KRIEG DEVAULT

Insights

Take Five: 5 Things You Need to Know About Indiana Government - February 2025

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1. Governor Braun's First Month

Governor Mike Braun was inaugurated as Indiana's 52nd Governor on January 13, 2025. Since that time, he has been active in setting administrative policy through 29 executive orders to date. Some of the most prominent executive orders issued align with federal executive orders, such as requiring state employees to return to physical offices, eliminating DEI initiatives, and directing Indiana law enforcement agencies to "fully cooperate" with federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agents. The governor also released a series of executive orders on various healthcare issues including price transparency, healthcare affordability measures, and assessing waste, fraud, and abuse in healthcare spending. In his first State of the State speech on January 29, he opened his speech with stories from Hoosiers about rising property tax costs and committed to implementing his plan for property tax cuts in partnership with the legislature. As a former legislator, expect Governor Braun to be an active participant in the legislative process, both behind the scenes and by using the power of his office to influence public debate.

2. Executive Branch Appointments

Soon after his election in November, Governor Braun released a plan to reorganize the executive branch agencies into a new structure reporting up to various cabinet officials. Braun's goal with this reorganization was to "be laser-focused on delivering results for Hoosiers". All of these roles have now been appointed, and each cabinet secretary oversees various agencies and quasi-governmental organizations aligned by subject area. Some cabinet members will dually serve as an agency head. In addition to Lieutenant Governor Micah Beckwith, here are the members of the Governor's Cabinet:

a. Secretary of Management and Budget: Lisa Hershman, former chief management officer for the U.S. Department of Defense
b. Secretary of Transportation and Infrastructure: Matthew Ubelhor, former state representative
c. Secretary of Commerce: David Adams, former state commissioner of workforce development
d. Secretary of Education: Katie Jenner, who served as Secretary of Education for former Governor Holcomb
e. Secretary of Business Affairs: Mike Speedy, former state representative
f. Secretary of Public Safety: Jennifer Ruth-Green, Air Force deputy commander
g. Secretary of Energy and Natural Resources: Suzanne Ryder Jaworowski, former chief of staff and senior policy advisor for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy

h. Secretary of Health and Family Services: Gloria Sachdev, president and CEO of the Employers' Forum of Indiana
i. Superintendent of State Policy: Anthony Scott, Indiana State Police Captain
j. Adjutant General: Lawrence "Larry" Muennich, former assistant adjutant general
k. Chief of Staff: Josh Kelley, former chief of staff in Governor Braun's Senate office

3. House and Senate Republican Agendas

The House and Senate Republican caucuses have each announced their legislative agendas for the 2025 session, and although each caucus has a supermajority in their respective chamber, there are some key differences in each group's priorities. The House Republicans' priorities include initiatives to pass a balanced budget, reduce regulations on K-12 schools, and multiple measures to attempt to reduce the cost of healthcare, along with more specific legislation including additional investment for deputy prosecutors and expanding the Residential Housing Infrastructure Assistance Program (RIF). On the other side of the Statehouse, the Senate Republican agenda focuses on enacting meaningful property tax reform, containing Medicaid costs, lowering health care costs, responsible management of water resources, and fiscal integrity and contract accountability. The one noticeable area of overlap between the two caucuses is the focus on lower health care costs, and while each group may have different ideas of how to achieve this goal, this will certainly be a hot topic for this legislative session.

4. House and Senate Democrat Agendas

The House and Senate Democratic caucuses also released their legislative agendas, with the primary areas of overlap between the two caucuses arising in health care and education. The House Democrats will prioritize capping insurance premiums and addressing prior authorization and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), while the Senate Democrats want to prohibit wage garnishment and property liens for medical debt, and tackle the maternal health crisis by expanding Medicaid reimbursement for doula services and expanding postpartum mental health care. The two caucuses are also in alignment on addressing education, which was not mentioned by the Senate Republicans. The Senate Democrats propose a minimum salary of $65,000 for K-12 teachers, invest $50 million in critical school staffing, and fully fund the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) waitlist. The House Democrats also support ending the CCDF waitlist, and their additional education priorities include fully funding public schools to relieve pressure on local property taxes and making pre-K accessible, affordable, and universal. The two caucuses found a perhaps-unlikely ally on the topic of removing the CCDF waitlist in Governor Braun as he announced a line item of $362 million for this purpose during the unveiling of his first budget proposal, and they will need to create similar partnerships to get other agenda items passed.

5. Krieg DeVault Team Updates

Krieg DeVault is pleased to announce that Gregory R. Ellis has joined the firm as Of Counsel in its Governmental Affairs and Public Advocacy Practice. A registered lobbyist and seasoned attorney, Mr. Ellis brings extensive experience representing corporate and government entities before the Indiana General Assembly and various administrative agencies.

Additionally, Mathew W. Norris has been named as the firm's new Governmental Affairs and Public Advocacy Practice Chair. Matt takes over the position at the recommendation of Executive Director of Government Affairs Amy M. Levander, who has served in that role for the last 10 years. Amy remains full time with the firm and will continue to provide strategic governmental and advocacy services to the firm's numerous governmental affairs clients.

Krieg DeVault's Governmental Affairs Team looks forward to continuing to provide excellent service to our clients in 2025.

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