

**2017**  
**Indiana General Assembly Report**  
*Week Four*



This is the fourth weekly report designed to inform CAC board and staff, as well as CAC members and the general public regarding our activities and work during the 2017 Indiana General Assembly.

After the presidential inauguration, rallies and marches surrounding the inauguration, legislators returned to a hefty schedule of committee hearings including an eight-hour meeting on the House Republicans' answer to Indiana's continued roads and transportation challenges: [House Bill 1002](#).

The final list of bills was introduced this week, bringing the total for the session to 1,245 bills. CAC is monitoring more than 50 bills and attended a handful of hearings including Senate Environmental Affairs where we presented testimony in support of [Senate Bill 511](#) which passed committee unanimously. [Senate Bill 416](#) was also moved unanimously by the committee and was recommitted to the Appropriations Committee. SB 511 will face a Senate vote as early as Monday. These bills are designed to address the cost of Indiana's growing water infrastructure crisis.

The House Environmental Affairs Committee heard [House Bill 1495](#), which was described by author Rep. Dave Wolkins (R-Winona Lake) as a Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) "clean-up" bill. A clean-up bill typically has a series of technical corrections that agency staff has identified throughout the interim. Unfortunately for the citizens of East Chicago, HB1495 also contained a provision that allows ArcelorMittal to sidestep permitting process for an industrial waste site. The measure would allow the company to place industrial sludge and heavy metal fugitive dust landfill in a site adjacent to an East Chicago neighborhood. Rep. Ryan Dvorak (D-South Bend) attempted to amend the landfill language out of the bill but failed among party lines. Despite the outcry, the bill passed committee 11-2. The Northwest Indiana Times wrote about it [here](#).

The House Utilities, Energy, and Telecommunications Committee heard [House Bill 1471](#), authored by Rep. Sally Siegrist (R-West Lafayette). The bill would transfer the administration of the 211 Connect 2 Help dialing code from the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. 211 provides valuable access to human services information and referrals, such as assistance with paying utility bills, securing affordable housing, and other essential human service needs. CAC offered testimony in support of the legislation, but no vote was taken.

The House unanimously passed [House Bill 1230](#), an initiative aimed at enabling Indiana's electric utilities compliance with the updated Federal policy regarding coal ash. The bill moves on to the Senate for further action.

The first editorial was published this week from an Indiana newspaper opposing [SB309](#), the measure authored by Sen. Brandt Hershman (R-Buck Creek) that ends Indiana's residential solar program. The Journal Gazette in Fort Wayne authored "[A Bright Idea, Resist urge to tie solar-energy producers' hands](#)", which ran on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Upcoming this week:**

- [Senate Bill 511](#) will receive a Senate vote as early as Monday
- [House Bill 1495](#) will be heard on second reading in the House, which means it is eligible to be amended, as early as Tuesday.
- [Senate Bill 309](#) is expected to be heard Thursday, but the hearing is not yet officially posted as of the writing of this report.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lindsay Shipps & Kerwin Olson