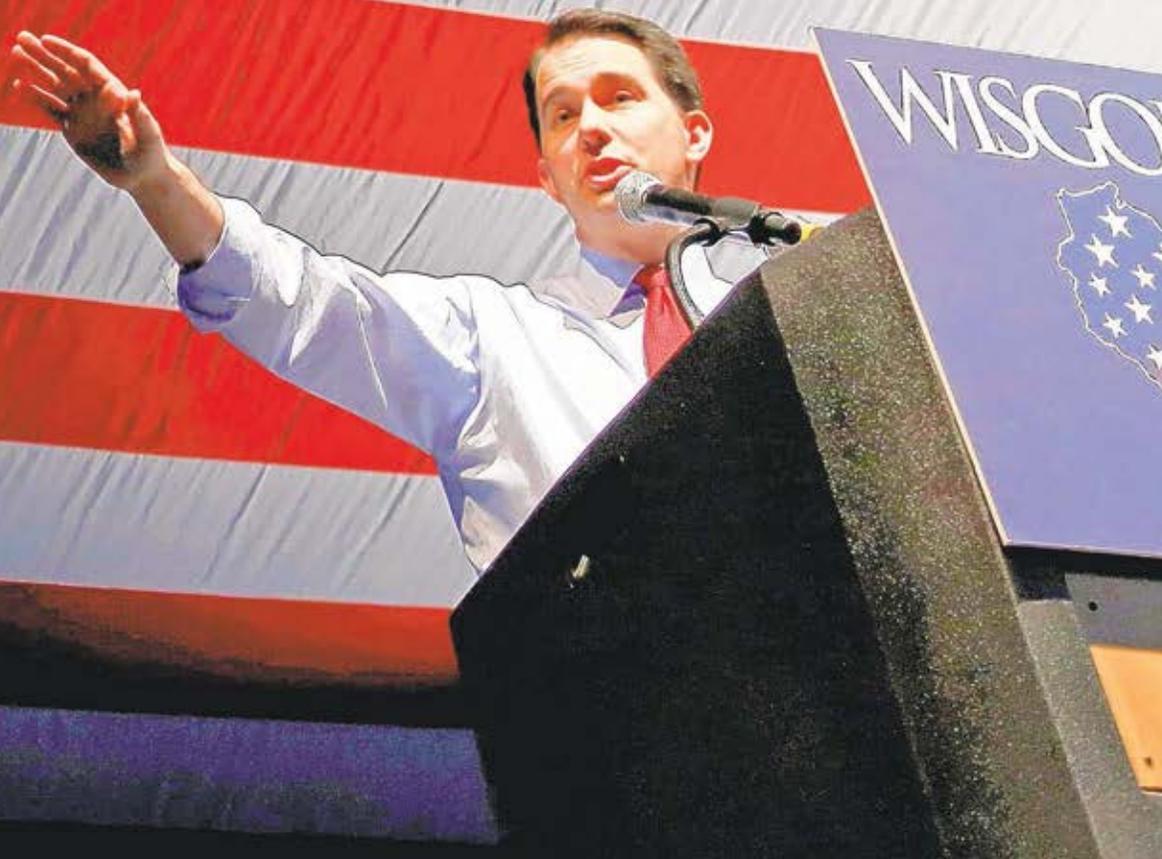


Taking Care of Business

Conservative governors weigh in on the GOP's prospects for 2014 midterm elections



RICK PERRY

The longtime lodestar of the Lone Star State **4**

MARY FALLIN

The daughter of two mayors makes her own mark **7**

SCOTT WALKER

Policies putting a purple state in the black **9**



“Some politicians just talk about creating jobs and reviving struggling economies, but Republican governors are actually doing it. The result is stronger, more prosperous states that work.”

— New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, head of the Republican Governors Association, says his fellow GOP state chief executives are getting the job done.

Republican governors cite their economic stewardship

Creating jobs, cutting taxes seen as paths to re-election

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The following are considered the top 10 states for businesses in America, according to the 2014 survey of 500 CEOs by ChiefExecutive.net.

1. Texas (R)
2. Florida (R)
3. Tennessee (R)
4. North Carolina (R)
5. South Carolina (R)
6. Indiana (R)
7. Arizona (R)
8. Nevada (R)
9. Louisiana (R)
10. Georgia (R)

Note: Governor's party affiliation in parentheses

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

By SETH McLAUGHLIN
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Heading into the 2014 election, the GOP is casting its slate of governors as turn-around artists, saying they've led their states out of recession by embracing lower taxes, putting people back to work and ensuring businesses are helped — not hampered — by their policies.

Republicans, who face the daunting task of defending 22 of the 36 governorships up for grabs this election cycle, are eager to build on the success of 2012 — when they picked up 12 of the top slots — and they think voters will see that they've been taking care

of business.

They point, for instance, to the latest jobs report from the Department of Labor that showed 10 of the 15 states with the lowest unemployment rates have Republican governors. Of the five states with the lowest unemployment rates — North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa — four of them are run by Republican governors.

GOP governors also run the five states with the lowest debt per capita — Tennessee, Indiana, Wisconsin, South Dakota and Arizona, according to State Budget Solutions.

“Republican governors across the country are cutting taxes, lowering spending, balancing budgets, reforming education and making their states engines of economic growth,” said Jon Thompson,

spokesman for the Republican Governors Association. “Republican governors are working hard to implement pro-growth, pro-business policies to make their states more competitive. And those policies have produced incredible results.”

For the 10th consecutive year, Texas has been named the best state to do business in a survey of more than 500 chief executive officers, and the other nine states at the top of the list are all run by Republicans, according to the survey by ChiefExecutive.net.

The same rankings showed that four of the five worst states to do business — Massachusetts, New Jersey, California, New York and Illinois — are led by Democrats. The states were graded on tax policy,

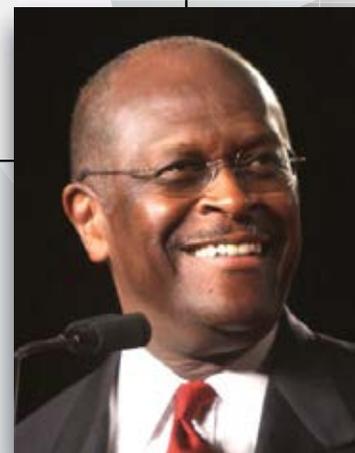
» see **STATES** | D8

American CurrentSee

DARE TO BE INDEPENDENT & FREE

**The FREE digital magazine
for those who dare to
be independent and free.**

Guided by spirited American thinkers like Dr. Ben Carson, Rev. A.R. Bernard, Thomas Sowell, Herman Cain and Mia Love, American CurrentSee is chocked full of robust dialogue on subjects from how to seize the debate to form a more perfect union, embracing a new agenda of economic opportunity and inspiring freedom from suffocating government. American CurrentSee is for those who dare to be independent and who cherish their freedoms.



