



Session – Week 12
March 28, 2025

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Indiana Outdoor Management Association

Click here for current Bill Track:

<https://tinyurl.com/IOMA2025>

Week 12 showed signs that the days of the current session are waning, as Governor Braun signed his first bill as Governor. On Tuesday, he signed HEA 1149 into law, which directs the State Department of Agriculture to create an online portal to navigate agricultural and related topics across federal and state agencies, and to comment on regulations that impact the farming community.

According to the law, the legislature can Adjourn Sine Die as late as April 29. However, we believe they will adjourn for the session on April 24 or 25. The committee deadline, by which all bills must be heard and pass out of their assigned committees, is April 10. All bills must clear both chambers by the end of the day on April 15.

To continue with the effort to reform taxes overall, the House Ways and Means Committee adopted an amendment that changes the scheduled phased decrease in state income tax. Per the adopted amendment, if the state's revenues grow by at least 3.5% in fiscal years 2025-2028, the tax will decrease to 2.9% in 2029 and will continue to decrease by 0.05% every four years until 2040 if revenues meet the 3.5% growth threshold. The original schedule phased down to 2.9% in 2027. We will continue to update you on this issue and your issues. Remember, click the link above to see your bill's status.

HB1531-Various Immigration Matters, authored by Rep. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City), prohibits employers with ten or more employees from knowingly or intentionally recruiting, hiring, or employing an unauthorized alien after June 30, 2025. Violation could result in a total or temporary suspension of an employer's operating or business license (i.e., pesticide applicator).

We testified to our concerns to the House Judiciary Committee, including the bill's vagueness regarding how the AG's office initiates an investigation, and that, whatever the method of initiating, rival companies or individuals could use it to harass member companies.

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We met with the AG's office, which offered to work with us if it passes to ensure fair implementation. The authority to investigate stems from their broad power to enforce the law and issue Civil Investigative Demands (CID). The AG can issue a CID to a business, and based on the information provided, if they have reason to believe (i.e., probable cause) that a violation has occurred, they may bring an action in court. If the Court finds, by a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., it is more likely true than not), it may order any of the penalties the bill provides, including suspending a business's license.

They provided other examples to demonstrate how their office might become involved. The Consumer Protection Division investigates and enforces consumer protection laws against businesses that commit fraud and abuse against consumers. The division has an online portal where victims can report businesses that harm consumers. Based on the information in the complaint, the AG determines whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation. Most don't rise to the level of fraud or abuse and don't warrant additional investigation. However, if the information in the complaint is sufficient to show abuse or fraud, the CID process discussed above may be initiated.

Another division enforces prohibitions on labor trafficking. One of the division's cases came from a local TV news story about an overcrowded apartment complex in Cass County. The story described a situation where inhabitants were living in apartments that far exceeded occupancy limits and had no access to transportation-- conditions that often accompany labor trafficking. Based on the news report, the AG issued a CID to the Health Director to gather more information and determine if she could provide further evidence warranting an investigation. The AG believes the office will avoid unnecessarily harassing businesses because of its discretion and limited resources.

We've relayed our concerns to Sen. Liz Brown (R-Fort Wayne), the chairwoman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to which the bill was assigned. It will die if she chooses not to hear the bill before the committee deadline on April 10. We heard the Governor's office supports sections of the bill. Hiring unauthorized aliens is one section. Much of the remainder of the bill grants local agencies the authority to enforce federal immigration laws. We don't know how active the governor's office is in trying to convince Sen. Brown to hear it. Sen. Brown has not posted her committee agenda for Wednesday. She will have one more week to hear it if she does not hear it this week. If there is any movement, we will continue to work with the Senate and maintain our lines of communication with the AG's office.

