



UTILITIES

Utilities were the top need in our 2026 community needs assessment survey. What is one action step you will take to improve Hoosiers' access to affordable utilities?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

Democrats passed utility cost savings and clean energy incentives under the Inflation Reduction Act that the Trump administration eliminated. These measures worked—and Trump's actions have set us back. We need to reinstate these cost savings and give Hoosiers some relief.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

Indiana's 8th district has some of the worst electricity rate increases in the nation. To address energy costs, we need to address corporate consolidation. In Indiana, private utility companies provide public utilities on a monopoly basis, and the state legislature stripped the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission of its power to regulate these utilities in our best interests. This is a key driver in the cost increases we're seeing. We also need to address the increased demand on utility companies. As large AI data centers come into communities, they draw on the power grid, driving up prices for everyone else in the surrounding communities. I would support a moratorium on building any new AI data centers until proper safeguards are in place to protect your energy costs, your clean air and water, and your job. President Trump's executive order forcing coal powered plants to remain open when they were planning to close has driven up costs, as the energy providers are passing these increased costs along to consumers. The courts overturned these rules in some states, but we need to get rid of them in all states. We also need to diversify our energy sources, especially by investing in more affordable forms of energy like solar. I would reinstate the investments in clean energy that my opponent voted to roll back in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

Utilities are a necessity and shouldn't be ran for profits and shareholders

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

One legislative action: pass the Local Energy Act to accelerate distributed generation — rural solar, small wind, community microgrids — funded from existing DOE and USDA rural development appropriations. It cuts transmission losses, hardens the grid against extreme weather, and keeps energy dollars circulating inside Indiana instead of exporting them to out-of-state investor-owned utilities. But affordability isn't only a generation problem. It's a burden problem. When a household spends 10–15% of income on utilities, every other bill becomes a crisis: rent gets skipped, prescriptions get skipped, groceries get skipped. This is the energy burden trap, and it hits ALICE households and fixed-income seniors hardest. Four structural fixes to pair with the Local Energy Act: Fully fund LIHEAP and expand weatherization assistance. Weatherization is the highest-ROI anti-poverty energy investment we have — every dollar spent lowers bills for years, not months. Shutoff moratoriums for households with medically vulnerable members, verified by provider attestation. No one should die because their oxygen concentrator got disconnected. Arrears forgiveness tied to enrollment in weatherization — turn accumulated debt into a lever for permanent bill reduction instead of a permanent trap. Rate-case transparency requirements on any utility receiving federal energy dollars. If ratepayers are subsidizing the infrastructure, ratepayers get to see the math. Utility affordability isn't charity. It's infrastructure — and infrastructure that fails the poorest households first is infrastructure that's already failing.

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Tonya Hudson Libertarian Region 9	The high cost of Utilities, fuel and groceries are the direct result of inept politicians. If elected to congress, I will vote to end the wars which will reduce the fuel costs that utility companies use. At the state level, the State is also responsible for state regulatory rules and regulations, and I would encourage them to reduce the costly red tape.
STATE SENATE	
Kirsten Root Democrat Region 21	I will push for a moratorium on new data centers and other massive high-energy projects until Indiana has real protections in place for consumers. Hoosiers should not be stuck with higher utility bills so corporations can get sweetheart deals and massive infrastructure built for them. Large industrial users must be required to pay the full cost of the energy, transmission, and grid upgrades they need, and utilities should have to prove that residential customers will not be left subsidizing private profit. Until those protections are law, we need to stop approving projects that put more pressure on families already struggling to keep the lights on.
Joshua Brant Independent Region 23	One action step I will take to improve Hoosiers' access to affordable utilities is to lower costs and strengthen community control over essential services. My tax restructuring proposal eliminates state taxes on utilities, which provides immediate relief on monthly bills for households across Indiana. But affordability also depends on how utilities are structured. I support moving essential services, such as water, electricity, and waste removal, toward public or nonprofit models so they operate with a focus on reliability, transparency, and community benefit rather than profit. This approach helps ensure that every Hoosier has stable, fairly priced access to the utilities they depend on.
Tamie Dixon-Tatum Democrat Region 25	By passing reform legislation for fair ratemaking along with funding state assistance programs and connecting people to these resources. Additionally, temporarily suspending the sales tax on utilities to provide some relief as we reform fair ratemaking legislation.
Ross Thomas Democrat Region 41	The way utilities are regulated (or more accurately not regulated) in this state means that there a lot of changes that need to be made. One thing we should do immediately is repeal the law that allows electric utilities to pass on massive infrastructure costs to consumers, even for projects that never produce any electricity. Giving huge for profit utility companies a monopoly will always be problematic. Ideally a publicly owned utility is the way to go, but as long as we have the current monopolies, shareholders should bear the risks of speculative infrastructure investments, not ratepayers.
Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang Democrat Region 48	I would support a bill to bring back one-to-one net metering, so a family that puts solar on its roof gets full retail credit for every kilowatt-hour it sends to the grid. That same bill should fund community solar, because most households that struggle with utility bills rent or can't afford panels, and a community solar subscription lets them share in the savings. Working families in District 48 are paying higher electric rates while data centers and other large power users look at sites in our counties. Those families deserve a straight answer about who pays for the grid upgrades those projects require, and I believe the companies that profit should pay their own way. I will also fight to keep local control over energy siting, with state standards as a floor and not a ceiling. The people who live next to a project and pay the bills should get the first say.
Cindi Clayton Democrat Region 49	3 year rate increase freeze, removing the 7% sales tax, like they do for data center power usage, require a summer disconnect moratorium (without having to be enrolled in a certain program)

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STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson
Democrat
Region 1

I would hold utilities and ZiURC accountable for the high cost of utilities, by forcing them to be transparent with their spending on infrastructure and updating the grid.

Maureen Bauer
Democrat
Region 6

Eliminate Indiana's 7% sales tax on residential utility bills, providing immediate relief on electric, gas, water, and other essential utility costs for Hoosier families.

Randy Novak
Democrat
Region 9

One action I will take is to change the legislation governing the IURC so ratepayers have a stronger voice. As a new member of the Indiana House, I supported amendments to HB 1002 aimed at reducing utility costs, including removing the sales tax from utility bills. I will continue holding utilities like NIPSCO accountable and fighting for the residents I represent—not the corporations.

Tyler Thomas Bridges
Democrat
Region 11

I will work to limit transportation and utility costs for Hoosier families by increasing accountability in the utility rate-setting process. I support revising the appointment process for the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) to provide greater legislative oversight and ensure that commissioners are accountable to the public they serve. I will also support efforts to expand energy-efficiency programs and other measures that can help reduce monthly household costs.

Austin Meives
Democrat
Region 23

Immediate action the Statehouse can take is to suspend the sales tax applied to residential utility bills. Follow up action relies on capping rates to prevent price gouging, as well as building a grid independent of massive price swings.

Racheal Bleicher
Democrat
Region 24

One immediate high-impact step I would like to take is to introduce legislation that would push the IURC to tie a portion of a utility's profits directly to affordability metrics. Essentially penalizing companies with their rate outpaces median household income growth.

Chris Campbell
Democrat
Region 26

I will work to make Indiana's utility system more affordable and fair by supporting policies that expand access to solar energy while protecting residential ratepayers. I want to reverse Indiana's net metering changes so utility companies pay a fair rate for excess solar energy returned to the grid, and expand community solar and "balcony solar" opportunities so renters and low-income Hoosiers can benefit from renewable energy savings. I will also push for the state to study the impact of high-utility-use industries, particularly data centers, on electricity and water demand. These industries should not be allowed to drive up utility costs for families and small businesses. Indiana should ensure that large industrial users pay their fair share of the infrastructure and resources they consume rather than shifting those costs onto residential ratepayers.

Magdalaine Davis
Republican
Region 26

Being young this is important to me. Over the past 2 years I have seen a hike in my utility bills. I think we need real action and we need it soon. I will work to strengthen oversight of utility rate increases and ensure that large industrial and data-center developments do not unfairly shift infrastructure and energy costs onto everyday Hoosier ratepayers. Hoosiers should not have to choose between keeping the lights on, paying their mortgage, or putting food on the table. I will support policies that promote responsible growth while protecting families, seniors, farmers, and small businesses from unreasonable utility costs. I am also interested in looking at a way to help homeowners and business owners get solar panels. This could help lower costs electric costs. I am also open to learning other ways I can work towards affordable utilities.

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Katie Robins Democrat Region 31	I would fight for stronger oversight of the IURC and utility rate increases, so that investor-owned utilities can't pass rising costs and profits on to families who have no other utility provider to choose from. Indiana's five largest utilities are for-profit monopolies, and Hoosiers deserve a real say in what they pay for power. I would also support ending winter shutoffs for families who can't pay, fully funding energy assistance, and studying public and municipal ownership options. As a nurse, I know that losing heat or power is a health emergency, especially for children, seniors, and people on medical equipment.
John E Bartlett Democrat Region 33	Get control of the IURC forcing them to implement fair policies toward customers. This includes slowing or stopping the installation of data centers which are driving prices higher due to demand outpacing supply.
Kimberly "Kim" Townsend Democrat Region 36	Lawmakers need to do their job and hold utility companies accountable, period! That means challenging excessive rate increases, demanding transparency, strengthening assistance and energy-efficiency programs and protecting families from disconnects. Additionally, if lawmakers are taking big PAC dollars from utility interests or sitting on utility boards while rates continue to climb, they should face intense scrutiny. Our responsibility should be to the Hoosiers paying the bill instead of finding ways to benefit ourselves at their expense.
Lauren Cole Democrat Region 37	One action step I will take is working to amend the current Indiana code that requires data centers to cover at least 80% of utility-project costs that are reasonably allocable to it. I believe this language is too vague, and leaves Hoosiers at risk of paying for a large percentage of the costs associated with these projects.
Lindsay Gramlich Democrat Region 39	I will work to repeal harmful legislation like HB1007 that deregulates our utilities and allow data centers to pass on costs to consumers, and I will push for the IURC to cap rate increases.
Victoria C Martz Democrat Region 55	—Statewide Data Center Ban —Refuse to take Utility Company Campaign Donations
Suzanne Fortenberry Democrat Region 57	No tax on utilities. Utilities give 10% of profits to help access for underserved population.
Michelle Hennessee Sears Democrat Region 58	The legislature needs to stop the acquisition of our utilities by private equity and provide oversight to the regulatory commission to ensure that they are actually acting in the best interest of people, not their own pocketbooks.
Tiffanie Arthur Democrat Region 63	One concrete actions I will take is push for stronger protections that prevent utilities from shifting the cost of major industrial developments onto everyday ratepayers. Hoosier families and small businesses should not see their electric bills rise because a massive data center or other high-energy user moves into the area. That means requiring large users pay their fair share of new generation, transmissions, and infrastructure costs, and demanding greater transparency and accountability when utilities seek rate increases.
Allen Miller Democrat Region 73	Revoke all "shall issue" language around rate increases for the IURC. Currently the language in the laws requires the IURC to justify denial of a rate increase instead of requiring the utility to justify the need for a rate increase.

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Cindy Ledbetter

Republican
Region 75

Indiana made the first step with HEA 1002 this year. I will continue working to bring greater accountability and competition to Indiana's utility system. I have filed legislation to address stranded assets and to introduce greater competition and consumer choice. Just as importantly, I am committed to educating Hoosiers about how the system works and empowering them to make their voices heard. Meaningful change will require both legislative action and an informed, engaged public.

Logan A. Patberg

Democrat
Region 76

I will introduce legislation to eliminate Indiana's 7% sales tax on residential utility bills. Electricity and heat are necessities, not luxuries, and families should not be taxed simply for keeping the lights on and their homes safe. This would provide immediate, automatic relief to every Hoosier household, with the greatest benefit going to families whose utility costs consume a large share of their income.

Alex Burton

Democrat
Region 77

I will continue to shape energy policy in committee and on the House floor.

Ian G. Richardson

Democrat
Region 79

By building the thermal utility. It's a thermal battery storage system that not only captures industrial and air conditioning waste heat. It generates power from that waste heat, and stores electricity as heat. All while providing a thermal utility that provides that recycled heat when needed. Paired with my desire to build artistically designed Vertical Axis Wind Turbines and we can generate cheap electricity, store it, and feed it back as either electricity or heat. While also making sure that large industries like data centers provide for their own infrastructure. We shouldn't be footing the bill for their infrastructure.

