

The Indiana General Assembly

By

Gerald C. Wright, Indiana University
David Ogle, State Legislative Leaders Foundation

Joint Project on Term Limits 2004



National Conference of State Legislatures



Council of State Governments



State Legislative Leaders' Foundation



7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230-7143
(303) 364-7700 • fax (303) 364-7800

444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202) 624-5400 • fax (202) 737-1069

<http://www.ncsl.org>

Overview

This is a report on the Indiana legislature, which serves as one of three control states in the NCSL/Council of State Governments joint project on term limits. Most of the evidence presented here comes from interviews carried out by Gerald Wright and David Ogle during October 8-10, 2003 in Indianapolis. We interviewed a disproportionate amount of individuals on the Senate side versus the House side among those currently serving in the legislature, but this is balanced by extensive House experience among the lobbyists we talked with, including two former speakers. This analysis is supplemented in places with statistical data gathered to match data collected for other states in the larger study as well as data from the Knowledgeable Observers survey conducted by Karl Kurz and NCSL. We felt that, with few exceptions, the interviews were quite consistent in giving us a portrait of the legislature and how it operates.

The theme of politics and policy making in the Hoosier state are nicely captured in the assessment of former House Speaker Mike Philips who noted that, “not all that much has changed” in how the legislature does its business. The thrust of the evidence we examined - interviews, statistical patterns, and the Knowledgeable Observers survey - point squarely to the conclusion that change over the last ten years has been modest.

Our interviewees generally spoke approvingly of the legislature. Although the legislature is characterized by strong partisanship, our sources showed a surprisingly high level of respect toward participants and the legislative process itself in Indiana. There was little to no support toward moving the legislature in a significantly more professional

direction, even though the demands of the job are seen to have outstripped the “part-time citizen legislator” description that fit Indiana in previous decades.

One recurring feature in our interviews was the significant differences in the political styles and roles of the House and the Senate. It seems that the Indiana Senate fulfills the role that George Washington saw for the U.S. Senate. George Washington is said to have told Jefferson that the framers had created the Senate to "cool" House legislation just as a saucer was used to cool hot tea. Our interviews found that the House is more innovative, competitive, and anxious to deal with the state’s problems, while the Senate is more deliberate, orderly and careful in the legislation it allows to pass through the process.

A few themes of change emerged during the interviews. Partisanship is alive and well in both chambers, and some observers believe that it has increased in recent years. The job of being a legislator in Indiana, as in most other states, is more demanding now than ever before, which has resulted in changes in the age and occupational profiles of those serving in the legislature. Our interviewees all agreed that the quality of media coverage of the legislature has deteriorated. The reporting tends to be superficial, infrequent, and aims more to present conflict or scandal than to inform citizens about what the legislature is doing – both in general and on specific issues.

The picture that emerges is one of a legislature with strong party caucuses and effective leadership in both chambers. There are relatively low levels of turnover, which contribute to a solid foundation of institutional memory about both process and policy. The increased costs and sophistication of campaigning have led to a growth in the leadership campaign committees that raise money and funnel resources into targeted

paces. The close party balance in the House has contributed to more intense electoral competition and greater partisanship in the legislature. Some feel the result of this balance is less compromise and cooperation than in earlier periods.

Overall, however, our interviewees seemed to believe that the legislature works quite well. Even with intense partisan competition, there are generally high levels of respect and comity in the Indiana legislature, especially in the Senate. In terms of changes in procedure or rules, such as adopting term limits, the clear feeling is, “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” From our participants’ point of view, the Indiana legislature is not broke, but certainly could be if a change such as term limits were forced on the legislature.

Leadership

The leaders of the Indiana legislature are chosen in secret ballot elections within the majority party caucuses, and these decisions, like those in many legislatures, are then ratified by a straight party line vote on the floor of the House and Senate. In the Senate, the majority Republican caucus has voted the same way for almost a quarter of a century in electing Robert Garton as president pro tempore. Senator Garton is now the longest serving legislative leader in the country. While the Speaker of the House is generally regarded as the most powerful position in the General Assembly, Garton’s long tenure and pervasive control of the flow of business in the Senate may balance whatever formal power margin is enjoyed by the Speaker. In the current period, the Speaker is Representative Patrick Bauer who, in contrast to Senator Garton’s long service, had completed just one session as speaker at the time of our interviews.