Go to www.americancurrentsee.com and subscribe NOW!

Get the ACS App for Droids at the Google Play Store

By **RALPH Z. HALLOW**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Whether he runs or not, Texas Gov. Rick Perry commands plenty of attention on the 2016 Republican presidential stage, and he knows it.

He demanded a face-to-face meeting in Texas with President Obama to talk about the Mexico-U.S. border crisis. He also kept demanding, until the reluctant president gave him one: a televised, photographed, widely reported face-to-face meeting.

Barely taking time to catch his breath, Mr. Perry followed up with a headline-generating attack on Sen. Rand Paul's stance on Iraq. As the longest continuously serving governor in U.S. history, Mr. Perry felt comfortable berating a U.S. senator considered to be a first-tier White House hopeful.

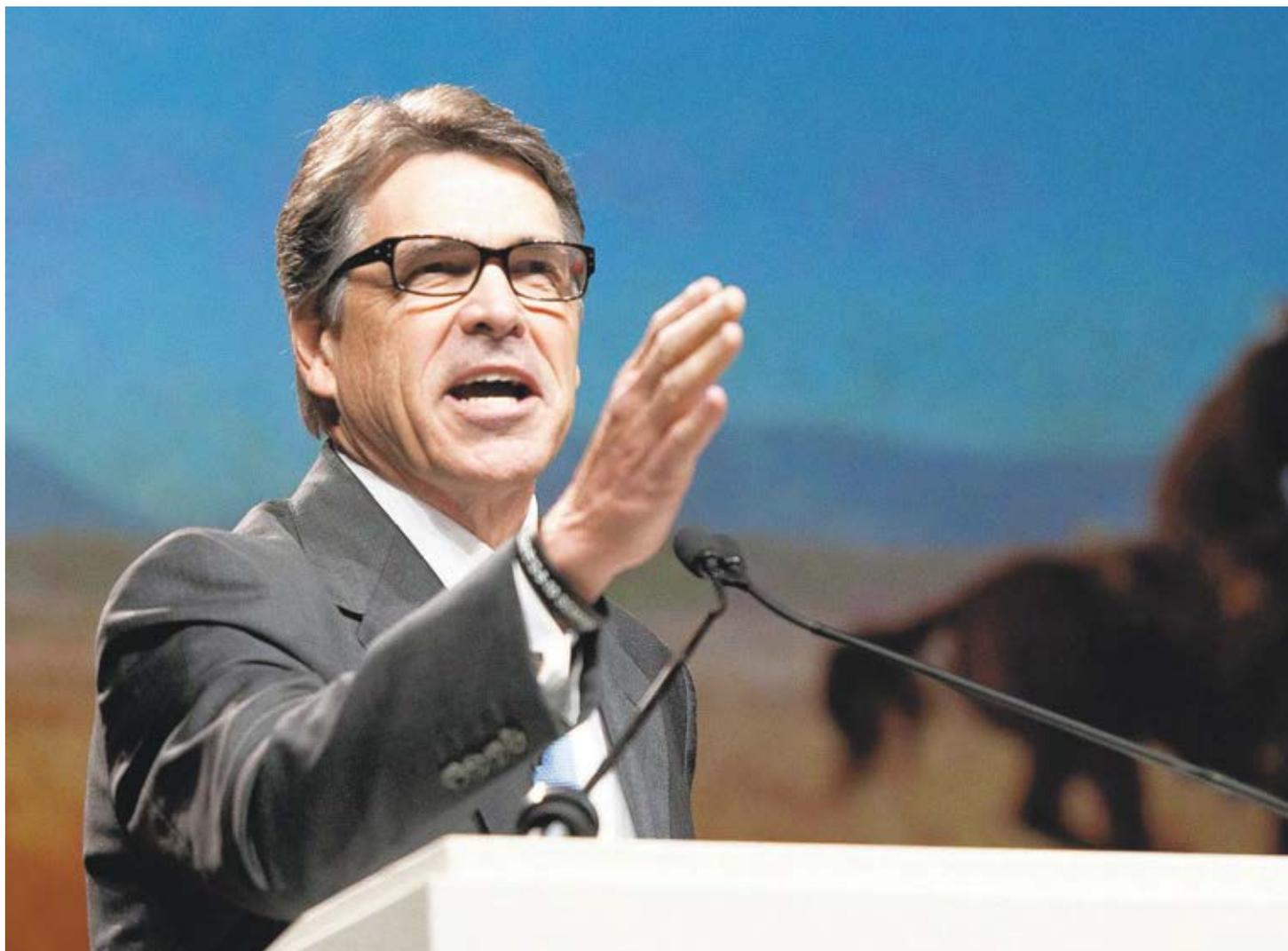
For a year now, Mr. Perry has been in full remedial mode for his campaign-killing gaffes in the 2012 Republican presidential primary, including when he couldn't remember a Cabinet office he intended to eliminate if he became president.

He has been grabbing the initiative and holding on to it from his ballyhooed visit to Israel last year to his performance in March at the Conservative Political Action Conference, where many activists proclaimed he gave one of the best speeches of the three-day event.

Now he is taking on one of his potential competitors in 2016 by jabbing Mr. Paul for being what the Texas governor called an "isolationist" outside the party tradition of Ronald Reagan and Dwight D. Eisenhower because of Mr. Paul's opposition to further U.S. military action in Iraq.

Mr. Perry took to the op-ed page of *The Washington Post* on July 11 to deliver a stinging attack on Mr. Paul by name, calling it "disheartening to hear fellow Republicans, such as Sen. Rand Paul (Ky.), suggest that our nation should ignore what's happening in Iraq."

In his response, published July 14 in *The Politico* under the headline "Rick Perry is Dead Wrong," Mr. Paul took an unusually personal tack, saying of the Texan



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rick Perry has been governor of Texas since Dec. 21, 2000, when his predecessor stepped down to move into the White House.

