



# INDIANA BLACK LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

## *2020 Legislative Agenda*

## **IBLC ANNOUNCES 2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA WITH FOCUS ON HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

**INDIANAPOLIS** – Members of the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus (IBLC) today outlined their 2020 legislative agenda, which focuses on key issues affecting minority communities across the state, including: health care, education, and criminal justice reform.

“We are moving forward with our commitment to achieve Economic Empowerment, Educational Obtainment, Health Access, and Social/Criminal Justice in Indiana,” said IBLC Chair State Rep. Robin Shackelford (D-Indianapolis). “Last session, we took steps toward serving Hoosiers in these areas by starting long overdue conversations on things like hate crimes and teacher salary increases. We are looking to build on those ideas by continuing these important conversations and adding new issues to the discussion at the Indiana Statehouse.

“The issues that the IBLC will focus on for the 2020 legislative session have impacted the lives of Indiana’s minority communities for decades and we want the people in our communities to know that our caucus members will continue to be their advocates and voices in the Indiana General Assembly.”

IBLC members outlined four areas of primary focus:

### **STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

“The IBLC is supporting my proposal that addresses contracting goals of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women Business Enterprises (WBE) and Veteran Business Enterprises (VBE). The legislation requires the president of each educational institution in Indiana to share with the State Budget Committee quarterly their progress in accomplishing the goals of the Governor’s Commission on Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises,” State Senator Greg Taylor (D-Indianapolis) said.

“If state education institutions do not reach their goals, my bill would allow the Office of Minority Business Development to stall contracts in an effort to hold our institutions accountable and protect the use of minority and women’s business enterprises as contractors.”

### **TESTING OF SCHOOL DRINKING WATER FOR LEAD**

“This year, one of the top priorities for the Indiana Black Legislative Caucus (IBLC) is to pass legislation to mandate the biennial lead testing of Lake County schools’ drinking water. Unfortunately, Northwest Indiana has had a problem with lead contamination, which has overwhelmingly impacted schools and students in primarily minority communities,” State Senator Lonnie Randolph (D-East Chicago) said.

“That’s why the IBLC will be fighting to get Senate Bill (SB) 214 approved this session. Requiring school drinking water to be tested for lead at least once every two years will ensure that we are able to identify and begin addressing lead issues more quickly to keep our schools and students safe.”

### **REDUCTION OF INSULIN PRICING**

Soaring insulin prices and inflexible insurance policies have forced many Hoosiers to take desperate measures to obtain a lifesaving medication. This legislation is designed to help reduce the cost of insulin for Hoosiers by requiring an insurer to cap the total amount an individual is required to pay for a 30-day

supply of a prescription insulin drug at an amount not exceeding \$100, regardless of the amount or type of insulin prescribed.

“Last session, I authored legislation to create a study committee dedicated to studying prescription drug prices in Indiana,” said Shackelford. “Too often study committees are conducted with nothing to show for them, but I intend to make the voices of those Hoosiers suffering from skyrocketing insulin prices heard.

“We have an emergency on our hands when reports are showing that as many as one in four people with diabetes are rationing their insulin because they are unable to afford their lifesaving medication. My proposal would require an insurer to cap the total amount for a 30-day supply of insulin at \$100, regardless of the amount or type of insulin prescribed. The testimony I heard this summer was truly heartbreaking and we cannot afford to wait any longer when Hoosiers lives are at risk.”

### **SUMMONS TO APPEAR**

House Bill 1076 would reduce the amount of people in jail by requiring officers to issue a summons for that individual to appear before the court if the individual has committed certain misdemeanors in the presence of a law enforcement official. This would not apply to violent misdemeanor offenses that involve a victim, a weapon, or an impaired driver; if the person poses a safety risk to the themselves, the officer, or the public; or if the person falsely identifies themselves to an officer. The law enforcement officer is not required to issue a summons if the person is subject to arrest for another offense, has violated the terms of supervised release, or has an outstanding warrant.

“We are talking about people with families who have jobs and are being housed in county jails as they await trial for sometimes petty crimes. We can and should do better,” said State Rep. Cherrish Pryor (D-Indianapolis).

“My legislation would reduce the amount of people in jail by requiring officers to issue a summons for that individual to appear before the court if they have committed certain misdemeanors in the presence of a law enforcement official. The legislature recently did a major overhaul of our criminal statute that created challenges with overcrowding at many of our county jails, so this is an easy way to reduce that problem.”

To learn more about the IBLC please visit: <https://indianahousedemocrats.org/members/iblc>.

