SENATOR
JOHN BRODEN
116TH INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ★ SENATE DISTRICT 10

NEWS RELEASE

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General Assembly approves Broden initiatives

INDIANAPOLIS – The 2010 legislative session of the 116th General Assembly ended on March 13, with 115 enrolled acts sent to the governor's desk for final action. State Senator John Broden (D-South Bend) authored and sponsored a number of bills that found approval by the legislature. They include:

Adoption and child support matters
Sen. Broden authored two bills this session that aim to protect the welfare of children in the state of Indiana. Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 140 will amend state laws regarding paternity and adoption proceedings. The bill will prohibit a man from establishing paternity by filing a paternity action as next friend of the child or requesting a prosecuting attorney to file a paternity action if he is barred from establishing paternity under adoption statutes. The initiative would also remove the provision that allows the putative father after the birth of the child to file for paternity action in order to contest the adoption.

Further, the bill aims to protect the safety of children by ensuring that the court does not grant an adoption if the petitioner has been convicted of certain felonies or is a sexually violent predator. The final draft of the bill was unanimously supported by the Senate and House of Representatives and was signed into law by the governor March 12 to become effective immediately.

SEA 163, authored by Broden, will increase the state's ability to collect child support due to families by requiring Indiana casinos to withhold the cash winnings of those delinquent in child support. SEA 163 was approved unanimously by the Senate and the House of Representatives and was sent to the governor for final action on March 11. The governor has until March 17 to sign the act into law, veto it or let it become law without his signature. If approved, the law will become effective July 1.

Monitoring of habitual traffic offenders
SEA 221 was authored by Sen. Broden and will increase the amount of monitoring by the court for those who have been repeat drunk driving offenders and those with restricted driving permits. The initiative would require a habitual traffic offender to submit to sobriety tests if stopped for traffic violations, wear a device that detects and records the person's use of alcohol and to install an ignition interlock device on their vehicle.

Sen. Broden said this bill allows individuals with restricted licenses to attend work, school and religious gatherings while still being monitored by authorities. The final draft of the bill was approved unanimously by both the Senate and the House of Representatives and was signed into law March 12 to become effective July 1.

Government ethics
Lawmakers worked this session to establish a bipartisan government ethics reform package. House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1001, sponsored by Broden in the Senate, will bar legislators from entering a lobbyist position for a year after leaving office, require universities to report the tickets and gifts they give to

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legislators, require more lobbyist disclosure of gifts by lowering the threshold for reporting a meal or gift from $100 to $50 for a single day, and bars the governor from raising campaign funds during the budget session of the legislature.

A bipartisan, bicameral compromise on HEA 1001 was approved unanimously in both chambers and sent to the governor on March 11. The governor has until March 17 to sign the act into law, veto it or let it become law without his signature. If approved, the new law will become effective January 1, 2011.

Earned income tax credit
HEA 1021, sponsored by Broden in the Senate, will allow for exemptions to be made in bankruptcy matters. The initiative will allow a debtor's Indiana Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to be considered exempt property under the bankruptcy property exemption statute. Sen. Broden said that this state tax credit is one of the largest anti-poverty tools in the state and should be protected during these financially troubling times.

The bill was approved in its original form with a unanimous vote in the House of Representatives and with a vote of 44-6 in the Senate. The act was sent to governor on March 11 and was signed into law March 12 to become effective July 1.

Abatement of abandoned property
HEA 1122 will clarify existing law concerning the notification of a property owner when their property has been considered abandoned. Under the bill, a property owner must receive a notice that in the event of a foreclosure they can appeal the finding of abandonment by the court, redeem the property or retain the property under certain circumstances.

HEA 1068 was approved in its original form by the House of Representatives with a vote of 88-8 and was approved unanimously by the Senate after being amended. The House voted unanimously to agree with Senate changes and the final draft was sent by the governor March 11. The governor has until March 17 to sign the act into law, veto it or allow it to become law without his signature. If approved, the law will become effective July 1.

Regulation of appraisal management companies
HEA 1235 will require increased regulation in the real estate appraising industry by requiring appraisal management companies to register with the state Real Estate Appraiser Licensure and Certification Board. Broden said this bill will help to standardize the real estate appraising industry by allowing some transparency in the process and ensuring professionalism throughout the state.

The bill in its original form was approved by the House of Representatives 95-1, and an amended form of the bill was approved in the Senate 48-2. The House voted unanimously to agree with Senate changes and the final draft was sent by the governor March 11. The governor has until March 17 to sign the act into law, veto it or allow it to become law without his signature. If approved, the law will become effective July 1.

Voters with disabilities
HEA 1109 co-sponsored by Broden, requires that all locations where a voter is entitled to cast an absentee ballot in person before Election Day must meet the same accessibility requirements that apply to a precinct polling place. The bill also provides that voters casting absentee ballots in the office of the circuit court clerk, or a satellite office, are entitled to assistance if they are disabled or unable to read or write English. The bill was approved unanimously by the Senate and House of Representatives, and has been sent to the governor. If signed into law, the bill will become effective July 1.

For more information on Sen. Broden, his legislative agenda or other State Senate business call 1-800-382-9467 or visit www.senatedemocrats.in.gov.

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