Both leaders are more respected than feared. Senator Garton in particular is held in high esteem by members of parties, lobbyists, and staff. Although we were told that the Republican caucus does not always agree with the leadership, the overwhelming impression is that virtually everything of significance that happens in the Senate goes through and is coordinated with the president pro tempore.

The context in which Garton assumed power in the Senate has had a profound effect on the character of the Senate, and has helped create the striking differences in the political styles, or as one observer termed it, “the personalities,” of the two chambers of the Indiana legislature. Senator Garton assumed leadership in 1970 following indictments that sent two of his predecessors to prison for corruption. Eager to overcome the adverse image of the Senate, Garton worked to create a chamber that stresses decorum, fidelity to procedures, and care in making public policy. Interns report that life in the Senate is orderly but relations are generally quite formal and cordial. The same interns report that the character of the House is more raucous with more open partisan conflict

The Speaker of the House, Patrick Bauer, was a highly aggressive partisan before succeeding the retiring Speaker John Gregg. Many expected the already high levels of partisan tension and conflict of the House to be exacerbated based on Bauer’s background, but to the surprise of some observers, Speaker Bauer has shown willingness to compromise and work with the minority. In the words of one Republican in the legislature, “he’s better than we thought he would be.”

In terms of leadership stability, Senator Garton sets the standard with 23 years as president pro tempore. Although turnover has increased among the leadership in the current session compared to the previous session with almost no turnover, the leadership

has been relatively stable in both chambers. Despite the current stability, if leadership turnovers were to be averaged over the last couple of cycles, the level of change in leadership is about the same as it has been historically.