Lodestar of Lone Star State touts Texas on national stage

With record and swagger, Rick Perry isn't fading into retirement

that "apparently his new glasses haven't altered his perception of the world, or allowed him to see it any more clearly."

"With 60,000 foreign children streaming across the Texas border, I am surprised Governor Perry has apparently still found time to mischaracterize and attack my foreign policy," Mr. Paul wrote.

Political observers think Mr. Perry is wily for targeting Mr. Paul because he went after a legislator and not a fellow gubernatorial prospect such as New Jersey's Chris Christie, Wisconsin's Scott Walker or Florida's Jeb Bush, a former governor with plenty of clout among the Republican establishment and major donors.

Whatever casual observers see in this Texan, it's clear he has no plans when his governor's tenure ends in January to fade

into the sunset like a white-hat cowboy in a spaghetti Western.

Like his predecessor in the Austin gubernatorial mansion, George W. Bush, Mr. Perry strikes people as a touchy-feely guy who

because he is, of course, a politician showing off.

His attack on Mr. Paul for being skeptical about interventionism in foreign policy may not sit as well with a Republican

Like his predecessor in the Austin gubernatorial mansion, George W. Bush, Mr. Perry strikes people as a touchy-feely guy who projects no airs about himself.

projects no airs about himself. He's just "Rick," and he's just as likely to throw an arm around a visitor's neck for a quick wrestling gesture as he is to bend slightly at the waist in greeting a female visitor.

He can do either without looking like a politician showing off — all the more to his advantage

electorate that is less hawkish than it used to be.

Indeed, Mr. Paul noted that widespread popular opposition to involvement in Iraq means that "it's time we finally retire that pejorative" term "isolationist."

For all his personal charm, Mr. Perry may be at odds with an important segment of his

base: young evangelicals who may dislike his support of a constitutional amendment against same-sex marriage or his comparison — which he recently reiterated — of homosexuality to alcoholism.

He also alienated some "rule of law" conservatives by supporting in-state tuition breaks for the children of illegal immigrants who slipped across the U.S. border. But that position is shared by a surprisingly large number of self-described conservatives who tend to open up on the subject only to trusted friends and acquaintances.

Where Mr. Perry has clear common ground with his party's base is his demand that Mr. Obama dispatch the National Guard to

» see **PERRY** | **D10**

Economic revival brings end to exodus

Thriving economy, school choice fuel Jindal agenda in Louisiana

By RALPH Z. HALLOW

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

BATON ROUGE, LA.

Republican Bobby Jindal postulates that when year after year more people move to Louisiana than leave it, he's probably doing something right as governor.

Of all the advances his state made since his election as chief executive six years ago, that is the one statistic that tickles him the most.

"For 20 years, more people left than came here, but for the last six years, the opposite has been happening," he said over dinner recently at the governor's residence.

The reason for the influx of new residents is that the Republican governor and oft-mentioned presidential contender has turned around the economy in general, the energy industry in particular, the quality of public education, and the availability of jobs while lessening the tax burden on individuals and business. That's the heart of his local story.

What Mr. Jindal, 43, is best known for nationally is revolutionizing the time-honored conservative concept of education vouchers, often called school choice.

Public-school vouchers were the key education reform that the Reagan administration pushed for and that Republican governors in Wisconsin and elsewhere tried to introduce over the objections of public-school teachers and principals unions in the 1980s and 1990s.

But in the early 2000s, school choice took a back seat to other education-reform efforts, such as the No Child

Left Behind law championed by President George W. Bush and other experiments tested by philanthropist billionaires such as Bill Gates and Michael R. Bloomberg.

Despite continued opposition from teachers unions, Mr. Jindal revived the school-choice debate a few years back and successfully got enacted in Louisiana what may be the broadest expansion of vouchers in years, enabling students to take money normally reserved for public schools and spend it instead on an education at a charter or private school of their choice.

The Jindal system has expanded non-government-run schools in several ways. It removed the cap on the number of charter schools, which are privately run public schools that have greater autonomy and whose teachers aren't unionized. And it expanded private-school vouchers statewide.

It also allows students access to more courses, no matter what neighborhood they happen to live in.

Formerly, students generally got state funding on a per-pupil basis to attend one school full time. If the school they attend didn't have the courses they needed, they were out of luck. The new law created a new vehicle giving access to all students at public and private schools to courses they need or want, but only certain students get state funding. The Jindal administration says that enrollment in the "Course Choice" program will expand from 2,400 in 2013-14 to a projected 9,600 by 2014-15.

Mr. Jindal met more resistance than expected initially because, critics say, he failed to consult with the school districts before putting the final



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, now in his second term, is one of two state governors of Indian heritage. He won re-election overwhelmingly in 2011, with 66 percent of the vote in a four-way race.

Since Mr. Jindal took office, the three major credit-rating firms in America have given Louisiana a total of eight upgrades.

touches on his system. Whether that was a managerial mistake or a practical route to bypass resistance from the education establishment is open to interpretation.

Like private and parochial schools, charters schools generally aren't handcuffed by union rules that make it too time-consuming and expensive to fire incompetent teachers and administrators.

Mr. Jindal is in a legal fight over his refusal to implement the Common Core national academic standards that he once backed. Critics of Common Core said from the start that it violated the 10th Amendment to the Constitution and federalized what constitutionally are the education prerogatives of state and local governments. Mr. Jindal now argues that the federal government has gotten too involved in writing the standards. That aligns him with conservative constitutionalists on the issue.

The Jindal administration also won its legal battle with President Obama's Justice Department's attempt to cripple the school-voucher program.

Another major plus for his record as a skilled manager is the rise in creditworthiness of his state government.

Since Mr. Jindal took office, the three major credit-rating firms in America — Fitch Ratings, Moody's Investor Service and Standard & Poor's Financial Services Co. — have given Louisiana a total of eight upgrades. This came at a time when one of the rating services, Standard & Poor's, lowered its U.S. creditworthiness assessment for the first time in history.

That means the U.S. government has to dig deeper into its already staggering national debt to pay the extra interest lenders demand in light of the lowered ratings.

» see **JINDAL** | D10



ASSOCIATED PRESS

If the GOP is to make greater inroads with Hispanic and female voters, New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, a former Democrat, is well-positioned to lead the charge.

