



## Indiana – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2025

### Summary

**The eleventh edition** of the Indiana CPAC Scorecard reveals a state legislature that largely upholds conservative principles, yet shows early signs of troubling drift. In 2024, the **Indiana Senate averaged 66% overall**, with Republicans holding a **strong 76%** and Democrats lagging at **19%**, underscoring their near-total embrace of big-government priorities. In the **Indiana House**, the pattern continued: Republicans averaged **79%**, Democrats **34%**, with an overall chamber average of **66%**.

This year's session featured significant wins for **constitutional liberty, property rights, and cultural sanity**. Lawmakers cracked down on squatting through SB 293, blocked foreign nationals from hostile nations buying land near military sites with HB 1183, and curbed the DEI machinery in public universities via SB 202. Indiana also took steps to protect Second Amendment rights by reducing gun-free zones (HB 1084) and safeguarded election integrity by banning local participation in privately funded election operations (HB 1264).

Yet these victories were tempered by growing openness to selective taxes and new mandates. SB 238 authorized counties to raise innkeeper's taxes, while SB 273 and HB 1385 imposed costly insurance mandates that will ultimately raise premiums for Indiana families. Such measures signal an unsettling comfort with government-directed economics that runs counter to true conservative governance.

Despite these concerns, Indiana remains a national example for resisting **progressive overreach on cultural issues, immigration enforcement, and parental rights**. The data clearly shows a Republican caucus largely committed to conservative ideals, while Democrats in both chambers stand nearly unified in support of expanding state power and embedding DEI radicalism. As Indiana looks ahead, conservatives must stay vigilant to ensure the state does not follow peers like Illinois down the path of higher costs, government favoritism, and diminished personal liberty.

## **Key Takeaways**

### **Indiana Strengthens Conservative Ground on Cultural and Constitutional Issues**

Indiana lawmakers delivered meaningful victories for conservatives on multiple fronts. With SB 202, the legislature took direct aim at entrenched DEI programs in higher education, making it easier to challenge discriminatory practices and reducing the likelihood that radical professors will secure tenure. HB 1264 similarly advanced core conservative priorities by blocking local election offices from participating in privately funded programs that could undermine election transparency and fairness. Meanwhile, HB 1084 strengthened Second Amendment protections by reducing gun-free zones and prohibiting the creation of firearm registries, reaffirming Indiana's commitment to foundational constitutional rights.

### **Hoosiers Defend Property Rights and Stand Against Foreign Adversaries**

Indiana also moved decisively to protect private property and national security. SB 293 criminalized squatting, ensuring that property owners cannot be forced into costly legal battles simply to reclaim their land. In a year when foreign influence has become a growing concern, HB 1183 prohibited individuals with ties to nations like China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea from buying land near military installations which is a targeted, sensible approach to safeguard critical infrastructure from foreign exploitation.

### **Troubling Signs of Policy Drift: New Taxes and Mandates Erode Economic Freedom**

However, even as Indiana held firm on cultural and security issues, the legislature advanced policies that chip away at economic freedom. SB 238 gave counties authority to raise innkeeper's taxes, burdening small businesses and consumers in the name of local revenue. Even more concerning, lawmakers passed SB 273 and HB 1385, imposing new insurance mandates that will drive up premiums and set dangerous precedents for government interference in private markets. These moves run directly counter to the principles of fiscal restraint and market neutrality that have long underpinned Indiana's economic success.

## **Highlighted Votes Analyzed**

### **SB 17 – Preventing Minors from Accessing Pornographic Websites with Age Verification Requirements**

This bill requires “adult-oriented websites” to implement reasonable age verification requirements to prevent minors from accessing pornography. CPAC supports efforts to prevent minors from gaining access to pornography and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on March 4, 2024 by a vote of 46-2, and the House passed it on February 27, 2024 by a vote of 92-2. The bill later became law.

### **SB 181 – Empowering the State to Enforce Federal Immigration Laws**

This bill allows the attorney general to, if probable cause exists, bring an action against a governmental entity to compel it to comply with federal immigration law. CPAC supports efforts to enforce federal immigration laws and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on January 22, 2024 by a vote of 37-9, and the House passed it on February 27, 2024 by a vote of 70-23. The bill later became law.

