

March 15, 2024

Final Legislative Report



Big Success in 2024 on Priority Policies

By Vanessa Green Sinderson, president and CEO, Indiana Chamber of Commerce

During the 2024 legislative session, we were laser focused on working with lawmakers, the Governor and other stakeholders to advance bills that move the state further ahead and increase its competitiveness, while also defending against legislation that hinders economic growth and free enterprise. I'm happy to report an overwhelmingly positive outcome for the business community: More than 80% of the Chamber's priority bills were enacted into law

(see the scorecard below for details). These policies will enable Indiana to rise even higher on the list of best states to do business and be a place where more people want to live, work and come visit.

The Indiana Chamber endorsed legislation that fell under the six pillars of its recently released visioning plan for the state, *Indiana Prosperity 2035*: Workforce, K-12 Education, Economic Growth, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Superior Infrastructure and Energy, Quality of Place Strategies and Healthy, Prosperous Citizens and Communities.

Among our top 2024 priorities were issues that impact the state's talent pipeline (House Bills 1001 and 1243; and Senate Bills 1, 2 and 8), as well as important business law reform (House Bills 1090 and 1160). The Chamber also fought to keep health care costs down for employers in advocating against Senate Bill 3, which was ultimately defeated.

This final recap outlines the outcomes and Chamber positions on key bills that affect Indiana businesses and the future economic prosperity of communities, families and individuals throughout the state. Looking ahead, Chamber policy committees and executive groups, composed of statewide volunteer leaders, will meet throughout the year and help define positions and draft legislative ideas for the 2025 session.

Please contact our government affairs team with any questions about the bills found in this *Final Legislative Report*.

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Education/Workforce

Contact: Jason Bearce

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HB 1001 EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION MATTERS (Goodrich)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

House Bill 1001 is both a refinement and expansion of last year's House Enrolled Act 1002, a wide-ranging bill

supported by the Chamber that contained a variety of policy provisions and funding incentives aimed at "reinventing high school" by expanding work-based learning opportunities. House Bill 1001 adds measures that include strengthening career coaching and navigation expectations, plus allowing students to use career scholarship account funds to obtain drivers' licenses (to remove job-related transportation barriers). This is in addition to postsecondary coursework, credentials and job training aligned with workforce needs.

HB 1102 CHILDCARE (Heine)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Childcare access/affordability is a statewide infrastructure challenge with significant implications for student learning, labor force participation and economic development. With Indiana employers consistently citing childcare among their top workforce barriers, the Chamber supports efforts, including those in this bill to simplify and streamline the state's complex and often burdensome childcare regulations while maintaining safety standards.

HB 1236 APPRENTICESHIP TAX CREDIT (Goodrich)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Defeated

The Chamber is a strong proponent for apprenticeships and related work-based learning experiences as an effective strategy for better developing and retaining Hoosier talent. Moreover, the Chamber supports targeted tax credits and related financial incentives, including those in this bill, that encourage more employers to invest in and increase access to these opportunities.

HB 1243 VARIOUS EDUCATION/WORKFORCE RELATED MATTERS (Behning)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This bill contains Chamber-backed provisions that include strengthening Indiana's high school diploma requirements with embedded postsecondary competencies, a computer science course requirement and ensuring more comprehensive and transparent reporting regarding the utilization and effectiveness of state workforce programs.

HB 1373 / SB 106 RESIDENT TUITION RATE (Karickhoff; Niezgodski)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Defeated

The Chamber and a broad-based coalition of business/community advocated support for this statutory change that would allow students who attended (for at least three years) and graduated from an Indiana high school to qualify for resident college tuition rates. To make good on Indiana's economic and workforce imperatives, we must fully leverage opportunities to upskill and reskill every pool of Hoosier talent, including the state's immigrant population. Neighboring states (Kentucky, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan) all have less restrictive resident tuition policies, placing Indiana at a competitive disadvantage for developing and retaining talent.

SB 1 READING SKILLS (Rogers)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Reading and literacy are the foundation of a highly skilled workforce. With nearly one out of every five Hoosier adults lacking basic literacy proficiency and thousands of Indiana students struggling to read by the end of third grade, the Chamber supports the proactive state policies in Senate Bill 1

aimed at better identifying and addressing reading difficulties sooner with early interventions and targeted supports grounded in evidenced-based instructional practices.

SB 2 CHILDCARE (Charbonneau)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Childcare access/affordability is a statewide infrastructure challenge with significant implications for student learning, labor force participation and economic development. Senate Bill 2 features several Chamber-backed policy provisions that include accelerating state rulemaking to streamline existing childcare regulations, expanding support for childcare workers and hard-to-serve areas, and ensuring greater data transparency and reporting regarding the state investments in early learning.