In N.M., GOP's hope for Hispanics

Conservative-convert Martinez converts voters with personal story

By **RALPH Z. HALLOW**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Bouyant, bilingual, upbeat and the first female Hispanic governor of any state, New Mexico's Susana Martinez seems a good fit for chief executive officer of a Western state where almost half the 2.1 million population is Hispanic.

But will major campaign donors and 2016 GOP presidential primary voters see the former prosecutor and daughter of a Texas deputy sheriff as a good fit for president of a nation where Hispanics account for 54 million out of a total population of 316 million?

The answer will become clearer as next summer approaches.

For now, she's running for a second term as governor this November with a personal story that excites the GOP faithful and right-leaning independents everywhere: she and her husband, Chuck, both former Democrats, had

turned Republican for philosophical, not knee-jerk partisan, reasons.

"Before I ran for district attorney, two Republicans invited my husband and me to lunch," she says in one version of the personal tale. "I knew a party-switch was what they wanted from us. So, I told Chuck, 'We'll be polite, we'll enjoy a free lunch and then we'll say goodbye.'"

At lunch, the conversation turned on issues with no mention of "Republican," "Democrat," "liberal" or conservative.

Instead, they talked about whether "welfare is a helping hand up or a way of life." They talked about the "size of government and how much should it tax families and small businesses."

In public gathering, such as her prime-time 2012 Tampa, Fla., GOP presidential nominating speech to millions of TV viewers and 20,000 delegates and credentialed members of the press, she wraps up the story this way: "When we left that lunch, we got in the car, and I looked over at Chuck and said, 'I'll be

damned, we're Republicans.'"

In small groups, her delivery is tailored a bit differently. She bubbles over with enthusiasm, and her eyes sparkle as she says, "... and I looked at Chuck and said, holy s---, we're Republicans!" Her small audience invariably breaks into laughter.

Mrs. Martinez, as a former district attorney, is said to have taken great delight in banning corrupt contractors from doing business with the state.

Right now, campaign consultants put her on the long list of potential 2016 White House candidates. Rising onto the shortlist will require something special — that unanticipated something that is the soul of American politics.

Some political consultants will

ultimately explore what she brings to a ticket in terms of demographics.

In New Mexico's Hispanic-rich Guadalupe, Mora, Rio Arriba, and San Miguel counties, Mrs. Martinez's 2010 share of the total votes — including non-Hispanics — was 57 percent, 46 percent, 41 percent, and 38 percent respectively. That was probably not a majority share of the Hispanic population, but from her supporters' viewpoint, remarkable nonetheless.

She's also got the kind of gubernatorial record conservative and establishment Republicans alike love to love — seemingly sparse to nonexistent in pandering to ethnic groups and other special interests.

As soon as she and her husband unpacked their clothes in the governor's residence, she began crusading to repeal a state law that granted illegals immigrants a driver's license. She also signed an executive order requiring state law enforcers to check the immigration status of everyone arrested

» see **MARTINEZ** | **D8**



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin leads a discussion on jobs and education at the National Governors Association convention on July 12 in Nashville, Tennessee.

By RALPH Z. HALLOW
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Sooner State's Fallin follows in her parents' footsteps

Fiscal responsibility drives agenda in Oklahoma

Oklahoma so far on Gov. Mary Fallin's watch has done pretty well for itself, according to the objective measurements most voters care about.

As a result, she has done pretty well for the reputation of the nation's 28 other Republican governors as a whole.

"When I took office, Oklahoma's unemployment was 7.2 percent, and now it's 4.6 percent," said Mrs. Fallin, 59, whose attraction to governance is in her genes. First her father and then her mother served as mayor of her hometown.

Since she's been governor, the state has seen 80,000 jobs created, she says.

One of the accomplishments that makes her the proudest puts her state at the top of the heap when it comes to per-person income increases.

"Our per-capita income grew over 6 percent in the short span from 2011 to 2013," she said. "That's the second-highest growth rate in this nation."

Something else put Oklahoma in the first tier of achievers among all states.

"Our gross domestic product growth rate is the fourth-highest in the United States, and its 'rainy-day' savings accounts have gone from a sad yet

laughable \$2.03 in 2010 to more than \$530 million today," she said.

With former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton a possible presidential nominee for Democrats in 2016, Republicans think an accomplished woman who has proven managerial experience as a governor might be the perfect counter on the 2016 ticket.

But like other governors running for re-election, Mrs. Fallin, with a husband and six children, shuns presidential campaign speculation.

"I'm not focused on presidential politics or any other office but the one I hold now. I'm running for re-election, and I'm working to make Oklahoma's economy the strongest it can possibly be."

"It's legitimate for people to ask me about the presidency," added the former two-term U.S. House member and former chairman of the Women's Congressional Caucus. "I get asked about running

for president all the time, but I'm focused on running for governor."

Focus is something she makes clear that she prizes as the underpinning of mothering and governing.

In June, she approved replacement of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English with Oklahoma-written standards.

"There may be a day when I think of doing something else in politics and public service. If that day comes, what will matter is how successful I have been leading the state of Oklahoma, creating more jobs here, improving education

and caring for taxpayer dollars. So all of my energy and focus need to go into the job I have now, regardless of what my future holds."

Still, it's a fact of life that if she wins a second term in November, she's a somebody in presidential wannabe politics; if she loses, she's at best a once-was somebody from a small state.

Mrs. Fallin, like some other political stars from her state, is not loath to criticize her own party for what she sees as its shortcomings.

Some — not her, she insists — focus on the fact that no Oklahoman, let alone an Oklahoma woman, has ever occupied the Oval Office.

Her champions say the GOP could use a female presidential nominee with a demonstrably serious record of fiscal accomplishment.

» see **FALLIN** | D10

STATES

From page D2

regulatory issues, the quality of the workforce and the quality of the living environment.

And the top five spots on CNBC's annual rankings of the "Top States for Business" also were held by states with Republican governors — Georgia, Texas, Utah, Nebraska and North Carolina.

"Some politicians just talk about creating jobs and reviving struggling economies, but Republican governors are actually doing it," New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, chairman of the Republican Governors Association, said recently. "The result is stronger, more prosperous states that work."

Democrats counter that the GOP is peddling a false storyline and that its governors have embraced policies that have hurt the middle class.

