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My Top Ten Indiana House and Senate Bills

I spend a substantial amount of time looking at Indiana's legislative bodies. Overall, I feel that Indiana's House and Senate chambers are stocked with a truly representative sampling of the state. More often than not, I feel that members of all parties are looking out for the folks in their districts.

Some of the more well known pieces of House Bills (HBs) and Senate Bills (SBs) this year include property tax caps, immigration reform and other hot button legal matters. Then there's this stuff:

HB 1128 - Rep. Craig Fry (D) - Golf carts on local streets. I didn't know this was really a problem, but evidently it is. According to the legislation, this: "Prohibits an individual from operating a golf cart on a public or private highway, except when a city or town has adopted an ordinance authorizing the use of golf carts on the city's or town's highways or private roads, or both."

HB 1524 - Rep. Terry Goodin (D) - State Egg Board. I hope this doesn't mean that eggs are starting to kill us, but, according to the proposed bill, this does everything from reforming the state's egg board (that's fun to put on a resume) to requiring sellers at farmer's markets to have a permit to sell eggs. Sorta like alcohol, tobacco and firearms, I guess.

HB 1207 - Rep. Charlie Brown (D) - Nutritional Information at Food Establishments. This bill seeks to require restaurants with more than ten establishments in the state to make specific nutritional facts about their menu readily available to customers. It's my understanding this could be anything from a printed piece of paper on the menu or a sign at the door. What I'm really wondering is how many people walk into a McDonald's and really care about how much fat is in their Big Mac.

SB 81 - Sen. Dennis Kruse (R) - School year. This bill would prohibit public K-12 schools from starting before Labor Day and ending after June 15, with exceptions for year-round schools. This is likely a result of the ISTEP test being moved from the fall to the spring. This legislation, in my opinion, likely seeks to stop people from saying, "When I went to school we didn't start until after Labor Day..." like people are prone to do once the school calendars are announced.

SB 0084 - Sen. Dennis Kruse (R) - Workforce Development. This proposed bill would really show a sign of the times: change "Indiana Department of Workforce

Development” to “Indiana Department of Unemployment Insurance.” I guess that means we’re leaving the development of Indiana’s workforce up to you.

SB 275 - Sen. Randy Head (R) - Definition of “textbook”. This makes sense to me, but it’s funny because it sounds like they’re rewriting the dictionary. This bill would redefine the word “textbook” in school law to include computers, computer software, etc.

SB 337 - Sen. Dennis Kruse (R) - Interior Designers. Not to keep picking on Sen. Kruse but his proposed legislation strikes me as unusual. SB 337 would require the registration of interior designers with the Secretary of State. I didn’t know interior designers were running wild and free in our state, but it’s good to know someone’s trying to tame people from illegally hanging curtains.

SB 363 - Sen. Marlin Stutzman (R) - Pickup trucks. Evidently, when the state hands out cash to cities, towns and counties for local roads it only factors in cars in the area. This law seeks to give more money to local governments with higher than average pickup truck registrations. So, if you drive a pickup truck, know that you’re not helping your county’s roads the next time you hit a pot hole.

SB 480 - Sen. Ryan Mishler (R) - Contact lens dispensing. This one speaks for itself: “...a person who dispenses a contact lens, including a contact lens *without* (my emphasis) corrective power, to an individual who does not have a prescription commits a Class B misdemeanor.” So kids, no sharing of contacts or you’re committing a crime!

HB 1709 - Reps. Turner (R), Welch (D), & Smith (R) - Removal of inmate tattoos. In short, this bill would let an inmate in the Department of Correction have paid tattoo removal, to be paid by the Department of Correction, before the inmate’s release date, if the inmate requests the tattoo he or she consented to in the first place, be removed.

Now, there’s at least a thousand pieces of legislation floating around this session. I picked out ten. They’re plenty of substantial pieces of legislation. And there are these.