



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

124th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025

 Week One Overview

Happy New Year! Thank you for allowing Barnes and Thornburg LLP to represent you during the 124th General Assembly. This past Wednesday, January 8th, the legislature reconvened for the 2025 legislative session. The session will be a long session and business must statutorily conclude no later than Tuesday, April 29th.

This week, the House and Senate caucuses started releasing their priorities for the 2025 session. The Senate Republican Caucus agenda focuses on property tax reform, lowering healthcare costs for Hoosiers, and increasing state government efficiency. More information can be found here: [Senate Republican 2025 Agenda](#).

The House Republican Caucus agenda will be released next Tuesday, January 14th.

The House Democratic Caucus released their agenda on Wednesday with Leader GiaQuinta delivering remarks on the House floor about their priorities. Their plan focuses on decreasing the cost of living, funding public education, and supporting public safety and veteran initiatives. The full agenda is linked here: [House Democrats 2025 Agenda](#).

The Senate Democratic Caucus announced its priorities in a noon press conference on Thursday. Their caucus plans to focus on increasing Medicaid reimbursement services, relieving medical debt, funding public education, and expanding tenant rights. An article detailing the goals is linked [here](#). The Senate Democratic Caucus also has new leadership this session. Senator Shelli Yoder (D- Bloomington) has been elected to serve as Minority Caucus Leader. Senator Andrea Hunley (D- Indianapolis) will serve as Assistant Minority Leader and Senator Rodney Pol (D- Chesterton) will serve as Minority Caucus Chair.

Only two (2) committees met this week: Senate Judiciary and Local Government. Details of proposed legislation in these committees are discussed below.

JUDICIARY

The Senate Judiciary kicked off the legislative session by hearing four (4) bills. The first was SB 80, Code Publication authored by Sen. Aaron Freeman (R- Indianapolis) proposes to repeal and relocate certain sections of Indiana's legal code. The bill makes no substantive changes to the law as introduced. SB 144, Parental Rights authored by Sen. Liz Brown (R- Ft. Wayne) prohibits government entities from withholding information about a child from their parents. The bill received support from several parents and attorneys. However, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Indiana opposed the bill, citing its vague nature. Sen. Freeman and Sen. Cyndi Carrasco both made statements in the committee confirming concerns about the vagueness of the language and noting that it could become problematic. Sen. Brown mentioned adding an amendment to exempt judges and public defenders from the bill. The bill was held and will be voted on next week.

The Committee also heard SB 142, Eviction Issues authored by Sen. Brown (R- Ft. Wayne) which would automatically expunge evictions after a period of seven (7) years providing that judgement against the tenant was paid in full. Sen. Freeman expressed opposition to the bill, as manually expunging evictions after seven (7) years citing concerns that the administrative requirements needed to implement the bill may cause a significant strain on the court system. Sen. Eric Koch also agreed with this concern.

Finally, SB 11, Minor Access and Use of Social Media authored by Sen. Mike Bohacek (R- Michiana Shores), was also heard in Senate Judiciary. As introduced, the bill would limit access to social media for children under the age of fifteen (15). Sen. Bohacek suggested several amendments, which will be considered by the committee in an upcoming hearing.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Senate Local Government Committee met Thursday and passed one bill which will now be sent to the Senate floor for further consideration. SB 127, Battery Charged Security Devices authored by Sen. Jim Buck (R -Kokomo) was presented in the committee. The bill would prohibit a county, city, or town from adopting an ordinance that would impose requirements on certain battery charged security devices. This bill passed and will move forward to the Senate floor.

SB 144, Political Subdivision Retirement Plans (Sen. Vaneta Becker), would require a political subdivision offering an employee retirement plan to annually present the plan to its respective county council. Sen. Becker plans to add an amendment to the bill for the committee's consideration. The bill was held in the Committee.