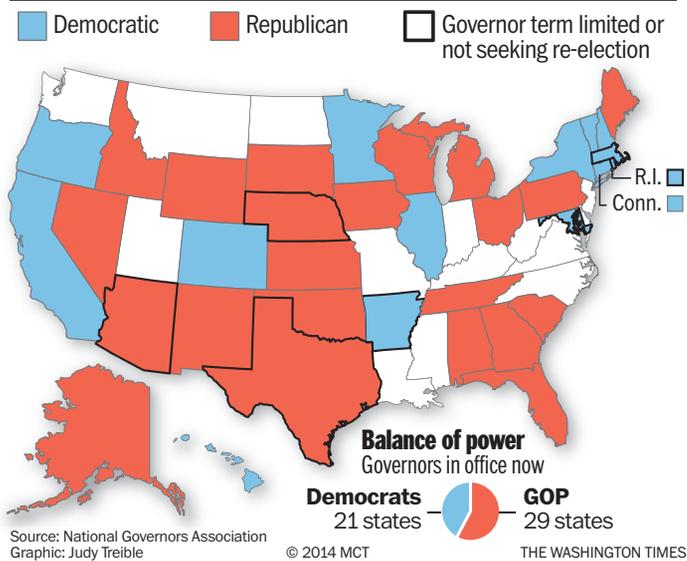
"Republican governors have prioritized tax breaks and special deals for the wealthiest and corporations and paid for them by raising middle-class taxes and gutting investments in education," said Sabrina Singh, spokeswoman for the Democratic Governors Association. "Those aren't pro-growth policies — they simply shift the burden from the rich to middle-class families, seniors and students who are working hard to succeed."

Chris Edwards, an economist at the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute, warned against reading too much into the role that either of the parties has played in reviving their state economies.

"State economic policies help

GUBERNATORIAL RACES

States with elections for governor this fall shaded by the party that holds the office now and current balance of power for all states:



drive each state's relative prosperity over the long term," Mr. Edwards said. "Factors such as union laws and tax rates either repel or attract investment and entrepreneurs. However, many

Republicans hope the dissatisfaction with the Obama administration, combined with signs of improving state economies will strengthen their electoral hand.

forces outside of state policymaker control can have a large impact, such as changes in global markets, technological breakthroughs such as fracking, and federal mandates

that hit states unevenly, such as environmental rules."

Whatever the case, Republicans say, they are delivering on the state level.

"Conservative governors and their partner legislatures are enacting bold reforms, challenging entrenched special interests and enacting growth agendas that are bringing fiscal sanity back to statehouses across America," said Jill Bader, spokeswoman for the State Government Leadership Foundation, which is a strategic partner to the Republican State Leadership Committee.

Of the 36 gubernatorial races in November, six of the 10 considered tossups, including Florida and Wisconsin, are now controlled by Republicans. Election analysts predict Republicans will easily hold 23 of their seats and that Democrats have a handle on

17. They also say the gubernatorial races arguably could be more important than the battle for control of the U.S. Senate because of the ongoing debates at the state level over taxes, voting rights and the expansion of Medicaid under Obamacare.

With that as a backdrop, Mr. Christie, one of several governors eyeing presidential runs, has raised boatloads of cash. RGA officials have vowed to spend \$100 million over the final 100 days of the campaign, as it looks to protect some of its most vulnerable governors, including Govs. Paul LePage of Maine, Tom Corbett of Pennsylvania and Rick Scott of Florida.

Republicans hope the dissatisfaction with the Obama administration, combined with signs of improving state economies, will strengthen their electoral hand.

Along those lines, the RGA has touted how Florida's unemployment rate has dropped 5 percentage points on Mr. Scott's watch, 2 percentage points under Mr. LePage in Maine and more than 2 percentage points under Mr. Corbett in Pennsylvania.

The dip in unemployment rates has put Democrats running against GOP incumbents in a bit of a bind because they are trying to downplay the same news on the jobs front that President Obama and Congressional Democrats are touting as a success story.

"Democrats are cross-pressured on the economy," said Darrell West, of the left-leaning Brookings Institution. "Nationally, they want to emphasize the sharp reduction in unemployment and [credit Obama's policies]. Yet in key states, Democratic

JOBS, JOBS AND MORE JOBS

Lowest state unemployment rates

1. North Dakota: 2.7% (R)
2. Nebraska: 3.5% (R)
2. Utah: 3.5% (R)
2. Vermont: 3.5% (D)
5. South Dakota: 3.8% (R)
6. Wyoming: 4% (R)
7. Hawaii: 4.4% (R)
7. Iowa: 4.4% (R)
7. New Hampshire: 4.4% (D)
10. Minnesota: 4.5% (D)
10. Montana: 4.5% (D)
10. Oklahoma: 4.5% (R)

Labor force participation rates

Top Five:

1. North Dakota 69.2% (R)
2. Nebraska 68.9% (R)
3. South Dakota: 67.2% (R)
4. Minnesota 67.1% (D)
5. Iowa: 67% (R)

Bottom five:

1. West Virginia: 50.8% (D)
2. Mississippi: 51.3% (R)
3. Alabama: 52.6% (R)
4. Arkansas: 53.5% (D)
5. New Mexico: 54.2% (R)

Note: Governor's party affiliation in parentheses.
 Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
 THE WASHINGTON TIMES

challengers point toward poor performance by GOP governors and argue their policies aren't working. It is hard for both arguments to be successful."

MARTINEZ

From page D6

in the state.

But it's her personal story that offers a strong connection should she gamble on 2016.

"My dad was a Golden Gloves boxer in the Marine Corps, then a deputy sheriff," she says. "My mom worked as an office assistant. One day they decided to start a security-guard business. I thought they were crazy. We had absolutely no savings. My dad worked the business. My mom did the books at night."

"At 18, I guarded the Catholic Church's bingo games held in the church lot. My dad made sure I could take care of myself. I carried a Smith & Wesson .357

Magnum," she says.

She says with palpable pride that her parents grew their security business that started with one teenager guarding a bingo game to 125 employees in three states.

"I went to law school and became a prosecutor — prosecuted child-abuse cases, gut-wrenching cases," she says, adding that doing so was for her "a privilege of a lifetime"

At this point, she'll usually say in Spanish, "In America, anything's possible." Regardless of the linguistic skills of her audience at the moment, her meaning is clear enough to elicit applause and whistles of approval.

