

## Mitch Daniels speaks at Chamber Luncheon

Written by

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Over 130 members of the community gathered at Southern Hills Church on Wednesday, September 8, courtesy of the Chamber of Commerce to hear Governor Mitch Daniels speak about Fighting the recession to win.

Daniels opened by stating, "Education and infrastructure is his greatest investments and we are spending as carefully as we can, spending only what we need. The people working for you in state government are doing a great job, we will never be satisfied and keep working towards ways to save."

Indiana is ranked 5th for the thriftiest state in the U.S for spending and it's about to get better." stated Daniels. "We are one of nine states that have a AAA Bonding rate, that is our best in history."

"From the very beginning I have tried to navigate through problems to protect our citizens and business against higher taxes, other states can raise taxes and Indiana doesn't, that gives us one step towards getting more jobs to this state."

Major incentives that Daniels and his staff has given to Indiana are: Major Moves project; telecommunication reform; Buy Indiana; property tax relief and regulatory reform.

Daniels stated that many states are cutting vital services, such as releasing convicts from prison, "We are not going to do that, we will not jeopardize our public safety for financial reasons." 13 states have cut K-12 by 10 percent with two states cutting by 20 percent, we do not plan for that to happen."

Gov. Daniels proceeded with his presentation by showing the audience ways him and his staff have taken actions to restrain spending by the following: hiring freezes, travel down by 50 percent, no raises in 2009-10; target Medicaid reductions, higher education down by six percent and K-12 reduced by three percent.

"We didn't like to do these things, but it was something that had to be done." stated Gov. Daniels.

One question was asked by a concerned member of the community regarding the need for a new airport, Gov. Daniels responded by stating, "The building of infrastructures that are done right are positive. You want to build things that have a positive return over time, clearly a right airport in the right circumstance is a good thing."

Lana Sullivan asked what his ultimate goal for local government reform we be, "I have lots of goals, but my first goal would be more accountability to the taxpayers, there is no question this would save money."

Another citizen asked if he plans to move his motorcycle to Washington D.C, "I'm not planning on it, maybe just a ride to D.C." stated Daniels.

Mayor Dave Bower asked about the early release of prisons with the growing prison population, "I do not support early release, we will have to increase capacity by utilization of each facility, as of now, no new prisons, but possibly in a few years we may have to grow and this would be a competition of communities for a new prison to be located."

"We are not yet halfway up the hill we fell down during the recession, but I hope you

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understand they theory we are trying to do to preserve and extend our edge versus other states.”

The Governor’s presentation is now available at the Chamber’s website for viewing. Interested persons may visit the website at [www.washingtoncountychamber.org](http://www.washingtoncountychamber.org) and click on the link for the presentation.