Sharon L. Wight

Democrat
Region 81

I will support any efforts to demand a moratorium on rate increases, as well as a review of the IURC and how they are managed.

Wesley Haffenden

Democrat
Region 83

I'll make utility affordability a priority at the Statehouse by stopping unnecessary rate hikes and holding utility companies accountable. Hoosiers shouldn't have to choose between keeping the lights on and buying groceries. We must put people's basic needs ahead of utility company profits.

Misti Meehan

Democrat
Region 84

I will work to strengthen consumer protections in Indiana's utility rate-setting process by requiring affordability to be a meaningful consideration before rate increases are approved. Hoosiers should not be forced to absorb continually rising utility bills without clear justification, transparency, and accountability. I support stronger scrutiny of utility costs and profits, greater public participation in rate cases, and policies that ensure investments in our energy system are necessary, reliable, and affordable for the people paying the bills.

Ed DeLaney

Democrat
Region 6

I will work to insure that data centers do not impact homeowners' utility costs. I will urge that we tax data centers on their electric bills and that failing that we end the 7% sales tax on homeowner bills.



HOUSING

How will you address the current housing crisis, which is pushing Hoosiers — especially those in low-income households — further into poverty and squeezing out moderate and middle-income earners from homeownership?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

As someone who briefly experienced housing insecurity in my youth, this issue is close to my heart. I secured rental assistance funding for Indianapolis, which is essential to preventing eviction and impacts too many Hoosiers. We need to expand housing supply and provide supportive services to those at risk—including financial literacy to help set Hoosiers up for long term success. President Trump cut funding to federal housing programs that were already underfunded. These programs are preventing many families from becoming homeless. We need to restore and strengthen this vital funding.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

We need real solutions that address both the supply and the cost of housing. We need to address the reality that housing supply (stalled since the 2008 housing market collapse) hasn't kept up with the growing demand of the largest generation in U.S. history reaching adulthood and needing housing. The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act was an important start to addressing this issue, but it doesn't solve the whole problem. The other half of the housing crisis is affordability. Wages haven't kept up with increased costs, and some families will never be able to afford homes that can be built at a market rate. Those who are stuck on fixed incomes like Social Security or Disability aren't able to afford housing on their incomes, and a minimum wage worker needs to work over 3 full-time jobs to be able to afford a two-bedroom apartment in Indiana. We need housing subsidies, but 3 out of 4 Americans eligible for subsidies don't receive them just because of underfunding. I would support expanded funding for housing subsidies – both through increased funding and care for public housing and through fully funding Housing Choice Vouchers.

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

By stopping investors from bying up the family homes and finding a way to use tax dollars to help the people with their expenses such as food, rent and utilities and taxing the rich along with raising the minimum wage

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

Housing in Indiana isn't a market accident. It's engineered scarcity — decades of underbuilding, zoning that blocks entry-level supply, and corporate investors treating starter homes as yield instruments instead of family shelter. The result: homes that cost three times annual income a generation ago now cost five to six times, and a growing share of Hoosier renters spend more than half their income on housing. I'm not going to pretend I have a single housing bill that solves this. I don't. What I have is two partial fits and one mechanism that matters more than either. The Family Farm Bill protects the land base — keeping working families on generational acreage instead of losing it to consolidation, which is upstream of rural housing stability. The Senior Property Tax Relief Act caps property tax exposure for fixed-income homeowners so the equity they built over 40 years doesn't get taxed out from under them. But the honest answer on the crisis itself is the Congress App. Housing policy in IN-09 shouldn't be written by a candidate in a questionnaire — it should be written by the people who can't afford a starter home, the seniors watching their tax bill outrun their Social Security check, the renters one rate hike away from eviction. The App is how they tell me what to do, and my vote in Congress matches the verified will of the district with a public audit trail. Anti-speculation limits, supply expansion, first-time buyer support — those are the levers on the table. Which ones the district pulls, and how hard, is the district's call. My job is to build the mechanism that makes that call binding.

Tonya Hudson

Libertarian
Region 9

Although I often don't agree with the behavior and acts of the current Congress, I support the bill that was recently passed, the 'Affordable Housing Act'. It needs time to be implemented but should help the situation of our current housing crisis. Regarding new-built homes, we need to encourage the President to not place tariffs on our neighbor to the north as we get good lumber from Canada.

HOUSING

How will you address the current housing crisis, which is pushing Hoosiers — especially those in low-income households — further into poverty and squeezing out moderate and middle-income earners from homeownership?

STATE SENATE

Kirsten Root

Democrat

Region 21

I would treat housing as both an affordability problem and a supply problem. Indiana needs to build and preserve more homes that working people can actually afford, not just approve development that looks good on paper while rents and home prices keep climbing. I would support state investment in affordable housing, stronger incentives for communities to build starter homes and workforce housing, and preservation funding so existing affordable units are not lost. I also support stronger protections for renters against extreme rent increases, unsafe housing, and abusive fees, along with restoring more local authority so communities can respond to their own housing needs instead of being blocked by the state. For families trying to buy a home, I would expand first-time homebuyer assistance and targeted property-tax relief so people are not priced out after they finally become homeowners. The goal should be simple: if you work in a community, you should have a real chance to afford to live there.

Joshua Brant

Independent

Region 23

Indiana's housing crisis is driven by rising costs and shrinking access to stable homeownership, and my approach focuses on protecting homeowners, reducing displacement, and rebalancing the market so working families can afford a place to live. My tax restructuring proposal significantly reduces property taxes and freezes assessed values until a home changes ownership. This means families won't see their property taxes climb year after year just because the market is shifting around them. Homeowners still benefit from rising equity, but they gain long-term stability and predictability in their housing costs, which is essential for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income Hoosiers trying to stay in their homes. I also believe Indiana must address the growing trend of large companies purchasing homes solely to rent them out. When housing stock is treated as an investment vehicle instead of a community resource, it drives up prices and pushes families out of homeownership. I support policies that discourage bulk acquisition, such as escalating taxes on large rental portfolios, while still protecting small, local landlords. The goal is to prevent speculative hoarding and return more homes to the owner-occupied market, where families have a fair chance to buy and build stability. Together, these steps help keep people in their homes, expand access to homeownership, and reduce the pressures that are pushing Hoosiers deeper into poverty.

Tamie Dixon-Tatum

Democrat

Region 25

By championing budget amendments to dedicate specific funds for affordable housing credits and homelessness prevention grants along with repurposing vacant buildings for affordable housing because the infrastructure is already there.

Ross Thomas

Democrat

Region 41

One thing we obviously need to do is increase the supply of available housing. The state should incentivize subsidized and workforce housing. I believe that any housing development that receives a tax abatement or other government assistance must include workforce housing or affordable starter homes as part of the project. We also need to go further in limited the ability of huge corporations and institutional investors from buy large numbers of homes and artificially driving up the cost of housing. The state should also invest in homeowner assistance programs to incentive the building of affordable housing. We should also invest in an actual statewide rural transit system, which would allow workers to live in more affordable areas while still working in larger cities and town.

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Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang
Democrat
Region 48

The 2025 property tax law, Senate Enrolled Act 1, pushed costs onto the people with the least room in their budgets. Landlords pass property taxes through to renters, and counties now have to choose between cutting services and raising the local income tax that every wage earner pays. I will work to fix that law so the state stops handing its bill to renters and young families trying to buy a first home. I would also give renters a repair-and-deduct remedy, so a tenant whose landlord ignores a broken furnace can fix it and take the cost out of the rent. I will vote to repeal Senate Enrolled Act 285, the 2026 camping ban, which the Indiana Sheriffs' Association opposed. Jail costs taxpayers more than housing help, and a jail record makes it harder for a person to rent an apartment or get hired.

Cindi Clayton
Democrat
Region 49

One cause of our housing shortage is that people are living longer and aging in place. While this is a good thing overall, it's causing a housing logjam. Elderly folks with paid off homes view that as their investment. It costs just as much to buy a much smaller new home than they'll get out of their house. We have to look at Accessory Dwelling Units (tiny homes) for those who WANT to downsize (never forcing anyone to do so). Perhaps this allows elderly folks to live in a community of like minded people or even in a family member's back yard. Right now, they're classified as RVs. We'll need to look at updating the regulations. Another option is the state investing in transitional living - paying a portion of the independent living bills until the person is ready for more advanced care. What we can't do anything about is how high the cost of raw materials (due to Trump's tariffs) and how few workers we have (with ICE filling for-profit prisons with New Americans who work construction) makes this problem one we will need time to solve and we may have to make some stopgap measures while we get back to a sane economic policy.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson
Democrat
Region 1

I would work to increase the amount of income that a person would need in order to receive assistance in paying their rent.

Maureen Bauer
Democrat
Region 6

I support land bank legislation that would allow local organizations to purchase vacant and abandoned properties and put them back into productive use for low- and moderate-income housing. We can address blight while increasing the supply of affordable housing and creating more opportunities for homeownership.

Randy Novak
Democrat
Region 9

We need to make homeownership attainable for working and middle-class Hoosiers while increasing affordable housing for families struggling to make ends meet. As a Realtor and public servant, I see firsthand how rising home prices, property taxes, insurance, construction, and utility costs are putting homeownership out of reach. I support using IEDC grants and incentives to help communities cover infrastructure costs and encourage the development of affordable housing. We also need to support first-time homebuyers and work to keep rental housing affordable.

Tyler Thomas Bridges
Democrat
Region 11

I will work to increase the supply of affordable housing while making homeownership more attainable for working and middle-income Hoosiers. This includes supporting policies that encourage the construction and rehabilitation of affordable homes and expanding opportunities for first-time homebuyers. We need to ensure that Indiana's housing market works for working families, not just investors and high-income buyers.

Austin Meives
Democrat
Region 23

We need to update zoning laws to allow ADU's as well as a move to mixed use zoning to allow more cost effective residential dwelling placement

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Racheal Bleicher
Democrat
Region 24

Amongst many other things, I would like to see a state-backed fund established to provide zero-interest down payment assistance loans for and closing cost assistance for first-time workforce buyers. Additionally, I would advocate for closing notice loopholes to prevent housing loss and enforce basic habitability standards statewide.

Chris Campbell
Democrat
Region 26

I will work to make homeownership and stable housing attainable for more Hoosiers by expanding affordable and workforce housing, supporting starter homes, duplexes and townhomes, and reducing unnecessary barriers that drive up construction costs. I will also support down-payment assistance for first-time buyers and programs that preserve affordable rental housing and prevent eviction and homelessness. Indiana needs a housing market where working families, seniors, and low-income Hoosiers can afford not only the rent or mortgage, but the total cost of staying in their homes.

Magdalaine Davis
Republican
Region 26

I will support policies that make it easier and more affordable to build and maintain homes while protecting local communities from irresponsible growth. Indiana needs to reduce unnecessary barriers to housing construction, encourage a greater range of affordable housing options, and support programs that help working families, first-time homebuyers, seniors, and low-income Hoosiers remain in their communities. I also want to make sure new development is matched with the infrastructure, schools, roads, and public services needed to support it. Hoosiers should be able to find a safe, affordable place to live without being priced out of the communities they call home.

Katie Robins
Democrat
Region 31

Homeownership is how working families build stability, and right now it's slipping out of reach. I would expand state down payment assistance for first-time and moderate-income buyers, because I know how hard it is to save up the down payment. I would also work through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority to incentivize cities and towns to build affordable housing and starter homes through grants and infrastructure funding for communities. To keep homes in the hands of Hoosier families, I would limit bulk purchases of single-family homes by hedge funds and large corporate investors. For renters, I would support rent freezes, stronger eviction protections and limits on junk fees, so families aren't pushed further into poverty by hidden costs.

John E Bartlett
Democrat
Region 33

Indiana needs to stop slum lords from buying up homes and apartments while raising rents and allowing the deterioration of the properties into unhealthy situations. For homeowners in general, we need to make reforms to the assessment process for calculating property taxes. We should average several points over a long time instead of one pinpoint in time every four years so that artificial peaks in market price do not hurt homeowners. We should stop the comparison of property in poorer areas to properties in higher-income areas. We also need to find penalties other than property confiscation. We need to create escrow accounts for people without mortgages to spread the cost over time.