### **SB 202 – Shaving Away at DEI Regimes at Indiana’s Public Universities**

This bill contains various provisions aimed at hacking away at entrenched DEI policies at public institutions of higher education. For example, it makes it easier to file complaints against discriminatory universities and reduces the likelihood that an extremist Leftist professor will receive tenure. CPAC opposes DEI structures and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on February 29, 2024 by a vote of 33-12, and the House passed it on February 27, 2024 by a vote of 66-31. The bill later became law.

### **SB 293 – Crackdown on Indiana’s Squatters**

This bill makes it a crime of trespass for a person to refuse to leave a property after having been told to do so by police. CPAC opposes squatting, supports property rights, and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on March 8, 2024 by a vote of 45-2, and the House passed it on February 27, 2024 by a vote of 94-0. The bill later became law.

### **HB 1137 – Allowing Students to Attend Meetings of Religious Instruction**

This bill requires principals to let students attend meetings of religious instruction after getting permission to do so from the students’ parents. CPAC supports First Amendment freedoms and supported this bill. The Senate passed this bill on March 8, 2024 by a vote of 32-16, and the House passed it on March 7, 2024 by a vote of 69-25. The bill later became law.

## **Trends and Observations**

### **Indiana Leads on Cultural Pushback Against DEI and Woke Academia**

Few states have acted as decisively as Indiana in pushing back against DEI orthodoxy in higher education. Through SB 202, Indiana has begun dismantling entrenched bureaucracies that enforce ideological litmus tests and radicalize campus culture. This stands as a national model for how states can reclaim universities from divisive identity politics and restore academic environments focused on merit, open debate, and equal treatment under the law. For conservatives nationwide, Indiana's efforts prove that the fight against cultural capture by the Left is not just symbolic—it can produce tangible legislative wins.

### **Strengthening Property Rights and Second Amendment Freedoms**

Indiana's commitment to safeguarding foundational rights stood out this session. Laws like SB 293 reinforce that property ownership is a bedrock of liberty by criminalizing squatting—protecting families and investors from costly legal quagmires. At the same time, HB 1084 took meaningful steps to roll back ineffective gun-free zones and ensure the state cannot maintain lists of private firearm owners, echoing the Founders' insistence that the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. These measures highlight why Indiana continues to attract individuals and businesses fleeing more restrictive states.

### **Early Warning Signs: Indiana's Experimentation with New Taxes and Insurance Mandates**

Even as Indiana advanced strong cultural and constitutional protections, troubling votes also emerged. By passing SB 238, lawmakers allowed counties to raise innkeeper's taxes, directly burdening small businesses and consumers. Likewise, SB 273 and HB 1385 introduced new insurance mandates that will drive up premiums, demonstrating a willingness by some legislators to abandon free-market healthcare principles. These trends serve as an early caution that Indiana's economic liberty, long a point of pride, could be vulnerable if conservatives do not reassert a commitment to low taxes and limited government intervention.

### **Conservative Excellence - Senate**

**None**

### **Conservative Excellence - House**

**J.D Prescott - 92%**

**Heath VanNatter - 92%**

**Timothy Wesco - 93%**

### **Conservative Achievement - Senate**

**Scott Alexander - 86%**

**Mike Gaskill - 86%**

**Michael Young - 86%**

**Gary Byrne - 86%**

**Tyler Johnson - 86%**

**Rick Niemeyer - 83%**

**John Crane - 86%**

**Eric Koch - 86%**

**Andy Zay - 83%**

### **Conservative Achievement - House**

**Beau Baird - 85%**

**Jack Jordan - 86%**

**Matt Lehman - 83%**

**Martin Carbaugh - 85%**

**Shane Lindauer - 86%**

**Robert Morris1 - 83%**

**Craig Haggard - 85%**

**Matt Hostettler - 80%**

**Cory Criswell - 83%**

**Bruce Borders - 86%**

**Chris Jeter - 83%**

**Jerry Torr - 80%**