



The Corydon Group 20 YEARS

SESSION – WEEK 9
March 5, 2021

INCPAS Weekly Update

Click here for current Bill Track:

- INCPAS <https://tinyurl.com/INCPAS2021Session>
- INCPAS Priority <https://tinyurl.com/INCPASPriority2021Session>
- INCPAS - TAX <https://tinyurl.com/INCPASTax2021Session>

It was a very slow week as we began the second half of session. Your bill track link above now only contains bills that have passed their Chamber of origin. Committee activity will pick up next week.

[HB 1373](#), the 120 to sit bill, has been assigned to the Senate Pensions and Labor Committee. INCPAS lobbyists will be meeting with the Senate Sponsor of the bill, Sen. Andy Zay, on Tuesday morning. The discussion will be the preparation of an amendment that extends the period of time that the Board of Accountancy has to promulgate the rule regarding exam windows that was required in legislation that passed last Session. Due to Covid restrictions, the Board was unable to complete the rule. Eric Sears from the Professional Licensing Agency will also be reaching out to Sen. Zay to express the need for the amendment.

INCPAS lobbyist continue to work with Sen. Linda Rogers on [SB 234](#), the payroll withholding bill.

There are currently no bills moving that are a threat to licensure.

Back to Session

Lawmakers returned to the Statehouse this week after a quick halftime break. It was a relatively slow week as bills received committee assignments and committee schedules were set. The Senate changed some of its COVID-19 protocols to allow testimony to occur in person in the same room as committee members. The House released a detailed committee schedule. As bills get assigned to committees and begin the process anew, several hot topics bear watching.

House Bill 1001 – State budget, authored by Representative Tim Brown (R-Crawfordsville), comprises the biennial spending plan for the state. It outlines the programs and priorities for state government over the next two years. Senator Ryan Mishler (R-Bremen) is the Senate sponsor of HB 1001, which passed the House 65-30.

House Bill 1005 – School choice matters, authored by Representative Bob Behning (R-Indianapolis), changes some eligibility requirements for the state's K-12 voucher program and would establish a new Indiana Education Scholarship Account (ESA) Program. The Senate sponsors are Senators Brian Buchanan (R-Lebanon), Mark Messmer (R-Jasper), Eric Bassler (R-Washington), and Liz Brown (R-Fort Wayne). HB 1005 passed the House 61-38.

Senate Bill 141 – Central Indiana public transportation projects, passed the Senate 32-17. Authored by Senator Aaron Freeman (R-Indianapolis), SB 141 – dubbed the "IndyGo bill" by many – would require the State Budget Agency to withhold local income tax revenue from counties if they fail to meet certain revenue requirements for their public transportation systems. It would also prohibit Marion County from creating additional bus lines if these revenue requirements are not met. Current law requires IndyGo to raise 10% of its operating expenses from private entities and at least 25% from fares and charges.

House Bill 1369 – Firearms matters, authored by Representative Ben Smaltz (R-Auburn) would repeal the law requiring a person to have a permit to carry a handgun. If passed, HB 1369 would allow people to carry a handgun without a permit, something proponents call "constitutional carry." The bill passed out of the House 65-31 and the Senate sponsors are Senators Erin Houchin (R-Salem), Mark Messmer (R-Jasper), Eric Koch (R-Bedford), Aaron Freeman (R-Indianapolis), and Chris Garten (R-Charlestown).

House Bill 1381 – Commercial wind and solar standards and siting would create statewide standards for commercial wind and solar projects, preempting

Committee Schedules

To view the House Committee Schedule, [click here.](#)

To view the Senate Committee Schedule, [click here.](#)

local regulations regarding project installation, setback requirements, height restrictions, and aesthetics. The bill passed the House 58-38. Representative Ed Soliday (R-Valparaiso) is the author of the bill. Joining him on the bill as Senate sponsors are Senator Mark Messmer (R-Jasper) and Senator Eric Koch (R-Bedford).

Senate Bill 352 – Broadband development, authored by Senator Erin Houchin (R-Salem), passed the Senate 47-0. As it stands, SB 352 would shift the priorities for projects funded by the state's Rural Broadband Fund. It says that the Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) will prioritize broadband service to areas where internet speeds are less than 25 megabits per second downstream. Representative Ethan Manning (R-Logansport) is the House sponsor.

House Bill 1365 – Various election matters, authored by Representative Timothy Wesco (R-Osceola) is a comprehensive

bill updating several election provisions. It covers everything from date and definition changes to candidate information and absentee voting. HB 1365 passed the House 83-13. Its Senate sponsors are Senator Jon Ford (R-Terre Haute) and Senator Greg Walker (R-Columbus).

As session ramps back up, we anticipate lawmakers working to compromise with each other to turn their bills into law.

Senate Appropriations Hears COVID Relief Bill

House Bill 1004, authored by Representative Shane Lindauer (R-Jasper) and sponsored by Senator Ryan Mishler (R-Bremen), would establish the Hoosier Hospitality Small Business Restart Grant Program to provide grants to eligible entities that have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and public-health emergency lockdowns. The goal of the bill is to accelerate economic recovery from the pandemic, especially in the state's hospitality sector.

HB 1004 bill passed the House Chamber 93-3. The Senate Appropriations Committee heard and amended it on Thursday, March 4 passing it on a unanimous 12-0 vote. The legislation enjoys broad bipartisan support. Testimony in committee focused on large entertainment venues that have been ineligible for past federal aid and do not meet current criteria in the bill. The bill now

moves to the Senate floor and is eligible for further debate and amendment as early as next week.

“Lessons from Texas”

The Senate Utilities Committee met this week for a discussion Chairman Eric Koch (R – Bedford) called “Lessons from Texas.” The committee heard presentations about the widespread power outages in Texas after a severe snow event. The purpose of the discussion was to review Indiana’s power-producing capabilities and capacity if a similar event were to occur.

The key takeaways were that Indiana and its electric grid are better positioned to withstand weather-related events because Indiana utilities are prepared and have contingency plans in place.

The Texas storm was at a level that few could have predicted in a state that typically receives little to any snow.

Indiana is not reliant on a single type of energy generation. MISO, the Regional Transmission Organization covering most of Indiana and a small sliver of Texas, and PJM, which also covers a small part of Indiana, both said that Indiana is well-served by its energy resources mix. This mix includes coal and natural gas, renewables like wind and solar, and nuclear energy.

Utilities, policymakers, and stakeholders indicated that they intended to apply the lessons learned from Texas to ensure Indiana is better prepared now and in the future.

The Corydon Group

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Managing Principal

Lou Belch
President

Carlin Yoder
Vice President

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Vice President, Assoc Management

Cam Carter
Vice President, Communications

Rachel Gibson
Vice President, Operations

Morgan Perrill
Sr Director. Strategic Initiatives

Sydney Moulton
Senior Associate

Steve Wolff
Senior Associate

Cory Martin
Director, Assoc Management

Calleigh Smith
Associate

Cassie Denney
Associate

Will Buetow
Legislative Intern