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Executive Director's Report from the State House

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FINAL REPORT

The Indiana House and Senate adjourned *sine die* shortly before the midnight deadline on Friday April 29, 2011. Depending on your point of view it was an attack on the working people and public education or as the Indianapolis Star's headline read "GOP claims Victory".

HB 1001 Budget Bill

The massive biennial 300 page budget bill, as usual, contains more than just "budget" items. Please refer to the House bills digest or read the bill at <http://www.in.gov/legislative/bills/2011/PDF/HE/HE1001.1.pdf>

HB 1210 Abortion

This bill makes Indiana with the most restrictive provisions for abortions in the country. It defines when human life starts (an issue still debated in many faith communities), requires women to be told that the fetus may feel pain (not substantiated in medical research), requires the women to assert in writing that she does not want to see an ultrasound, and it removes funding from Planned Parenthood, even though NO federal or state dollars paid for abortions. The bill had almost unanimous Republican support in both chambers and seven democrats supported in the House. There will most likely be legal action regarding this bill for years to come.

Schools

The Governor and the Republican leadership called it a sweeping reform package for are schools. The Democrats called it an attack on public education by allowing vouchers to be used at private or charter schools. Changes were also made regarding teacher pay and evaluations based on the students ISTEP scores. It will be years though to see the results.

Collective Bargaining

Although this issue was removed from the table when the Democrats left the state, it was probably only postponed. It will be the subject of an interim study committee and legislation will likely return for the next session.

Nurse Issues

The resolution to study home births and non-nurse midwives was withdrawn. Maybe I can be retired before we have to revisit that issue.

SB 363 Background checks did pass both chambers. It will be required for all new licensees for health care professionals. The results of the national check could result in denial of a license after a hearing before the appropriate board.

Other Health Professionals

Please review the House and Senate bills lists. There were changes for certified nursing assistants, physical and occupational therapists, physicians' assistant's, dentists, and the medical licensing board. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact ISNA.

The next edition of the Legislative Update will be next January. We will be monitoring the interim study committees and will keep you updated on issues that might involve nursing and health care.

We'll see you at the Annual Meeting of the Members, September 30, 2011 in Indianapolis!