Her checklist as the chief manager of her state includes closing a record-sized structural deficit "by requiring state employees to contribute more to

their retirements."

She boasts of having sold the state's luxury jet used by her predecessor, "capped salaries for Cabinet secretaries and eliminated the chefs in the governor's residence."

On the hottest issue of the election cycle so far, she moved to end the state's sanctuary policy for illegal immigrants who commit crimes and to crack down on driver's license fraud by foreign nationals.

One achievement, in particular, may make her stand out among an American electorate that polls show is sick of seeing, over five decades, an inverse relationship between the public money spent on education and the quality of the resulting education. She is credited with putting into effect a teacher-evaluation system that measures actual student progress. She went on to defeat a

teachers union attempt to use the courts to block the reform.

One wildcard may be her agreement to increase teachers' salaries as a quid pro quo for increasing accountability in the state's classrooms.

Her re-election team today boasts that when she took office, she ended "years of inaction at the state and federal level to recover any of the taxpayer money that was lost as a result" of Gov. Bill Richardson's administration scandals.

Since the change in administrations, Mrs. Martinez's team touts a successful agreement to "recover more than \$26 million for taxpayers from companies and individuals related to the scandals."

Mrs. Martinez, as a former district attorney, is said to have taken

great delight in banning corrupt contractors from doing business with the state. She signed legislation requiring nearly 30,000 new local government employees to be covered by ethics laws and "re-instituted the use of minimum qualifications for state government positions to ensure that those who are hired are qualified for their job."

That she campaigned hard among New Jersey's Hispanics for Gov. Chris Christie's re-election is hardly conclusive evidence that she's got the magic touch with that growing segment of the U.S. electorate. But it doesn't hurt the impression that she can pass the laugh test when it comes to envisioning her as not only the first female president or vice president, but the first Hispanic elected to either post.

By RALPH Z. HALLOW

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Ever since Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker grabbed the political world's attention on June 5, 2012, by becoming the first governor in U.S. history to survive a recall election, he has been on a roll.

In his 3½ years as governor, he has managed to get taxes and unemployment rates down, reverse the job-killing out-migration of businesses and turn a \$3.5 billion inherited budget deficit into a nearly \$1 billion surplus.

Sometimes in his half-blue, half-red state, it has looked more like a roller-coaster ride for the outwardly mild-mannered but quietly stubborn Republican. He says with pride that he refused to be intimidated by one of the most muscular, all-out efforts by national labor and public employees unions to unseat an elected official in years.

The year before Mr. Walker was sworn in as governor, the state struggled with a crushing unemployment rate of 9.2 percent, about the same as the nation as a whole. Now, the state boasts an unemployment rate of 5.7 percent, a bit below the 6.1 percent national rate and the lowest for the state since 2008.

"Personal income grew 4.4 percent over the year — faster than the U.S.," he said in his State of the State address this year, adding that, according to the latest figures, "Wisconsin ranked as the fourth-best state in the country for personal-income growth."

In his battle with public-sector unions, Mr. Walker, 46, has become a hero for many taxpayers in his own state and for other governors facing similarly mountainous problems with unsustainable retirement and health care benefits for their state workforces. For them, the onetime county executive of Milwaukee County has shown the determination to reform government in ways that make Milton Friedman acolytes applaud and drive Paul Krugman apostles into liberal apoplexy.

To most Democrats, he is simply a union-busting tool of business.

For all of Wisconsin's reputation as a bastion of left-liberalism, Republicans occupy the governorship, are a majority in the state Senate and House, hold one of the two U.S. Senate seats and five of the state's eight seats in the House.

Yet Mr. Walker is in a tight re-election contest. The latest Marquette University Law School poll has the



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker fended off a 2012 drive by liberals, angered by his disavowal of business as usual, to recall him from office.

Walker survives, Wisconsin thrives

Purple state governor bloodied, unbowed

incumbent in a dead heat with Madison School Board member Mary Burke, whose family owns and runs the famous Waterloo-based Trek Bicycle Corp. Mr. Walker has condemned Trek for buying bicycle parts abroad — an understandable political tactic by the Republican, but one that would not have drawn a smile of approval from Mr. Friedman, the late iconic economist for many American conservatives and a champion of free trade.

What Mr. Walker is banking on is that voters ranging from the center to the right on Wisconsin's political continuum will remember that he stood up to the powerful unions in the face of rising tax burdens and the prospect of eventual insolvency as retirement and health care costs rose faster than state income. He continues to cut taxes and government spending

while achieving an economic growth rate that many other governors would love to be able to claim in their states.

One reason he was able to do that is that, as he said, he "signed a bill that

He continues to cut taxes and government spending while achieving an economic growth that many other governors would love to be able to claim in their states.

requires public workers to contribute 5.8 percent of their salaries to their pensions — that's up from zero for most of them — and to pay 12.6 percent of their health insurance premiums, up from 6 percent."

He can be expected on the campaign

trail to take credit for achieving agenda items that have eluded conservatives for years, such as ending collective bargaining for "everything except base wages, ending compulsory union membership, and stopping the forced collection of union dues."

For many conservatives and independents, his most commendable act as governor was what he described as "freeing school districts from the stranglehold of collective-bargaining rules," allowing them to buy health insurance on the open market and to hire and fire teachers based on merit, not tenure. Most of all, Mr. Walker can be expected to lay what economists say is legitimate claim to having strengthened Wisconsin's pension system, which is the "only one in the country that is fully funded."

PERRY

From page D4

the border to end the invasion of unaccompanied Central American children, as well as the lieutenants of the foreign crime cartels.

On immigration, he has shown you can talk tough without sounding mean-spirited. He has repeated publicly his accusation that the children flooding the border are told to claim to American authorities that they are fleeing for their lives — escaping the murderous drug wars in El Salvador and other Central American countries.

That bold accusation seems to resonate with Republicans, independents and many Democrats who suspect collusion between the U.S. government and Latin American authorities as the only plausible explanation for the sudden inundation of the southern border by busloads of unaccompanied children.

Mr. Perry casts himself as the most aggressive and successful governor in personally persuading corporate leaders in the U.S. and around the world to relocate part or all of their operations to Texas.

Unknown to most people outside his state, he is something of a culture maven.

“There is no question that 10 to 15 years ago folks might have had a point in saying we were culturally and intellectually a backwater. Al Gore once said the air is brown here,” he told *The Washington Times*. “Well, today, we have won that battle, both in perception and substance. The cultural arts here have exploded. From zoos, to music, to museums, to theater. In Houston, we have more theater seats than any other city in America except New York.”