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## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

### **Pilot Program to Fund Educational Attainment | Rep. John L. Bartlett**

Pilot program offering who receives government assistance \$15 per hour to any parent pay for child care while attending school or a trade program. There will be a volunteering component that will require the parent to volunteer in their child's school in order to meet the requirements for the program. The program provides funding for child care, support of educational goals, and increased parental involvement in the child's school, and ultimately leads to self-sufficiency and no longer requiring government assistance. [HB 1139]

### **Equal Pay for Women | Rep. Carolyn B. Jackson**

The bill would make it an unlawful employment practice to pay wages that discriminate based on sex for similar work. Further, it would secure an employee's ability to inquire about, disclose, compare, or otherwise discuss their wages. This bill additionally provides that the Civil Rights Commission would have jurisdiction to review any disputes and allegations of wage discrimination. [HB 1034]

### **Small Loan Finance Charges | Sen. Eddie Melton**

The bill changes the current incremental finance charge limits that apply to a small loan to a maximum annual rate of 36%. Prohibits certain acts with respect to financing of a small loan and makes a violation a deceptive act and subject to penalties. [SB 442]

### **State Educational Institutions | Sen. Greg Taylor**

The bill would require state educational institutions to report their Minority, Women's and Veteran Business Enterprise numbers to the Budget Committee on a quarterly basis. This would also include adding language that provides the Office of Minority Business Development hold up contracts they have if they do not meet their goals. [SB 383]

# EDUCATIONAL OBTAINMENT

## **Bullying | Rep. Gregory W. Porter**

The bill treats charter schools and private schools that receive state choice scholarship money the same as public schools when it comes to bullying. These schools will be subject to the same laws and administrative codes as public schools. These schools will also have to develop rules and discipline procedures concerning bullying. [HB 1167]

## **Testing of School Drinking Water for Lead | Sen. Lonnie M. Randolph**

The bill requires testing of the drinking water in every school building in Lake County at least once in each period of two calendar years to determine whether the drinking water exceeds the lead action level for drinking water established by regulations of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. [SB 214]

## **Teacher Salary Increase | Rep. Vernon G. Smith**

The bill allows a school corporation to provide an increase or increment in a local salary range for a teacher who possesses a master's degree or doctorate degree. [HB 1296]

## HEALTH ACCESS

### **Scholarship for Minority Students Pursuing Careers in Health Care | Sen. Jean Breaux**

The bill establishes a scholarship program for minority students who are pursuing health care careers, and establishes the requirements for receiving the scholarship. The scholarship is the lesser of the balance of the student's total cost of attendance minus other financial assistance, or \$4,000. [SB 287]

### **Reduction of Insulin Pricing | Rep. Robin Shackelford**

Soaring insulin prices and inflexible insurance policies have forced many Hoosiers to take desperate measures to obtain a life-saving medication. A measure will be offered to require an insurer to cap the total amount an insured person is required to pay for a 30-day supply of a prescription insulin drug at an amount not exceeding \$100, regardless of the amount or type of insulin prescribed.

### **Postpartum Medicaid for Pregnant Women | Rep. Vanessa Summers**

The bill provides Medicaid to eligible women for the duration of their pregnancy and for one year after giving birth. Additionally, changes in household income during the pregnancy or period after giving birth will not affect the mother's ability to receive aid. [HB 1248]

# SOCIAL AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## **Special Death Benefits for Police and Firefighters | Rep. Earl L. Harris Jr.**

The bill increases the special death benefit for certain public safety officers from \$150,000 to \$225,000. Last fall, this proposal was passed unanimously by the Interim Study Committee on Pension Management Oversight. [HB 1019]

## **Marital Violence | Rep. Ragen Hatcher**

The bill seeks to address marital violence between separated spouses. It states that acts of a spouse to exert control over property established and owned by the other spouse are considered theft. It also allows for marital violence victims to expedite processes for child support, temporary custody of a child, temporary possession of property, and temporary spousal support. [HB 1355]

## **Summons to Appear | Rep. Cherrish S. Pryor**

The bill would reduce the number of people in jail by requiring officers to issue a summons for that individual to appear before the court if the individual has committed certain misdemeanors in the presence of a law enforcement official. This would not apply to violent misdemeanor offenses that involve a victim, a weapon, or an impaired driver; if the person poses a safety risk to themselves, the officer, or the public; or if the person falsely identifies themselves to an officer. The law enforcement officer is not required to issue a summons if the person is subject to arrest for another offense; has violated the terms of supervised release; or has an outstanding warrant. [HB 1076]

## Officers



**Robin Shackleford**  
State Representative  
*Chairwoman*



**Earl L. Harris Jr.**  
State Representative  
*Vice-Chairman*



**Ragen Hatcher**  
State Representative  
*Treasurer*



**Carolyn B. Jackson**  
State Representative  
*Chaplain*



**John L. Bartlett**  
State Representative  
*Parliamentarian*

## Members



**Jean D. Breaux**  
State Senator



**Cherrish S. Pryor**  
State Representative



**Vanessa Summers**  
State Representative



**Eddie Melton**  
State Senator



**Lonnie M. Randolph**  
State Senator



**Greg Taylor**  
State Senator



**Gregory W. Porter**  
State Representative



**Dr. Vernon G. Smith**  
State Representative

## Connect With Us

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