



April 11, 2019

Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) is the public policy voice of the Catholic bishops in Indiana regarding state and national matters.

The 2019 session is coming to its close. **Bills must pass third reading on Monday, April 15th, in the House and in the Senate on Tuesday, April 16th.** Conference committees have begun as well as concurrence vote on bills. **Leadership has indicated they want to end the session before the deadline of April 29th ; they hope to end on April 24th.**

House Financial Institutions Committee amended SB 613, Consumer credit, on Tuesday.

The amendment was finalized in the early hours of Tuesday morning. **The amendment reduces but does not change the character of the interest rate.** The new interest rates are 167% instead of 190% on payday installment loans of up to \$1500; 72% instead of 99% on loans up to \$3000. **The basic character of the bill remains;** vulnerable and low-income working families will be targeted and burdened by payments and debt that trap them and take advantage of their circumstances. Industry amendments to strengthen the bill were defeated on second reading. Nevertheless, **the bill will be on third reading on Monday, April 15th . Calls to the House are needed to stop this unnecessary expansion of predatory lending. Locate your State Representative [here](#).** Those who support the bill claim there is no other alternative for these families. But regardless of intention to help, the ends do not justify the means. Raising prices by taking advantage of the ignorance or hardship of another is a violation of the seventh commandment. **Contact your State Representative asking that he/she oppose SB 613.** See our [Action Alert](#). **If the House passes the bill, it will return to the Senate for concurrence. A call to your State Senator opposing the bill is also needed. Locate your State Senator [here](#).**

HB 1004, School safety, passed the Senate. The bill was amended to make sure that parents are involved before any mental health screening or surveys are conducted by schools. **ICC supports the bill** as it provides funding to schools for safety equipment and structural changes to ensure buildings are secure. Also, **Catholic schools are eligible for these matching grants.** The **bill now returns to the House.** Because there are several school safety bills during this session, conference committees are likely to make sure there are not conflicting provisions. **ICC will continue to monitor the bills** during the closing days of the legislature.

Senate Appropriations Committee passed the biennial budget on Thursday. The **Senate is expected to pass it next week, Tuesday.** The education budget **includes support for the school scholarship and tax credit scholarship program.** The **Senate version** provides for a second opportunity for a school scholarship (voucher) for second semester, but it removed the 70% tier for those families between 100 and 125% eligible for free and reduced lunch. **Please contact your State Senator asking them to restore this provision. Find your State Senator [here](#).**

The **Senate version** increases support for all K -12 schools over 2% per year, including an increase for teacher pay for performance. This is larger than the House passed bill. Also, **funding has been appropriated** for an increase in the school safety funds and for Department of Children Services. **The House will dissent on the Senate version; the budget will be finalized during the last days** of the session in conference committee **to reconcile the difference** between the House and Senate versions. **ICC will continue to monitor and advocate for our positions.**

SB 365, Funding child welfare programs, passed the House 94 – 0. The bill allows the Department of Child Services to **collaborate with churches and supportive local community organizations** that may provide assistance in meeting the needs of children and families in crisis. **ICC supports the bill. It returns to the Senate** without amendments. The bill authorizes but **no funding is attached.** There is a **pilot program already underway** in Marion County. However, to scale the project to more counties and throughout the state, **funding to support the website and email connection will be needed.**

With unanimous support, the House concurred with the Senate version of HB 1547, Consent to pregnancy services for a minor. The **bill now goes to the Governor for signature.** The bill, which **ICC supports,** authorizes a pregnant minor between the ages of 16 -18 to consent for health care provided the parents are first contacted and given the opportunity to provide consent and guidance for care. Should the parents refuse to be involved or if the child is without parental support, health care providers can then be directed by the minor for her and the baby's care.

The Senate dissented on SB 119, Firearm matters, due to the House addition of its bill to authorize churches to allow guns on school property. A **conference committee report has been drafted** that removes this addition and returns the bill to its original topic only. SB 119 updates Indiana Code to prohibit sale or transfer of machine guns to anyone under age of 18. **ICC is supportive of removing the authorization and keeping schools gun free zones.** However, we may **expect the language to be added** to another bill in conference committee. The **ICC will monitor** for this.

Good news; HB 1369 Assisted reproduction and gestational surrogacy, did not receive a hearing in the Senate. Hence, the **bill is dead and will not pass this year.** HB 1369 would have provided legal support and guidelines for surrogacy. Current law does not permit surrogacy contracts to be enforced. **ICC is grateful that Senate leadership and Senator Randy Head (R - Logansport), chair of the Judiciary Committee did not hear the bill.**

In addition to the Update, **more detailed information regarding the bills, as well as detailed information about the legislative process and the Indiana General Assembly can be obtained by clicking [here](#).** Archived I-CAN Updates, ICC positions and other background information can be accessed on the ICC website www.indianacc.org