Kimberly "Kim" Townsend
Democrat
Region 36

Housing is the work I do every day and have done for over 30 years. I know firsthand this crisis is no longer just affecting low-income families. Working and middle-class Hoosiers are being priced out too. We need to build and preserve more affordable and workforce housing, strengthen pathways to homeownership, and invest state resources where the need is greatest. Housing should help families move forward without pushing them further behind. If elected, I will fight hard to create a Housing Committee as this is one of the state's problematic areas.

Lauren Cole
Democrat
Region 37

I will address the current housing crisis by first working to expand income-based property tax relief and home repair assistance for seniors, disabled Hoosiers, and working families. Housing costs have risen substantially faster than renter wages in the last few years, so focusing on affordability as a whole is how I believe we should approach this.

HOUSING

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Lindsay Gramlich Democrat Region 39	On the state level, there are a few things we can do. Firstly, we need to fix the problems caused by SEA 1 and stabilize property tax rate increases. Secondly, we can invest in new affordable housing across the state, focusing on filling in empty lots in cities and repurposing unused industrial or commercial buildings, while being sure to retain neighborhood character and account for the limits of local services and infrastructure. If elected, I will work across the aisle to increase our housing stock, cap rent increases, and build affordable workforce housing so the people who work in our communities can afford to live here, paired with compassionate solutions for those facing homelessness.
Victoria C Martz Democrat Region 55	Support building more affordable housing options in my district as well as supporting first time and low income home buyer programs.
Suzanne Fortenberry Democrat Region 57	Invest in tiny home communities. (think trailer park but better built) Build Near grocery stores and parks so owning a car isn't a must. No interest for 1st 5 years on 1st time home buyers (as long as you live there)
Michelle Hennessee Sears Democrat Region 58	The housing issue is more a financial issue that needs addressed by raising the minimum wage in Indiana. The legislature also needs to block private equity firms or leasing corporations from purchasing single family homes. Additionally, there need to be limits on what private landlords can charge tenants based upon the value of the home.
Tiffanie Arthur Democrat Region 63	I would address Indiana's housing crisis by focusing on both affordability and supply. We need more starter homes, work-force housing, and quality rental options, not just high-end development. I would support state and local partnerships that help communities build housing where it is needed, rehabilitate vacant and deteriorating properties, and remove unnecessary burdens that make new housing more expensive. I also want to protect working families from being priced out of their own communities. That means expanding down-payment and homebuyer assistance, supporting programs that help seniors and lower-income homeowners make critical repairs, and making sure housing incentives actually benefit Hoosier families rather than padding developers' profits.
Allen Miller Democrat Region 73	Rent controls on investment so that rent can not increase more than 5% per year without substantial improvements to the rented unit.
Cindy Ledbetter Republican Region 75	Indiana House Republicans have taken steps to address housing affordability by focusing on both the cost and availability of housing. I have supported these efforts, including: • **HEA 1005 (2025) – Housing and Building Matters:** Streamlined permitting and building processes and invested \$25 million in infrastructure to support new affordable housing development. • **HEA 1001 (2026) – Housing Matters:** Reduced certain regulatory barriers and development costs with the goal of increasing Indiana's housing supply and creating more opportunities for new housing development. I will continue supporting policies that encourage new affordable housing development, increase the supply of homes, and make homeownership more attainable for working and middle-class Hoosiers while ensuring housing options remain available for our most vulnerable residents.

HOUSING

How will you address the current housing crisis, which is pushing Hoosiers — especially those in low-income households — further into poverty and squeezing out moderate and middle-income earners from homeownership?

Logan A. Patberg Democrat Region 76	Indiana needs to build and preserve housing that working families can actually afford, not simply offer developers tax breaks without requiring results. I will support state investment that helps communities extend water, sewer, and road infrastructure for affordable apartments and starter homes, rehabilitate vacant properties, and require developments receiving public support to include genuinely affordable units. We should also strengthen rental assistance and expand down-payment assistance for first-time homebuyers. Whether someone is earning a low wage, teaching school, or raising a family on a middle-class income, safe and stable housing should not consume most of their paycheck or remain permanently out of reach. A lot of the time in Indiana, we forget renters exist and we need to prioritize Hoosiers of all income levels.
Alex Burton Democrat Region 77	There needs to be a minimum standard of living established.
Ian G. Richardson Democrat Region 79	Start by barring companies and investment firms from holding more than 15 single family dwellings. As well as removing property taxes from homestead properties. We shouldn't be paying to live here, and well, that benefit doesn't extend to profiteering real-estate investors and second homes.
Sharon L. Wight Democrat Region 81	I will support any bill that would support rent control agreements, demands on landlords to lower their rent costs to a fair market value, and increases of the minimum wage.
Wesley Haffenden Democrat Region 83	I'll focus on building and protecting housing Hoosiers can actually afford. I'll prioritize investing in affordable housing, cracking down on corporate ownership of homes, WeBuyHomes groups, and make it easier to build entry-level housing. Housing is a place to live not a speculative investment for Wall Street.
Misti Meehan Democrat Region 84	I would address Indiana's housing crisis by increasing the supply of homes Hoosiers can actually afford while protecting the stability of people already in their homes. That means supporting state and local tools that encourage affordable and work-force housing development, preserving existing affordable housing, and expanding pathways to homeownership for low- and moderate-income families. We also need to remove unnecessary barriers to new housing while making sure growth works for the communities where it occurs. Indiana should use housing investments strategically — including programs that support construction, rehabilitation, and homeownership — so working families are not priced out of the places where they live and work. Housing policy should ultimately do two things: keep people from falling into homelessness and give more Hoosiers a realistic path toward stable housing and homeownership.
Ed DeLaney Democrat Region 6	We need to subsidize interest rates for first-time buyers and to re-think our multiple housing programs.



FOOD

The cost of groceries — and especially healthy foods — is creating challenges for many families. How will you increase access to quality, nutritious food?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

We urgently need to reverse Trump's SNAP cuts that have caused thousands of families to go without. Indiana also opted out of a federal program that is designed to provide food to kids in the summer, who typically rely on free school lunches. My Summer Meals for Kids Act would ensure every state opts into this program, and kids don't have to suffer because adults choose to play politics. I also am working to pass a bill to reduce food deserts. My bill would help support grocery stores in areas that don't have access to fresh produce and other staples.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

One key thing we can and should do is to break up corporate monopolies. Just eleven corporations dominate our grocery store shelves. We also need to end the war in Iran that is driving up the costs of groceries and everything else we buy due to increased diesel costs. We also need to restore full funding for SNAP benefits and support initiatives like SNAP double-bucks benefits for fresh produce at farmers markets

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

By using our tax dollars to fund production of more meat, vegetables and fruits to help drive prices down and to stop stores from price gouging for the sake of their shareholders

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

Food insecurity in Indiana isn't a supply problem. The state produces more calories than it consumes. It's a distribution and pricing problem — and for low-income households, it's a benefit-cliff problem stacked on top of a food-desert problem. Three fronts: 1. Rebuild the local food economy. The Family Farm Bill I've drafted supports the small and mid-sized operations that historically fed their own communities — before consolidation routed Indiana produce through out-of-state distributors who mark it up and ship it back. Pair it with expanded USDA Local Agriculture Market Program funding, direct farm-to-school and farm-to-food-bank procurement, and infrastructure grants for regional processing and cold storage. Every dollar spent on a Hoosier farmer instead of a multinational middleman lowers the shelf price and raises the wage floor at the same time. 2. Fix the benefit cliffs. SNAP eligibility drops off a wall — a working parent earning one extra dollar can lose hundreds in food assistance. That's not policy, that's a trap. Smooth the phase-out, index thresholds to actual food cost inflation (not the outdated Thrifty Food Plan basis), and expand WIC coverage for the working families currently priced out of both assistance and the grocery aisle. 3. Attack food deserts directly. Tie federal grocery infrastructure incentives to underserved census tracts. Fund mobile markets and cooperative grocery models in the counties where the nearest full-service store is 20+ miles away. Extend SNAP to cover prepared foods at qualifying retailers for households without functional kitchens — seniors, disabled Hoosiers, families in substandard housing. Underneath all three: nutritious food isn't a luxury good. It's the input to every other outcome — school performance, workforce productivity, chronic disease rates, healthcare costs. A district that can't feed its kids affordably is subsidizing every downstream failure that follows.

Tonya Hudson

Libertarian
Region 9

This is a state and local issues to be addressed by state (Lt. Gov overseas agriculture). As I previously stated, I would vote to end the wars to reduce the fuel costs which adds to grocery costs.

FOOD

The cost of groceries — and especially healthy foods — is creating challenges for many families. How will you increase access to quality, nutritious food?

STATE SENATE

Kirsten Root

Democrat
Region 21

I would start by making breakfast and lunch free for every public-school student in Indiana. Families should not have to prove they are poor enough for their child to eat at school, especially when grocery prices can change a household budget long before an annual eligibility form catches up. I also want Indiana to build much stronger relationships between our schools, local farmers, and food producers. We should make it easier for schools to buy fresh food grown here in Indiana, invest in farm-to-school partnerships, and help districts with the equipment, staffing, and purchasing systems they need to serve more locally produced meals. That gives kids better food while keeping more of our food dollars in our own communities and supporting Indiana farmers. Beyond schools, I would protect access to nutrition assistance and support food pantries, community organizations, and other programs that connect families with fresh, nutritious food. Protecting farmland is part of this too. If we want affordable local food in the future, we cannot keep treating productive farmland as disposable. No child should be trying to learn hungry, and healthy food should not be a luxury reserved for families who can absorb another increase at the grocery store.

Joshua Brant

Independent
Region 23

Improving access to quality, nutritious food starts with strengthening Indiana's local food system so families can afford healthy options and farmers can sustainably produce them. My tax restructuring plan incentivizes Indiana businesses to source their products locally, which helps build stable markets for Hoosier-grown food. When local producers have reliable buyers, they can diversify their crops beyond corn and soy, increasing the availability of fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods grown right here in Indiana. This approach also reduces transportation and supply-chain costs, which can lower grocery prices for consumers. To support this shift, I want to invest in rural infrastructure, including processing, storage, and distribution capacity, so farmers have the tools they need to bring more fresh, affordable food to Indiana communities. The goal is a system where farmers earn more, families pay less, and nutritious food is easier to access across the state.

Tamie Dixon-Tatum

Democrat
Region 25

Support proposal to expand community microfarming and make it easier for local farmers to sell directly to their communities.... Save farmland from data centers and other industries that take away from our food source. Reduce tariffs that increase fuel costs [diesel] and other costs that make it hard for farmers to produce food.

Ross Thomas

Democrat
Region 41

The cost of groceries/inflation is a nationwide problem that is more efficiently tackled by national economic policy. Access to nutritious food can be a two pronged problem, having nutritious options available that you can't afford or living in a food desert where healthy options simply don't exist. We should address the first prong by expanding, not continually cutting and over-regulating SNAP benefits, with a greater investment in the program that provides greater subsidies for the purchase of fruits and vegetables. Making healthy choices more affordable is a much better approach than restricting the choices that consumers make with their SNAP benefits. I also support universal free breakfast and lunch for public school students, year round. In many areas of the state, the Dollar General Store is the de facto grocery store. The state should make it a priority to support co-ops and other locally owned stores which offer healthy fresh foods with a real investment. I would support state or municipally owned/funded grocery stores in urban areas where the private sector refuses to invest.

Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang

Democrat
Region 48

Rural families in District 48 often drive a long way to reach a full grocery store, and the small-town stores that remain usually charge more for fresh food. I would support state grants that help independent grocers in underserved towns stock fresh produce, along with programs like Double Up Indiana that let Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program dollars go further on fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and local stores. I also support free breakfast and lunch for every public school student. A child who eats at school learns better, and a parent who doesn't pay for school lunch has more money for groceries at home. This year, the state's economic development agency found up to a quarter of a million dollars for a luxury suite at a car race in Washington, D.C. That money would have paid for fifty thousand school lunches, and I would have spent it that way.

