



SENATOR  
**KAREN TALLIAN**  
116TH INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ★ SENATE DISTRICT 4

**NEWS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release:*  
March 16, 2010

*Media Contact:*  
Peg McLeish, 317-232-9507  
Elise Shrock, 317-232-9496

**General Assembly approves Tallian initiatives**

INDIANAPOLIS—The 2010 session of the 116th General Assembly ended on March 13, with 115 bills sent to the governor's desk. State Senator Karen Tallian (D-Portage) sponsored or authored a number of bills that gained approval by the legislature and are awaiting final action by the governor or set to become law. They include:

**Unemployment insurance**

Lawmakers worked all session to find a compromise on one of the largest issues facing the state of Indiana. Senate Enrolled Act (SEA) 23, coauthored by Tallian, will delay changes in unemployment insurance premiums by one year that will now go into effect January 2011. The Indiana Unemployment Trust Fund went bankrupt eighteen months ago and the state has borrowed \$1.7 billion dollars from the federal government to pay unemployment benefits. Sen. Tallian said the bill also includes language that will help small businesses and promote jobs. SEA 23 will provide tax credits for companies hiring new employees or expanding, or moving to a county where individuals have become dislocated workers. Additionally the bill makes EDGE grants more available to small businesses. Sen. Tallian said the bill will also take steps to resolve the issue of employee misclassification to ensure that benefits are provided to full-time employees, and ensure that benefits are still being distributed while appeals processes are also being determined.

The final draft of the bill was unanimously approved in the Senate and approved in the House of Representatives by a vote of 85-12. The act will now move to the governor for final action. The governor has seven days to sign the act into law, veto it or let it become law without his signature.

**Public employee pension funds**

Lawmakers approved a number of bills that will affect various retirement benefit programs in the state of Indiana. SEA 30 was authored by Tallian and will allow members of the Indiana Public Employees Retirement fund (PERF) and the Indiana Teachers Retirement fund (PRF) to withdraw from their annuity savings account if the member has separated employment and is not employed in a covered position after 30 days. Current law provides that a member in this position would have to wait 90 days before drawing benefits.

SEA 30 will also give members the ability to petition the board of trustees of their respective funds to correct an error in a determination of the member's creditable service or benefit at any time, and to appeal if the request is made within 6 years of the determination.

-more-

## *PAGE 2 / GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPROVES TALLIAN INITIATIVES*

The act further provides that, before July 1, 2012, an active member of the 1977 Police Officers and Firefighters Pension and Disability Fund who is eligible to receive an unreduced retirement benefit may elect to receive a partial lump sum distribution equal to the monthly benefit times the years of service in exchange for an reduced monthly benefit.

A bicameral compromise on the final draft of SEA 30 was unanimously approved by the Senate and House of Representatives. The bill awaits final action by the governor. Upon enactment the new law will become effective July 1, 2010.

SEA 172, coauthored by Tallian, and House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1050, cosponsored by Tallian in the Senate, are two pieces of legislation that allow for a member of the 1977 Police Officers and Firefighters Pension and Disability Fund to designate one or more beneficiaries to receive the member's contributions to the fund plus interest if the member dies without collecting benefits. This initiative will help those that have not collected benefits or designated a beneficiary like a child, spouse or parent. These bills also provide that if a member does not specify a beneficiary, the member's contributions and accumulated interest will be refunded to the member's estate.

SEA 172 was unanimously approved by the Senate and House of Representatives, and was signed into law by the governor on March 12 to become effective immediately. HEA 1050 was also approved unanimously in both chambers. The governor has seven days to sign the act into law, veto it or let it become law without his signature.

Also concerning the 1977 Police Officers and Firefighters Pension and Disability Fund is HEA 1127. The bill, cosponsored by Tallian in the Senate, allows a member of the fund to purchase service credit at cost for the member's prior service in a position covered by a public retirement fund. Tallian said that this bill will allow those who serve our state to consolidate their time of service under one retirement plan. HEA 1127 was approved unanimously by the Senate and the House of Representatives in its original form and was sent to the governor March 11 for final action. The governor has seven days 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, 2010.

