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## Press Release

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### **Holcomb outlines 2018 Next Level Agenda with emphasis on building a strong workforce**

INDIANAPOLIS – At an event celebrating Indiana’s record-breaking year in job creation, Governor Eric J. Holcomb today shared his 2018 Next Level Agenda, which continues his 2017 priorities while placing a greater emphasis on building Indiana’s workforce to fill high-wage, high-demand jobs.

“With nearly 29,000 new jobs announced this year and one million expected over the next decade, we must act now to ensure Hoosiers have the skills they need to secure good jobs and succeed in our growing economy,” Gov. Holcomb said. “In 2018, I will remain sharply focused on building our workforce and other key issues that affect Hoosiers most—jobs, economic growth, health, infrastructure, and government service. I look forward to working closely with state lawmakers and other stakeholders in the year ahead to advance this plan.”

The 2018 Next Level Agenda includes five pillars outlining both legislative and administrative priorities for the year ahead. Read the summary below and visit [www.in.gov/gov](http://www.in.gov/gov) for more details on Gov. Holcomb’s agenda.

1. Cultivate a strong and diverse economy.

To continue cultivating a strong and diverse economy, Gov. Holcomb’s 2018 agenda focuses on attracting new talent, supporting our growing tech sector, preparing for next generation technologies and opportunities, and encouraging sustainable regional development.

2. Maintain and build the state’s infrastructure.

After advancing an historic long-term road funding plan in 2017, Gov. Holcomb’s 2018 agenda focuses on better managing the state’s water resources, expanding our global economic presence with a fourth port, and improving broadband access, speed and affordability where it’s needed most.

3. Develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century skilled and ready workforce.

The 2018 action items outlined in Gov. Holcomb’s education and workforce plan were created with three guiding principles in mind:

- Provide every Hoosier child an effective baseline education infused with skills and attributes that prepare them for life after high school.
- Ensure students graduate from high school set on a pathway that prepares them for college, career training or a quality job.
- Connect working-age adults to education and training that leads them directly to employment aligned with industry needs.

To accomplish these goals, the state will build the framework for the new system through the Governor’s Education to Career Pathway Cabinet, enabling plans, resources and operations to be locally determined and managed.

4. Attack the Drug Epidemic.

Gov. Holcomb's agenda continues Indiana's attack on the opioid epidemic by strengthening enforcement, expanding recovery options and making it easier for Hoosiers to locate and access treatment. Additionally, the 2018 Next Level Agenda calls for improved reporting and monitoring as well as a stronger focus on programs that help reduce infant mortality rates in our state.

5. Deliver Great Government Service.

Great government service remains the cornerstone of Gov. Holcomb's Next Level Agenda. With that in mind, Indiana will continue its history of strong financial management and maintain healthy reserves in 2018. The agenda also calls for a new parental leave policy for state employees, streamlined and simplified processes for citizens to interact with state government, and better outcomes from large-scale IT projects to improve state government service.

Finally, in response to a request from some civically engaged elementary school students, Gov. Holcomb's agenda calls for state leaders to work with students around the state to adopt the Say's Firefly as the state's insect.

As part of his 2018 Next Level Agenda tour this week, the governor will also visit Lafayette, Sellersburg, Jasper, Fort Wayne and Elkhart.

Learn more about Gov. Holcomb's 2018 Next Level Agenda at [www.in.gov/gov](http://www.in.gov/gov).