



GOVERNOR'S PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION

Public Comments Summary

Number of Comments: 59

Timeframe: February 9, 2022 – March 9, 2022

No. of Comments	Topic	Summary
43	Opposition to public health authority and mandates	<p>There were 43 respondents who all voiced opposition to the ability of public health departments to create rules, laws, policies, or mandates regarding the health of IN residents. These respondents recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allowing public health departments to make recommendations on issues such as water safety, implementation of safety inspections, ensure restaurants are providing service in a healthy and sanitary manner, and leading a healthy life• Limit data collection and sharing of health information of IN residents through formalization of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs)• Allowing medical providers to advise and manage the care of their patients, not public health departments• Allowing parents to make all decisions regarding their child's health
5	Smoking/tobacco prevention	<p>There were 5 respondents in favor of increasing taxes on cigarettes to help decrease tobacco use rates in IN and improve public health. Three of the five respondents noted their gratitude for the establishment of the GPHC and recommended the GPHC consider creating additional tobacco policies such as strengthening the smoke free air law and increasing public health funding in prevention and cessation.</p>
3	Public health funding	<p>There were two respondents supportive of the establishment of the GPHC and its focus on improving public health in IN. The respondents recommended enhancing the state's public health infrastructure and increasing funding for public health departments who have played a critical role during the pandemic. A specific accolade was made for the Health Department of Bartholomew County. These respondents recommended working with the leadership of public health departments, health systems, and community partners to tackle high rates of tobacco use, obesity, and chronic disease, and support the public health workforce. Another respondent also supported increased funding for public health by increasing taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals, and allocating funding for hiring additional public health workforce.</p>

No. of Comments	Topic	Summary
3	Mental health	<p>There were two respondents very concerned with the short and long-term damage the pandemic has had on child/adolescent mental health due to mask mandates, school closures, and other policies mandated by the state during the pandemic. They strongly urged the GPHC to end mandates and consider the consequences of their actions on children/adolescents in IN. There was one respondent who discussed the mental health crisis in IN and across the country and the critical need for increased access and funding for mental health services and practitioners.</p>
2	Adolescent/childhood health	<p>One respondent commended the Governor and ISDH for addressing the gaps in Indiana's public health infrastructure and recommended increased funding and partnership with early education, childcare, and schools so children and youth have access to primary care, vaccines, and health education to prevent smoking and other addictions and encourage healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>One respondent noted the critical importance of maternal and child health as the areas with the greatest potential for return on investment, and suggested pairing vulnerable mothers and children with community members who can provide guidance on how to successfully raise health children.</p>
2	Other	<p>One respondent advocated for the ability of state employees to work remotely given the Governor's announcement to launch an initiative incentivizing out-of-state workforce to work for the state by working remotely. This respondent is recommending that the same remote work policies be given to state employees.</p> <p>One respondent commented on the importance of EMS and first responders and strongly encouraged the GPHC to listen carefully to the recommendations and critical issues of people working at the local/grassroots level during the listening tours.</p>
1	COVID vaccine and mask mandates (opposed)	<p>There was one respondent opposed to vaccinations and encourages the GPHC to look at the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) data on a weekly basis.</p>