### **Government ethics and lobby reform**

Lawmakers worked this session to establish a bipartisan government ethics reform package. HEA 1001, cosponsored by Tallian, 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 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 seven days to sign the act into law, veto it or let it become law without his signature. If approved, the law will become effective January 1, 2011.

### **Display of political signs**

SEA 64 was authored by Tallian and will prohibit a homeowners association from enforcing rules that bar homeowners from displaying political signs on the member's property. The bill will allow homeowners to display political signs for an election beginning 30 days before and ending 5 days after the date of the election to which the sign relates.

*-more-*

SEA 64 was approved in the Senate with a vote of 48-1 and was unanimously approved in the House of Representatives. The governor signed the act into law March 12 to become effective July 1, 2010.

**EMS suspension and termination**

SEA 87, also authored by Tallian, will entitle EMS personnel to a hearing and an appeals process if a medical director refuses to supervise that individual or suspends the individual without just cause. SEA 87 will require the commission hearing the appeal to consult with an independent medical expert. The independent medical expert must be a physician trained in emergency medical services and be unaffiliated with the same hospital as the medical director whose opinion is being challenged.

The bill was signed into law by the governor on March 12 and becomes effective July 1, 2010.

**Property tax collections**

HEA 1059, sponsored by Tallian in the Senate, is a bill that will make changes to the property tax billing process. HEA 1059 will require counties that anticipate being behind schedule with spring tax bills to send provisional tax bills by April 1<sup>st</sup>, in which 50 percent of the previous year's total tax liability would be due by May 10<sup>th</sup>. Exceptions can be made under the bill if a county shows the ability to send out tax bills with a due date no later than June 10<sup>th</sup>. The counties must first appeal to the Department of Local Government Finance.

If the final property tax bills were not determined by fall, the remaining 50 percent of the previous year's bill would be collected by November 10<sup>th</sup>. If the final amount for the current year can be determined, a reconciliation bill for the remainder of the current year's taxes would be issued and due in November. Provisional tax bills allow property owners to make uniform payments and ensure that money is collected by the counties until the proper billing amount can be determined.

The final draft of HEA 1059 was unanimously approved by the Senate and approved by the House of Representatives with a vote of 91-2. The act was sent to the governor for final action on March 15 and if enacted will become effective July 1, 2010, upon passage.

**Worker compensation**

HEA 1116 is a bill that was sponsored by Tallian in the Senate that will ensure that an employer or those who employer's insurance carrier may not delay emergency medical care for worker's injured on the job or experience occupational disease disablements. Workers who are injured will be able to receive emergency medical assistance by any physician rather than having to wait for the arrival of the doctor specified by the worker's employer. Passage of this bill will provide faster treatment and prevent some injuries from becoming permanent.

The bill awaits final action by the governor. If enacted, the law will become effective July 1, 2010.

**Earned income tax credit**

HEA 1021, cosponsored by Tallian 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. Tallian said that this state tax credit 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 signed into law March 12 and becomes effective July 1, 2010.

**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. Tallian sponsored this bill in the Senate.

The bill awaits final action by the governor. If enacted, the law will become effective July 1, 2010.

**Regulation of appraisal management companies**

HEA 1235, cosponsored by Tallian in the Senate, will require increased regulation in the real estate appraising industry by requiring the appraisal management companies to register with the state Real Estate Appraiser Licensure and Certification Board. Tallian said this bill will help to allow more transparency in the process and ensure professionalism throughout the state.

If signed into law by the governor, the bill will become effective July 1, 2010.

**County clerk liability**

HEA 1044, cosponsored by Tallian in the Senate, and will ensure that county clerks and the Clerk of the Supreme Court will not be held liable for acts of omissions while performing clerk's duties as long as there is not gross negligence or intentional disregard of clerk duties.

HEA 1044 was unanimously approved by the Senate and House of Representatives and was sent to the governor for final action March 11. If enacted, the law will become effective July 1, 2010.

For more information on Sen. Tallian, her legislative agenda or other State Senate business, call 1-800-382-9467 or visit [www.senatedemocrats.IN.gov](http://www.senatedemocrats.IN.gov).

###