



**INDIANA PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS COUNCIL**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **IPAC Applauds Passage of High Tech Crime Units Legislation**

INDIANAPOLIS (May 5, 2021) – The Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council announces that the High Tech Crimes Unit program has officially been signed into law and funded via the new biennial budget.

House Enrolled Act 1082, authored by Rep. Greg Steuerwald, R-Avon, will establish up to 10 different High Tech Crime Units throughout Indiana with the potential for college students, focused on digital technology and/or criminal justice, to team up with local prosecutor offices to investigate cyber crimes. Digital forensic evidence is increasingly tied into criminal investigations and opening more of these High Tech Crime Units will allow for serious, violent crimes with digital technology evidence to be reviewed in a more expeditious and rigorous manner.

"Computers, cell phones and other electronic devices may contain valuable information to assist in the prosecution of criminal acts, but it takes knowledge and expertise to extract and analyze that information," Steuerwald said. "By encouraging collaboration between law enforcement and higher education institutions, we can be more efficient while providing students real-world, hands-on experience. It's a win-win for everyone involved, especially victims who deserve justice for the crimes committed against them."

The new units will be built similarly to current programs in Tippecanoe County and St. Joseph County who have working agreements with Purdue University and the University of Notre Dame, respectively. In these agreements, college students studying criminal justice or forensics get deputized by the prosecutor and work on investigations. These existing units in Tippecanoe and St. Joseph counties have worked on homicides, sexual assaults, burglaries and many other types of cases, analyzing cell phone data, cameras and computers to either connect evidence to the target of an investigation or exonerate persons of interest.

Over the next several months, the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council will review proposals by county prosecutors and Indiana colleges to determine where the 10 new units will go. The units will be spaced out throughout Indiana and one unit will serve multiple counties in that geographical area.

"We're very excited about this new statewide resource.," said Chris Naylor, Executive Director of IPAC. "We want to thank Rep. Steuerwald for his leadership, the chairs who heard this bill in committee, Rep. Wendy McNamara and Sen. Mike Young and fiscal leaders Rep. Tim Brown and Sen. Ryan Mishler. The expansion of this framework, pioneered by Tippecanoe County Prosecutor Pat Harrington and St. Joseph County Prosecutor Ken Cotter is a great step forward for criminal justice in Indiana and we look forward to getting these new units up and running in the near future."

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**About the Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council:** The IPAC is a non-partisan, independent state judicial branch agency that supports Indiana's 91 prosecuting attorneys and their chief deputies. It is governed by a 10-member board of directors of elected prosecuting attorneys. The IPAC assists prosecuting attorneys in the preparation of manuals, legal research and training seminars. It serves as a liaison to local, state, and federal agencies, study commissions, and community groups in an effort to support law enforcement and promote the fair administration of justice.