Table 1. Leadership Turnover Indiana General Assembly

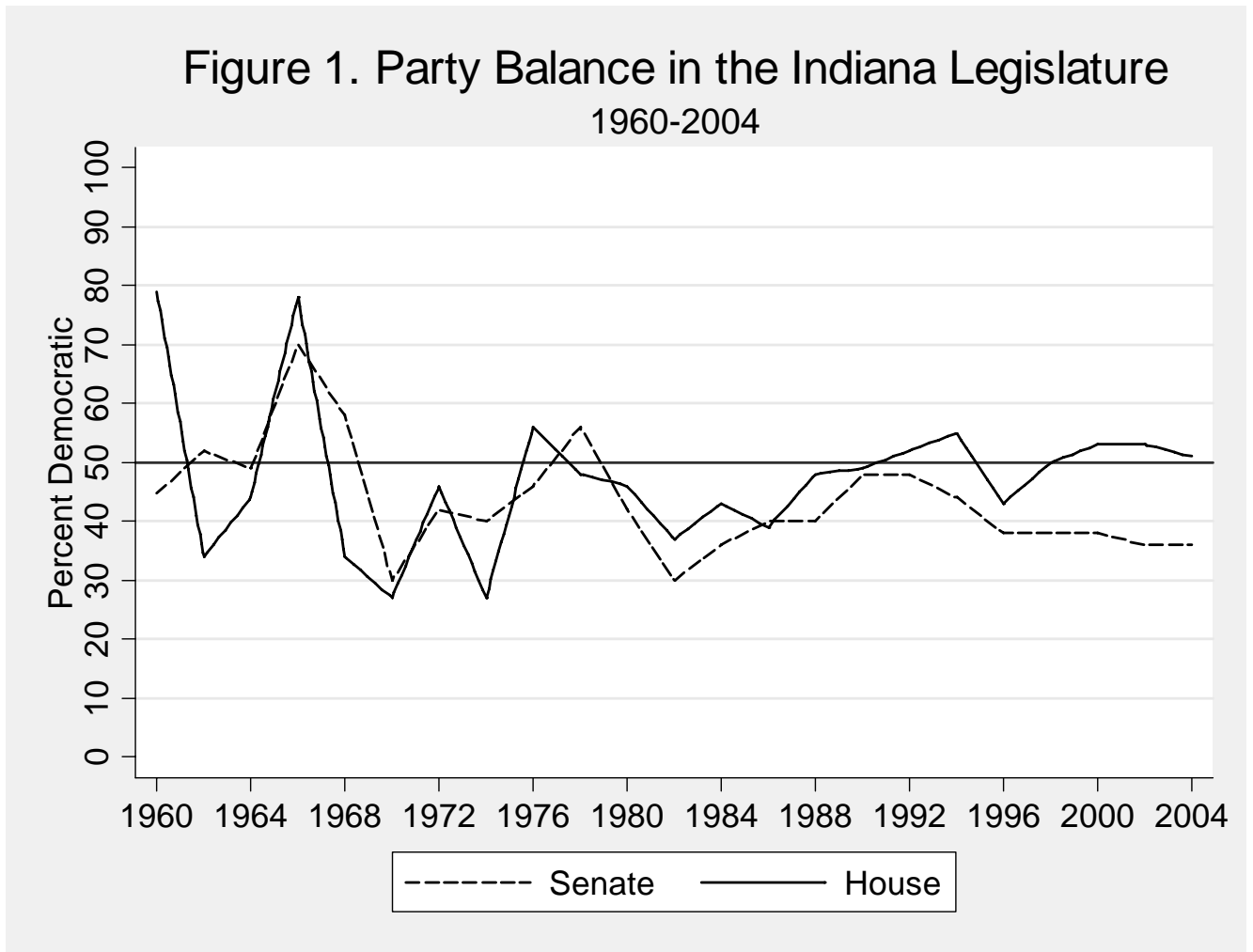
Year	House Dems	House Reps	House total	Senate Dems	Senate Reps	Senate total
1993-94	2 of 7	2 of 7	4 of 14	2 of 9	2 of 6	4 of 15
1995-96	0 of 7	2 of 7	2 of 14	4 of 8	4 of 9	8 of 17
1997-98	3 of 7	2 of 7	2 of 14	4 of 11	1 of 7	5 of 18
1999-00	1 of 7	0 of 9	1 of 16	3 of 12	3 of 8	6 of 20
2001-02	0 of 7	0 of 9	0 of 16	0 of 11	0 of 8	0 of 19
2003-04	0 of 7	3 of 9	3 of 16	5 of 12	6 of 9	11 of 21

Note: Leader turnover is defined as a member in a leadership position that did not hold a position of leadership in the previous session.

Party Caucuses

Indiana has long had strong, competitive legislative parties. However, a major difference has emerged between the House and the Senate in the last decade. The House has been very competitive while the Republicans have maintained solid control of the Senate. The Democrats have a bare one vote edge (51-49) in the House compared to the Republican dominance in the Senate (32-18). As Figure 1 shows, the Senate has been under Republican control for all but two years since 1970. The Democratic leadership

believes that the best that they can do, even if they control redistricting and have a good year, would be 25 of the 50 seats - and they have been a long ways from that in recent years.



The close margin in the House today is not atypical of what has been the case over the last twelve years, including a contentious power sharing arrangement that resulted from the 50-50 outcome for the 1997-1998 sessions. The close margins, and the strong possibility of changes in party control in the House, have led to vigorous partisan conflict and high levels of party cohesion, especially among the majority Democrats.¹

The caucuses are central to the politics of the legislature. The majority caucuses in both chambers are seen as highly effective. Policy positions are actively discussed within the caucuses, with the general expectation that positions agreed to in caucus will govern members' behavior on the floor. One former member of the House noted, however, that there are serious disagreements with the Democratic caucus on hot-button issues like abortion and gun control that split the liberal urban Democrats from those representing more rural and conservative districts.

Perhaps is it with such disagreements in mind that one Republican senator noted that the Republican caucus in the Senate is cohesive and cooperative, while running the majority caucus in the House is akin to "herding cats." The diversity of the Democratic caucus is consistent with one lobbyist's observation that recent speakers have been less powerful because they need to placate members and their reelection needs. Given the House Democrats' tenuous hold on the chamber, it is certainly reasonable that the speaker would work with his caucus in what one source called a "mutual aid" relationship.

