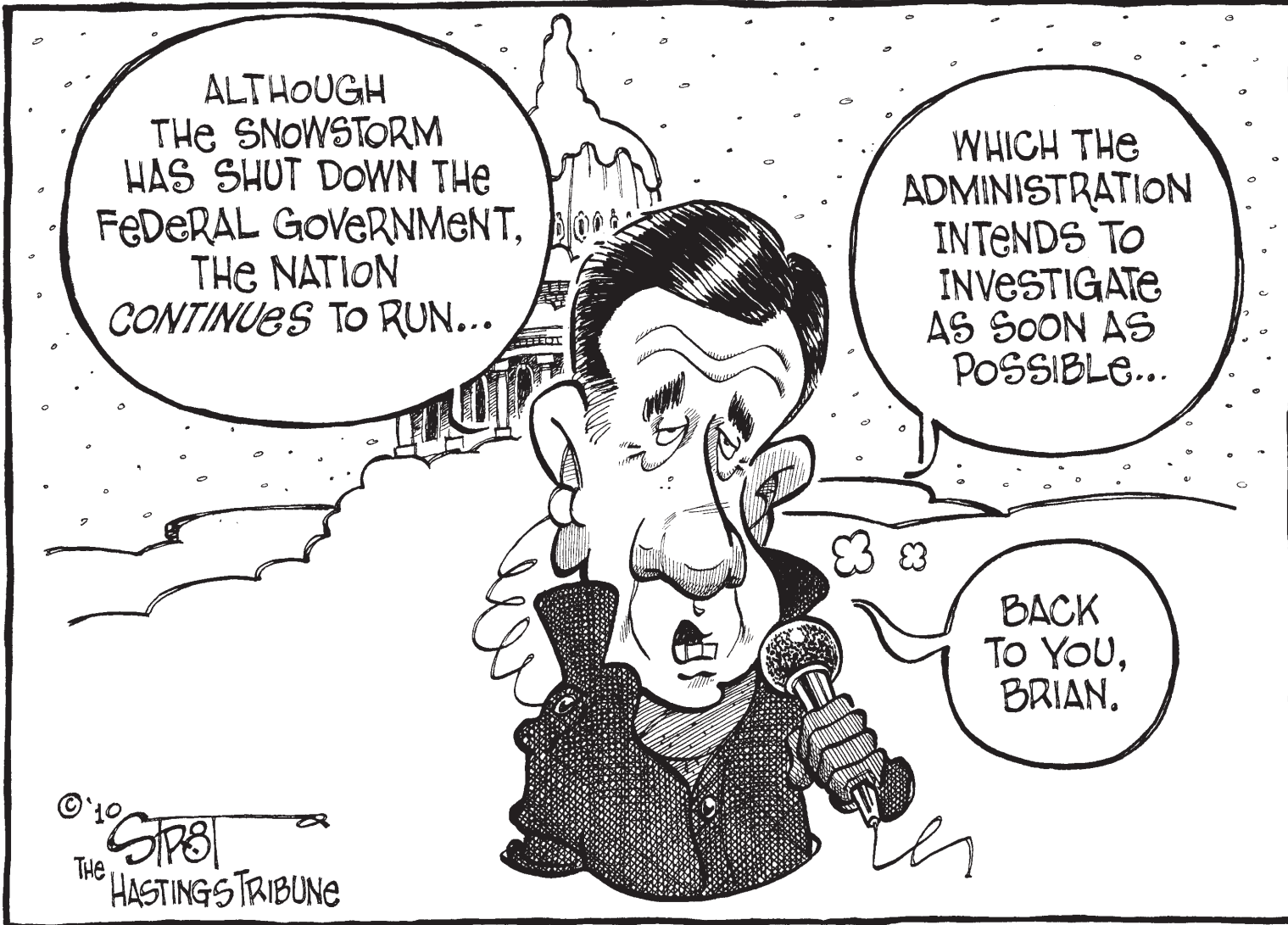
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## Is this what our community really wants?

To the Editor:

My name is Shari Taylor. I have lived in rural Sherman county all of my life. My husband is Terry Taylor. We have two sons - Ryan and Garrett.

School closures are not really going to affect the education of my children as Ryan graduated this past year and Garrett will be a freshman at the high school next year. It may, however, affect the education of my grandchildren down the road.

After attending the education hearing at the USD 352 school board meeting on Feb 8th, it became very clear to me that most members of our school board already had their minds made up to close North school, without a doubt.

I would like to share with you the statement I made at the school board meeting with topics for you to consider.