Points of Interest

GUBERNATORIAL TRANSITION

Governor-Elect Mike Braun unveiled his incoming administration's Freedom and Opportunity Agenda late last year. The Governor-Elect's agenda can be found [here](#). The Governor-Elect will be inaugurated on Monday, January 13, 2025. This weekend will celebrate Governor-Elect Braun with public and sponsored events planned starting Saturday. Information about the upcoming events can be here: [Inauguration Weekend Schedule of Events](#)

With a new Governor comes a new administration. Please see the new administration roster below:

Cabinet Members:

Mike Speedy, Secretary of Business Affairs

David Adams, Secretary of Commerce

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Suzanne Jaworowski, Secretary of Energy and Natural Resources

Dr. Gloria Sachdev, Secretary of Health and Family Services

Lisa Hershman, Secretary of Management and Budget

Jennifer-Ruth Green, Secretary of Public Safety

Matthew Ubelhor, Secretary of Transportation and Infrastructure

Anthony Scott, Superintendent of the Indiana State Police

Brigadier General Lawrence Muennich, Adjutant General of Indiana

Micah Beckwith, Lieutenant Governor

Joshua Kelley, Chief of Staff

Senior Staff:

Jason Johnson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Legislative Affairs

Jessica Wedgewood, Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations

Patrick Price, Governor's Legal Counsel

State Agencies and Departments:

Steve Russo, Executive Director of the Indiana Public Retirement System

Holly Lambert, Insurance Commissioner

Lindsay Hyer, Executive Director of the Professional Licensing Agency

Thomas Fite, Director of the Department of Financial Institutions

James Michaels, Superintendent of the Indiana School for the Blind

Dr. David Geeslin, Superintendent of the Indiana School for the Deaf

Dr. Lindsay Weaver, Commissioner of the Indiana State Department of Health

Steve Cox, Director of the Indiana Broadband Office

Dan Huge, Chairman of the Indiana Finance Authority

Don Lamb, Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture

Lloyd Arnold, Commissioner of the Department of Corrections
Alan Morrison, Director of the Department of Natural Resources
Kevin Garvey, Commissioner of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles
Mitch Roob, Secretary of the Family and Social Services Administration
Jake Adams, Department of Veterans Affairs
Fred Glynn, Executive Director of the Office of Community and Rural Affairs
Brandon Clifton, Indiana Department of Administration Commissioner
Pete Miller, Executive Director of the Indiana Management Performance Hub
Kent Abernathy, Indiana Department of Transportation Commissioner
Adam Krupp, Director of the Department of Child Services



Session Floor Highlights

The first week of session primarily involved introducing bills and attending to procedural formalities. Next week, more committees will convene to hear bills, and bills will start to move to the House and Senate floors for debate.



Looking Ahead

The deadline for filing [Senate](#) bills has passed, but [House](#) bills can be filed until Thursday, January 14th. The deadline for assigning bills to Senate committees is Thursday, January 16th.

Please use the live link sent in your weekly report email to keep up to date with new bills.

Please feel free to contact a member of our legislative team should you have questions regarding the happenings in the Indiana General Assembly!

Lauren Box (Partner)
Office: (317) 231-7289
Email: Lauren.Box@btlaw.com

Makenzie Binford (Lobbyist)
Office: (317) 231-7301
Email: Makenzie.Binford@btlaw.com

Brian Burdick (Partner)
Office: (317) 231-7393
Email: Brian.Burdick@btlaw.com

Jake German (Partner)
Office: (317) 231-7538
Email: Jacob.German@btlaw.com

Heather Harris (Partner)
Office: (317) 231-6448
Email: Heather.Harris@btlaw.com

Brandt Hershman (Partner)
Office: (202) 371-6374
Email: Brandt.Hershman@btlaw.com

Mike Moga (Associate)
Office: (317) 231-6452
Email: Mike.Moga@btlaw.com

Shannon Halinski (Intern)
Office: (317) 229-3101
Email: Shannon.Halinski@btlaw.com

Justin Heriberto Rojas (Intern)
Office: (317) 231-7330
Email: Justin.Rojas@btlaw.com

Alexis Taylor (Intern)
Office: (317) 229-3001
Email: Alexis.Taylor@btlaw.com