A former speaker stated that he sees less give and take between the parties than was the case some years ago. He noted that the full budget committee used to meet over the summer and arrive at a consensus budget that was then presented to the House. That kind of cooperation does not happen today.

Campaign and Elections

Like most places in the United States, campaigning for the Indiana legislature has changed. Campaigns have gotten more expensive and control of funds has become

more centralized than was the case in the early careers of many of those we interviewed.

One senator noted that his father won with a campaign chest of \$10,000 and that he himself unseated an incumbent (just over ten years ago), spending less than \$30,000. Competitive seats see much higher expenditures today. Previously, speakers did polling, recruiting and had campaign committees, but the level of leadership involvement is much higher now than in the past, including growth in targeted races, the use of direct mail, specially designed media campaigns, and the organization and funding of phone banks. While most members of the legislature have safe seats and are expected to raise money to fund their own campaigns, the leadership is expected to provide what is necessary to those members in tight races.

The intense and ongoing fight for control of the chamber has increased the stakes in each competitive election to the lower house. Moreover, like many states, only a handful of the districts in any given year have reasonably competitive elections. This can be seen first in the low levels of seat turnover in recent years (Table 2). The exception was the Republican Revolution of 1994 that was a “shock” to the system with the Republicans picking up 10 seats in the House. The close balance in the House quickly returned in 1996 when the Democrats picked up eight seats. There were no seats that saw a change in party control in the House in 2000 and the Senate in 2002. The latter is a reflection of the bi-partisan incumbent gerrymander that appears to have sealed in the Republican majority in that chamber while securing the seats of the sitting Democratic minority.

Table 2: Seats Changing Parties in the
Indiana Legislature

Year	House		Senate	
	D to R	R to D	D to R	R to D
1994	10	0	2	0
1996	2	8	1	0
1998	0	3	1	1
2000	0	0	1	0
2002	4	2	0	0

The surprise to many is how the Democrats have been competitive in the House, and even held control of the chamber, in what is generally regarded as a solidly Republican state. Part of the answer appears to be clever targeting. In the 1998 election only five of the winners got 55% of the two party vote or less, and all of them were Democrats. In the next election there were 11 of these competitive races and the Democrats were the winners in seven of these. This means that a number of incumbent Democrats were vulnerable going into the redistricting that followed the 2000 census. While the chamber will probably end up in Republican control if current patterns of party identification continue, the Democrats were able to buy themselves at least another two years of control, thanks to their control of the post-2000 redistricting for the House. Each chamber drew its own districts. Similar to population patterns nationwide, the gains in population were in the generally Republican suburbs. The Democrats could only hope to retain control by shaving some of the strength of current incumbents by changing the area

and shape of their districts to strengthen districts in which they could compete. The effort that resulted was intentionally a partisan, rather than incumbent gerrymander. In the 2002 election, Democrats won 10 of the 12 seats that were competitive. Overall the Democrats kept their majority 51-49 and did so with only 40.4% of the vote.

The intense battle for control of the House is likely to continue for at least the next few years, and with it, heightened levels of inter-party conflict in virtually all operations of the chamber.

Groups and Representation

When members and staffers talk about cleavages in the legislature they mention party, of course, but sometimes almost as quickly an enduring urban-rural split that some report comes up on a number of issues.

The representation of minorities, at least African Americans and women, lags behind their proportion in the population, as it does in most states. Table 3 shows that there has been little change in the last ten years in the representation of blacks and women. African Americans have stayed at around 8% of the legislature while women have remained at about 18%.

Do minorities make a difference? When asked about non-party caucuses, one long-time observer stated that none of the interest-specific or regional caucuses that have formed matter much - except the Black Caucus. Generally voting in a block, the Black Caucus is an important force that is listened to in the Democratic caucuses of both houses.