Mr. Perry’s strong religious faith has been a big part of his political career, but for him now, the economy is pre-eminent in the lives of Americans, whether religious or secular.

“Americans have to decide what is the most important to them: social issues, foreign policy, national security and other issues. But all those issues — many of them should be the purview of states, not the federal government,” he said in an interview before embarking for the Middle East last summer.

“You can’t have any of these if you do not take appropriate care of taxes, regulation, legal policies, so that there can be the revenues for those desires,” he said.

JINDAL

From page D5

In May 2011, S&P elated the Jindal administration and the GOP-dominated legislature by raising the likelihood of Louisiana’s being able to repay its general obligation debt to AA status from its AA-grade.

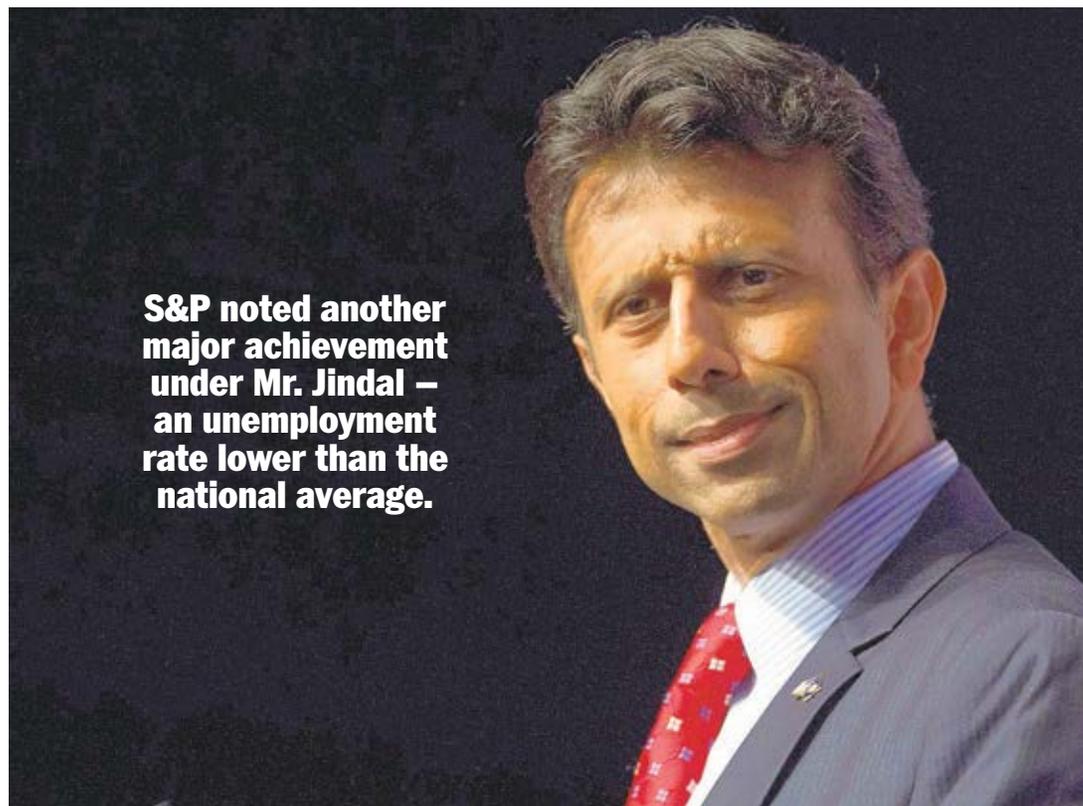
So Louisiana finds itself happily in the exact opposite situation as the U.S. Treasury. The state’s government has to dig less deeply into its pool of taxes collected from businesses and workers’ earnings to pay a lower interest rate to lenders. Why? Because they see a better likelihood of getting their money back, based on the S&P rating for Louisiana.

“That was the first AA rating from Standard & Poor’s for Louisiana from since 1984,” Mr. Jindal said. He essentially repeated the interpretation he made in 2011. “The higher credit rating shows that the business world sees what we’re doing to expand and diversify our economy — while we continue making government more fiscally responsible.”

S&P noted another major achievement under Mr. Jindal — an unemployment rate lower than the national average.

“We expect the state to continue to address its structural challenges, such as its underfunded pension systems, and we anticipate that it will likely continue to make expenditure cuts as needed to ensure balanced operations,” S&P analysts said at the time.

“This state has the lowest unemployment in the South,” he said. He’s right, according to the



ASSOCIATED PRESS

S&P noted another major achievement under Mr. Jindal — an unemployment rate lower than the national average.

Under Gov. Bobby Jindal’s leadership on the economy, Louisiana’s credit rating has greatly improved.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, which in June reported Louisiana at 5 percent unemployment, followed by Texas at 5.1 percent. Most of the other Southern states fell in the 6 percent to 7 percent range.

In January, Mr. Jindal’s state set the lowest unemployment rate since September 2008, when Mr. Jindal had been in office only a few months. He also takes credit for getting the legislature to enact what he says is the largest-ever income-tax rate reduction in the state.

He slashed \$9 billion (26 percent of spending) from the state budget and cut the state’s payroll

by more than 28,000 jobs.

One of his boldest and most controversial achievements is turning a government-run health care system into a partnership with private-sector providers. He was later able to claim that the state’s former charity (now privatized) hospital cost \$52 million less than originally budgeted.

He noted the state achieved a record of a little more than 2 million people employed, out of a total population of 4.6 million.

He argued that a leaner, more efficient, less-costly state government is another inducement

for people living and working in other states to come stay in Louisiana.

To the bitter consternation of environmentalists and even some conservatives, the governor signed a bill that protected the oil and gas industry from exposure to civil damages in lawsuits, including BP PLC’s liability for billions of dollars in unsettled claims resulting from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The energy industry’s revival in Louisiana, especially in the Gulf of Mexico, has helped fuel the state’s economic growth, the industry says.

FALLIN

From page D7

That base, Mrs. Fallin said, hasn’t seen the budget and national-debt reductions promised by many Republicans who land on the banks of the Potomac.

“Too many in my party haven’t kept their word on cutting spending, the national debt and government meddling when they got to Washington, including Republican presidents,” she told *The Washington Times*.