SB 6 READING PROFICIENCY (Raatz)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Consistent with the Chamber's backing for Senate Bill 1, we support this complementary legislation to better identify students with reading deficiencies in grades four through eight and provide clear guidance to local schools regarding proven interventions and supports to address these challenges.

SB 8 HIGHER EDUCATION MATTERS (Leising)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Increasing postsecondary education attainment is a top Chamber priority aligned with employer needs in a talent-driven workforce and economy. This bill contains Chamber-backed provisions aimed at removing barriers to postsecondary attainment, including requiring all high schools to offer the "Indiana college core" coursework, streamlining the "reverse transfer" process for granting associate degrees to individuals with sufficient college credits and increasing the availability of accelerated bachelor's degree programs that can be completed within three years at the state's higher education institutions.

SB 147 CHILDCARE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION AND EVALUATION

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Defeated

Increasing childcare accessibility and affordability is a top Chamber priority tied to state workforce needs. As such, the Chamber supports financial incentives, including the property tax exemptions for childcare providers and employers in Senate Bill 147, aimed at expanding childcare access and capacity in local communities across Indiana.

SB 282 ABSENTEEISM AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (Donato)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Removing barriers to increased education attainment and workforce participation are top priorities for the Chamber

and its members. To that end, habitually truant students are far more likely to drop out of school, have limited employment prospects and an increased risk of economic hardship. As such, the Chamber supports the proactive measures included in this bill to better identify, prevent and address the risk factors and root causes associated with habitual truancy.

Economic Growth/Tech

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SB 34 OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING (Rogers)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation furthers the state's effort to reduce unnecessary barriers to enter the workforce for licensed professionals moving to Indiana from other states.

SB 150 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND CYBERSECURITY (Brown)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation establishes the artificial intelligence (AI) task force to study how state agencies use AI and make policy recommendations to the General Assembly. It also establishes a means for state and local agencies to guard against (potentially) debilitating cybersecurity attacks.

Free Enterprise

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HB 1155 / SB 53 RIGHT TO REPAIR (Greene; Ford)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Defeated

These bills are unnecessary measures as manufacturers already provide repair information to customers. Computer codes required to be provided to customers and third parties under this legislation go far beyond repair information and risk the loss of intellectual property and proprietary information. The Chamber opposed this legislation, which creates government price controls for repair information and parts, as it would force manufacturers into direct sales to the detriment of established dealer networks, as well as creates a new cause of action against manufacturers for failure to provide software code and parts in a manner and price acceptable to customers or third parties, which will encourage litigation.

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SB 9 NOTICE OF HEALTH CARE ENTITY MERGERS (Garten)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Passed

As amended, this bill would require Hoosier health care providers and insurance carriers to notify the Indiana attorney general 90 days in advance of when they are going to complete a merger or acquisition. While scaled back from its original version, the Chamber remains concerned about setting a precedent that state government should now play a role in the merger and acquisition process. This market intrusion may cause a chilling effect on merger and acquisition activity and lead to regulatory uncertainty that negatively impacts the state's nationally ranked business climate.

Hoosier Health

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HB 1259 PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS (Barrett)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation will help qualified nurses relocate and provide health care in Indiana. The Chamber considers this an important tool to help address the nurse shortage in certain areas of the state.

HB 1326 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (Carbaugh)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Defeated

Indiana workplaces are safer now than ever. With recent news that the lowest number of Hoosiers in recent history were injured or sick at work last year, now is not the time to increase OSHA penalties. The current penalty levels are an adequate deterrent.

HB 1385 PAYMENT OF AMBULANCE SERVICES (Barrett)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Passed

This legislation mandates that insurance carriers pay 500% of the published rate for out-of-network ambulance services, which is excessive. This payment amount could drive up health insurance premiums being shouldered by employers and employees.

SB 3 PRIOR AUTHORIZATION (T. Johnson)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Defeated

This bill attempts to address cost control. However, it interferes with a health plan's ability to determine prior authorization. This, in turn, hamstring a health plan's ability to control. If the bill had passed, it would have cost employers billions of dollars.

SB 132 PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (Brown)

Chamber Position: Oppose in Part / Outcome: Passed

This legislation includes mandatory dental assignment of benefits, which could erode insurance networks and make dentists less likely to join the network. Fewer dentists in network leads to higher costs and less access for Hoosiers.

