Longtime legislator discusses dual role of serving in minority:
Articulate policy differences, but find ways of working across aisle

by Ilene Grossman (igrossman@vcp.org)

About to enter his 20th year in the Indiana Senate, Tim Lanane does not know what it is like to serve in a majority party caucus. But over the years, he has learned that being outnumbered doesn’t necessarily mean being counted out of the legislative process.

“Those are opportunities to get things done,” he says.

Over the years, his legislative accomplishments have included being part of new laws to protect homeowners from predatory lending practices (the Indiana Homeowner Protection Act) and to bring a casino to a horse-racing track in his home district.

Most recently, based on the idea of a constituent, Lanane helped get legislation passed in 2016 to expand the availability of concussion training. Under the new law, Indiana’s elementary schools will get the training. (It already was provided for high school coaches.)

“It was really gratifying to get that passed,” Lanane says.

But there are admittedly challenges and frustrations for legislators serving in the super-minority (Republico...