KRIEG DEVAULT

Insights

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

December 3, 2019

By: Amy M. Levander

1. House Republicans Elect Speaker-Elect
The House Republican caucus met on Monday, December 2nd and chose Representative Todd Huston (R-Fishers) to serve as Speaker-Elect for the upcoming legislative session, with a formal vote to elect him Speaker to take place the last week of the 2020 session. Current House Speaker, Brian Bosma announced on November 19th at the General Assembly's Organization Day that he will be stepping down as Speaker of the House of Representatives at the end of the 2020 session and will not seek re-election. Bosma has been a state lawmaker for 34 years and has led the House as Speaker for 12 years, making him the longest-serving Speaker in Indiana history.

2. Red4Ed Rally
Approximately 15,000 teachers greeted legislators as they returned to the Statehouse for Organization Day on Tuesday, November 20th rallying for an increase in teacher pay, opposing recently enacted continuing education requirements which require 15 hours of an externship, and mitigating the impact of low ILEARN test scores linked to teacher salaries. While legislative leaders have indicated these issues will receive much debate, it is not clear what changes may be made during a short, non-budget session year.

3. Republican Caucus Priorities
House and Senate Republicans discussed their legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session during Organization Day. The Republican caucuses in both chambers presented a united agenda that will focus on raising the vaping and smoking age from 18 years old to 21 years old, creating transparency in the health care system in attempt to lower costs, and enacting a "hold harmless" exemption to protect schools and teachers from low ILEARN scores.

4. Democratic Caucus Priorities
The Senate Democrats outlined their priorities including creation of a non-partisan redistricting commission; decriminalizing possession of marijuana; requirements for safe storage of firearms and closing loopholes in background checks to purchase firearms. House Democrats will likely outline their priorities prior to the January 6th reconvening of session.

5. Healthcare
Healthcare costs will be a priority topic this session. The Interim Study Committee on Public Health recently approved a number of recommendations for consideration during the upcoming legislative session including: creation of an all payor claims database, legislation addressing balance billing and surprise billing, requirements for Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), and increasing the smoking age to 21 for cigarettes and vape.

For more information, please contact Amy M. Levander or a member of our Governmental Affairs and Public Advocacy Team.