



# State Legislative Update

*April 4, 2025*

## 2025 INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY WEEK 13

### General Legislative Information

- Week 13 of the 2025 legislative session is complete. The target final adjournment date for the General Assembly is April 24th or 25th, a little shy of 3 weeks from now. Overall activity at the State House ramped up this week, with next week being the deadline for the workhorses of the legislative process – the committees – to complete their work for the second half of the session.
- The 2nd and 3rd Reading deadline in the House and Senate is April 14th and 15th, respectively. The collective goal is to have as few bills go to conference committee as possible. But there is still a lot of heavy lifting to do. Still in play are efforts to tighten rules around the Medicaid system, health care cost transparency and cost reduction, several education initiatives, property tax relief for Hoosiers and the single most critical piece of legislation of all, the new two-year \$46 billion state budget.
- Approximately 30 concurrence motions have been filed and/or acted upon by both the House and Senate. This means that if legislative changes were made in one chamber or the other during the second half of the session, those changes have been accepted by the house of origin.
- Jennifer Ruby has been selected by Governor Braun to serve as Indiana's Public Access Counselor. The position of Public Access Counselor is tasked with reviewing open government questions from the general public and others. Ms. Ruby has had a private law practice in Indianapolis for 20 years, with a focus on estate planning and business law. Her previous public service work includes the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and City of Indianapolis agencies.
- The Indiana Department of Transportation has a new commissioner for the second time since Governor Braun took office in January. Kent Abernathy, the Governor's appointment to that position in December, resigned after just two and a half months on the job. Lyndsay Quist replaces Abernathy. Quist was elevated from the position of Deputy Commissioner. No reason was given for Abernathy's departure. Quist has spent more than a decade working for INDOT in various roles, and previously served in the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Three very different property tax proposals have been discussed so far during the 2025 legislative session. Governor Braun, Senate Republicans, and House Republicans have all offered concepts for relief for Hoosiers. All three come at the issue of property tax relief differently, with each proposal having varying impacts on homeowners, businesses, and local units of government. Next week – April 10th – is the committee deadline for both the House and Senate. The House Ways and Means Committee will finalize Senate Bill 1 and the Senate Appropriations Committee will put forward a plan for the State Budget, House Bill 1001. The final versions of these bills will occur in conference committee, when both the House and Senate will jointly hammer out their differences.

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- Partisan school board elections were the focus of discussion in the House of Representatives this week. The House Elections Committee made some major changes to Senate Bill 287 in committee. SB 287 would have forced school board candidates to declare a party on the general election ballot, and if they wanted to be Democrats or Republicans, they would have to have gone through the primary election process first. The House Elections Committee changed that bill so that there is no primary election requirement and candidates must choose a label for the general election ballot - either one of the major political parties, independent, or nonpartisan. SB 287 passed the House by a vote of 54-40 and a concurrence motion has been filed in the Senate which means the Senate will accept the changes made by the lower chamber.
- Remember that bill that would allow a commission to study the annexation by Indiana of several counties in Illinois? Well, it is still moving through the legislative process. The Senate Public Policy Committee held a hearing on House Bill 1008 and passed it by a vote of 7-2 and it is now on to the full Senate for consideration. The legislation establishes the Indiana-Illinois Boundary Commission that would explore the possibility of redrawing the state boundary and bringing those Illinois counties that have passed referenda to secede from that state. Keep in mind that Illinois also would have to agree to this and that is unlikely to happen. The bill was amended to add more commission members and require an initial meeting by September of this year.
- On the utilities and energy fronts, the Senate Utilities Committee held its final hearing last week. The House Utilities, Energy, and Telecommunications Committee met this week and will meet for the last time this session next Tuesday. Of relevance to our municipal electric distribution utilities, there will be continued discussion on Senate Bill 502, which deals with utility pole attachments by telecommunications companies.
  - In its current form, Senate Bill 502 requires telecommunications companies that want to attach broadband communications equipment on to electric utility poles (IOU, municipal, or cooperative pole owners) utilizing funds from the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program to report information on their attachment requests to the Indiana Broadband Office (IBO) on a quarterly basis. It also requires the IBO to post the quarterly reports on the office's website and authorizes them to adopt guidelines to implement the reporting provisions. The bill sunsets on July 1, 2030.
  - This legislation is important to our municipal electric utilities as they own the electric distribution poles to which telecommunications companies routinely seek attachment. The intent of SB 502 is to assist in the timely deployment of broadband to the rural areas of Indiana utilizing federal BEAD funds allocated to Indiana and that expire in four years. A significant amendment was introduced to the bill in committee last week that would have made several unfavorable changes to the legislation. After some testy discussion, the Chairman of the committee held the bill until the final committee meeting on Tuesday April 8th. IMPA has been involved throughout the session in an effort to craft language that is fair to both pole owners and to attaching entities.



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- This week's Tracking List contains bills dealing with a wide range of topics, such as utility-related bills (including electric, water and sewer), local government-related bills, economic development, pertinent environment bills, and other general interest legislation.
- All committee and Floor activities for the IN General Assembly can be accessed online at [www.iga.in.gov](http://www.iga.in.gov).

