

In the Indiana Supreme Court

Cause No. 24S-MS-116



Order Establishing the Commission on Indiana's Legal Future

Indiana faces a critical shortage of attorneys. Virtually all 92 Hoosier counties have fewer lawyers per capita than the national average, and the gap is especially acute in Indiana's rural and most socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, as well as in the public service sector. This shortage threatens the institution of the legal profession, public trust in the courts, the rule of law, and the civic health of our communities.

As the body charged by the Indiana Constitution with the exclusive authority to regulate the practice and profession of law, this Court is responsible for addressing this challenge. So, on March 25, 2024, the Court hosted representatives from each branch of government, practitioners, legal education experts, and others. We thank those participants for their engagement, interest, and thorough discussion about Indiana's lawyer-shortage issue and potential solutions. It became clear from the March 25 convening that this Court must use its authority to formally create a commission to further study the issue and propose recommendations.

Accordingly, there is hereby CREATED the Commission on Indiana's Legal Future. The Commission shall explore options for addressing Indiana's attorney shortage and present findings and recommendations to the Court for future actions. The Commission's work shall be divided into five work groups, each incorporating a broad spectrum of relevant professional expertise.

- **Business & Licensure Models:** Identify ways in which the current law firm business model and professional regulations can be improved to meet the needs of modern and future practice and make recommendations on alternative legal licensure models.
- **Pathways to Admission & Education:** Identify and make recommendations on models for alternative pathways to legal practice in Indiana and on models to strengthen and streamline connections between secondary, undergraduate, and law school institutions.
- **Incentivizing Rural Practice:** Identify and make recommendations on ways to connect law students, practitioners, and other legal professionals to business and professional opportunities within rural communities.
- **Incentivizing Public Service Work:** Identify and make recommendations on ways to promote interest in public-service-oriented legal work, including in the criminal

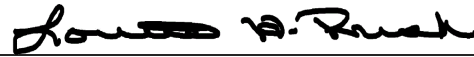
justice system, in family services, in civil legal aid, and in municipal, county, and state government.

- **Technology Applications:** Identify and make recommendations on ways to safely and ethically utilize emerging technologies, such as generative artificial intelligence and online dispute resolution, to fill gaps in legal representation.

The Commission should submit proposals to the Court for action as they are ready but is **DIRECTED** to provide a final report to the Court by July 1, 2025. To the extent legislative changes or funding requests are proposed, the Commission is **DIRECTED** to provide interim recommendations on those requests by August 1, 2024.

A list of Commission members is attached. Selection of members to the work groups shall be approved by the Commission's co-chairs. Membership of the work groups may change as the Commission carries out its work. The Office of Judicial Administration shall assign staff to assist the Commission.

Done at Indianapolis, Indiana, on 4/4/2024.



Loretta H. Rush
Chief Justice of Indiana

All Justices concur.

Commission on Indiana's Legal Future

1. **Co-Chair – Hon. Nancy Vaidik.** Indiana Court of Appeals
2. **Co-Chair – Justin Forkner.** Chief Administrative Officer, Indiana Supreme Court
3. **Dean Karen Bravo (or designee).** IU-McKinney School of Law
4. **Rep. Ed DeLaney.** Indiana House District 86
5. **Sen. Sue Glick.** Indiana Senate District 13
6. **Elizabeth Green.** General Counsel, Indiana Department of Workforce Development
7. **Emily Guenin-Hodson.** Guenin Law Office, P.C.
8. **Prof. Bill Henderson.** IU-Maurer School of Law
9. **Angela Jones.** The Law Office of Angela M. Jones, LLC
10. **Amy Karozos.** State Public Defender
11. **Jon Laramore.** Indiana Legal Services
12. **Jeremy Morris.** Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP
13. **Michael Nossett.** Deputy General Counsel, Office of the Governor
14. **Dean Christiana Ochoa (or designee).** IU-Maurer School of Law
15. **Lara O'Dell.** Program Chair, Legal and Paralegal Studies, Ivy Tech Indianapolis
16. **Kathy Osborn.** Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP
17. **Bob Rath.** Chief Innovation Officer, Indiana Supreme Court
18. **Hon. Hunter Reece.** Warren Circuit Court
19. **Brad Skolnik.** Executive Director, Office of Admissions and Continuing Education
20. **Rep. Greg Steuerwald.** Indiana House District 40
21. **Sen. Greg Taylor.** Indiana Senate District 33
22. **Hon. Leanna Weissmann.** Indiana Court of Appeals
23. **Josh Woodward.** Counsel to Chief Justice Rush