



March 7, 2019

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

The legislature began the second phase of its work this week. House bills are now being assigned to Senate committees, and Senate bills have been assigned to House committees. Some committees have held hearings, but committee chairs are still reviewing which bills will be given a hearing. **We expect committees to be more active next week.**

This week the House Public Health Committee heard SB 201, Health provider ethical exemption; it passed 9 – 4. ICC supports the bill. The bill extends **conscience protection** regarding abortion to pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

Next week House Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee will hear SB 440, TANF eligibility. ICC supports the bill. TANF eligibility guidelines and monthly support has not been updated for decades. Under current law, Indiana only serves families and children who are living under 16% of federal poverty guidelines. **SB 440 will increase the level of eligibility to 50% of federal poverty guidelines.**

On **Monday, March 11** at 11 AM the **organizations opposed to SB 613, Consumer credit, will hold a press conference** at the Statehouse. Many churches as well as agencies and organizations will be in attendance asking House members to oppose the bill because of the harm it will bring to families and society.

To this point **ICC has tracked 106 bills, and with INPEA, another 28 education related bills.** With the fallout **due to crossover, the number has been cut to approximately 30 bills plus 15 education bills.** Most of the topics in the dead bills will not be considered for the session. Yet, one must remain vigilant because occasionally one of the issues or a new topic can be inserted into one of the live bills.

Bills still alive that ICC is following:

HB 1211, which bans dismemberment abortion, passed the House with bipartisan support by large margin.

HB 1369 passed the House with only 18 no votes. Its title, **Assisted reproduction and gestational surrogacy**, indicates its objective – to facilitate surrogacy. **ICC was the only person/group to object** to the change in Indiana law.

SB 613 is designed to **increase the product line of payday lenders** to include installment loans up to \$1500 with interest and fees up to 190%; the bill also provided for a new product with 99% interest for loans up to \$4000, and it changes Indiana law governing interest charged by loan companies to allow interest charges up to 36% on all loans with no cap on the amount of loan. **ICC opposes the bill.**

Several bills ICC opposed died: Two **assisted suicide** bills (one in each chamber) were filed; neither were given a hearing. Also, not given a hearing, were bills requiring **contraception coverage** by insurance companies and **reproductive rights that included abortion.**