



Session – Week 9
March 7, 2025

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



INCPAS Weekly Update

Click here for current Bill Track:

INCPAS	https://tinyurl.com/INCPAS2025
INCPAS- TAX	https://tinyurl.com/INCPAS-TAX2025

The second half of the legislative session started this week at the General Assembly with a more reasonable pace than the first half with fewer bills moving through committees. The highlight of the week was on Wednesday afternoon when the House Ways and Means Committee met to hear testimony on the two important and controversial property tax bills: the property reform bill [SB 1](#) and the school property tax bill [SB 518](#), both sponsored in the House by Chairman Jeff Thomson (R-Lizton). The hearing lasted almost 9 hours and over 150 people gave testimony during the hearing. If you are interested in reading more about the committee hearing, we have attached the Hannah Ways and Means Committee notes with this report.

After the hearing on SB1, Chairman held the bill in committee for amendments until next Wednesday and indicated that he will propose a committee amendment to add some or all of the provisions of his own local tax reform bill [HB 1402](#). HB 1402 seeks to modernize Indiana's tax framework and provide property tax relief by restructuring local income taxes. The bill also seeks to reduce some of the tax burden on businesses by phasing out business personal property taxes. Chairman Thompson expects that the amendment will be available to the public on Monday. Chairman Thompson also held SB 518 for potential amendment and further debate next week.

Our licensure of accountants bill [HB 1143](#), sponsored by Sen. Linda Rogers (R- Granger), will be heard in the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee in next Tuesday morning at 9:00 am. We do not expect any problems with the bill in the committee hearing. As you may recall, the bill's current version includes language allowing taxpayers to submit documentation and other information to the DOR in electronic

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

format. We will keep you updated on how the committee hearing goes as well as any other developments regarding the bill.

Finally, we spoke to the Executive Director of the Professional Licensing Agency (PLA), Lindsay Hyer, this week about the status of PLA's biennial budget and how it might affect PLA's ongoing modernization efforts. PLA's proposed budget for this session is roughly the same as the previous biennial budget, and Lindsay indicated that the current proposed budget would not be enough to complete its ongoing modernization efforts. Although PLA's proposed budget has been flatlined this session, other agencies like the Indiana Office of Technology and the State Personnel Department are significantly increasing their charge backs to other agencies, resulting in a bit of a budget shortfall for the agency. Nevertheless, Lindsay indicated that the Braun Administration is taking a more state-wide approach toward modernization and that she expected the administration would find the funds to complete the modernization before the end of life for PLA's current system on June 30, 2027.

As always, you can follow the bills we are tracking for you by clicking on the links above, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Partisan School Board Elections

The House Elections and Apportionment Committee heard [SB 287](#) on Thursday. The bill proposes increasing the maximum salary for school board members and aligning their elections with other state races. If passed, candidates must participate in both a primary and general election and declare a political party affiliation. Under current law, Indiana school board elections are non-partisan. More than 40 individuals from across the state, including many school board members, testified at the committee hearing.

Sen. Gary Byrne (R-Byrneville), the author of SB 287, believes that school board elections are already influenced by party politics. He pointed to campaign materials, contributions, and support from unions and partisan groups as evidence. According to Sen. Byrne and other supporters, school board members may not disclose their political affiliation but inherently make decisions based on their ideology.

Sen. Byrne said the goal of SB 287 is to enhance election transparency and increase voter turnout. He believes that displaying party affiliation on the ballot would give voters clearer insight into candidates' ideologies, helping voters make more informed choices and leading to higher turnout and greater confidence in the election process.

Opponents of the legislation argued the bill would discourage and even disqualify many community members from running or continuing to hold their positions on school boards, either due to their employment or a desire to avoid partisan politics.

Democratic lawmakers voiced concerns that the bill would discourage voters from researching candidates and increase divisiveness. Many opponents denied any party affiliation and emphasized the importance of keeping partisan politics out of education.

The Senate narrowly passed SB 287 on third reading with a 26-20 vote. A similar House bill, [HB 1230](#), authored by Rep. J.D. Prescott (R-Union City), did not pass that chamber.

SB 287 was held by the committee chair but is eligible for further action.

Food Cultivation

A House bill covering the production and sale of cultivated or lab-grown food passed out of the House in the first half of session. [HB 1425](#), authored by Rep. Beau Baird (R-Greencastle) and sponsored by Sen. Jean Leising (R-Oldenburg) and Sen. Sue Glick (R-LaGrange), hopes to raise consumer awareness through improved labeling on products that fall within this emerging market.

The [AP](#) reports that more than 150 companies around the

world are trying to develop these food products, all working on a variety of meats: chicken, beef, pork, and lamb. The process is initiated by growing tissue harvested from muscle cells until they form into their respective cuts. Cultivated meat benefits from its reduced vulnerability to zoonotic diseases and requires less land and water to produce.

HB 1425 was heard in the Senate Agriculture Committee on Monday, March 3, and makes changes to the labeling of lab-grown meat sold within Indiana and prohibits the term "meat" from being used to describe the product. Advertising must be compliant with the Board of Animal Health (BOAH) and in a manner that clearly indicates it is a cultivated product. This bill is a product of multiple bills pertaining to the advertisement for lab-grown meat. The bill passed out of the Senate Agriculture Committee with one no vote from Sen. Shelli Yoder (D-Bloomington) and will be on the Senate second reading calendar next week.

This marks a significant step toward improving transparency within the lab-grown meat industry. It offers a promising future for greater consumer awareness in the ever-changing marketplace.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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

BUDGET HEARINGS

Tuesday, March 11

2:00 – 2:20 PM	Rep. Thompson, Introduction
2:20 – 2:40 PM	Ball State University
2:40 – 3:00 PM	Purdue University
3:00 – 3:20 PM	Indiana University
3:20 – 3:40 PM	University of Southern Indiana
3:40 – 4:00 PM	Indiana State University
4:00 – 4:20 PM	Vincennes University
4:20 – 4:40 PM	Ivy Tech University
4:40 – 5:00 PM	Indiana Supreme Court

Thursday, March 13

11:00 – 11:30 AM	Management & Budget
11:30 – 12:00 PM	Business Affairs
12:00 – 12:30 PM	Public Safety
12:30 – 1:00 PM	Energy & Natural Resources
1:00 – 1:30 PM	Commerce
1:30 – 2:00 PM	Transportation
2:00 – 2:30 PM	Education
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Health & Family Services

MIDPOINT STATISTICS

<u>Chamber</u>	<u>Bills Filed</u>	<u>#Alive</u>	<u>Percent</u>
House	708	185	26.2%
Senate	521	156	29.9%
Total	1,229	341	27.7%



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