Tax Climate

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HB 1120 PROPERTY TAXES (Thompson)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

The legislation extends the cap on the maximum operating referendum tax that a school corporation can levy. Once passed by voters, a school operating referendum establishes a maximum tax rate which is uncontrolled by the property tax caps. As the value of business and residential property increases, the tax liability grows as well. The Chamber supports reasonable controls on the growth of these taxes, and this bill strikes the appropriate balance between supporting the operations of a school corporation and protecting property taxpayers.

HB 1208 ASSESSMENT OF WIND POWER DEVICES (Negele)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Defeated

The Chamber disapproves of this approach, as the bill mandates that facility owners maintain the initial post-acquisition valuation, adjusted based on a depreciation schedule set by the Department of Local Government Finance, diverging from the current practice of starting with the federal depreciation value. It replaces recognized depreciation schedules with an administratively determined one.

HB 1328 DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE (Snow)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation has significant implications for the business community in terms of property tax management, levy rates and local government finance regulations. The bill focuses on administrative and procedural changes in tax assessment, appeals and compliance, with an emphasis on improving efficiency and oversight within local government finance structures. It contains a provision that allows eligible businesses to apply for, and receive, a homestead property deduction.

HB 1387 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT (Miller)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation makes amendments to the Residential Housing Infrastructure Assistance Program including an expansion in

eligibility for funding and changes to certain definitions to include age-restricted housing and residential housing development facilities that may be part of redevelopment commission programs. The Chamber supports expanding this program so that more housing developments can move forward.

SB 61 TOURISM IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (Holdman)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Defeated

The legislation allows for the creation of a tourism improvement district whereby the businesses and real property owners within the district are assessed a special benefits tax to support quality of place initiatives in the district. The Chamber supports, with adequate taxpayer protections, efforts to support quality of life initiatives and boost the vibrancy of communities, such as those included in this bill.

SB 228 VARIOUS TAX MATTERS (Holdman)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

The Department of Revenue agency bill amends the economic threshold for sales tax nexus to remove the 200-transaction trigger, which requires retail merchants to collect and remit sales tax. This measure also makes positive changes to the pass-through entity tax that was enacted in 2023 with the Chamber's support. This is an example of thoughtful action taken to continuously improve Indiana's business tax climate.

Business Law Reform

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HB 1090 TRANSPORTATION MATTERS (Pressel)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

Included in the Indiana Department of Transportation agency bill are provisions that make important previously excluded information (e.g., seat belt use) available to jurors at the damages stage of trials involving automobile accidents.

HB 1160 CIVIL PROCEEDING ADVANCE PAYMENT CONTRACTS (Lehman)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This legislation expands the lawsuit lending statute to protect commercial litigants from being sued by a party that is funded by foreign adversaries interested in obtaining intellectual property through the court's discovery process.

SB 226 ATTORNEY'S FEES (Gaskill)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This bill provides a much needed update to a law that will help both plaintiffs and defendants engage in meaningful settlement discussions.

Energy/Environment

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HB 1242 Excess Liability Trust Fund (Morrison)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This bill expands the use of the Excess Liability Trust Fund (ELTF) while protecting the solvency of the fund, which has long been an environmental policy priority of the Chamber. The fund has grown due to better regulatory oversight of claims submitted for reimbursement to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. Expanding the use of the ELTF to clean up or replace with aboveground storage tanks is an equitable solution for all contributors to the fund.

HB 1276 NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING OR MEETING (Soliday)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

The bill gives the Indiana Department of Environmental Management commissioner until 10 days after the last day of a public comment period to decide to hold a public hearing or meeting regarding the issuance or denial of a permit, based on information received during the public comment period. This legislation promotes efficiency and regulatory certainty.

HB 1305 / SB 249 MAJOR GROUND WATER WITHDRAWAL FACILITIES (Negele; Deery)

Chamber Position: Oppose / Outcome: Defeated

While the Chamber recognizes the importance of long-term planning and protection of water resources, we are opposed to water permitting requirements like ones included in these bills that only apply to the business community. Water is essential and impacts every facet of society. Once the Indiana Chamber Foundation completes its water study later this year, we will push for more significant water legislation/regulation.

HB 1383 WETLANDS (Morrison)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

There has long been confusion over who regulates and what is regulated when wetlands are involved. This bill clarifies the Indiana Department of Environmental Management procedures, definitions and practices regarding wetland interpretation and regulation. It does not reduce the protection of wetlands and streamlines and simplifies compensatory mitigation.

