



Northern Indiana Advocates (NIA) Update

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## ***NIA Legislative Receptions***

*Northern Indiana Advocates is holding two legislative receptions and **you are invited**. This is a gathering of our area's top decision makers including our state legislators, city and town elected officials, and business leaders. Our mission is to re-engage relationship building and regional collaboration prior to the 2024 legislative session. We would love to have you attend.*

*For more information, please click on a link below, and RSVP to Dan Bearss at [DBearss@NITDC.com](mailto:DBearss@NITDC.com)*

[November 1st; 4-6:00 pm \(CST\) at Hard Rock Casino, Gary](#)

[November 9th; 8-9:30 am \(EST\) at Holiday Inn Mishawaka \(Douglas Road\)](#)

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# *Legislative Updates*

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## ***Change Comes Early to General Assembly***

October 2023

It's been a slow summer around the statehouse with one exception: early resignation and retirement announcements among legislators. The days of career politicians are largely gone in Indiana. We're in a period of consistent change in the make up of the Indiana General Assembly. As a result, we see more frequent changes in committee assignments and leadership.

There are surely more to come as lawmakers must determine whether they will seek reelection by mid-February. There is a wide open race for governor that will see major transition of power in 2024. Big election years like the one ahead of us are often seen as good break points for legislators who are considering retirement. Here's a breakdown of the changes we've seen so far...

### **Senate**

- **Sen. John Crane (R)** announced he will not run for reelection. His district covers Avon on the west side of Indianapolis and all of Putnum County. Look for popular former Hendricks County Sheriff Brett Clark to be the odds-on favorite to win that seat in May and make an immediate impact in the senate.
- **Sen. Jon Ford (R)** resigned in September to join Reliable Energy, an advocacy group for the fossil fuel industry, as their executive director. He was replaced in a caucus election by former Indiana State University lobbyist, and great American, Greg Goode. Ford served on several key committees, including chairing the Elections Committee and serving on Public Policy and Appropriations.
- **Sen. Eddie Melton (D)** hasn't left office... yet. He's going to be the next mayor of the City of Gary so there will be a caucus later in the year to replace him when he is officially elected.

- **Sen. Chip Perfect (R)** resigned his seat in August. He was replaced in a caucus election by Randy Maxwell, a construction contractor from Guilford. Perfect was the chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee so we'll see a change there.
- **Sen. Jack Sandlin (R)** passed away suddenly this month. He was succeeded in office in a caucus election by Cindy Carasco, who ran for Marion County prosecutor in 2022. She's terrific.
- **Sen. Andy Zay (R)** is running for Congress in Indiana's 3rd Congressional District as Congressman Jim Banks runs the U.S. Senate. It's a crowded field that includes former Congressman Marlin Stutzman. Zay is in the middle of his second full term so if he loses the primary election for congress he'll be able to stay in the Indiana Senate.

## House

- **Rep. Ed Clere (R)** is running for mayor of New Albany so there's at least a chance he won't be back in the statehouse this January.
- **Rep. Randy Frye (R)** resigned unceremoniously from the Indiana House. That's all we have to say about that. He was replaced in a caucus election by Alex Zimmerman, an attorney from North Vernon. Frye was chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee.
- **Rep. Chuck Goodrich (R)** is going to be elected to Congress in Indiana's 5th Congressional District. He served on the Ways and Means Committee.
- **Rep. Donna Schaibley (R)** announced she will not seek reelection. There are a couple names in the mix right now of people in this Zionsville-based district who might run. The quality of the candidate matters in this district that could possibly elect a Democrat.
- **Rep. Jerry Torr (R)** announced he will not seek reelection. Torr served in the House for nearly 30 years and was a great legislator with a long list of major legislation he shepherded through assembly throughout his career, including Right to Work and Day Light Saving Time (which is a big deal if you're not from Indiana and think I'm nuts). The Carmel-based district is another tough one for Republicans. Danny Lopez is the announced

Republican in that race, who is a perfect fit for the district. Danny served in the Holcomb administration and is an executive for the Indiana Pacers in addition to being a great guy. Torr was the chairman of the powerful House Judiciary Committee.

- **Rep. Ann Vermillion (R)** resigned from office over the summer. She was replaced in a caucus election by Lori Goss-Reaves, a professor at Indiana Wesleyan University.

## House Committee Assignments

Typically committee assignments run on two year cycles. But with key retirements coming next year, House Speaker Todd Huston [announced](#) some meaningful changes yesterday to House committees. Here are the highlights...

- Rep. Chris Jeter (R) will take over as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. Torr will ride shotgun as vice chair for his last session before retirement.
- Rep. Steve Bartels (R) will assume the chairmanship of the House Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee.
- Rep. Lori Goss-Reaves (R) will serve on the House Public Health Committee and Insurance Committee.
- Rep. Alex Zimmerman (R) will serve on the House Roads and Transportation Committee and Utilities Committee.

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