



March 8, 2018

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

**Conference committees, the final phase of the 2018 session, began this week on Wednesday.** Conference committees are where differences between each chamber's version of a bill are reconciled or compromised for an agreement. This phase also sees bills being voted upon to agree with the changes made in the second chamber. **Third reading of bills occurred this week on Monday and Tuesday in the House and Senate respectively.**

**HB 1203, Qualified egg banks, passed the Senate 31 – 18.** The bill allows IVF clinics to import frozen human ova to be used in the process to create embryos. The explanation given was that there are not enough donors, particularly minority women, in Indiana. Another reason was that it would be cheaper than women having to leave Indiana for the procedure. **The Church opposes IVF as immoral.** Despite our efforts to point out the dangers and potential for manipulation and exploitation, many Senators and Representatives see this as an alternative for infertile women to carry and give birth to a baby, adoption, notwithstanding. Since this was not changed from the House version, **the bill will now go to the Governor for signature or can become law without his signature, unless he vetoes it.**

**SB 419, Professional and occupational licenses, passed third reading in the House 88 – 8.** The bill was **amended to include a fix for DACA individuals** who under current Indiana law are not eligible for a license or certain work certificates. The amendment changes the law to allow the state to issue license to those who successfully complete training and other requirements. **ICC supports the amendment.** Senator Doriot filed a concurrence with the amendment. **The Senate is expected to support the concurrence.**

**HB 1007, Expanding mental health access, passed the Senate 49 -0.** This is the Governor's bill **responding to the opioid crisis** and provides for 9 additional opioid centers which will provide a center within 1 hr. drive for Indiana residents. **The bill returns to the House for concurrence vote or a conference committee** to resolve any differences in the two versions. **ICC supports the bill.**

**SB 11, Eligibility for SNAP, was amended into HB 1317, Health matters,** on second reading in the Senate; **the bill passed 36 – 12. ICC supports the addition and urges the House to concur with the addition.** The bill contains many provisions regarding health matters. The House Republican caucus will determine if this provision will remain as well as other changes made by the Senate. **Dissent was filed and the bill will be discussed in conference committee next week.**

**Senate concurred on SB 203, Crimes resulting in loss of fetus, 41 -8.** **The bill now goes to Governor for signature.** It is **expected that he will sign it.** The bill provides for enhanced sentencing should a fetus be killed during a crime against the mother. Current Indiana law allows for this if the fetus has reached viability. SB 203 changes the law to provide a crime at any point during pregnancy. This recognizes the child in the womb and that life begins at conception.

**The Senate concurred on SB 340, Regulation of abortion and newborn safety devices, with a vote of 37 – 9. The House amended the newborn safety device bill into SB 340.** The initial bill updated abortion clinic regulations and provides for emergency room/ hospital reporting of complications, which arise from abortions. Of particular concern were complications from medical or chemical abortion. **The bill now goes to the Governor for signature.**

**Senator Dennis Kruse (R – Auburn), author of SB 65, Instruction on human sexuality, dissented from the amendments in the House.** He will convene a **conference committee next week to discuss a compromise.** The issue he has with the House version is that it is an “opt-out” rather than an “opt-in” on the part of the parents. Under the House version, if the school did not hear back from the parent, the student would remain in the class. Senator Kruse wants to change it that unless a parent gives permission, the student is not in the class.

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](http://www.indianacc.org)