She’s taken what observers call a conservative — the political right calls it “common sense” — line on a number of issues. She earned criticism from Democrats and liberals for shunning federal funding to expand Medicaid in Oklahoma under Obamacare. She

argued the extension would have cost as much as \$1 billion to extend coverage to uninsured Oklahomans through 2020. Maintaining roads and schools and other state priorities would suffer, she said.

Critics called her arithmetic misleading and ideologically driven.

In June, she approved replacement of the Common Core State Standards in mathematics and English with Oklahoma-written standards.

“Unfortunately, federal overreach has tainted Common Core,” she said. “President Obama and Washington bureaucrats have usurped Common Core in an attempt to influence state education standards. The results are predictable. What should have been a bipartisan policy is now widely regarded as the president’s plan to establish federal control of curricula, testing

and teaching strategies.”

Earlier, she had approved rules that the Republican legislature passed for an A-to-F grading of public schools. The purpose, she

She earned criticism from Democrats and liberals for shunning federal funding to expand Medicaid in Oklahoma under Obamacare.

said, was to give parents a more easily understandable measure of each public school’s performance than the numeric grading system. Her critics called the A-to-F system unfair and misleading. She

prevailed.

She is only the fourth Republican governor in Oklahoma history, which she says has her pinching herself every now and then when she thinks back to having grown up in a town of 2,000 people and to her parents as struggling to make ends meet as local government employees.

She also has more than a modicum of determination in her genes. “My dad was mayor of our hometown and died at 57, so my mom became mayor,” she said.

After college, she became district manager of the national Lexington hotel chain out of Texas. She figures that experience allowed her to know more than a little something about hiring, firing, finding talent, managing it; in other words, all the things voters look for in a chief executive.

By **RALPH Z. HALLOW**

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence already has achieved most of his early agenda, barely 18 months into his first term.

Mr. Pence has signed into law \$643 million in annual tax relief and has presided over a state economy that managed to lower its unemployment rate to 5.9 percent from the 7.9 percent that burdened the state when he took office in January 2013.

“Passing a budget that lets us live within our means and funding our priorities in roads and schools probably is my proudest accomplishment,” Mr. Pence told *The Washington Times* as he was leaving a fundraiser for Colorado GOP gubernatorial candidate Bob Beauprez on Thursday.

“On top of that, we finished our fiscal year with \$2 billion in reserves,” Mr. Pence added.

His administration can also take credit for the creation of 50,000 jobs since the former congressman took office.

Like his predecessor, former Gov. Mitch Daniels, Mr. Pence, 55, has the reputation of being one of the GOP’s brainiest political stars. But unlike Mr. Daniels, Mr. Pence has not picked a fight with the religious conservative activists in his party. It’s not just that he thinks inviting cleavages in the GOP coalition is bad politics — Mr. Pence happens to be an evangelical Christian and a down-the-line social conservative on preserving traditional values.

Also somewhat unusual for a state governor, he has a long-held interest in foreign policy. During his 12 years as a member of the U.S. House, he rose to leadership of the House Republican Conference and served on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

He once confided that he regards himself as a “Zionist” when it comes to his devotion to Israel’s security and continued existence.

Fellow Hoosiers and former congressional colleagues say Mr. Pence, a possible 2016 GOP presidential contender, is modest and unassuming, almost to a fault. At a large national meeting in Indianapolis recently, Mr. Pence arrived without a retinue of aides and handlers, talking quietly with his wife until some attendees realized the governor of the host state was in their midst.

But it was as a classic free-market, pro-growth conservative and a moral traditionalist that he made his mark in Congress.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence served six terms in the House of Representatives before returning to the Hoosier State to run for governor in 2012.

From House to Statehouse

Indiana’s Mike Pence hits the ground running

The lightened burden that he secured for Indiana taxpayers came in the form of \$313 million in their earnings they were able to keep in their pockets, thanks to a 5 percent cut in the state’s income tax. An additional \$170 million of the \$643 million in relief came from cuts in corporate-tax rates — which dropped to 4.9 percent from 6.5 percent.

Indiana families also benefited from being able to keep \$125 million — that otherwise would have gone to state government — by the legislature’s killing of the state’s widely despised inheritance tax in May 2013.

Finally, the new governor has approved some \$35 million in relief for banks and other financial institutions.

Mr. Pence is one of the class of relatively new GOP governors who argue that it’s not enough for the party to say “no” to what it considers President Obama’s rush to “socialism,” be it Obamacare or other federal intrusions into state, local and individual prerogatives under the Constitution.

For instance, Mr. Pence is proposing

market-based reforms to deliver quality coverage to the Medicaid-eligible population of Indiana, and earlier this year, he told an audience at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington

Like his predecessor Mitch Daniels, Mr. Pence, 55, has the reputation of being one of the GOP’s brainiest political stars.

about his ideas for using more traditionally conservative ways to help Americans who can’t afford health care insurance.

Based on health savings accounts, his Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 builds on a program that Mr. Daniels first introduced in Indiana.

He said the big difference with Obamacare is that states will have the flexibility to set up health care plans of their own design.

“In Indiana, we have learned that the way to change Medicaid is to base the program on what we know improves health and lowers costs, namely consumer-driven health care using health savings accounts,” Mr. Pence said.

Mr. Pence is also at ease sharing the credit for his state’s reforms.

“Beginning in the early 1990s, Indiana became a centerpiece for the discussion about consumer-driven health care,” he said.

“Today, Indiana has more public employees — 96 percent in our state government — enrolled in health savings account plans, more than any other state,” he said. “And our private marketplace has a higher percentage of people enrolled in consumer-driven plans compared to many other states.”

“So the Healthy Indiana Plan, built as it is on health savings accounts and on consumer-driven health care, makes the most sense, being launched and piloted and expanded in the state where consumer-driven health care, in many respects, was born.”

No More Waiting!

The Washington Times National Digital Edition



Now get *The Washington Times*' groundbreaking news and conservative commentary right on your mobile device of choice with our new National Digital Edition. The "living newspaper" is updated all day long on your tablet or smartphone with the best articles and op-eds written by *The Washington Times*' staff plus exclusive columns and features only available to NDE subscribers.

**Sign up today! A one-year subscription is just \$39.99.
That's less than 11¢ a day!**

**Subscribe at
nde.washingtontimes.com**