

Hendricks County Chambers Weekly Statehouse Update

By Caryl Auslander • Feb 04, 2023

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- **General Statehouse Update**
- **Hendricks County Chambers Update**
- **Action Items**
- **Important Dates**
- **Closing**

General Statehouse Update



It's a wrap on week four at the Indiana General Assembly, and we are officially 25% through the legislative session. This week we where we saw consensus on a number of proposals, from TANF eligibility and data protection to small business tax deductions. And, of course, there was a fair share of debate, particularly surrounding the future of school board races. Bills to attempt to lower health care costs that affect hospitals and health insurers continue to move forward, and the state's two-year Commission on Public Health advocated for language to support their findings. Let's dive in.

Public Health Commission Presents to Senate Health and Provider Services

Legislation stemming from Governor Eric Holcomb's [Public Health Commission](#) passed out of the [Senate Committee on Health and Provider Services](#) on Wednesday. The Public Health Commission was [co-chaired](#) by former State Senator Luke Kenley and former State Health Commissioner Dr. Judith Monroe, who delivered their [findings](#) in August of 2022.

[SB 4](#) contains a [list](#) of about two dozen core services local health departments must provide if they want to get significantly increased funding from the state. Food protection, local pool inspections, immunizations, and maternal and child health services are a few of the affected areas. The funding needed to accompany this legislation is expected to be included in [HB 1001](#), the state budget bill.

Senate Appropriations

Last week, we saw [Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch](#) testify before the Senate Appropriations committee urging the passage of comprehensive mental health legislation, [SB 1](#). This week, the committee unanimously approved the bill to head to the full Senate. Some changes were made in committee including reducing the number of members to sit on the re-established Indiana Behavioral Health Commission, prioritizing children and the elderly, and setting metrics for the commission to report back.

As a reminder, this is the Senate's major mental health bill this year and carried by Sen. Michael Crider (R-Greenfield). [SB 1](#) transforms the 988 Crisis Hotline into the 988 Crisis Response Centers and addresses funding and sustainability plans for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics. There are currently 19 pilot CCBHC sites in Indiana.

[HB 1006](#), the Mental Health companion bill in the House, also passed third reading unanimously on Tuesday and now heads to the Senate.

House Committees Hear Proposals to Address Healthcare Costs

Fines for hospitals and tax credits for doctors who are unaffiliated with large healthcare systems are part of a [cumulative healthcare bill](#) heard in [House Public Health Committee](#) this Wednesday. [HB 1004](#) is [priority language for Republicans](#) who say they are responding to a lack of action on the part of healthcare entities and insurers to lower prices. No votes were taken on this bill, and amendments are expected to be heard in committee next week.

Meanwhile, [HB 1003](#), which takes on the insurance component of this session's collection of healthcare cost regulations, was heard in the [House Committee on Insurance](#). Language to address the poor return to doctors treating Medicaid patients and delays in the prior authorization process is included in the bill, which authors say aims to increase competition in both the provider and insurance marketplaces. Additional committee discussion is expected to tie over to next week as well.

Privacy Legislation Advances Out of Committee

A bill to create a ["bill of rights"](#) for Hoosier data privacy would allow consumers to monitor how their data is used and provide an option to delete it. [SB 5](#) also includes a requirement for businesses to have annual data protection assessments and security checks.

This piece of priority legislation for the Senate Majority passed unanimously out of the Senate Committee on [Senate Commerce and Technology Committee](#) on Monday and is now up for further consideration by the full Senate.

High School Job Training Grants See Committee Support

[HB 1002](#) passed through the [House Education Committee](#) on Wednesday and was recommitted to House Ways and Means, the body's fiscal committee. Bill authors say the proposal will provide more [job training to high school students](#) to address skills gaps and employee shortages. It would also change graduation requirements, and funds previously allocated toward free college through the 21st Century Scholarship would be available for us in on-job training.

Some changes were made in the committee to [address funding concerns](#). Bill authors added a price range of \$2,500 to \$5,000 to the accounts, to be determined by the Department of Education and the [Governor's Workforce Cabinet](#). The updated language also specifies that schools can host joint career fairs to meet the provisions of the bill, and requires all schools to offer a career awareness class for all students, regardless of whether they use the scholarship accounts, by July 2024.

SB 188 Partisan School Boards Bill Heard

Under a proposal heard in [Senate Elections Committee](#) this week, candidates running for local school board would have to [disclose their party affiliation on the ballot](#). While the overwhelming majority of those who appeared to testify on Monday opposed [SB 188](#) stating that we should keep politics out of education, proponents of the measure say that stating their political affiliation is a transparency move. No vote

was taken, and discussion remains as to what the final language could look like. Committee Chair Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute) suggested an example of changes on deck could be to allow counties to have ballot referendums to decide whether local school board races should be partisan. The bill has not yet been put back on the schedule for further consideration.