HB 1399 PFAS CHEMICALS (Lindauer)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Defeated

The Chamber supported HB 1189 in 2020 (and HB 1341 in 2023), which established protections for firefighters using PFAS and defined PFAS/PFOA. The current definition in Indiana Code is based on the more hazardous soluble firefighter foam

cells. However, non-soluble PFAS/PFOA is an important product that is safe and used in various industries and products including medical devices, pharmaceuticals, metals, automotive and food packaging. This legislation would have helped clarify the difference and ensure non-soluble PFAS/PFOA can be used. This is a critical issue that we will see again next year with several pending Environmental Protection Agency rulemakings in play.

SB 206 IDEM AGENCY BILL (Niemeyer)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

The Chamber supports several provisions in this bill that would streamline Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). These include: existing easements to be identified in a corrective action plan before an environmentally restrictive covenant is approved and IDEM making a determination within 90 days regarding prior approval for constructing or expanding a biomass anaerobic digestion facility or biomass gasification facility. Initially, the Chamber opposed parts of this bill, but it was amended to remove sections that dealt with restrictive covenants and called for a private right of action for when a party was undertaking remedial actions and access to property was denied.

Various Matters

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HB 1003 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW (Steuerwald)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

The bill makes significant changes to the long-standing administrative law process in Indiana for the regulated community. The bill modifies how agency actions will be reviewed by administrative law judges and trial courts at various stages of the appeals process – and also who pays for attorneys' fees. The Chamber worked with the House to get the bill into a position for us to support. The Senate made changes to it that we opposed, only to be fixed in the conference committee process.

SB 4 FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (Garten)

Chamber Position: Support / Outcome: Passed

This bill streamlines administrative processes and helps eliminate dedicated funds that are not being used by state agencies and where funds are sitting by reverting those funds to the state's General Fund.

2024 LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

Bill #	Title/Description	Chamber Position	1st House				2nd House				Status
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

BUSINESS LAW REFORM

HB 1090	Transportation Matters (Seat Belt Use Disclosure)	Support									Signed
HB 1160	Civil Proceeding Advance Payment Contracts	Support									Signed
SB 226	Attorney's Fees (Settlement Discussions)	Support									Signed

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | INNOVATION

SB 34	Occupational Licensing Reform	Support									Signed
SB 150	Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity Study	Support									Signed

EDUCATION | WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

HB 1001	Education and Higher Education Matters	Support									Signed
HB 1102	Deregulation of Childcare	Support									Signed
HB 1236	Apprenticeship Tax Credit	Support									Died
HB 1243	Various Education/Workforce Related Matters	Support									Signed
HB 1373 / SB 106	Resident Tuition Rate	Support									Died
SB 1	Reading Skills	Support									Signed
SB 2	Childcare	Support									Signed
SB 6	Reading Proficiency	Support									Signed
SB 8	Higher Education Matters	Support									Signed
SB 147	Childcare Property Tax Exemption and Evaluation	Support									Died
SB 282	Absenteeism and School Attendance	Support									Signed

ENERGY | ENVIRONMENT

HB 1242	Excess Liability Trust Fund	Support									Signed
HB 1276	Notice of Public Hearing or Meeting	Support									Signed
HB 1305 / SB 249	Major Ground Water Withdrawal Facilities	Oppose									Died
HB 1383	Wetlands	Support									Signed
HB 1387	Housing Development	Support									Signed
HB 1399	PFAS Chemicals Definition	Support									Died
SB 206	IDEM Agency Bill	Support									Signed

FREE ENTERPRISE

HB 1155 / SB 53	Right To Repair (Risky Intellectual Property)	Oppose									Died
SB 9	Notice of Health Care Entity Mergers	Oppose									Signed

HEALTH CARE

HB 1259	Professions and Occupations	Support									Signed
HB 1326	Occupational Health and Safety Penalties	Oppose									Died
HB 1385	Payment of Ambulance Services	Oppose									Signed
SB 3	Health Care Prior Authorization	Oppose									Died
SB 132	Professional Services (Dental Assignment of Benefits)	Oppose in Part									Signed

TAXATION

HB 1120	Property Taxes	Support									Signed
HB 1208	Assessment of Wind Power Devices	Oppose									Died
HB 1328	Department of Local Government Finance	Support									Signed
HB 1387	Housing Development	Support									Signed
SB 4	Fiscal and Administrative Matters	Support									Signed
SB 61	Tourism Improvement Districts	Support									Died
SB 228	Various Tax Matters	Support									Signed

STATUS KEY

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 – First Reading | 5 – Committee Referral | 8 – Third Reading |
| 2 – Committee Action | 6 – Committee Action | 9 – Conference Committee |
| 3 – Second Reading | 7 – Second Reading | 10 – Action by Governor |
| 4 – Third Reading | | |

