



Session – Week 5  
February 7, 2025

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*The Corydon Group*  
— FIRST IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS —

## Indiana Outdoor Management Association

*Click here for current Bill Track:*

<https://tinyurl.com/IOMA2025>

The fifth week of the legislature saw the first activity regarding two key issues and campaign centerpieces for 2025—property tax relief and drafting the biennial budget. On Tuesday, February 4, the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee held the first hearing for SB1 (Property Tax Relief) with public testimony. The committee held the bill to discuss and vote on Tuesday, February 11. As drafted, SB1 increases the assessed value standard deduction and reforms the process of bringing and voting on school referendums. It is likely to change and, along with the budget, will be one of the last bills to pass before the legislature Sine Dies in April.

The House Ways and Means Committee held the first hearing on HB1001 (State Budget), which directs spending for 2025 and 2026. The committee heard nearly six hours of requests from the public. The action on these bills indicates that the days of the first half are waning. We will keep you updated on your bills, as most committees will meet for the last time before the February 17 Committee Report Deadline. You can track the status of your bills anytime by clicking the link above.

HB1184—State Chemist, authored by Representative Steve Bartels (R - Eckerty), would transfer the office's reporting line, including its duties, authorities, and employees, from Purdue to the Indiana Department of Agriculture in 2027. The office would continue to exist, but instead of reporting to the Dean of the School of Agriculture at Purdue, it would report to the State Agricultural Commissioner, who reports to the Lt. Governor.

HB1184 was assigned to the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, and I spoke to Chairman Rep. Mike Aylesworth (R - Hebron). He told me he does NOT plan to hear the bill. So, according to Chairman Aylesworth, it is going to die.

SB123-Unemployment Compensation, authored by Senator Scott Alexander (R - Muncie), reduces the maximum amount of regular unemployment benefits. Senate Pensions and Labor Committee heard it three weeks ago but held it for further discussion. Employers pay into an Unemployment Insurance Fund, which provides unemployment benefits. An employer's UI rate is based on several variables, but

one of the most significant is the number of workers who receive UI benefits. Seasonal industries pay more than non-seasonal industries because their workers use UI benefits.

I spoke with the Committee chair and explained that, per the author, the intent is to disincentivize unemployed workers from remaining unemployed and instead filling open jobs. For seasonal employers, the problem the bill intends to solve—finding workers to fill unmet needs—will be exacerbated, as they will be unable to find employees when the next hiring season opens. She told me that she would not vote the bill out of her committee so that it would die.

HB1418-Employing an Unauthorized Alien, authored by Rep. Jim Lucas (R - Seymour), prohibits an employer from intentionally employing an unauthorized alien or entering into an agreement with an employer (even as a subcontractor) who employs unauthorized aliens. It allows a person to allege a complaint against an employer alleging a violation that the Indiana Attorney General must investigate.

I spoke with the Employment, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman, Heath VanNatter (R - Kokomo), and he told me he would not hear the bill.

HB1638-Government and Regulatory Matters, authored by Rep. Steve Bartels (R - Eckerty), is the latest administrative agency reform bill of a multi-year effort to increase transparency, eliminate waste, and improve the efficiency of state agencies. As drafted, it requires agencies to engage in additional actions before renewing a rule, like comparing the costs of similar rules in surrounding states. It also merges, consolidates, and eliminates overlapping boards regarding duties or personnel. Two of the boards that would be consolidated are the Pesticide Review Board and the Invasive Species Council.

It was scheduled and removed from the House Government and Regulatory Reform Committee's agenda and hasn't been rescheduled. It is not on the Monday agenda, but the committee can meet once after next week. The Governor's office voiced concerns regarding the bill's breadth, and we heard that House leadership may have pulled the bill and aren't going to allow it to be heard.

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## Indiana on the Global Stage

A long-standing goal of The Indiana General Assembly (IGA) has been promoting economic development and innovation across the state. This year, [HB 1489](#) seeks to establish an Indiana-Ireland Trade commission. According to bill author Representative Tim O'Brien (R – Evansville), Ireland is already one of Indiana's largest trade partners representing \$20.8 billion a year in imports.

"Indiana has long had strong cultural and economic ties to Ireland and establishing an Indiana-Ireland Trade Commission would strengthen that foundation. The commission could open doors for new business opportunities, encourage investment and bolster our state's position on the global stage," Rep. O'Brien said.

As proposed by HB 1489, the Trade Commission would consist of a 13-member bipartisan body housed under the executive branch. If enacted, it would be tasked with strengthening trade and investment between Indiana and Ireland.

It aims to foster collaboration on policy, promote business and academic exchanges, and support economic and infrastructure development in both regions.

Of the 13 members, nine would be voting members appointed by the governor and four would be advisory

members from the IGA.

Among the voting members, one must be from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, one from a higher education institution, two of Irish-American descent, and two with civic experience representing Irish-Americans.

House Bill 1489 passed out of committee with bipartisan support before passing out of the House on third reading with an 87-1 vote.

The bill awaits further action in the Senate.

## AEDs & Student Safety at Athletic Events

The Senate Health and Provider Services Committee unanimously passed [SB 350](#) on Wednesday. Sen. Linda Rogers' (R – Granger) bill focuses on both improving access to and increasing knowledge of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and allows school funding to be used to purchase them. It drew broad support from local leaders and families.

Both EMS and firefighters testified in support of the bill's AED expansion. Local advocacy groups touted the need for increased education regarding the usage of AEDs.

One mother testified that her son passed away mere feet from an AED because no

students understood how to use the device.

In the aftermath of his death, the school implemented training programs and held fundraisers to purchase more AEDs. Through charitable contributions, they acquired 25 defibrillators. Coaches utilize a shared calendar to monitor the location of each device, and which team is in possession of it.

One student whose life was saved by an AED testified that it is not enough to simply possess one, training is necessary. The bill ensures that every school takes the necessary steps to create a training program and drill teachers, staff, and students in the same manner that they practice other safety procedures.

For every minute after a heart attack, the chances of survival decrease by 10%. Early defibrillation and CPR are essential ways to save someone in cardiac arrest before an ambulance arrives. Nearly 23,000 children die every year due to cardiac arrest and 43% of those deaths occur at school sporting events. However, the survival rate increases from 17% to 80% when an AED is present at an athletic event.

## Legislative Deadlines

125<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

House and Senate committee report  
deadlines:  
February 17, 2025

House and Senate second reading  
deadline:  
February 19, 2025

House and Senate third reading  
deadline:  
February 20, 2025

Crossover break:  
February 24 – February 28, 2025

Second half of session begins:  
March 3, 2025

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