Table 3: Demographic Composition of the Indiana Legislature

Year	% Democratic	% Non-White	% Women	Ave. Age
1993-1994	51.33%	8.00%	19.33%	52.52
1995-1996	43.33%	9.33%	20.67%	53.11
1997-1998	46.00%	8.67%	18.67%	53.93
1999-2000	48.00%	8.67%	18.00%	54.47
2001-2002	47.33%	8.00%	17.33%	56.39
2003-2004	46.00%	7.33%	18.00%	58.40

One of our female legislators suggested that the increase in the number of women in the legislature has had a number of positive consequences. She felt that the women were more effective legislators because of their background in civic activity and their primary concern to make good policy, rather than being driven by political ambition, which she saw as more frequent among her male colleagues.

One of our lobbyists offered that the increased numbers of women changed how lobbyists do business. Meetings for dinner and in the bars are not an option with some of the women so alternative methods must be developed for creating the legislator-lobbyist trusting relationships that all parties agree are fundamental to the successful operation of the legislature. One change is that some of the contract lobbying firms have added females to the rosters

Committees

The reports are that there have not been any large-scale changes in how the committees operate. The committee system is taken quite seriously. There are few amendments to bills reported out of committee on the floor. Each chamber has a provision for a “blast” or discharge of a bill, but those are almost never used. In 1988 the House passed a rule to make it harder for the speaker to pull bills from committee for floor action.

It is not clear, however, that the power of the committees lies primarily with the chairs. We received reports that the committees are more respectful of bill authors than used to be the case. This translates to honoring the author’s preference for referral and not altering the substance of what the bill intends to accomplish. Others feel that while there is deference to members’ preferences in the Senate, there is more game playing in the House with strategic referrals.

We have not been completely successful in obtaining full historical records on committee memberships but all that we heard suggests that the pattern of the last couple of sessions is typical. In the 2001-2002 session, the House had 17 standing committees. This expanded to 20 for the 2003-2004 session, with 15 of the chairs in the earlier session continuing as chairs. The Senate had 20 standing committees in each session but four of those were new or re-organized from the previous session. Fifteen of the senators who were chairs in 2001-2002 were also committee chairs in 2003-2004.

Several of our sources indicated that the committee work in the Senate is carried out more strictly by the rules of the legislature compared to the House. It is not uncommon for House bills to get derailed in the Senate because of the latter chamber’s

stricter and more consistent interpretation of the legislature “germaness” rule. Some senators feel that an important part of their committee work is “cleaning up” after the sloppy bills passed by the House, thereby making better legislation and protecting the legislatures from likely challenges in the courts.

Changing Membership

Virtually everyone that we talked with agreed that the profile of the people serving in the Indiana legislature has changed. The membership used to be all male, comprised mostly of lawyers, farmers, and small business owners. The percentage of members’ with those occupations has declined dramatically. One lawyer/lobbyist stated that there used to regularly be at least twenty lawyers in the House and now there are only five or six. Today the legislature has more public employees, (some of whom are eligible for compensation for their time spent in the legislature) retirees, and spouses who do not need to hold a full time job.

The common explanation for the change is that the pressures of the job have increased, so that people with a career can no longer afford to serve. The demands of the job and the complexity of the legislation mean for many that being a legislator has become a full time job for part time pay.

Another perception is that people are coming to the legislature later and burning out earlier. The months spent in Indianapolis every year away from home are stressful for those with children, so that many of those running for the first time are empty nesters. The feeling is that many of the new members are not politically ambitious in the sense of wanting to run for higher office, or of even staying in the legislature. One