FOOD

The cost of groceries — and especially healthy foods — is creating challenges for many families. How will you increase access to quality, nutritious food?

Cindi Clayton

Democrat

Region 49

Farmers grow what the government subsidizes. Corn is a filler in a lot of ultra processed food. The food industry is a powerful lobby. Again, another big problem. Smaller solutions are incentivizing farmer's markets to keep produce local and reduce the risk of contamination and not having to incorporate the skyrocketing cost of diesel into transporting out of season foods.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson

Democrat

Region 1

I would like to see more neighborhood gardens. They can be at vacant lots, inside buildings and classes offered for individuals on how to grow food for sustainability.

Maureen Bauer

Democrat

Region 6

work to protect access to SNAP and other nutrition programs while supporting our food banks, farmers markets, and local organizations that help families access fresh, healthy food. We should also make it easier for local farmers and producers to sell directly to Hoosier families and support programs that bring fresh food into neighborhoods that lack a full-service grocery store.

Randy Novak

Democrat

Region 9

We need to make sure every Hoosier has access to affordable, nutritious food. I support strengthening local food banks, supporting programs that help families purchase fresh and healthy foods, and encouraging local agriculture and farmers markets. We should also look at ways to reduce the costs that make healthy food less affordable for working families. No family should have to choose between putting food on the table and paying their utility bill or rent.

Tyler Thomas Bridges

Democrat

Region 11

I will work to increase access to quality, nutritious food by expanding SNAP eligibility so more Hoosier families can receive assistance with the rising cost of groceries. I will also support stronger consumer protections against price gouging and unfair pricing practices that drive up the cost of essential food. Expanding access to fresh, healthy foods in underserved communities should also be a priority so that where you live does not determine whether you can afford nutritious food.

Austin Meives

Democrat

Region 23

We must raise the allowances on food stamps as well as close gaps in grocery store coverage. I don't know if a delivery system would be more efficient then a distributed store system by we have to close some gaps

Racheal Bleicher

Democrat

Region 24

I would continue to push for the Food Desert Grant Program that stalled in 2025 to ensure that every community in Indiana has access to fresh, unprocessed foods. I would also champion dedicating a state budget line item to scale the "Double Up Food Bucks" program across the state, instantly doubling the purchasing power of low-income Hoosiers at farmers' markets and local grocers.

Chris Campbell

Democrat

Region 26

I will work to make nutritious food more affordable for Indiana families by protecting SNAP benefits, expanding Double Up Food Bucks at Indiana farmers markets, supporting local food banks and food pantries, and increasing access to fresh food in communities that lack grocery stores. I will also support policies that strengthen school meals and connect Indiana farmers with local schools and communities.

Magdalaine Davis

Republican

Region 26

I will work to make nutritious food more affordable and accessible while supporting Indiana farmers, small food producers, and local communities. I would also look at modernizing Indiana's cottage food laws to determine whether reasonable changes could allow more Hoosiers to produce and sell affordable, locally made foods while maintaining appropriate food-safety standards. Expanding opportunities for small producers, farmers markets, and community-based food programs can help increase access to fresh, nutritious food while keeping more dollars in our local economies. No Hoosier should have to choose between eating healthy and paying their other bills. I would also encourage community gardens. It seems small but this can help with access to quality food as well.

FOOD

The cost of groceries — and especially healthy foods — is creating challenges for many families. How will you increase access to quality, nutritious food?

Katie Robins Democrat Region 31	I would help communities without a grocery store get one, including through state grants and technical support for community-owned and municipally owned grocery stores in food deserts, since private chains often leave the places that need them most. I would protect and expand SNAP and support free school meals for all students, because kids can't learn when they're hungry. I would also support programs that stretch food dollars at farmers markets and local growers, so families can afford fresh, healthy food. As a nurse, I see how nutrition affects health, and no Hoosier family should have to choose between paying bills and buying groceries.
John E Bartlett Democrat Region 33	With 1 in 7 Hoosiers facing food insecurity, Indiana has a big problem. The timing of this survey is ironic in that the Senate moved a bill through committee moving much of the SNAP funding to the states. The state must find the funding to ensure that SNAP is fully funded and that SNAP is available to all who need it.
Kimberly "Kim" Townsend Democrat Region 36	Food banks and pantries are important partners, but they should not be a family's only answer to food insecurity. Families deserve access to fresh produce, quality meats and everyday staples, not just whatever happens to be available or nearing expiration. I would support stronger partnerships with local farmers, grocers and community organizations, expand access to fresh-food programs and protect nutrition assistance for families who need it. The goal should not simply be making sure people have something to eat...it should be making sure they have access to nutritious food they can feel good about feeding their families. I will work to bring in more options and funding to SNAP so that families with children and the elderly will not have to worry about access and affording nutritious foods.
Lauren Cole Democrat Region 37	I will work to connect our local farmers directly with families, schools and neighborhoods, by investing in the infrastructure needed to get food where it belongs. Indiana already has a program called Double Up, which gives SNAP users a dollar-for-dollar match for fruits and vegetables, but operates at only a few locations. I'd like to expand on this program to include farmers markets, farm stands, and more grocery stores. Investing in our local farmers and communities, and building the missing connection between them is the first step I would take.
Lindsay Gramlich Democrat Region 39	The inherently national or international supply chains of food create a barrier, but there is still a lot the state legislature can do to increase food access to needy families. In recent years, however, our Republican state leaders have defunded SNAP and SUN Bucks. We need to restore funding for these programs so that families in need can have access to nutritional food while they work to get back on their feet. Furthermore, we can stop tearing up quality farmland to build data centers, and ensure our farmers are adequately supported and providing good quality food to the market.
Victoria C Martz Democrat Region 55	I will fight for a living wage and adequate benefits for all working class people to increase their buying power. Anyone working full time should not have to struggle to afford food and basic needs. I want to provide small businesses with a subsidy to offset the increase in minimum wage to ensure they remain competitive with large corporations without risk. I also support expanding SNAP benefits and reducing the eligibility threshold. I also support providing free school lunches to all public school students as Fayette County schools in my district have already accomplished.
Suzanne Fortenberry Democrat Region 57	In America we prioritize growing ingredients instead of food. We can give a tax break to farmers who grow farm to table fruits and vegetables to make them more affordable helping both consumer and grower.
Michelle Hennessee Sears Democrat Region 58	We need to make breakfast and lunch free at public school and ensure that those meals are meeting modern nutrition guidelines. We also need to incentivize grocery stores chains to purchase produce and meat from local farmers in addition to surveying the state to determine any grocery deserts and address that from a legislative standpoint.

FOOD

The cost of groceries — and especially healthy foods — is creating challenges for many families. How will you increase access to quality, nutritious food?

Tiffanie Arthur Democrat Region 63	I would focus on making healthy food more affordable and accessible by supporting programs that connect local farmers directly with families, schools, food banks, and community organizations, while also protecting and expanding access to programs like SNAP, WIC, and school meal programs. I would also support incentives for grocery stores and food retailers to locate or remain in underserved communities, because too many Hoosiers live miles from a full-service grocery store. At the same time, we can invest in farmers markets, mobile markets, community gardens, and local food program that keep more food dollars circulating in our own communities. Access to nutritious food should not depend on your ZIP code or your income. We can support Indiana agriculture, strengthen local economies, and make sure families can put healthy food on the table at the same time.
Allen Miller Democrat Region 73	I will introduce a bill to make school lunch and breakfast free for all public schools. We had this briefly during the pandemic through federal relief funds, and it was a huge benefit for all Hoosier families. With implementation we can look at partnerships with local growers to make sure that we are getting high quality locally sourced food.
Cindy Ledbetter Republican Region 75	The rising cost of groceries, particularly healthy foods, is a real concern for Indiana families. Transportation and distribution costs, including federal policies affecting diesel fuel, contribute to the cost of getting food from producers to consumers. I have met with stakeholders regarding these challenges, and we are working to address the matter and bring forward legislation in Indiana next year aimed at reducing costs and improving access to affordable, nutritious food for Hoosier families.
Logan A. Patberg Democrat Region 76	As a teacher, I see what hunger does to a child's ability to learn. I will work to expand Double Up Food Bucks, make SNAP and WIC easier to access, and help schools, food banks, and neighborhood markets purchase more food from Indiana farmers. Hoosiers need nutritious food that is affordable and available close to home.
Alex Burton Democrat Region 77	Prepared food should be accessible via SNAP. We need to increase participation and work within food systems.
Ian G. Richardson Democrat Region 79	By providing state subsidies to farms and producers in the state of Indiana, in exchange for getting first purchase in the state of Indiana. That includes providing tax subsidies for hot house growth, aquacultural farming in low-laying flood prone areas, and cold storage.
Sharon L. Wight Democrat Region 81	I will support efforts to ensure that SNAP benefits are revived for our community members, increase opportunities for community gardens, and ensure that our farmers in Indiana have the opportunity to sell their goods in our state first.
Wesley Haffenden Democrat Region 83	I'll make sure every Hoosier can afford to put healthy food on their table. I'd focus on protecting SNAP, supporting local farmers and food banks, and sponsor legislation to raise the minimum wage so families can afford to thrive. No family should have to choose between paying the electric bill and buying groceries.
Misti Meehan Democrat Region 84	I would increase access to nutritious food by restoring Indiana's participation in SUN Bucks and expanding programs that make healthy food more affordable year-round. Families should not lose access to food simply because school is out for the summer. I also support expanding Double Up Indiana so more SNAP recipients can stretch their benefits when purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables, particularly in communities with limited grocery access. Indiana should make it easier — not harder — for families to put healthy food on the table while supporting local farmers and food retailers at the same time.
Ed DeLaney Democrat Region 6	We need to dramatically increase our state support for food banks esp. in light of cuts to SNAP.



TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families' transportation challenges?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

The increase in gas prices is caused by Donald Trump's war in Iran. Car prices are up because of Trump's tariffs. There's no question Trump's policies are having a disastrous impact on families' access to vehicles. We need to address that, but we also need to build on public transit. In Indianapolis, I brought funding home to establish mass rapid transit, which opens up doors to families who don't have cars or prefer a second option. We have a long way to go, but the progress we've made has helped connect Indianapolis like never before.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

We need to invest in improving our public transit infrastructure and increasing access through funding programs like on-demand services. Terre Haute recently made their bus service free. In more rural communities, we need to invest in regional commuter bus networks and vanpool programs connecting suburban/rural residents directly to industrial parks, medical centers, and higher-education hubs.

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

A good start would be to stop the endless wars and stop funding Israel and increase trade with oil-rich countries while going back to expanding electric and other ways to fuel our future along with using tax dollars to help people to afford vehicles that use less or no oil-based fuels.

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

Transportation in rural Indiana isn't a convenience issue. It's the precondition for every other economic outcome — the job, the clinic visit, the community college class, the grocery run. When a working vehicle costs \$530 a month before gas, insurance, or repairs, it's not transportation anymore. It's a second rent. Four structural fronts: 1. Attack the ownership cost stack. The Rural Equipment Freedom Act I've drafted extends right-to-repair protections so families and independent mechanics can fix their own vehicles without manufacturer lockouts on diagnostics, parts, and software. Repair monopolies are a hidden tax on every rural household — a \$40 sensor becomes a \$600 dealership visit because the code is proprietary. Break the lockout, and the used car you already own lasts three more years. 2. Rein in predatory auto lending. Subprime auto loans at 20%+ APR trap working families in vehicles that depreciate faster than they amortize. Cap rates on auto lending, require full cost-of-credit disclosure in the language the buyer speaks, and give the CFPB real enforcement teeth on repossession abuse. A family shouldn't lose the car they need for work because a lender engineered the loan to fail. 3. Bring services to the people, not the reverse. The Rural Mobile Health Access Act deploys mobile clinics to shortage counties — because the cheapest healthcare trip is the one you don't have to drive to. Same principle applies to DMV services, benefit enrollment, and workforce training: federal support for mobile and satellite delivery in counties where a 40-mile round trip is the default. 4. Fund rural transit honestly. Federal transit dollars overwhelmingly flow to urban systems. Rural IN-09 needs demand-response transit, vanpools, and county-level coordination for medical and employment trips. Tie a share of federal transit formula funding to rural coverage, not just urban ridership. Underneath all four: mobility is infrastructure. A district where a broken alternator costs someone their job is a district where the economy is already failing the people it depends on.

