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Turning On Citizen Power **www.citact.org**

Utility Legislation in the 2010 Indiana General Assembly: The Taxpayer Wallet and the Ratepayer Wallet are Still the Same Wallet!

The 2010 session of The General Assembly is upon us. It promises to be highly political as mid-term elections loom with control of redistricting hanging in the balance. Hoosier communities continue to struggle with unemployment, lost revenues, and the burden of health care and energy costs spiraling out of control. Promises of taxpayer protection emanate from both sides of the aisle, yet once again, it appears that the Governor and his friends in the utility and coal industry are poised to throw ratepayers to the wolves; failing to recognize that the taxpayer wallet and the ratepayer wallet are one and the same.

The General Assembly has some decisions to make.

Will they continue to support an unsustainable economic model that supports the profit of the utility and coal industry at the expense of our health and our environment? Or will our elected officials finally proclaim that Indiana is ready to enter the 21st century and begin to lay the foundation of a sustainable economic model focused on protecting our precious natural resources?

Will they continue to support an energy policy that mandates the dirtiest and most expensive options? Or will they support an energy policy that supports the cleaner and cheaper options of energy efficiency and renewable energy?

Will they continue to bleed ratepayers dry and stand idly by while the utilities further erode consumer protections? Or will they choose to protect the ratepayer wallet with the same fervor as the taxpayer wallet?

Legislation has been filed that address all of those questions. The choice is clear. How will the General Assembly respond?

SB 115: Eminent domain for carbon dioxide pipeline

Authors: Beverly Gard (R), Richard Bray (R), John Waterman (R), Lindel Hume (D)
Sponsors: Kreg Battles (D), Russ Stilwell (D), Eric Koch (R)
Status: In House Commerce, Energy, Technology, & Utilities Committee

Summary: CAC opposes this bill. The utilities know that they are going to begin being held accountable for their carbon dioxide emissions, and they want to make sure that they can pass all of the costs and liability onto us. They are working to set the stage to begin Carbon Capture and Sequestration. The idea is to shoot the carbon dioxide deep into the ground, under our homes, businesses, and farms, and hope that it stays there. They have no idea how this will impact our health or our environment. SB 115 is the first step in this plan, allowing them to claim eminent domain and take our property if it is in the way of building a pipeline to get the carbon to the place where they want to “store” it.

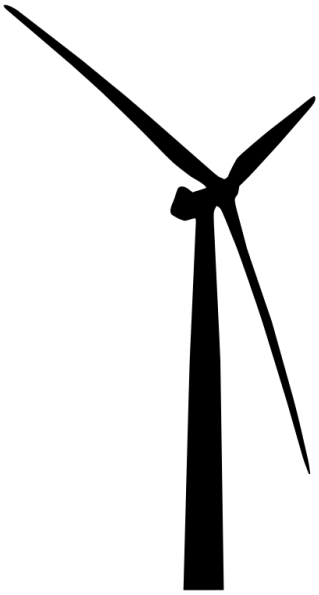
HB 1063: Energy efficient buildings

Authors: Matt Pierce (D), Earl Harris (D), Mara Candelaria Reardon (D)
Sponsors: Beverly Gard (R), Karen Tallian (D)
Status: In Senate Energy & Environmental Affairs Committee

Summary: CAC supports this bill. This bill requires a government building to be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to achieve or exceed the level of energy efficiency set by current rating systems. Buildings represent 39% of the energy, 72% of the electricity, and 55% of the natural gas used in the U.S. annually. The benefits of green building are a significant cost savings for Indiana taxpayers, improved worker health and productivity, improved public and environmental health, and a huge reduction in CO2 emissions. We must act now on changing the way we construct our buildings in Indiana. By continuing to use outdated energy codes, we are throwing away our tax dollars and unnecessarily wasting energy, water, and other precious natural resources.

SB 313 & HB 1094: Net metering

Authors: (SB 313) James Merritt (R), Beverly Gard (R), Richard Young (D), Sue Errington (D)
(HB 1094) Ryan Dvorak (D), Wes Culver (R), Eric Koch (R)
Sponsors: (SB 313) Ryan Dvorak (D), Jack Lutz (R)
(HB 1094) James Merritt (R), Sue Errington (D)
Status: (SB 313) In the House; **(HB 1094)** In the Senate



Summary: CAC supports these bills. Currently, net metering is limited to only 10 kilowatts, and only to residential customers and K-12 schools. These bills would expand eligible customers classes to allow individuals, businesses, commercial industries, and universities to generate their own electricity. The utilities would also be required to add a credit to the customer's bill for any surplus power that is generated. These bills encourage renewable energy production, energy independence, and customer owned generation.

Be sure to check our website regularly for the most up-to-date information, as bills are moving quickly at the State House! www.citact.org

Take Action!

Write, call, or e-mail your legislators, as well as the Chairs of the House and Senate Utility Committees!

- Tell your Senator to vote YES on HB 1094 and YES on HB 1063!
- Tell your Representative to vote NO on SB 115 and YES on SB 313!
- Make sure to remind them that the taxpayer wallet and the ratepayer wallet are the same wallet and that if they don't want to raise taxes, they should not consider legislation that will raise utility rates for unnecessary investments on behalf of utility profits!
- Let them know that coal and nuclear are NOT renewable energy!
- Tell them that the best investments for energy in Indiana are in energy efficiency, wind, solar, and geothermal. These are the technologies that will create jobs, and benefit the health, environment, and pocketbooks of ALL Hoosiers!

To look up and/or e-mail your legislators, visit:
http://district.iga.in.gov/DistrictLookup/

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