

### State of the State

On Tuesday, Governor Eric Holcomb delivered the State of the State address, the first time in Indiana's history that the speech was given virtually and not before a live audience in the House Chamber. He began by addressing the difficulties Indiana has endured due to COVID-19 and observing a moment of silence for all those who have lost their lives to the virus. Holcomb said, "Hoosiers have risen to meet these unprecedented challenges ... the State of our State is resilient and growing. Our foundation has held strong."

Holcomb then recited a list of achievements by his administration and the state. He touted the vaccine rollout and stated that about 300,000 Hoosiers have either been vaccinated or scheduled an appointment to get the vaccine. He acknowledged a decrease in the number of Department of Child Services cases and stated that Indiana is leading the nation in increased adoptions from foster care. Holcomb also promoted Indiana's workforce programs and their effectiveness in moving more people into higher paying jobs and achieving post-secondary educations.

A key focus of Holcomb's remarks was the state's economy and business climate. He said because of Indiana's strong fiscal position before the pandemic, the state is well-positioned for a comeback this year and cited more than 120,000 new job commitments with 31,000 in 2020 alone.

The governor articulated his goals for 2021 which range from restoring state agency budgets and asking the legislature to increase K-12 funding by \$377 million and higher education by \$103 million, to making new investments in state parks and finishing the I-69 road project ahead of schedule, to investing an additional \$100 million to improve broadband infrastructure. Emphasizing equal opportunity, Holcomb said a new 'diversity dashboard' will be going live, an outside review of law enforcement academies and agencies will be completed, and the first ever cabinet-level diversity officer will begin working on diversity measures across state government.

To improve quality of life for seniors, the governor asked the legislature to adopt a managed care system adopted by 25 other states that allows more seniors to age in place through an integrated system that will help drive transparency and accountability.

Also, Gov. Holcomb briefly introduced the new 'Next Level Regional Recovery' program, aimed at regional collaboration around the state to improve quality of life, advance industry sectors, and grow workforce development initiatives. The governor also asked the legislature to make Indiana the 31<sup>st</sup> state to pass a pregnancy accommodations bill.

Gov. Holcomb finished by saying, "For Indiana, the future is now, and the world continues to hear Indiana's engines roar. That's why I'm more excited than ever to work together to build a 'State of Opportunity' for all Hoosiers."

### Committee Schedules

To view the House Committee Schedule for next week, [click here](#).

To view the Senate Committee Schedule, [click here](#).

### Statehouse Closed This Week

The hustle and bustle of the legislative session came to a halt this week when House Speaker Todd Huston (R-Fishers) and Senate President Pro Tem Rodric Bray (R-Martinsville) cancelled all legislative activity. They announced the hiatus due to potential protests of the presidential inauguration at various state capitols. Speaker Huston said, "This decision was made out of caution and in the best interest of everyone involved in the legislative process. Public gatherings are a critical component of our democracy, and I pray that any demonstrations are peaceful and respectful of the incredible privilege we all have as Americans to make our voices heard."

Session is set to resume on Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> as lawmakers work to get their bills turned to laws. They have filed 1,011 bills, 601 in the House and 410 in the Senate.

