

## Mitschelen taunts Bauer on gay marriage

■ But Demos claim current state law sufficiently clear.

Tribune staff report

INDIANAPOLIS — A Republican candidate for the Indiana House said Friday that America is waging “a culture war” that Democratic Rep. B. Patrick Bauer is reluctant to fight.

Kevin Mitschelen, who hopes to unseat Bauer from South Bend’s 6th District, said the war involves “the traditional family ordained by God” and under assault by legal chal-

lenges to same-sex marriage bans.

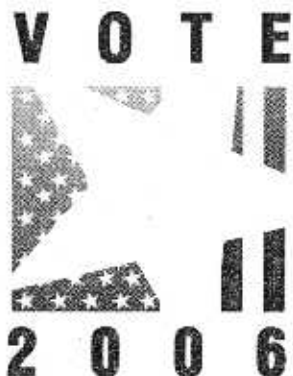
According to Mitschelen, the surest way to preserve traditional marriage is a constitutional amendment that courts could not overturn.

“Pat Bauer knows that Indiana’s current law defining traditional marriage can be overturned by our own judicial branch,” Mitschelen said in a news release, “which leaves the state at risk for redefining marriage as we know it.”

Bauer dismissed the comments as an attempt to divert attention from the Republican majority’s failures. He said Repub-



Bauer



Mitschelen

licans ignored public opinion against daylight-saving time, the Indiana Toll Road lease and a state budget that will force higher property taxes next year.

Bauer also said he fully sup-

ports current Indiana law that bans same-sex marriage, which has been upheld by trial and appeals courts in Indiana.

“I am for traditional marriage,” he said.

But Bauer said he would allow a vote on a proposed constitutional amendment next year, should Democrats win the majority next month. “If redundancy is absolutely imperative,” he said, “we’ll have a vote to see where that should be.”

Mitschelen criticized Bauer for blocking a House vote on a proposed Indiana amendment in 2004, when Bauer was speaker of the House.

Democrats said existing law was sufficiently clear on marriage, but Republicans walked off the House floor four times that year in an attempt to force a vote.

“Some say there is no God,” Mitschelen said in a news release. “I say his laws are intended for our benefit. Therefore, it is in our best interest to hold his thoughts close to our hearts and act to preserve the sanctity of marriage in Indiana.”

Lawmakers voted bipartisanly last year for a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage and bar “the legal incidents of marriage” to same-sex couples.

The amendment process requires passage by a separately elected legislature, followed by a public vote in a general election.