This week, we continued our supporting efforts to assist Syngenta in addressing an unintended consequence of legislation passed in 2024—HEA 1179. The law prohibits Indiana institutions from transferring intellectual property, including data, to entities owned, operated, or controlled by foreign adversary governments. Purdue College of Agriculture conducts public research using products from Syngenta. Syngenta has a Chinese investor with a controlling interest. China is considered a foreign adversary, so Syngenta is a business controlled by a foreign adversary under the law.

This week, we collaborated with Syngenta's lobbyist and legislators to identify a bill where we could insert Syngenta's language to facilitate research and collaboration. We will continue our supportive efforts next week.

Conference Committees

With critical deadlines for the second half of session just over two weeks away, the Indiana General Assembly is entering one of the busiest times of session.

For a bill to survive the statutory end date of April 29, both chambers must pass the exact same language by a constitutional majority vote. If a bill is amended in the second half of session, it must be returned to its chamber of origin for a concurrence or a dissent by the bill's author on the changes made. In the case of a dissent, the bill is sent to a conference committee.

Conference committees consist of two members from each chamber, one Democrat and one Republican appointed by the House Speaker and the Senate President Pro Tempore, respectively. Often decisions are made ahead of time and conference committee meetings can sometimes last only a few minutes. Conferees may amend bills as they please as long as the conference committee report (the final version of the bill) is signed by all four conferees.

Any conferee's reluctance to sign the report does not present as significant an obstacle as it might first appear. While the committee must start with an equal number of Democrats and Republicans from both

chambers, a conferee can be removed and replaced with a member from either party. All conference committee reports must pass both chambers by a constitutional majority vote. Otherwise, the legislation dies.

These last few weeks of session will be marked by numerous conference committees, Rules Committee meetings, and session meetings. This portion of Indiana's legislative process garners a great deal of scrutiny as many bills die or change significantly in conference committee.

So far, only a handful of amended bills have been returned to their chamber of origin. As of Thursday, March 27, eleven concurrences and zero dissents have been filed by the Senate. The House has filed thirteen concurrences with dissents on just two bills: [HB 1682](#), General Legislative Matters, and [HB 1460](#) Drainage Systems. It is highly likely that the biennial budget, [HB 1001](#), will go to a conference committee.

Braun Signs First Bills

Governor Braun recently signed seven of the ten bills sent to his desk this week. This is the first bill signing of his term, marking a key milestone of his first few months in office. Each bill successfully navigated the legislative process, passing through committee assignments, second reading and third reading debates.

Each bill was signed by the Speaker of the House, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the President of the Senate (the lieutenant governor, who presides over the Indiana Senate) before being sent to the Governor's desk.

Indiana is known for having a "limited" gubernatorial system. Unlike states where the chief executive holds significant authority, Indiana embedded checks and balance in its state constitution.

While Governor Braun holds the power to veto any legislation, the General Assembly can override a gubernatorial veto with a simple constitutional majority vote—51%—in both chambers. This ensures a balance of power between the executive and legislative branches and the governor's veto power can be overridden if there is sufficient support in the legislature.

As of Thursday, March 27, the Senate has passed four additional bills from its concurrence calendar. The house passed five. More bills will reach the governor's desk in the coming weeks as both the House and Senate add to their respective concurrence calendars.

Just over a month remains in the legislative session before the last day to adjourn—*sine die*—arrives on April 29.

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2025 UPCOMING DEADLINES

HOUSE: Senate Bills

Committees: Thursday, April 10, 2025
2nd Reading: Monday, April 14, 2025
3rd Reading: Thursday, April 15, 2025

SENATE: House Bills

Committees: Thursday, April 10, 2025
2nd Reading: Monday, April 14, 2025
3rd Reading: Thursday, April 15, 2025

HOUSE & SENATE

Anticipated Sine Die: Thursday, April 24
Statutory Sine Die: Tuesday, April 29

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

The conference committee process is the process of reconciling bills to guarantee that every piece of language receives a constitutional majority vote in both chambers before it becomes law. Please see the graphic below which helps explain the conference committee process.