Tonya Hudson

Libertarian
Region 9

I think we should practice 'Free Market Principles', and the right to private property including private vehicles. But with ownership comes personal responsibility. The federal government should not interfere with Free Market Principles as long as our Country's national defense is not in jeopardy.

TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families' transportation challenges?

STATE SENATE

Kirsten Root

Democrat
Region 21

Transportation is one of those costs that can quickly destabilize an entire family. A car repair is not optional when that car is how you get to work, take your child to school, buy groceries, or make a medical appointment. I would support creating a state transportation-assistance fund that community organizations could use to help lower-income Hoosiers with essential vehicle repairs and other transportation emergencies before a broken car turns into a lost job or missed healthcare. We also have to stop treating car ownership as the only realistic way to get around Indiana. I want the state to invest much more in public transportation, including more reliable bus service in our cities, better regional connections between communities, and flexible or on-demand transit in rural areas where fixed routes may not make sense. Public transportation should be dependable enough that people can actually use it to get to work, medical appointments, school, and essential services. We also need to maintain the roads people already depend on. Potholes and deteriorating roads mean damaged tires, suspensions, and repair bills that families are left to absorb. Road funding should reflect the actual miles communities maintain and their ability to pay, particularly in rural Indiana. Transportation is economic infrastructure. If we expect people to work, attend school, keep medical appointments, and care for their families, we have to give Hoosiers more than one way to get where they need to go.

Joshua Brant

Independent
Region 23

Transportation challenges are economic challenges, and improving mobility is one of the most direct ways to help Hoosiers access jobs, school, childcare, and healthcare. In the short term, I support policies that reduce the financial burden of owning and operating a vehicle, including strong incentives for insurance companies to transition toward nonprofit models. When insurance is structured around service rather than profit, families can see meaningful reductions in monthly costs. In the long term, Indiana needs a more reliable and affordable transportation system overall. I support increased investment in public transit not only within cities and towns, but also between them. Regional connections make it easier for people to reach work, medical appointments, and essential services without depending entirely on a personal vehicle. Expanding transit options would lower household transportation costs, improve access to opportunity, and strengthen local economies across the state.

Tamie Dixon-Tatum

Democrat
Region 25

Continue suspending state gas sales and excise tax to help lower fuel costs, and we can help reduce vehicle fees. But, we have no control over car notes. Also improving public transportation and encouraging car pooling.

Ross Thomas

Democrat
Region 41

A comprehensive statewide public transportation system, designed in conjunction with a federal investment in regional rail service, is vital for our state to grow. Not only has the Republican controlled legislature refused to make those investments, they have actually passed laws to prevent places like Indianapolis from expanding mass transit on their own. Indiana also has among highest gas taxes in the country. This is a very regressive tax that hits working people hard. It also creates a system that discourages a transition to electric vehicles since doing so, means collecting less gas taxes. I would support lowering, but not eliminating, the gas tax and replacing it with a more equitable progressive income tax that has those with a greater ability to pay paying their fair share.

Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang

Democrat
Region 48

Public transit is limited across most of District 48, so a working vehicle and a road that doesn't ruin it are necessities. In January 2026, the state's road schedule cut 25 projects in District 48 worth about \$67 million, while the state kept planning the Mid-States Corridor, whose Section 2 alone carries an estimated cost of \$1.18 billion. In a February 2026 Public Policy Polling survey, 88 percent of Indiana voters said they would rather fund local roads and bridges, and I agree with them. I will vote to restore local road funding before the state spends another dollar on new highway megaprojects. I would also support expanding the rural transit services that community action agencies already run, so people can get to medical appointments and job interviews without a car. And I want the state to study low-cost repair help, because one repair bill shouldn't cost a worker a job.

TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families' transportation challenges?

Cindi Clayton

Democrat
Region 49

Life in rural counties is impossible without a running car. That's just a fact. In larger cities, there is some public transportation, but not nearly enough. I'm going to be honest and say I don't have a solution but I am open to ideas.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson

Democrat
Region 1

Carpooling and when possible public transportation.

Maureen Bauer

Democrat
Region 6

Reliable transportation is essential to getting to work, school, child care, and medical appointments. I support greater state investment in public transit, including local bus systems, as well as programs that help working families afford vehicle repairs and transportation costs. We also need to invest in safe roads, sidewalks, trails, and other infrastructure that gives people more ways to get where they need to go.

Randy Novak

Democrat
Region 9

Transportation is essential to a family's ability to work, attend school, and access health care. I would support improving public transportation where it is needed and expanding programs that help struggling families maintain reliable transportation. We also need to address the rising costs of gas, insurance, and vehicle repairs. A reliable vehicle is not a luxury for many Hoosiers.

Tyler Thomas Bridges

Democrat
Region 11

I believe Indiana should be thinking bigger about transportation, including building a reliable mass public transportation system that connects communities across the state. I recognize that this will take time and significant investment, so in the meantime we need to address the costs families face today. I will push for greater transparency and limits on unnecessary transportation fees, including excessive vehicle registration and title fees, late penalties, and other charges that can make maintaining a vehicle more expensive. I will also support programs that help working families afford necessary vehicle repairs and explore ways to make public transportation more accessible and affordable.

Austin Meives

Democrat
Region 23

100 years ago we had light rail connecting the small towns across Indiana. We need a robust public transportation system that connects Lake Michigan to the Ohio River and is affordable to all Hoosiers.

Racheal Bleicher

Democrat
Region 24

I would like to see more modernized and connected public transportation throughout our communities. I think we should also consider an exemption or partial credit on Indiana's 7% state sales tax for low-to-moderate income buyers purchasing reliable used cars under a certain price point, thus reducing the initial financial burden of acquiring transportation.

Chris Campbell

Democrat
Region 26

I will support expanded bus routes, regional transit, and better connections to jobs, schools, health care, and grocery stores

Magdalaine Davis

Republican
Region 26

Growing up overseas as a military kid showed me how important reliable public transportation can be. I want Indiana to invest in public transportation where it makes sense, including expanded bus and rail systems in larger communities and reliable rural transit for communities that need different solutions. At the same time, I know that many Hoosiers, especially in rural areas, depend on their cars every day. We should make vehicle ownership and maintenance more affordable while continuing to invest in the roads we all rely on. Everyone deserves a reliable way to get to work, school, and the doctor, regardless of where they live.

TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families' transportation challenges?

Katie Robins

Democrat
Region 31

For families in rural and small-town Indiana, no car often means no job, no school, and no doctor's appointments. I would fight to fund public transit that works outside our biggest cities, including reliable routes to jobs and medical appointments. I would also invest in fixing our roads and highways, because unsafe, deteriorating roads put families at risk and cost drivers in repairs they can't afford. Indiana has railroad lines running through communities all across the state that aren't being used to their full potential, and I would support restoring passenger rail on them. A worker in Marion should be able to catch a train to Indianapolis, giving families a real alternative to rising gas and vehicle costs.

John E Bartlett

Democrat
Region 33

The other obvious thing about transportation missing here is that as jobs and health care, etc. have evaporated in the small town and rural areas, people are travelling much further for their needs (over an hour for many). We should be encouraging high speed rail commuter lines. We should be better with our road funding (such as not outsourcing our toll road only to replace it with a high gas tax). We should be encouraging alternate transportation type other than fossil fuels by offering rebates.

Kimberly "Kim" Townsend

Democrat
Region 36

Transportation can be the difference between keeping a job and losing one, getting to a doctor or missing an appointment. We need to expand federal transportation dollars into the communities with the greatest need, especially our rural communities where options are limited or nonexistent. We also have to recognize that people don't just work 9 to 5. Transportation must be available for Hoosiers working second and third shifts, too. If we expect people to work and be self-sufficient, we have to make sure they can actually get to work. I will advocate and vote on more funding for transportation expansion and walkable communities.

Lauren Cole

Democrat
Region 37

I agree that a working vehicle is critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments. My approach for this is to work on legislation that will protect car buyers from hidden fees and predatory financing practices. I also believe that we should invest in public transportation options, so owning a car is not the only option, and we should also be investing in targeted relief when gas prices rise.

Lindsay Gramlich

Democrat
Region 39

This is a massive issue for families. Gov. Braun's gas tax suspension has been a temporary bandaid on this issue, and more permanent solutions should be found. The Iran War must end immediately to bring gas prices down, but until that happens, the state legislature needs to act. Indiana leaders have a responsibility to make sure working families aren't financially burdened by healthcare costs, childcare payments, and utility rates, but they haven't done this. At the Statehouse, I'll work to lower these other costs so families can have more breathing room in their wallets to pay for car payments and other transportation-related expenses

Victoria C Martz

Democrat
Region 55

Rural Indiana really struggles with having adequate transportation options. I'd like to see public transportation options expanded into rural areas. I would work to secure state public transit match grants to help fund public transit options in my district. We can also work with local nonprofits who already have access to buses to expand their services to transport residents in need, such as providing tax incentives or mileage reimbursement.

Suzanne Fortenberry

Democrat
Region 57

We need a better public transportation system in Indiana. Investing in our future is a must.

Michelle Hennessee Sears

Democrat
Region 58

We need a more robust public transit system especially into the donut counties (ie communter trains). We also need to address the state's gas tax as it is one of the highest in the country yet our roads are crumbling and in need of constant repair.

TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers' ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families' transportation challenges?

Tiffanie Arthur

Democrat
Region 63

I would focus on lowering the cost of transportation while expanding options, especially in rural Indiana where having a reliable vehicle is often a necessity, not a luxury. That means investing in the roads and bridges Hoosiers already depend on, supporting programs that help lower- and moderate-income families repair or replace unreliable vehicles, and expanding practical rural transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities, workers, and patients who need help getting to medical appointments. I also believe we should scrutinize vehicle fees, insurance costs, and other state policies that add to the expense of simply getting to work. And rather than spend billions on massive new infrastructure projects, I want transportation dollars focused first on maintaining the roads Hoosiers use every day. In rural communities, transportation is access, to a paycheck, an education, healthcare, groceries, and opportunity. State policy should recognize that reality and help families get where they need to go without transportation costs consuming more and more of their household budget.

Allen Miller

Democrat
Region 73

I will work to repeal restrictions on commuter rail. Indiana used to be a national model for light rail inter-urban public transit, allowing a family in Greensburg to have economic access to jobs in Indianapolis and further.

Cindy Ledbetter

Republican
Region 75

Reliable transportation is essential for Hoosiers to work, attend school, access health care, and care for their families. Governor Braun has already taken an important step by temporarily suspending Indiana's gasoline use and excise taxes to provide immediate relief at the pump. Long term, we also need to look at practical solutions that improve access to reliable and affordable transportation. I will continue supporting efforts to strengthen public transportation and expand transportation options at the local level, particularly in communities where limited transportation can be a barrier to employment, education, and health care.

Logan A. Patberg

Democrat
Region 76

Most folks in Indiana cannot just hop on a bus when their car breaks down. Before becoming a teacher, I spent nearly a decade working in automotive and agricultural parts, and I saw how one battery or set of tires could lead to missed work and a family falling further behind. We already have local programs showing us what can work. Vanderburgh County's Gatekeeper program helps with car repairs, while the Posey County Council on Aging provides door-to-door transportation. I would put state matching dollars behind more locally run programs like these because the answer looks different in Evansville than it does on a county road outside New Harmony.

Alex Burton

Democrat
Region 77

Public transit must improve across the State.

Ian G. Richardson

Democrat
Region 79

End the vehicle tax, end registration taxes, end the tire tax. Only taxes we should be levying are against fossil fuels. I would also offer a tax credit for EV owners and first time electric vehicle purchases.

Sharon L. Wight

Democrat
Region 81

We need to increase availability for public transportation across our state. This is one of the areas I am most passionate about, because this would allow for so many benefits to our community. Statewide, our public transportation systems from buses to trains are virtually nonexistent. In Fort Wayne, we don't have buses that regularly go to our largest hospitals; this is just one example of a system that is broken. We should not need a car to get from Fort Wayne to other parts of our state; and we see where public transportation infrastructure benefits others even within our state in Northwest Indiana.

