



March 10, 2016

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

The session ended today with agreement on several major issues being decided in the final two days. Besides several major topics ICC followed, the two bodies and Governor's office compromised on road funding. The legislature ended a few days before the statutory last day of March 14, in part, due to availability of rooms for legislators as the Big Ten men's tournament is being played in Indianapolis.

HB 1337, Abortion, passed the House after much debate and emotion, **60-40**. The concurrence with the Senate version included the provisions of SB 313. SB 313 prohibits abortion, if the sole reason for the abortion is due to race, sex, or disability of the baby. HB 1337 also contained the provision that all aborted or miscarried remains are to be either cremated or buried and not treated as medical waste.

Many opponents of the bill voiced concern about the fact that the House did not have an opportunity to discuss, review or debate the aspects of SB 313. Consequently, **11 Republicans joined the Democrat caucus in voting against the bill**. Some opponents saw the bill as more of a political vote than real possibility of reducing abortions. Proponents believe the effect of the bill will be to provide another opportunity to discourage doctors and mothers from aborting babies with disabilities, in addition to tightening abortion regulations.

Governor Pence is expected to sign the bill. However, a **challenge on constitutional grounds is expected**. It may take some time before the issue is settled.

Another major issue remaining for ICC was the **Choice Scholarship** topics in SB 334. **SB 334 passed out of the Senate with bipartisan support**. The bill encountered resistance in the House Education Committee and was amended in an effort to make it harder to vote against. **Provisions regarding background checks and confidentiality agreements were added as well as language supporting dual credit teachers.**

When the bill returned to the Senate for concurrence, the **additions were deemed "non-germane" to the original bill, so the Senate could not concur on the bill**. In an effort to move **SB 334 forward, the House added the language to HB 1005**. HB 1005 provided teacher negotiated stipends for public school advanced placement teachers. These provisions added even more resistance from some. But the **Conference Committee report prevailed in the House 51 - 43** on Weds. night; also **passed in the Senate 33-17** on Thurs. **Governor is expected to sign.**

Another issue that came down to the wire was **HB 1002, Next Generation Hoosier Educator Scholarship**. Because this was Speaker Bosma's bill, it was caught up with the negotiations over road funding. Hence, before it could be settled, road funding, HB 1001, had to be agreed upon. **The Senate stripped the House version and provided only a study of the issue.** The

Conference Committee Report combines aspects of both versions. The scholarship program will be established and be under the supervision of the Commission of Higher Education. It will conduct research and set up procedures for implementation and report back to legislature by December 1. Any adjustments of the program can then be considered by the next General Assembly in 2017. **First scholarships will be awarded in fall of 2017.** The program provides scholarships for up to 200 top high school students who study to become teachers and commit to teach at least 5 years. Teachers can fulfill this commitment by teaching in a public, charter or choice scholarship school. The **House concurred unanimously** and it **passed the Senate** and is **on its way to the Governor.**

The **Senate concurred with the House amendments to SB 11, ABLÉ savings accounts; it passed 45-0. Governor Pence is expected to sign it.** The bill provides tax credits for gifts to accounts to support disabled persons.

In addition to the Update, one 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