



I-CANUpdate

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February 2, 2017

INDIANA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS (1967-2017)

The General Assembly is in full swing and bills are moving in committee and on the floor. **HB 1079, School safety, passed the House 99 – 0.** It will now go to the Senate after March 1 for consideration there. The bill title changed to better reflect the nature of the bill. It requires expanded criminal background check and expanded child protection index check for all employees prior to employment and also on all employees every five years. This would apply to all public, charter, and accredited non-public schools. **Senate versions of this bill, SB 34 and SB 298 passed Senate Appropriations on Thursday. These go to floor next week.**

Senate passed several bills this week. SB 30, Student school information, passed 48 -1. SB 30 would require reporting number of students and to which schools parents are exercising their right to choose school setting. Parents can choose between public, charter and non-public schools. **SB 86, School curriculum, passed 35 – 14.** SB 86 would require all schools to teach cursive writing. Currently, this is a school's decision. And the **Senate defeated SB 87, Report cards, 15 – 34.** The bill would have required the use of letter grades in grades 3 – 12 when reporting to parents. Currently, student report cards are left to schools determination. **Both bills were authored by Senator Jean Leising.**

SB 9, SNAP and drug convictions passed second reading without amendments. **It will be on third reading next week. Senators need to hear from you to support SB 9.** The bill removes the ban on receiving SNAP benefits by individuals with a past felony drug conviction. SNAP bans do not apply to any other types of felony convictions. **Food is a fundamental human right.** Those reentering the community after incarceration need access to SNAP for success. This bill will help them get more food to feed their families and stretch their resources to help cover the fees associated with probation and parole for monitoring and drug testing. **ICC supports SB 9. [Take Action Now.](#)**

HB 1287, Choice and Community Living pilot program, was amended in House Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee. The amendment will allow the program to be statewide and addresses implementation matters. **The bill was unanimously approved and now goes to the floor for consideration. ICC supports this bill.**

HB 1004, Pre-kindergarten education, passed House Education Committee on an 8 -4 vote. There was general agreement with the expansion of the pre-K pilot program. The disagreement came due to the additional provision that provides these same children who receive a pre-K voucher to also be eligible for the school choice scholarship in kindergarten. **Attempts to amend to exclude the school choice provision were defeated on a party line vote. The bill was reassigned to House Ways and Means Committee. ICC supports the bill.**

SB 276, Early education grant pilot program was held in Senate Education. Senator Travis Holdman (R – Markle), is **working on an amendment** which will be considered on February 15. The current version of the pre-K expansion does not link the school choice scholarship. **ICC supports the bill.**

Next week we expect hearings on SB 245, Long term small loans in Senate Insurance and Financial Institution Committee. The bill would increase the loan amount up to \$2500 and the length of the loan up to 24 months at **20% /month interest.** **ICC and many other groups have expressed opposition to the bill.** Experience has shown that payday loans charge exorbitant rates and traps them in a cycle of debt. Please let your State Senator know that payday lending takes advantage of the vulnerable and is morally wrong, a violation of the 7th commandment. Contact your Senator [here](#).

In addition to the Update, you can obtain more detailed information regarding the bills, as well as detailed information about the legislative process and the Indiana General Assembly by clicking [here](#). You can also access the archived I-CAN Updates, ICC positions and other background information at the ICC website www.indianacc.org