Many, many small schools combine junior high with high school. Several even have K-12 in the same school. I attended Edson up until it closed which was a K-12 school. And, I was a teacher in the Brewster school district for 10 years, also a K-12 school. Students in both of these schools were never at any more risk than students in the Goodland school district even though Goodland is separated by elementary, junior high and high school.

My second topic of consideration was the issue of junior high boys and girls at high school level. Presently, junior high and high school students mix together throughout the entire year. They can sit together at athletic events in the fieldhouse, football stadium and track for nine months of the year. They spend time together at our Goodland Activities Center, 12 months of the year. They run together all



### from our readers

• to the editor

summer long at the baseball complex. They spend and entire week together at the county fair. And many attend the Sherman Theatre where it is possible for these age groups to mix. My point being — "Our kids are much, much safer together in school than anywhere else they could be!"

Third, why did we hire this "expert" to evaluate our schools and spend all that money just to ignore the results. The recommendation was to move the junior high to the high school for next year which could be done without a lot of expense, however, some remodeling would need to be done in the near future. And why did we as a community choose to build the new junior high gym at the high school if there is so much risk of putting these kids together?

Finally, what happened to our kids coming first? All we seem to be worried about is our staff and saving their jobs. Have been a teacher myself, I feel we have many many wonderful teachers in our district, but there are a small percent who are just putting in their time. These are the ones that need to go and begin to save our district some money.

I would like to challenge you as a board to actually see how your community really feels about closing North as opposed to Grant Junior High by getting input from every parent who has a student in the district. I'm betting the numbers would be very unanimous in favor of

closing the junior high just what was recommended to you as a board by your "expert".

Having said this, I realize this is only the beginning, as more schools will probably have to be closed in the future. You as a board, have to start somewhere, why not start with the recommendation you were given?

All statements made to the school board that night were to close the junior high instead of North school. Funny thing is our school board president just kept saying "Our decision is based on what our community wants." If this is truly what our community wants, why did not one person, at the meeting, get up and speak on behalf of closing North school.

Supposedly the board has scheduled a town meeting on Monday, March 8, at the auditorium to decide what to do with North now that it was voted 6-1 to close.

My question is, "Will a town meeting do any good, since the board chooses not to hear what the community wants anyway?" Why pretend to have a meeting to see what the community wants as our school board president said when the board obviously has been told to support administrative decisions regardless. If this is the case, why do we need a school board at all?

It's time the board thinks about what is actually best for our students and what the community wants, rather than just being puppets. Come on school board officials you were elected to be a voice for our community and yet only one of you seem to be hearing what your community is saying, loud and clear!

Shari Taylor  
Goodland

## More deserving thumbs up received



### tom dreiling

• time out with td

• "The Kansas legislator who wants to eliminate the fee for those who can't afford it, must be one of those who can't afford it." (Feedback line: [td1@st-tel.net](mailto:td1@st-tel.net)).

-td-

OK. In last Friday's column I talked about doing something special for Lent. After a lot of thought I decided I would try to cut a few more pounds off of a body that has a few too many. If I can cut about 5 more pounds I'll be where I have wanted to be for a long time...175 pounds. So that's my Lenten goal. Currently, I am just a bit under 180. Eating less, exercising, getting enough sleep, drinking a lot of water, and not eating after the evening meal are among the things that figure into weight loss. So, why don't you join me this Lenten season and shed a few unnecessary pounds yourself? Maybe we could join up and call ourselves, "The Lenten Losers." You game?

-td-

Let's wrap up this column with a little Catho-

lic humor (the names have been changed to protect the innocent): Father Rob married Flora and Rex but it didn't result in any children. They prayed, they consulted many times with their family doctor, friends offered advice. Nothing worked. So one day Flora went to visit with her parish priest, Father Rob, and asked if there were any special prayers he could toss into the mix. He didn't know of any at the moment, but told her the next week he would be flying to Rome and that he'd light a candle for her and Rex. She was delighted to hear that. Father Rob did as he said he would and lit a candle "in support of the young couple's desire to have children." Well, low and behold, that sacred candle worked and the couple had two sets of twins and six singles — 10 kids! One Sunday morning she and the 10 children were at Mass and afterward Father Rob commented how wonderful it was to see her and all the kids at Mass, but he wondered where Rex was?

"Well, Father," she said, "he flew to Rome... to blow out that candle!"

-td-

Have a good evening! And as you get ready to attend the house of worship of your choice this weekend, don't forget the kids, no matter the number. ([td1@st-tel.net](mailto:td1@st-tel.net))

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