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THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026
"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" II COR. 3:17

IndyStar.

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Braun eyes nuclear power deal

Canadian firm could build eight reactors in Indiana

Karl Schneider
Indianapolis Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

Gov. Mike Braun continued his mission to position Indiana as a national leader for nuclear development when he announced Oct. 19 the state intends to explore partnering with a Canadian nuclear company to build six gigawatts of new electric generation.

The announcement came at the conclusion of Purdue University's Global Nuclear Energy Economic Summit where the governor signed a nonbinding agreement with engineering services and nuclear company AtkinsRéalis, based in Montréal, and Hoosier Energy, a nonprofit electric cooperative servicing central and southern Indiana. Indiana electricity generating utilities produce about 27 gigawatts, ac-

cording to a December 2025 Indiana Office of Energy Development report. This project, if successful, would increase Indiana's energy generation by more than 22%.
"We do intend to be leading on this in the U.S., and I think we're getting all our ducks in a row and just getting started," Braun said.
The partnership would reach full capacity over time through eight AtkinsRéalis reactors, located in Hoosier Energy's coverage area, AtkinsRéalis CEO

Ian Edwards said during the announcement.
The project would keep Hoosier Energy committed to its all-of-the-above approach to energy generation, the cooperative's president and CEO Donna Walker said. In addition, the partnership would help Hoosier Energy provide its 700,000 customers with reliable, affordable and sustainable power, she said.
See NUCLEAR POWER, Page 11A



Winners and losers

Indy's 2027 budget boosts roads and police funding but cuts jail reentry and education

Jordan Smith Indianapolis Star | USA TODAY NETWORK

The 2027 budget season began in August with Indianapolis City-County Council Democrats overriding Mayor Joe Hogsett's veto to push through vehicle tax hikes that will generate new revenue for roads next year.
Other than that, the subsequent two months of committee hearings brought no major changes to the Hogsett administration's \$1.9 billion 2027 budget that council Democrats approved Oct. 19 over Republicans' unanimous opposition. Two Democrats, Crista Lee Wells and Jesse Brown, also voted against the final budget.
Nearly 50 activists with Live Free Indiana and other groups who pushed for more spend-

ing on jail reentry and violence prevention programs gathered outside the City-County Building to protest the unchanged priorities.
As the council meeting progressed, several protesters were forced to leave after disrupting the meeting by shouting objections to budgeting \$400 million for the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. Activists heavily criticize the agency's handling of the police killing of 21-year-old Dalys Jett and five officers' alleged misuse of Flock cameras.
"Our council takes unprecedented action to override a veto and pass the wheel tax, to fix
See INDY BUDGET, Page 11A



Secretary of state debate reduced to 2-man event

Kayla Dwyer and Marissa Meador
Indianapolis Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Indiana secretary of state candidates will return to the stage for a third debate, this time hosted by Fox59/CBS4 in Indianapolis on Oct. 22.
The flavor of this one will be different: With two of the candidates excluded by the television station's polling threshold, it'll be a one-on-one debate between Democrat Beau Bayh and Republican Max Engling. Various polls have shown those two to be the front-runners of this competitive top-of-ballot race.
IndyStar will be participating in the debate, which will air live at 7 p.m. from the Fox59/CBS4 studios, with a question from News Director Kaitlin Lange.
Viewers will be able to watch a live stream of the event on IndyStar's website and we'll have live coverage of the event from IndyStar political reporters.
The debate comes on the heels of an independent poll commissioned by Free Press Indiana that showed Bayh leading the field by eight percentage points.
The results of the poll were part of the criteria used to determine debate eligibility, so Lincoln Party candidate Greg Ballard and Libertarian Lauri Shillings, who each polled 5% and 6%, respectively, will not participate in the debate.
See DEBATE, Page 11A

Child killer seeks execution pause after failed TN lethal injection

Kristine Phillips
Indianapolis Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

The attorneys of an Indiana death row inmate who is set to be executed next month are asking Gov. Mike Braun to pause all executions in the state after a recent botched lethal injection in Tennessee.
Jeffrey Weisheit's legal team is call-

ing for a transparent and thorough examination of Indiana's execution protocols and procedures, as well as of the source and adequacy of its lethal injection drugs. Joseph Perkovitch, one of Weisheit's attorneys, cited similarities between how Indiana and Tennessee carry out executions and keep information



Weisheit

about them secret, such as the source of the drugs used.
Perkovitch said there are "glaring" and "unmistakable" questions regarding the drugs used to execute Tennessee death row inmate Christa Pike, who survived two doses of pentobarbital, the same drug used in Indiana. The two states share the same drug supplier, Perkovitch said, and while Tennessee shields significant information from

disclosure, Indiana "is worse."
Indiana, for example, is one of just two states that don't allow members of the media to witness executions.
"We want to underscore today that the problems in executions in Tennessee present very serious questions for the procedures and practices in Indiana," Perkovitch told reporters Oct. 19,
See EXECUTION, Page 9A

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