Wesley Haffenden

Democrat
Region 83

Indiana shouldn't force people to own a car just to get to work, school, or the doctor. I'll fight to expand public transit, support passenger and high speed rail, and make transportation more affordable right now by tackling auto insurance costs, lowering registration fees, and looking for ways to reduce the gas taxes. Long term, we should build a transportation system where a car isn't the only way to get around.

TRANSPORTATION

A working vehicle is often critical to Hoosiers’ ability to work, attend school, and make health care appointments, among other needs. Yet costs are climbing here, too: the average used car payment just topped \$530, and gas prices are straining family budgets. How would you address families’ transportation challenges?

Misti Meehan Democrat Region 84	I would address transportation challenges by focusing on both the cost of driving and access to reliable alternatives. In much of Indiana, having a working vehicle is a necessity, so we should carefully examine taxes, fees, and other policies that add to the cost of driving while continuing to invest in safe, well-maintained roads. At the same time, not every Hoosier can drive or afford a vehicle. I support strengthening local and rural transit, improving connections between communities, and making sure transportation options reach jobs, schools, health care, and other essential services. Transportation policy should reflect the reality that Hoosiers need dependable, affordable ways to get where they need to go.
Ed DeLaney Democrat Region 6	IndyGo is moving to help reduce this problem. We need to support it with dollars and publicity



GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

I support universal paid family and medical leave so workers can care for a new child, a loved one, or their own health without losing their job or income. I also support the Childcare for Every Community Act to provide federal funding for states and localities for universal access to high-quality, affordable child care in every community. It would ensure that half of all families nationwide pay no more than \$10 a day for child care and costs will be capped at no more than 7% of household income. Women accounted for 100% of the labor force decline in July, and a huge factor is lack of childcare. We need to prioritize paid leave and affordable childcare for the good of our economy and our families.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

Nobody should have to choose between caring for their health or a sick loved one and their ability to make a living to provide for themselves and their loved ones. I would support a federal paid family and medical leave insurance program that would provide income for up to 12 weeks of leave to care for a loved one. Parents also need to know their children are in safe hands while they are at work, but childcare in Indiana costs more than the average mortgage. I would support legislation that expands federal investments in childcare and caps the costs at 7% of a family's income. I would also support increasing the minimum wage. Work-life balance requires your job to pay you enough that you only have to work one job to have enough to live on. I would also support decoupling medical care from employment through a universal single-payer healthcare system like Medicare for All. You shouldn't be stuck in an awful job just to access the healthcare that you need.

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

The people should have medicare for all that would cover health, eyes, ears, and dental along with paid holidays and parental leave, sick days etc. Every other 1st and 2nd world country on the planet has figured out universal healthcare except the U. S.

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

Paid leave in America is a coin flip. If you work for a large employer in a blue state, you probably have it. If you work for a small employer in Indiana, you probably don't. That's not a labor market — that's a lottery, and the people who lose it are the ones who can least afford to. The absence of a federal floor is the problem. Twelve states plus DC have built paid family and medical leave insurance programs. They work. Claim rates are high, small business impact is minimal, and the pooled-insurance model spreads the cost so no single employer absorbs it. What's missing is federal action to make that floor universal instead of geographic. Four structural commitments: 1. A national paid family and medical leave insurance program, pooled and portable, modeled on the state programs already operating. Covers own serious illness, care for a family member, and bonding with a new child. Funded through modest shared payroll contributions — the same mechanism that makes Social Security and Medicare work. 2. Protect small employers, don't exempt their workers. The insurance model matters here: a five-person shop shouldn't have to self-fund leave, but the person working there deserves the same coverage as someone at a Fortune 500. Pooling solves both problems at once. 3. Recognize caregivers. A daughter caring for a parent with dementia is doing work the healthcare system would otherwise pay for at ten times the cost. Paid leave should cover that reality, not pretend it doesn't exist. The Veterans Dementia Memory Care Access and Accountability Act I've drafted moves in this direction on the VA side — the principle extends. 4. Wage floor and predictable scheduling. The Fair Wage for All Act I've drafted eliminates the tipped subminimum and raises the floor. Paid leave without a livable wage is a benefit workers can't afford to use. Pair it with federal fair scheduling standards so hourly workers can plan childcare, medical appointments, and second jobs without their employer rewriting the week on 48 hours' notice. Underneath all four: the Congress App is how IN-09 tells me which levers to pull first. A shift worker in Bedford, a farmer in Orange County, and a nurse in New Albany have different paid leave needs — and the mechanism I've built lets them shape the specifics instead of a candidate guessing on their behalf. Family and work aren't competing priorities. Treating them as if they are is a policy choice — and it's one we can reverse.

GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

Tonya Hudson

Libertarian
Region 9

As the question implies, States have the responsibility to improve job quality. This should not be done at the federal level or the federal office I seek.

STATE SENATE

Kirsten Root

Democrat
Region 21

Indiana should create its own statewide paid family and medical leave insurance program so Hoosiers can take time off for a new child, a serious illness, surgery, or caregiving without losing every paycheck. The benefit should be administered through a statewide fund, not left to each employer to invent on their own. I would structure it in a way that reflects Indiana's economy. Our state has a huge number of small employers, and a five-person business in Kokomo, Tipton, Sheridan, or Westfield cannot handle an extended absence the same way a national corporation can. The smallest employers should be exempt from the employer contribution, while larger employers help fund the system. Indiana should also provide grants to small businesses for overtime, temporary staffing, or training while an employee is on leave. I also support earned paid sick time and major investment in childcare, because work-life balance is not just about long-term leave. A parent should not have to miss a week of pay because a child is sick, and families should not have to turn down work because there is no affordable childcare available nearby. Indiana talks a lot about being a good place to work and raise a family. We should make that true in practice. A good job should let Hoosiers care for themselves and the people they love without putting their housing, groceries, or financial stability at risk.

Joshua Brant

Independent
Region 23

Expanding access to paid leave and improving work-life balance requires both stronger job quality and a labor market where workers have real leverage. My tax restructuring proposal encourages businesses to source more of their inputs locally, which helps grow Indiana's economy from the ground up. As new businesses emerge and existing ones expand, the labor market shifts in favor of workers, encouraging employers to offer more flexible schedules, better benefits, and more supportive workplace policies. I also support targeted policies that help employers provide meaningful work-life balance. Incentivizing abundant staffing levels can reduce burnout and make it easier for businesses, especially small and mid-sized ones, to offer paid leave and flexible scheduling without disrupting operations. In addition, I believe Indiana should expand access to longer periods of maternal and paternal leave so parents can care for their families without risking their jobs or financial stability. The goal is a system where Hoosiers can take care of themselves and their loved ones, maintain steady employment, and participate fully in the workforce; all while supporting businesses that want to do right by their employees.

Tamie Dixon-Tatum

Democrat
Region 25

I would support a state-run paid family and medical leave program paid for by both employers and employees to help take care of their children and/or other health issues.

Ross Thomas

Democrat
Region 41

I support mandated paid family and medical leave for employees of businesses with more than 10 employees that have worked at a job for more than 6 months, as well as paid family and medical leave for all government employees. I also strongly support the repeal of Right To Work and other anti-union policies in this state. Strong unions can collectively bargain for expanded benefits beyond the minimum that I would require.

Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang

Democrat
Region 48

I support creating a state paid family and medical leave insurance program. Workers and employers would each pay a small share into a statewide fund, and a worker who needs time to recover from surgery, care for a new baby, or stay with a dying parent would draw part of their wages from that fund. I have run a small business for more than twenty years, and I know a small employer can't match a large corporation's leave policy alone. A state insurance pool lets a five-person shop in Ferdinand offer the same protection as a company with five thousand employees, and it keeps good workers from quitting when a family emergency hits. I would also push the state to invest in child care, because parents in much of this district can't find an open slot within a reasonable drive, and a parent without child care can't take a full-time job.

GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

Cindi Clayton

Democrat
Region 49

We MUST enact paid family leave. A paid caregiver for an elderly parent can keep costs down for the state in Medicaid, nursing homes, and is a critical way to strengthen the bonds of family that the republicans keep saying is so important to them. I've worked in HR for 25 years. I know there are people who had intermittent leave that had "flair ups" every other Friday - payday. But, we can't stop progress because some people take advantage. We sure don't stop supporting billionaires and giving them welfare when they cheat/take advantage. As Trump said - not paying taxes makes me smart.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson

Democrat
Region 1

I would offer bills that would raise the pay for hard working individuals and equal pay for women and men.

Maureen Bauer

Democrat
Region 6

I have introduced legislation to expand workplace protections for Hoosiers, including bereavement leave and grandparent leave, and I have offered amendments to ensure pregnant workers receive real, reasonable accommodations on the job. I will continue working to expand paid leave and workplace policies that recognize Hoosiers should not have to choose between keeping their job, caring for their family, or taking care of their own health.

Randy Novak

Democrat
Region 9

Transportation is essential to a family's ability to work, attend school, and access health care. I would support improving public transportation where it is needed and expanding programs that help struggling families maintain reliable transportation. We also need to address the rising costs of gas, insurance, and vehicle repairs. A reliable vehicle is not a luxury for many Hoosiers.

Tyler Thomas Bridges

Democrat
Region 11

I will support creating a statewide paid family and medical leave program that provides workers with wage replacement when they need time away from work to care for themselves or a family member. Rather than placing another payroll deduction on employees, Indiana should pursue available federal grants and funding opportunities, use existing state resources, and explore partnerships that allow us to build a sustainable program. I will also work to expand access to Medicaid and take advantage of federal funding opportunities that can strengthen Indiana's overall health and family-support system. Hoosiers should not have to choose between caring for a loved one and earning a paycheck.

Austin Meives

Democrat
Region 23

I support bringing these programs to Indiana provided they are available equally and aren't limited to those who have time to fill out multiple forms.

Racheal Bleicher

Democrat
Region 24

I would like to see Indiana's Paid Family and Medical Leave system modeled after other successful state programs structured as low-cost, payroll backed social insurance funds. Employee contributions of around 1% of wages could fund standard wage replacement for up to 12 weeks of leave. I believe we should also expand job protection rights so that workers in mid-sized or smaller companies don't risk losing their jobs when taking leave.

Chris Campbell

Democrat
Region 26

Paid family and medical leave is long overdue in Indiana. I will work to create a state paid-leave program with tiered, income-based benefits, similar to unemployment insurance. Starting with a modest, sustainable program would help Hoosier workers care for a new child, family member, or themselves without being forced to choose between their paycheck and their family.

GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

Magdalaine Davis Republican Region 26	I believe Hoosiers should not have to choose between keeping a paycheck and being there for themselves or their families. I would support exploring a paid family and medical leave program that works for both employees and employers, including better maternity leave for new mothers. No mother should have to rush back to work before she is ready simply because she cannot afford to take time off. We should also look at more flexible workplace policies that help parents and caregivers balance work and family. Good jobs should allow Hoosiers to build a career while still being there for the people they love.
Katie Robins Democrat Region 31	I would support a state paid family and medical leave program, so workers can take job-protected, paid time off to care for a new child, a seriously ill family member, or take care of their own health. I would also support paid sick days for every Hoosier worker, because no one should have to choose between a paycheck and staying home when they're sick. I would expand access to affordable childcare, with a phased expansion of publicly funded childcare and pre-K funded through our existing state budget, because parents can't hold good jobs if they can't find care for their kids.
John E Bartlett Democrat Region 33	No one should lose their jobs or face financial hardship due to health issues. We most definitely need to ensure that people are able to exist through hardships. We also need to encourage living wage job opportunities for Hoosiers in small towns and rural areas. We do this by increasing the education level of our population, ensuring affordable and available health care, and building infrastructure such as secondary road improvements and fiber optic broadband internet.
Kimberly "Kim" Townsend Democrat Region 36	Working Hoosiers should not have to choose between a paycheck and taking care of someone they love. I understand this personally, as I cared for my mother while she lived with me, and I know the responsibility that comes with trying to balance caregiving, work and everyday life. I support expanding paid family and medical leave in a way that works for employees and employers, along with affordable childcare and flexible workplace policies. Families should be able to care for the people they love without risking their jobs or their financial stability. Unless we break the supermajority, these types of benefits will be dissolved. Life has a tendency to shift and we need to provide protections for our greatest asset...the worker!
Lauren Cole Democrat Region 37	I support creating a statewide paid family and medical leave program so Hoosiers can take time without losing their job or paycheck. I would also support earned paid sick time, and greater access to affordable childcare. Taking time off when needed is essential to a good work-life balance.
Lindsay Gramlich Democrat Region 39	In the legislature, I would absolutely support a paid family leave law. This is a basic labor right afforded to families in many other states and almost all other developed countries. Governor Braun's program that lets mothers bring their newborns into the office is not the answer, and it's time for Indiana to catch up. As a union-endorsed candidate, I strongly support increased labor rights and strengthening collective bargaining rights so more workers can negotiate higher wages and better benefits. I also support a tri-share childcare system that would split costs between an employer, employee, and the state, making childcare much more accessible and financially viable for working families, along with incentivizing the construction of new childcare facilities to meet demand.
Victoria C Martz Democrat Region 55	Family is an integral part of Indiana. And it's time we start taking that seriously. Only 21% of Indiana workers receive paid family leave from their employers. This gap jeopardizes the health of our communities. Most of us have no safety-net in place if something happens to a kid, spouse, or parents. We are forced to decide, stay home and take care of our family or work to pay the bills and put food on the table. That's an impossible choice. It is past due that our state guarantees paid family leave. My plan would create a social insurance program. This program would cover 8 weeks of paid leave per qualifying life event. It would replace up to the Indiana average weekly income, currently \$1278 a week. It would be financed through an automatic weekly payroll deduction of around \$2. This is how we come together to take care of our community. Because we need each other the most when times are tough.

GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

Suzanne Fortenberry Democrat Region 57	Indiana needs to pass a minimum PTO bill, at a rate that is both fair to workers and small business owners.
Michelle Hennessee Sears Democrat Region 58	Increasing the state minimum wage, creating excitement about Union jobs and ensuring that commercial development is required to use Union workers.
Tiffanie Arthur Democrat Region 63	I would support expanding access to paid family and medical leave so working Hoosiers do not have to choose between a paycheck and caring for themselves or someone they love. I'm open to a statewide family and medical leave insurance program that is financially sustainable, protects small businesses from disproportionate burdens, and ensures workers can take necessary leave without risking financial crisis. But work-life balance goes beyond paid leave. I would also support making childcare more affordable and accessible, strengthening protections for pregnant and caregiving workers, and encouraging predictable scheduling and workplace flexibility where practical. For too many families, one illness, a new baby, or an aging parent can mean missed wages they simply cannot afford. A strong economy should work for the people doing the work. Hoosiers should be able to earn a living, raise a family, and care for the people who depend on them.
Allen Miller Democrat Region 73	We need to repeal the right-to-work law that left unions powerless to organize effectively. Workers can hold all the power at a company if they are able to organize.
Cindy Ledbetter Republican Region 75	Supporting working families requires looking at the entire picture, including child care, family leave and workplace flexibility. Indiana has taken several important steps in this direction. I supported HEA 1253 (2025), which expanded child-care access and reduced barriers for providers, and HEA 1177 (2026) which expanded incentives for employers to provide or help support child care for their employees. Governor Braun is also leading by example within state government. He expanded paid parental and childbirth recovery leave for state employees and launched the Family First Workplace initiative, which allows eligible employees in participating state agencies to bring their infants to work during the first six months of life. I will continue supporting innovative and practical solutions that give employers flexibility while helping Hoosiers balance the responsibilities of work and family.
Logan A. Patberg Democrat Region 76	I do not have to guess what paid leave can look like when workers have a seat at the table. As part of the Evansville Teachers Association team that negotiated our latest contract with EVSC, I helped expand paid parental leave to at least 15 days for a birth, adoption, or stillbirth. We made real progress because workers sat down together and made the case that welcoming a child should not mean losing a paycheck. At the Statehouse, I would take that same approach by bringing workers and employers together to create a statewide family and medical leave insurance program. I would also support earned sick time, more predictable scheduling, and affordable child care. Folks should not have to choose between keeping their job and caring for the people who depend on them.
Alex Burton Democrat Region 77	I'd look to approaching this relying on my colleagues. I'm going into my 2nd term focused on results.
Ian G. Richardson Democrat Region 79	Childcare tax credits, 45 day medical leave pay, 90 day medical leave coverage, 4 weeks a year in sick pay, and a mandatory 30 days of holiday pay.

GOOD JOBS

Hoosiers want access to good jobs that allow them to balance work and family. Many states are improving job quality through the creation of state family and medical leave insurance programs, which allow workers to receive paid time off to care for themselves or others. How would you approach expanding access to paid leave and other work-life balance supports for working Hoosiers?

Sharon L. Wight Democrat Region 81	This is a key area of difficulty in our state - and one that I personally have been subject to. I was working at a place that appeared to follow all of the rules, only to meet resistance when I needed an extended leave for a major procedure. This is another area I would put myself in the front of the fight for to ensure that no one has to worry about losing their jobs when they are also ill. Regarding work-life balance, this is certainly another area we see unsupported by our state in both public and private sectors. We need to do a better job ensuring that our citizens stay healthy both mentally and physically, and this might mean pressuring businesses to treat their employees as human beings, rather than robots.
Wesley Haffenden Democrat Region 83	I'll fight for paid family and medical leave in Indiana so workers don't have to choose between a paycheck and caring for themselves or someone they love. We must also mandate sick leave and make sure employers can't punish people for using it. Your job should not force you to choose between work and your family. This is part of my policy platform on my website and something I am running on. Hoosiers must take back the power that has been ceded to corporations for decades.
Misti Meehan Democrat Region 84	I support expanding access to paid family and medical leave so workers do not have to choose between a paycheck and caring for themselves, a new child, or a seriously ill family member. Indiana should explore a statewide paid-leave program that is sustainable for workers and employers, particularly small businesses. Work-life balance also means predictable scheduling, affordable child care, and wages that allow a full-time worker to support a stable life. Good jobs should provide more than a paycheck; they should give Hoosiers a realistic opportunity to care for their families, remain in the workforce, and build long-term financial stability.
Ed DeLaney Democrat Region 6	We need to build out the unemployment system to add coverage for these temporary absences.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Our advisory council encouraged us to ask candidates: how have you been an advocate for Hoosiers of modest means in your roles prior to running for office?

CONGRESS

Andre Carson

Democrat
Region 7

Growing up, my life was changed by programs like Head Start, which helps lower income families afford early childhood education. I haven't forgotten how important it is to support Americans who have modest means, especially children. Programs like Medicaid and SNAP aren't handouts. They're investments in the health and safety of our nation. I will always vote to strengthen social safety net programs because everyone deserves a helping hand – and in the richest country in the world, no one should go without the care and food they need.

Mary Allen

Democrat
Region 8

I first ran for public office because I continually saw how policy impacts people – from working in healthcare to serving with my husband in an urban non-profit ministry, I saw how policies hit people in some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. In the non-profit world, we worked directly with families navigating financial hardship to build sustainable paths forward, established after-school tutoring to support students academically, managed weekend meal programs and established an urban community garden to improve access to fresh produce. Serving on the ground taught me that real advocacy means listening to neighbors, understanding systemic barriers, and creating practical solutions that help families thrive.

James Burke

Independent
Region 8

Never been in any roles before this but my household frequently donates the clothes and household items to places like recovery houses, animal rescues and other less fortunate people.

Floyd Taylor

Independent
Region 9

Honest answer: not enough, and that's part of why I'm running. Before this campaign, my advocacy for Hoosiers of modest means looked like most people's — the neighbor scale. I've given strangers rides when they needed to get to work, a clinic, or home. I've shared food and supplies with people on my road when things got tight. I've helped where I could see the need directly, because that's what you do when you live in a community and pay attention. But I'm not going to stand here and tell you giving someone a ride to a doctor's appointment is the same as fixing the fact that they had to hitchhike to get healthcare in the first place. It isn't. Individual generosity is real, and it matters, and it's also structurally insufficient. A neighbor with a working truck can plug one gap on one day. It can't close a hospital desert, cap a predatory auto loan, or smooth a SNAP cliff. That gap — between what one person can do at the neighbor scale and what the system is doing to people at the district scale — is why I decided running for office was the honest next step. And it's why the campaign is built around the Congress App instead of around me. One representative giving rides doesn't scale. A mechanism that lets 750,000 Hoosiers direct federal votes on the policies squeezing them — that scales. The best advocacy I can offer people of modest means isn't my personal generosity. It's building a system where their voice sets the vote, and a public audit trail proves it did.

Tonya Hudson

Libertarian
Region 9

I am a member of the local Lions Club, and we do volunteer work to help local food pantries.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Our advisory council encouraged us to ask candidates: how have you been an advocate for Hoosiers of modest means in your roles prior to running for office?

STATE SENATE

Kirsten Root

Democrat
Region 21

Before I ever ran for office, most of my career has been spent working directly with Hoosiers who were trying to navigate systems that are hardest on people with the fewest resources. As a family case manager with the Indiana Department of Child Services, I worked with families dealing with housing instability, transportation problems, domestic violence, mental health needs, addiction, childcare barriers, and jobs that did not leave much room for a crisis. Part of my job was advocating with courts, schools, service providers, and other agencies so families could actually access the help they were being told they needed. That experience also taught me how often poverty itself gets mistaken for neglect or irresponsibility when the real problem is that a family cannot afford rent, childcare, transportation, or treatment. I carried that same approach into my work in community healthcare and mental health. At the IU Student Outreach Clinic and through Mobile Integrated Health with the Westfield Fire Department, I saw how much difference it makes when services meet people where they are instead of expecting someone already in crisis to navigate five different systems on their own. I have also stood with workers fighting for fair treatment, including NIPSCO workers, and spoken publicly about utility affordability and the impact rate increases have on families who cannot simply absorb another monthly bill. Advocacy, to me, has never meant speaking for people who are struggling. It means listening to them, helping remove the barriers in front of them, and using whatever position I have to make sure the systems affecting their lives actually hear them.

Joshua Brant

Independent
Region 23

I've been an advocate for Hoosiers of modest means long before running for office, and much of that comes from lived experience. I grew up in a working-poor household, so I understand firsthand the challenges families face when they're doing everything right but still struggling to get ahead. That background has shaped the way I listen, learn, and engage with issues that affect low-income Hoosiers. I've also made a point of challenging my own assumptions. For example, I was initially skeptical of a \$15/hour minimum wage, until I sat down and tried to build a real budget based on a full-time schedule at that pay rate. The numbers made it clear that many Hoosiers simply cannot meet basic needs at that wage. That experience pushed me to rethink my position and advocate more strongly for policies that reflect the actual cost of living. Beyond wages, I've been a vocal supporter of FMLA protections, stronger worker safety standards, and healthier (including mental health) and more supportive workplaces. I've consistently spoken up about the need for dignity, stability, and fair treatment for working families, and I've tried to use my voice to highlight the realities Hoosiers face every day. My advocacy has always been rooted in listening, learning, and standing up for people whose struggles often go unseen. That's the same approach I bring to public service.

Tamie Dixon-Tatum

Democrat
Region 25

I am a civil and human rights director that offers daily protection against discrimination in the areas of fair housing, education, employment, disability and public accommodations. Plus, I have helped to organize and implement the 35th annual back to school parade and picnic in Madison County/Anderson Indiana where we give away free school supplies k-12, food and drinks.

Ross Thomas

Democrat
Region 41

As an attorney in private practice in Indiana for over 30 years I provide pro bono services regularly for people that need my help without the ability to pay. As chairman of the Bartholomew County Democratic Party, I have given two local groups, Our Common Goods and Food Not Bombs, access to our headquarters both as a meeting place to organize, but also space to store their donations. We are also regular contributors to Turning Point shelter in Columbus. I personally assist Food Not Bombs with proving a free hot meal every Sunday in Pence Park in Columbus, where I also bring tables and chairs from our headquarters. I have continuously lobbied or city government against tax abatements for housing developments that do not include workforce housing.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Our advisory council encouraged us to ask candidates: how have you been an advocate for Hoosiers of modest means in your roles prior to running for office?