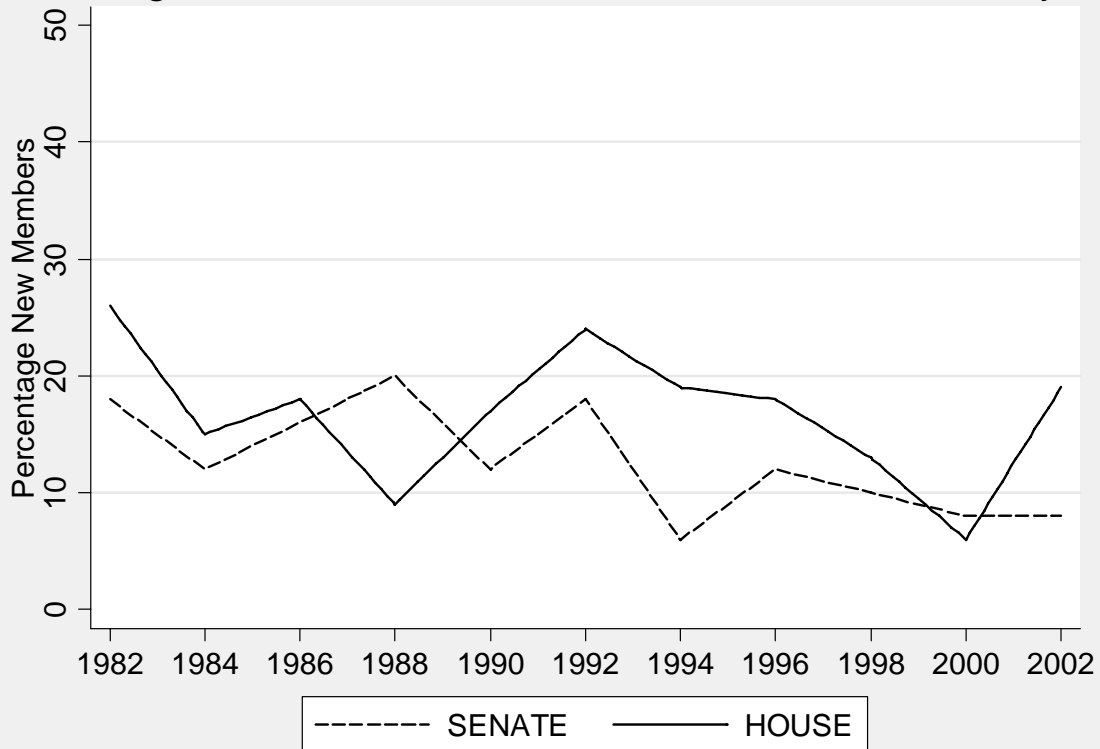
observer offered that only about 25 percent will be long time public servants in the legislature, the rest serving a few sessions and moving on.

The training and socialization for new members comes from three sources. The Legislative Service Agency (LSA) has a program for new members that is said to be quite good. In addition, mentoring relationships frequently develop where veterans provide perspective and guidance for rookies. Finally, a number of lobbyists hold receptions for new members, but the purpose of these is more to initiate relationships on which the lobbyists will build than to provide training for the legislators. We did note, however, that many of the lobbyists have been around the legislature a long time, and the expertise they offer their clients is as much about how the process works as it is providing detailed policy information for the legislators. There is a wealth of experience and knowledge among the lobbyists that new legislators, if they are smart, should be drawing on.

We should note that the socialization process is probably more effective in Indiana than in legislatures with higher turnover. With just a few new members following each election, there is a healthy ratio of experienced to new legislators, which is quite favorable for new member learning.

While we have discussed some changes in membership, we should also stress that the overall membership in the legislature is rather steady. Figure 2 shows the level of turnover as the percentage of new members in each chamber. These levels are on the low side compared to the other state legislatures.

Figure 2. Turnover in the Indiana General Assembly



Bicameralism in Indiana

The two houses of the Indiana legislature operate quite differently, have different styles, and even see their missions differently. In the Senate, the Republicans have held a comfortable majority since the Republican gerrymander which gave them favorable districts in the 1982 election. They have had the same leadership in Senator Robert Garton as discussed above. The Democratic minority leadership is not confrontational, but tries to work with the majority whenever they can. Their feeling is that if they consistently challenged the majority they would just be “crushed”. As a result, all reports are that the level of partisan conflict in the Senate is substantially less than in the House. The staff in the Senate feels that Garton and the minority leader,

Young, have a good, respectful working relationship, which is consistent with our impression from talking with the minority leader.

