



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

#### **Education Issues:**

**HB1001** School Accountability. Authored by Rep. Devon from Granger. This bill states that ILEARN test results will not lower the state designated grade lower than what it was previously. It passed with a large majority and is now with the Senate Education and Career Development Committee.

**HB1003** Education Matters. Authored by Rep. Jordan from Bremen. This bill contains deregulation language.

**HB 1066** Authored by Rep. Thompson from Lizton provides for siblings and foster children to attend the same schools regardless of differing eligibility requirement. 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.

**HB 1265** Drinking Water Testing authored by Rep. Jackson from Hammond, requires school corporations to test drinking water for lead before 2023. Referred to Senate Environmental Affairs.

**SB223** Free Application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA Requirements. Authored by Sen. Leising from Oldenburg, requires all high school seniors to complete a FAFSA unless a waiver is requested. It is scheduled for a hearing on in the House Education committee on 2/19/2020.

**SB246** Mental Health Services Authored by Crider from Greenfield. Requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a mental health provider to apply for a secured school grant. This will require to schools if applying for safety grant to have a MOU for services available to families, if they wish to utilize this provider. The acceptable providers are broad and would include Catholic Charities counselors. Will have a second Reading on 2/17/2020.

#### **Family and Children Issues:**

**B312** Parents with Disabilities. Authored by Sen. Niezgodski of South Bend, acknowledges and affirms the need to respect the rights of disabled parents in matters before the state. It also requires disability awareness training in the department of child services. This bill also passed unanimously out of the Senate. This bill was referred to the House Family, Children and Human Affairs committee.

**SB449** Juveniles. Authored by Sen. Houchin of Salem. This innocuous title belies the nature of the bill. **SB449** reduces the age from 13 to 12 for a minor to be tried as an adult for specific crimes. When children are waived to adult court, recidivism increases by 34%. The opportunity for rehabilitation is also greatly diminished because the emphasis is on punishment. The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) found that children are five times more likely to be

sexually assaulted in adult facilities than in juvenile facilities. Sadly, children held in adult facilities are up to 9 times more likely to commit suicide. Finally, there is also the question of competency for a 12-year-old to stand trial and to assess multiple charges or plea agreements. According to the National Center for Juvenile Justice, juvenile crime is lower than the national average and decreasing in the state of Indiana. Despite these and other facts presented in opposition to this bill, it crossed over to the House and was referred to the Courts and Criminal Code committee. The ICC continues to oppose this bill and encourages readers to do so as well. Please contact Committee Chair Rep Wendy McNamara at [h76@iga.in.gov](mailto:h76@iga.in.gov) to voice your opposition.

#### **Prolife Bills:**

**HB1317** Health Care Advance Directive. Authored by Rep. Kirchhofer from Beech Grove. This bill allows a person to make a health care advance directive and to appoint a healthcare representative. This passed unanimously out of the House. This bill updates and simplifies current law by eliminating the need for a healthcare power of attorney and a living will. It provides for a sample directive to be available as a guide. It also for the five wishes (1) The Person Who Will Make Care Decisions For The Patient (2) The Kind of Medical Treatment To Receive (3) How Comfortable The Patient Would Like to Be (4) How They Wish People to Treat Them (5) What They Would Like Their Loved Ones To Know. This was referred to the Senate Judiciary committee.

**SB299** Fetal Remains, (Brown of Fort Wayne authored this bill while opposing **SB342** Pregnancy Accommodations) This bill augments **HB1337** which passed in 2016 and was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in May of 2019. That bill required fetal remains to be treated with dignity by either being interned or cremated. **SB299** requires facilities, that either perform the abortion or provide the chemicals for an abortion, to inform the woman of her right to a humane and dignified disposition of the fetal remains. This bill requires the department of health to be accountable for tracking that the clinics have treated the remains with dignity. It has been referred to House Public Health committee. The ICC support this bill which is very timely with the final internment of the 2411 fetal remains that were discovered last year.

**HB1199** Palliative Care. This bill broadened the type of facilities that can give aid and comfort to those in need of palliative care. It was referred to the Senate Health and Provider Services committee.

**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](#).