Bradley "Brad" Hochgesang

Democrat
Region 48

Two years ago, my wife and I learned our new home sat in the path of the proposed Mid-States Corridor highway. We started filing public records requests, speaking at county meetings, and organizing the families along the route, most of whom had never spoken in front of a government body. More than 13,000 people signed the petition, a December 2025 Public Policy Polling survey found 81 percent of Dubois County voters oppose the corridor, and the Dubois County Council voted to withdraw from the corridor's regional development authority. That work grew into 19 public town halls, ten on the corridor and nine in a series called "Your Community, Your Say." My wife and I both work full time, so we hold them on nights and weekends when working people can come. Moderators are sometimes Republican, and the panels have included Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Neighbors have told me at those meetings that nobody had asked their opinion in years, and I intend to keep asking.

Cindi Clayton

Democrat
Region 49

I have served Holly's House for 11 years (local adult and children's advocacy center) and am the current board chair. My "crew" and I volunteer for Keep Evansville Beautiful. I am an active member of the NAACP and contribute to their Men's health initiative in Barbershops. I volunteer with the Vanderburgh Humane Society and River Kitty Cat Cafe. I attend every inner city neighborhood association every month if I can, so I can hear and understand the problems and wins for each community.

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Carolyn B Jackson

Democrat
Region 1

Prior to running for office I was an advocate for individuals in my community by attending city council meetings and speaking to issues like. Keeping the health department open in my community, keeping public transportation and continuing leaf removal in the fall.

Maureen Bauer

Democrat
Region 6

Before running for office, I worked at the Statehouse for the Indiana House Democrats, where I ran constituent mail communications and the livestreams of legislative session and committee meetings, helping bridge the divide between the public and their state government. I also worked on campaigns, knocking on doors, phone banking, organizing fundraisers, and talking directly with Hoosiers about the issues affecting their families. Those experiences taught me the importance of making government accessible and ensuring that everyone, regardless of income, has a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. I also worked as a harvest worker in wine cellars, understanding the importance of safe working environments and labor shortages. These experiences have helped guide me as an elected official.

Randy Novak

Democrat
Region 9

Long before running for office, public service was my career and my calling. For more than 35 years as a firefighter, I served the people of Michigan City and advocated for families in need. As a member of the LaPorte County Council, I worked on budgets and long-term planning with a focus on responsible use of taxpayer dollars and the needs of our communities. I have also served for many years on the Community Action Agency Board and worked closely with the Salvation Army and local Township Trustees to help people in need. I have always believed that those who are struggling deserve someone willing to stand up and help—and that is the same commitment I bring to the State House.

Tyler Thomas Bridges

Democrat
Region 11

As a teacher, I have advocated for Hoosiers of modest means by helping young people understand their rights, their government, and their ability to participate in our democracy. In my classroom, I have worked to make civics and government accessible to every student, regardless of their background or economic circumstances. I have also helped students register to vote so they could have a voice in the decisions that affect their communities. I believe civic engagement is one of the most important tools working families have to advocate for themselves. Before running for office, my role as an educator allowed me to help students find their voice and understand that their participation matters.

Austin Meives

Democrat
Region 23

I'm just one guy but last year I donated over 100lbs of meat to a homeless outreach and they made a bunch of meal from that. I donate where I can

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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Racheal Bleicher

Democrat
Region 24

I have been passionate about service, volunteering and philanthropy for as long as I can remember. Since moving to Indiana in 2020, I have volunteered at the Indiana Diaper Bank and advocated with the Junior League of Indiana for services in foster and kinship care; ensuring no child or family is left behind. I believe that when we lift each other up, we all rise and that is a value that I will continue to carry into the Statehouse.

Chris Campbell

Democrat
Region 26

I advocated for Hoosiers of modest means through service on boards focused on homelessness and recovery services. I have worked to understand the challenges facing low-income families and workers by staying engaged with community organizations and listening directly to the people they serve. That experience continues to shape my work in the legislature and my commitment to making sure every Hoosier has the opportunity to thrive.

Magdalaine Davis

Republican
Region 26

Being 23 I have not held any prior roles. I can tell you how I plan to though. I plan to listen to my community and the data. I do a lot of research and one thing that my theory professor told me the other day stuck with me. He said "when you look at the data there will be times that you're wrong, and thats ok. The question is what do you do when you're proven wrong?" If I am proven wrong by the data I plan to admit that and change my course based on the facts. I think this is something we have sadly lost in politics. I see people following the money or the next big thing even if the facts show us how detrimental that decision can be.

Katie Robins

Democrat
Region 31

As a nurse, I've advocated for patients of modest means every day. When coverage limits left patients without the supplies they needed to safely manage their care at home, I found ways to make sure they didn't leave empty-handed. I've also trained and mentored new nurses, teaching them to look out for patients who fall through the cracks. And like many Hoosiers, I've faced the choice between paying bills or buying groceries myself, so I understand these struggles personally and will fight for policies that meet families where they are.

John E Bartlett

Democrat
Region 33

I have volunteered for Second Harvest Food Bank and some local food pantries. I have worked on Habitat projects.

Kimberly "Kim" Townsend

Democrat
Region 36

Advocating for Hoosiers of modest means isn't something I started doing because I decided to run for office. It has been the work of my entire career. For more than 30 years, I have worked in housing, community development, local government and nonprofit leadership, helping families access safe housing, federal resources and opportunities that can change the direction of their lives. Today, as CEO of the Anderson Housing Authority, I advocate every day for seniors, people with disabilities, working families, veterans, children and people experiencing homelessness. I have fought to bring millions of dollars back into our community, expand housing opportunities, protect families from displacement, improve neighborhoods and make sure people who are too often overlooked have a seat at the table. I have also served on community boards, worked with our schools, supported young people and families, even those returning to the community from incarceration. I helped bring organizations together when our community faced difficult challenges. I have sat across the table from families who are struggling, and I have sat across the table from the people who control the resources. I have never been afraid to speak up in either room. My advocacy has always been about making sure everyday people are seen, heard and treated with dignity. Running for office is not the beginning of that work for me. It is an opportunity to take the work I have already been doing for decades to the Statehouse and elevate outcomes for Madison County.

Lauren Cole

Democrat
Region 37

Before running for office, I used my scientific background to make healthcare more accessible and humane. While working in a COVID-19 testing lab, our company primarily served nursing-home residents covered by Medicaid, many of whom struggled with repeated nasal swabs. I decided to develop a saliva based test that was easier and less invasive for these patients, as well as young children, and anyone who had difficulty tolerating traditional testing. That experience taught me that advocacy begins with recognizing a system isn't meeting someone's needs, listening to how they are affected, and using that information to create something more robust. That is how I will approach advocacy at the Statehouse.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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Lindsay Gramlich

Democrat
Region 39

In my day job, I am the President & CEO of Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis. We serve over 2700 girls in central Indiana, helping them develop life skills and supporting them through their formative years. Most of our girls come from underserved communities. These families are the hardest hit by state funding cuts to public schools and programs like Medicaid and SUN Bucks. Seeing this is a big part of why I decided to run. Society can be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable members, and we aren't doing enough to support Hoosiers in need.

Victoria C Martz

Democrat
Region 55

I've always been deeply involved in my community. As a criminal defense attorney I offer pro bono services representing those in need when I am able. I have always been a very vocal advocate in my local community voicing my support of uplifting the most vulnerable among us. I go to local town halls and try to speak on behalf of the people. Recently I went to a county commissioners meeting in Franklin County to speak against data centers in our rural communities as it can increase everyone's energy bills and harm our environment.

Suzanne Fortenberry

Democrat
Region 57

I Run a non-profit (100% volunteer run) . Our secondary mission is to connect people to other organizations that are open and inclusive to all.

**Michelle Hennessee
Sears**

Democrat
Region 58

I have worked with individuals with developmental disabilities for 20+ years, advocating for change in education and health systems to ensure that individual needs were being met.

Tiffanie Arthur

Democrat
Region 63

Before running for office, I had already spent years advocating for Hoosiers of modest means through community service, education, youth programs, and local organizing. Much of that work has centered on making sure people have access to opportunities, resources, and a voice regardless of their income. As an educator, coach, booster leader, and nonprofit volunteer, I saw firsthand how transportation, activity fees, childcare costs, food insecurity, and other everyday expenses can limit opportunities for families. I worked to help young people participate, succeed, and feel supported even when their families were stretched financially. In community leadership, I have also focused on practical service, organizing food drives, helping provide free Thanksgiving meals to local families, supporting community resource efforts, and creating spaces where people can connect with information and assistance. As Daviess County Democratic Party Chair, I have emphasized service before politics, because people need organizations that show up for their communities, not just during elections.

Allen Miller

Democrat
Region 73

Quite frankly I haven't been actively involved in much of anything for the last 10 years. I've been pretty caught up in raising two kids.

Cindy Ledbetter

Republican
Region 75

Having personally experienced poverty and homelessness, I understand how difficult it can be to work your way toward stability and self-sufficiency. Those experiences have shaped my commitment to giving families a hand up and creating opportunities to move out of poverty. That commitment has carried into my legislative work. I co-authored HEA 1009 (2021), which changed Indiana's TANF rules so that eligible young people could pursue education, workforce training or apprenticeships and earn additional income without automatically jeopardizing their family's assistance. The goal was simple: we should encourage young people to work, gain skills and become self-sufficient—not penalize their families when they do. I currently serve on the House Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee, where I continue advocating for policies that strengthen families. In my community, I also believe in giving back personally and have donated portions of my campaign funds to local nonprofits serving children, seniors and veterans, including the United Methodist Youth Home, SWIRCA and local veterans organizations. This is very dear to my heart. I received a hand up when I needed one, and I believe strongly in paying that forward and helping other Hoosiers build a better life for themselves and their families.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

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Logan A. Patberg Democrat Region 76	As a public school teacher, I work every day with young people who are capable but often carrying problems beyond their years, whether that is unstable housing, no reliable ride, or needing to work while finishing school. I try to be the person who listens and helps them find the best path forward. As an Evansville Teachers Association board member, I have fought for better pay, benefits, and working conditions for educators. I was also part of the contract negotiations that expanded paid parental leave for EVSC teachers to at least 15 days. Before teaching, I spent nearly a decade working in automotive and agricultural parts alongside many of the same working families I hope to represent. To me, advocacy means showing up, listening, and using whatever seat you have at the table to make life a little more workable for folks who are too often ignored.
Alex Burton Democrat Region 77	Affordable housing, food access, and listening more than I speak.
Ian G. Richardson Democrat Region 79	I am a Hoosier of modest means. I'm living in poverty and have most of my life. Right now I'm working overtime at a restaurant. I advocate for Hoosiers of modest means, because I'm right there with them, in the same boat. I want what's best for all of us, and well, we are being shafted.
Sharon L. Wight Democrat Region 81	I have supported organizations such as Blessings in a Backpack, The League for the Blind and Disabled, Fort Wayne Center for Learning, and Turnstone Center for Children and Adults with Disabilities financially. Additionally in 2024, Fort Wayne Toys for Tots suspended their giving for one year. A friend and I jumped into action, and in 6 weeks organized Christmas gifts for over 200 children in our area.
Wesley Haffenden Democrat Region 83	I have volunteered for non-profits right here in NE Indiana and previously served in student leadership at Purdue Fort Wayne. I built a career in the private sector while coming from a working class family that relied on reduced lunch and public health programs during the housing crisis. Those experiences shaped how I view our current economic systems.
Misti Meehan Democrat Region 84	Much of my advocacy has focused on making democracy more accessible to ordinary Hoosiers. I have spent years working elections, recruiting and training volunteers and poll workers, helping voters understand the process, and advocating for voting systems that remove unnecessary barriers to participation. I strongly support Vote Centers because they give voters greater flexibility to cast their ballot where it works best for them rather than being limited to one assigned Election Day location. That matters especially for people balancing hourly jobs, transportation challenges, child care, and other demands. For me, civic engagement begins with making sure government is accessible to the people it serves. Hoosiers should not need extra time, money, or flexibility just to exercise their right to vote.
Ed DeLaney Democrat Region 6	I worked for fair housing, access to public facilities and bail cost reduction before becoming a legislator.