Going along rather than fighting at every turn seems to have yielded some electoral benefits for the Senate Democrats. In the recent redistricting, the Senate Republicans could have drawn lines that would have yielded them another couple of seats and thus a quorum proof chamber. That is, two more seats would give the majority the 34 seats it needs to be quorum proof: the Republicans could conduct business even if the Democrats walkout - which they have done on occasion in recent years. But instead of that partisan gerrymander, the new district lines worked to make almost all the sitting incumbents safer. The result is that the seats/votes ratio in the Senate is quite even: Democrats running in the new districts for the 2002 election won 32 percent of the seats while receiving 36 percent of the vote.

The House is a different story in several regards. The partisan conflict there is more intense and the relations between the Speaker and the minority leader do not run as smoothly as is the case with the party leaders in the Senate. The House is seen as less orderly, even “rough and tumble” and there is a widespread belief that the House is more likely to initiate new legislation and to try out new ideas. Whereas the House is seen as proactive, the Senate “does not want anything” in the words of one lobbyist. He believes this works to the Senate’s advantage in conference committees. One former speaker said that legislation generally is easier to get passed in the House, in part because everyone assumes it will get fixed or killed in the Senate. The Senate is disciplined and proceeds strictly by the rules; it does not “suspend the rules like in the House where anything goes.”

The governor does not appear to play much of a role. The governor did not come up spontaneously in our interviews. When asked about the role of the governor in legislative policy making, we were told that the best and strongest was Bob Orr (governor 1980-1988) and that recent governors have left a “vacuum” in terms of agenda setting and policy leadership. Our sources seem to believe that the low level of policy leadership of recent governors is more a matter of their personal styles than anything inherent in the political culture of the state or the constitutional limitations on what the governor can do.

Lobbyists

Everyone we talked with saw the relationship between the lobbyists and the legislature in quite positive terms. The relationships are more formal now than in years past – although references may have been to members’ early careers rather than the last decade. There is less wining and dining and more provision of support for legislation.

The veteran legislators we talked with report that they regularly rely on lobbyists for both political information, such as how the lobbyists’ constituents will be affected by a bill or how to move a bill through the legislature, and for policy guidance on ways to craft legislation to achieve a particular objective. Some committee chairs say they try to talk with lobbyists on both sides of an issue to get a complete picture.

There is some feeling that the lobbyists, “are less powerful but more necessary” than in the past. There are more lobbyists, so members have multiple sources of information and contact on important issues, and the issues are more complex so that the policy expertise of the lobbyists is important. The Legislative Services Agency helps

members draft legislation, but they do not have the technical expertise in specialized areas that members sometimes need.

There seemed to be a mix of strategies among the lobbyists we talked with in whether they work only with one party or they work both sides of the aisle. One lobbyist said he was hired when the Democrats finally came to power “so someone in the firm could talk to the Democrats.” Another lobbyist, however, said that much of the legislation his clients are interested in does not fall along party lines so he tries to work with both parties. He feels his chances of success are better if he can garner some bipartisan support.

Although the lobbyists work with individual members, they also assume that those they work with confer and coordinate with the committee chairs before making any major commitments. The vision we got in terms of the lobbyists’ influence is pure textbook in nature. There is no quid pro quo for the dinners, receptions, and campaign contributions that lobbyists provide. Rather, these events provide opportunities for the lobbyists to form relationships that are necessary for them to be effective. The service that the lobbyists provide for clients, as they see it, is that they know who to talk to and how to get access to make their pitch. Lobbyists also understand the legislative process and advise clients on what is possible and what they can do to promote their cause.

Overall, the relationship between lobbyists and legislators is well developed, understood, and valued by legislators and staff. It has changed slowly, and the legislature is not any more influenced today than in previous periods. The only exception may be cases where the cost of campaigns has increased so much that legislators have become

more attentive to the concerns of contributors and supporters so that, as one lobbyist reported to us, they are “less willing to compromise.”