TANF Eligibility Changes Pass Senate

The Senate is sending the House a measure to [increase the maximum income threshold for families to qualify for TANF](#) (Temporary Assistance For Needy Families) to 50 percent of the federal poverty level after two years. The bill would also increase some maximum payments families can get from TANF. [SB 265](#) has received wide support from both sides of the aisle and advocates in the human services space.

State and Local Tax Legislation Sails Through Committee

A bill to provide a state and local tax (SALT) deduction for many small businesses in the state passed unanimously out of the [Senate Committee on Tax and Fiscal Policy](#) Tuesday morning. [SB 2](#) would provide the deduction for what are known as [pass-through entities](#), which are businesses that are not subject to corporate income tax. Some advocates for the bill say its passage could potentially result in an estimated \$50 million in annual tax savings for business owners.

What's Next?

Committees have a little more than two more weeks to meet - so expect lots more bills moving through the legislative process - including the House-version of the biennial budget. We will be in these hearings, letting you know of issues of importance to you.

Hendricks County Chambers Update



Week four of the legislative session is in the books, and we are beginning to get a sense of what the remainder of the first half will look like. Agendas over the next couple weeks will be packed, as lawmakers from both parties will be making efforts to have their bills heard and passed through the policy process. As a reminder, February 21st and 23rd are committee report deadlines for the House and Senate. The following week, on February 27th and 28th, all House and Senate bills will need to pass final third reading floor votes in their respective chambers if they want the ability to move on to the second half.

Childcare/PreK:

- [**SB 368**](#) establishes the early childhood care and education pilot program to provide a cost sharing approach to fund quality early childhood care and education in 11 Northeast Indiana counties. This bill was heard, and held, in committee two weeks ago. It has not been posted to next week's agenda at this time.
- [**SB 375**](#) is a child care assistance bill authored by Republican Senator Linda Rogers. The bill would raise the income eligibility limit for grants under the On My Way Pre-K program (program) to 260% of the federal poverty level. SB375 will be heard in the Senate Family and Children Services committee on Monday, February 6th.
- [**SB 186**](#), [**S 238**](#), [**SB 255**](#) all deal with child care tax credits. None of these bills have been scheduled for a hearing at this time.

Housing:

- [**HB 1005**](#) is an omnibus housing bill and includes many of the recommendations from last summer's Housing Taskforce final report, including revolving loans for housing infrastructure. The bill passed out of committee unanimously and will be eligible for second

reading floor amendments on Monday. Related article: [Lawmakers move revolving fund for housing forward without price tag \(Indianapolis Business Journal\)](#)

Workforce:

- [SB 347](#) is a work share bill that deals with unemployment benefits programs. It was heard in the Senate Pensions and Labor committee this week and drew wide support, including from a number of Chambers. The bill was held in committee and the new chair, Senator Linda Rogers, has put it on the schedule for an amend and vote hearing next Wednesday, February 8th.

Health Care:

- This week, two House priority healthcare bills were heard in committee. [HB 1003](#) is focused on the insurance industry, while [HB 1004](#) focuses on hospitals. Both bills saw a wide-range of testimony and were ultimately held in committee for consideration at a future date. Related article: [Lawmakers hear mixed reviews on bill to lower health care costs \(Indianapolis Business Journal\)](#)

Please review your bill track list (below) and let us know if you have any questions - Chambers care about a lot of issues, so this list is very expansive!

Here is the [live link](#) to your bill track for 2023.

Action Items



- Please review your bill track and let us know of any bills of interest to you.
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Important Dates



Tuesday, February 21st - House Committee Report Deadline

Thursday, February 23rd - Senate Committee Report Deadline

Thursday, February 23rd - House 2nd Reading Deadline

Monday, February 27th - Senate 2nd Reading Deadline

Monday, February 27th - House 3rd Reading Deadline

Tuesday, February 28th - Senate 3rd Reading Deadline

Tuesday, April 11th - House Committee Report Deadline

Thursday, April 13th - Senate Committee Report Deadline

Thursday, April 13th - House 2nd Reading Deadline

Monday, April 17th - Senate 2nd Reading Deadline

Monday, April 17th - House 3rd Reading Deadline

Tuesday, April 18th - Senate 3rd Reading Deadline

Thursday, April 27th - Anticipated Sine Die

[Senate Session Calendar](#)

[House Session Calendar](#)
