



February 8, 2018

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

SB 33, Houses of worship and firearms, authored by Senator Jack Sandlin (R – Indianapolis), **passed the Senate 43-5 on Tuesday**. The bill's title is not completely accurate because SB 33 **applies only to churches with schools on the same campus**. Churches can authorize or not allow guns on their property. This bill will allow a person who can legally carry a firearm to carry the gun on school property that is connected to a church, unless the school/church prohibits it. The bill originated from a church with a school in Indianapolis. The school/church officials were concerned about security and did not have funding for hired security personnel; they wished to have employees or volunteers who own and carry guns to have them while at school/church. The bill does clarify that a person cannot carry the gun if the school/church does not permit it, but there are concerns that the law will embolden some and invite others to carry even if the school and church has a policy against it. In addition, owning a gun does not qualify as being able to use it properly during an emergency. Using a firearm during an emergency requires maturity and training. **Indiana law currently provides that school authorities and churches can authorize persons to carry guns or prohibit them on their property. ICC does not see a need to change the law.**

The 2018 session has hit its mid-point. Bills passed in their house of origin will now be considered by the other body beginning next week. Hence, the process begins again with chairpersons deciding which bills to hear or not, and each bill must go through the committee and floor votes. Bills that did not get a hearing in their house of origin are considered dead for the session. The topic could be resurrected but unlikely since it was already rejected in one chamber.

Based on what has passed, we can surmise which of the major topics (during the session) is likely to pass this session and which will not. **Medical marijuana did not get a hearing and is dead for the session;** a summer study committee has been proposed. **Both houses passed a bill to legalize CBD oil**, a cannabis extract that is used for medicinal purposes. **One of the bills will be sent to the Governor. Sunday alcohol sales passed both houses** and likely will be passed along to the Governor. **Extending cold beer sales** to convenience stores and supermarkets **did not get a hearing; it will not pass this session.** The **bias crimes** or hate crimes bill **did not get a committee vote** and therefore **will not pass this year.**

Many less high profile bills were unheard and did not move. These included bills providing **resident tuition** and providing **driving permits for immigrants**. A bill to **curb high interest and fees** charged to low income persons also did not get a hearing. Bills dealing with **minimum wage** increase did not get a hearing.

Several positive bills passed and are expected to move:

SB 123, Newborn safety devices at fire departments, expands the opportunity to provide a safe place for parent to surrender a baby if unable to care for it.

SB 340, Regulation of abortion, updates Indiana law particularly regarding chemical abortions.

SB 203, Crimes resulting in loss of a fetus, affirms the life of the unborn child as a victim in a crime.

SB 11, Eligibility for SNAP, granting food stamps to persons released from prison following a drug conviction.

HB 1007, Expanding mental health access, deals with providing additional services and facilities to address the opioid crisis.

HB 1001, Education funding, provides additional funding to make up the short fall in budget for public schools and school scholarships.

Two bills moved that ICC opposed:

HB 1319, Small loans and unsecured consumer installment loans, has been assigned to Senator Mark Messmer (R – Jasper) and to his committee. Along with many other organizations, **we are working to defeat** this bill in committee in the coming weeks.

HB 1203, Qualified egg banks, sponsored by Senator Vaneta Becker (R – Evansville), has been assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee. Only ICC opposed the bill during the House committee hearing.

Several flawed bills were stopped also:

HB 1157, End of life options, providing for doctor assisted suicide.

HB 1183, Contraceptives, and SB 151, Contraceptive coverage, required universities and other religiously connected organizations to provide insurance coverage for contraceptives.

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