Media

The biggest and most consistent change mentioned in our interviews concerns the media’s coverage of the General Assembly. Media coverage is seen as universally worse than it used to be. The legislature used to be considered a valued “beat” by the media and experienced reporters would know the process and policy problems as well as the politicians. The reporting was seen as being informative and fair. Today, the legislature is not covered frequently or well. The less experienced journalists appear to the legislative community to be looking only for conflict or scandal-ridden sound bites. We were told that the media seek out the “sensational,” that they take “cheap shots,” and report only what they think is “sexy.”

In the past, those covering the legislature were part of the legislative community. They socialized with the legislators and lobbyists and did a good job of reporting all sides of the issues. Today the reporters are perceived to be afraid they will somehow be contaminated if they get too close to the legislature and generally adopt an antagonistic stance toward the body. One senior legislator told us that the media “do a real disservice to the public” in their scanty reporting. She told of a bill she sponsored dealing with the importation of solid waste to Indiana. A highly negative and sensationalist article was printed in the Indianapolis Star and the reporter never checked with the bill’s sponsor to understand what the bill would actually do and what problem it was intended to solve. It appears that most involved with the legislature on a regular

basis believe that in the current environment the best that can be hoped for is no coverage at all.

Comity

There is a high level of respect and generally cordial relations among the actors in the Indiana legislature. We were struck that even during discussions of the high levels of partisanship that characterize aspects of the legislature, our interviewees seemed to have consistently positive opinions about their colleagues and about the quality of the legislative process in the state. In the Knowledgeable Observers survey, Indiana scored the highest of the nine study states on the question of “collegial and courteous to other members.” When asked about this, a legislator answered that, yes, almost everyone was quite respectful, and that was because “we all know one another.” This was, interestingly, attributed in part to the state’s relatively loose regulations on lobbyists’ activities. This legislator said that she frequently will have informal conversations with members of the other party at receptions and dinners and through these functions get to know them and about their families and what they are like as individuals - all at functions that are paid for by lobbyists. She offered that “a lot of states will not allow that, so members have many fewer opportunities to socialize.”

Changes

We have mentioned a number of modest changes that our sources see. Overall, the changes in who is in the legislature and their living arrangements when the body is in session have lead to less collegiality than in the past. Voters are seen to be

more demanding and the legislation and problems the legislature deals with are more complex.

The cost of campaigns has increased and the process of fund raising, recruitment, and even campaign strategy are more centralized. The best Indiana example is the 86th district in the House, which was redrawn for the 2002 election. Both parties targeted that race with the Republican incumbent spending \$484,000 and the Democrat, David Orentlicher spending \$342,000 and winning by 37 votes. All for a job that pays \$11,600 a year.

On Term Limits

Although Indiana does not have term limits, and is quite unlikely to get them in the near future, our sources nevertheless had opinions they were willing to share on the topic. In a nutshell, the legislature works because of the storehouse of expertise in the membership and because of the lobbyists who have been around for years. There is a strong feeling the legislative process will suffer if term limits are imposed in Indiana. A number of the familiar critiques were offered, including those that members would be more dependent on lobbyists and that the lack of historical perspective would lead to poorer quality legislation for the state should term limits be imposed. The only glimmer of support for term limits we heard came from a veteran senator from a very safe district who thought that the longevity of the membership made the institution a bit less responsive and slower to change.

Conclusion

Indiana makes a nice comparison state against which to gauge the effects of term limits where they have been enacted. The sense of our sources (and this seems to be born out by the Knowledgeable Observers survey) is that the legislature has not undergone any major shifts in the last decade. There have been changes in the occupational profile of those in the legislature and the inclusion of more African Americans and women, but those changes occurred largely prior to the last ten years.

Virtually everyone we interviewed believes the legislature does a good job. There is some sentiment for less partisan rancor in the House, but that may be unavoidable with the close party balance in that chamber. Over the last decade, there have been no significant shifts in power to the governor, staff, or to lobbyists. The changes that have occurred, such as those in the composition of the membership, are part of longer term processes.

¹ This is evident in the roll calls we gathered for the 1999-2000 sessions of the all the state legislatures. The R^2 between party membership and NOMINATE scores calculated for the full set of competitive roll calls for the House is .951; however, in the Senate the relationship is just as strong $R^2=.957$.