



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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2009 Legislative Wrap-Up

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What important issues are facing our community today, in your opinion?

Please feel free to e-mail me your thoughts to h24@iga.in.gov, post your comments on my Web site at www.in.gov/h24, or return this card with your comments below.

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Taxpayers are Winners in New State Budget

I believe the new state budget, based on solid common-sense principles, is a success for Hoosier taxpayers and public education.

Although the budget is a bipartisan compromise, with all 48 House Republicans voting for it, our principles remained an important influence. It is a success, I believe, because:

- It contains no general tax increases.
- It maintains at least \$1 billion in state reserves.
- It uses one-time federal stimulus money responsibly, including statewide infrastructure and university construction projects.
- It does not deplete trust funds or other dedicated money for operating expenses.

Gov. Mitch Daniels outlined those standards early in the process and did not waver. While many states are cutting overall education spending, raising taxes or both, this budget does neither. It even promises more support for education through additional funding. The "education trigger" would also allot 50 percent of state revenue to education when income exceeds revenue projections.

Statewide public education receives what I believe is solid support:

- K-12 education gained an average increase of 1.1 percent in calendar year 2010 and 0.3 percent in calendar year 2011.
- The budget fully funds K-12 anticipated enrollment increases at growing public schools.
- The Ivy Tech Community College network was given enhanced support, and bonding is authorized to fund 38 university capital projects throughout the state, including Indiana University Southeast, Purdue University and Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.
- The state's higher education scholarship grants program receives increases of 6 percent in fiscal year 2010 and 3 percent in fiscal year 2011.

I believe this is the right budget for Indiana right now, and that's why I voted for it.



Rep. McClain speaking with a session intern.



Rep. McClain listening to a discussion during session.

Honoring Our Veterans

This legislation honors Hoosier heroes who have sacrificed so much for us by granting all Hoosier Purple Heart recipients free tuition to state colleges and universities. Previously, the law only provided tuition to those who received the Purple Heart after Sept. 10, 2001, and the children of all Purple Heart recipients. After serving in the Navy, I was able to attend Purdue University on the GI Bill. I feel honored to be able to give that same opportunity to someone else.

Parking for Veterans

I co-authored legislation this session to allow individuals who have been issued a Former Prisoner of War or Disabled Veteran license plate to park in a metered space without charge.

Helping Military Families

Access to the Military Family Relief Fund was expanded this session to include all active-duty personnel and not just those in the National Guard or reserves. The fund will also provide education and employment assistance. This law should give military families peace of mind during a stressful time, when family members are serving overseas.

Providing Disability Benefits

The law allows members of the 1977 police officer/firefighter pension and disability fund to receive the disability benefit for the remainder of the disabled member's life. Previously, a disabled member only received a disability benefit until age 52. The law also entitles disabled members to receive the same monthly supplemental benefit they would have received if they had served until retirement.



Rich McClain

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