



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

By law in an even number year such as 2020, the Indiana General Assembly must end no later **than March 14**. As this session rapidly draws to a close, here is what is happening at the statehouse.

After surviving third readings in their chamber of origin, bills crossed over to the other chamber. Once there if amendments were added and the bills survived to third readings and were passed back to the house of origin, the bill's author either concurred or dissented. If the author concurred, the bills will be sent to the governor for his signature to become law. If the author dissented, either because he or she did not support the amendments or because the author wants to their own additional amendments, bills were sent to conference committee. There the conference committee composed of two members from each party and their appointed advisors, will try to reach an agreement. If there isn't an agreement, then the bill dies. If an agreement is reached, then a report is signed and sent back to both chambers for approval. If both the Senate and House approve the report, then the bill is sent to the governor for his signature. If either house does not approve the report, the bill dies. This is how the following bills fared.

#### **Family Related Issues:**

**SB249** Exploitations of Dependents and Endangered Adult. Authored by Sen. Young from Indianapolis, passed out of the senate. This bill would penalize individuals who recklessly exert power or control over the property of a dependent or endangered adult. This has now been signed by the Speaker and the President Pro Tempore. It awaits Governor Holcomb's signature.

**SB299** Fetal Remains authored by Sen. Brown from Fort Wayne. This bill gives structure to the Indiana Department of Health for the dignified cremation or burial of fetal remains. In the House, amendments were added that the bill's author did not concur with; therefore, the bill has been sent to a conference committee.

**SB312** Parents with Disabilities. Authored by Sen. Niezgodski of South Bend. This bill attempted to acknowledge, respect, and affirm the need to respect the rights of disabled parents in matters before the State. It also would have allowed for disability awareness training in the department of Child Services. After previously passing unanimously out of the Senate, it failed to advance by the House's 3<sup>rd</sup> reading deadline for Senate bills and died.

**HB1009** Various Welfare Matters. Authored by Rep Goodrich from Noblesville prevents a family with receiving public assistance from being penalized if an 18-year-old family member has a paid internship. This was returned from the Senate to the House without amendments and awaits the Governor's signature.

#### **Education Issues:**

**HB1001** School Accountability authored by Rep. DeVon from Granger. This bill would hold the school harmless and not give a performance grade in 2018-2019 lower than the grade earned in 2017-2018. It failed to advance by the Senate's third reading deadline for House bills and died.

**HB1002** Teacher Evaluations, authored by Rep. Cook from Cicero. This bill removed, in part the requirement that a school's performance evaluation must in part be based on objective measures of student achievement. It was returned to the House without amendments will be forwarded to the governor for his signature.

**HB1066** Various Education Matters, authored by Rep. Thompson from Lizton. This bill tried to provide for siblings and foster children to attend the same schools regardless of differing eligibility requirements. It also allows for the transfer of records for safety issues. Additionally, it provides for autism awareness training. ICC and INPEA have been working for years to address foster child and sibling voucher eligibility. The language affecting foster child and siblings was removed

because this was not a budget year. The ICC supported this bill. We hope that this language will return next year and be successful. The other issues remained and passed on third reading. It is now in conference committee.

#### **Healthcare Issues:**

**HB1004** Health Matters, authored by Rep. Smaltz from Auburn. This bill has disturbed health care providers, patient advocates and the ICC because it seeks to limit how providers could charge for some of their services based on where they take place and whether or not the provider is in or out of network. In enacted, these changes could affect the revenue stream of hospitals, which could then adversely affect the delivery of services to the most vulnerable health care clients. This bill is in conference committee.

**HB1199** Palliative Care authored by Rep Clere from New Albany. Acknowledging the respect for life to its natural end, the ICC has monitored this bill which requires a home health agency to have a hospice license in order to offer palliative care to address the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of a patient when managing their pain and their symptoms. The ICC supports measures that allow a natural death with dignity. The author in the House concurred with the Senate amendments. It will be sent for the governor's signature.

**HB1317** Health Care Advance Directive authored by Rep Kirchhofer from Beech Grove. Allows a person to make health care advance directive and to appoint a healthcare representative without conflicting documents. There was some talk that this allowed doctors to "practice law". However, many elder care, trust and estate attorneys were consulted during drafting of the bill and either suggested or approved the language. This bill died, but because it passed out of the house, Indiana law allows language to be added to another bill. The bill was resuscitated and folded into bill **HB1326**, Community Mental Health Centers and is in conference committee.

#### **Policy Issues:**

**SB67** Township Homeless Assistance, authored by Sen Sandlin from Indianapolis. This bill provides for townships with more than 10,000 residents to give aid to the homeless who may not be from their township or who cannot prove their legal residence. It also requires that a list of available resources for the homeless be published and distributed no later than March 1 of each year. The ICC supports effort to assist the vulnerable in our communities. The bill died but is now part of **HB1113** Department of Local Government Finance, authored by Rep. Leonard from Huntington. It is now headed for a conference committee hearing.

**SB449** Juveniles, authored by Houchin from Salem. The ICC opposed this bill which would have allowed 12-year old children, in certain cases, to be waived to adult court. This is now a dead bill.

**HB1418 SB289** Minimum Age to Marry Bill. Originally authored by Rep. Engleman from Georgetown. The ICC did not oppose this bill because it sought to prevent abuse and trafficking as well as ensure that young people are seeking marriage for mature and loving motives. It advanced out of committee but died on third reading. Its pertinent language now exists in **SB289**, Family and Juvenile Law Matters, authored by Sen. Grooms from Jeffersonville. It is set for a conference committee hearing.

**SB340 Private Property Matters**, authored by Sen Spartz from Noblesville. This bill contained language that adversely affected the tenant in a landlord – tenant relationship and gave considerable leverage to the landlord. Additionally, it would rescind prior laws across the state that deal with landlord tenant relationships. It also offered little protection from retaliation from a landlord if a tenant filed a complaint or had a legitimate grievance. For these reasons, the ICC opposed these provisions. These disturbing parts were added to **SB148** Zoning and Manufactured Homes, authored by Sen. Doriot from Syracuse without vetting, a hearing or testimony. During the conference committee hearing, several advocates opposing the imbalance wished to speak. At first Sen Doriot was not going to allow testimony. After being pressed regarding the right of citizens to be heard, Sen Doriot reluctantly consented to five minutes, then 10 minutes of testimony. A press conference has been scheduled for Monday, March 9, at 10am at the statehouse. We encourage you to oppose these disparate portions of the bill. Please contact both your Senator and Representative. [Click Here](#)

**Please assist the ICC's efforts by contacting your legislator.** Click [here](#) to find your legislator. ICC Archived I-CAN Updates, ICC positions and other background information can also be accessed on the ICC website and by clicking [here](#) **More detailed information regarding these and other bills, as well as detailed information about the legislative process and the Indiana General Assembly can be obtained by clicking [here](#).**