PRESS RELEASE
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MEDIA CONTACTS:
Marcus J. Barlow
Press Secretary
Office of the Mayor
E-mail: mbarlow@indygov.org
Office: 317-327-3713
Cell: 317-496-5515

Jessica Higdon
Deputy Press Secretary
Office of the Mayor
E-mail: jhigdon@indygov.org
Office: 317-327-3649
Cell: 317-281-5817

EXCERPTS FROM MAYOR BALLARD’S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

INDIANAPOLIS – (April 9, 2008) I believe that Government’s primary responsibility is public safety, and that’s why my team and I have made Public Safety job number one. One of the most obvious weaknesses regarding Public Safety was a disjointed chain of command. In a crisis situation, police and fire must work together, otherwise lives will be lost. That is why I worked to bring IMPD back under the Office of the Mayor.

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Businesses need an educated workforce and good schools for their employees’ children to attend. We cannot improve our economy without also working to improve the quality of our educational system.

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When I went to the state legislature earlier this year, I didn’t go there to convince state legislators to stop property tax relief. I went there to encourage them to enact it, because the current system of property taxes threatened to make Marion County unlivable. My job is not to
make government comfortable for government, but to make Marion County comfortable for its
citizens. Does it make balancing our budget more difficult? Yes it does. Is it worth it to make
sure citizens don’t live in fear of losing their homes? Definitely. No question.

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Right now there are over 40 different taxing entities in Marion County. Some of these
entities provide needed services, but many duplicate functions already being performed.
We must be mindful of the debt that we are leaving for the next generation. Our long term debt in
this city is 5.7 billion dollars, 2.8 billion of which is supported by your property taxes.

In our school systems alone, we have amassed a debt of 1.8 billion dollars. If we are going
to address long-term spending problems, the State Legislature needs to give Marion County the
ability to finish the job of consolidation that started over 4 decades ago.

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A true partnership between government and its constituents is more than listening. It also
involves being transparent and honest. Soon we will announce the dates for Indystat, which will be
established performance measures, and we will make the results open to the public.

We are also going to have budget reviews open to the public so that you can scrutinize how
we are spending your money.

To increase the level of trust our citizens have for their public officials, we have introduced
a comprehensive ethics reform package. This will give city-county employees, as well as elected
officials, clear direction on what is ethical behavior.

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As a Marine, I traveled all over the world, and one thing that struck me was how the world,
in the words of Thomas Friedman, is getting flatter.

If Indianapolis is to remain competitive 30-40 years from now, we must dedicate ourselves
now to increasing our city’s International profile.