

Attention News Department

From:

***Indiana Farm Bureau***

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For Release:

### **Farm Bureau Hosts Legislative Luncheon**

District 3 Indiana Farm Bureau leaders recently gathered with area legislators to discuss the upcoming budget session and issues effecting members. Topics of most concern where reducing the cost of state government, while helping local authorities develop methods to streamline services. These included supporting counties as they consider the roles of township government and possible consolidation. Rep. Rich McClain of Logansport hoped to further this discussion by bringing forth a Ways and Means recommendation for budget review of all state boards. He stressed consolidation and/or elimination as a way of reducing the size and cost of state government.

On taxes and business development, ideas being proposed included closing existing tax loop holes, and expanding incentives for Indiana based companies. Rep. Don Lehe, chair of the house Agriculture Committee, stressed his continued support for agriculture tourism initiatives. Mr. Lehe also pledged to continue developing partnerships to make Indiana agriculture manufacturing competitive in the global market place by helping companies overcome excessive import laws placed on Indiana exports. Rep. Doug Gutwein of Francesville, assured the group he will work non stop to find ways to reduce the disparity the state currently pays in the unemployment insurance tax formula.

With 55 percent of the Indiana state budget going to education funding, all attending the luncheon agreed we should continue reviewing ways to improve delivery costs. Sen. Brandt Hershman suggested that by bringing all teachers under a single state delivered insurance plan that upwards of 400 million could be shaved from the state budget. Other ideas being purported included universal review methods for schools and increased flexibility to administrators and corporations looking to innovate.

Finally, all legislators present promised their full support in helping craft equitable partisan free legislative districts, and looked forward to meeting any new residents that may be included in their perspective new districts. Now that republicans hold both houses, those elected also looked forward to being able to have a draft state budget finished with plenty of time for debate and final approval.

Farm Bureau Legislative Luncheon

Photo December 30, 2010



Attendees from L-R

Andy Stoll, Jonella Beale, Mike Beale, Rep. Rich McClain, London Griesey, Rep. Don Lehe, Katy Lehe, Sen. Brandt Hershman, Kendell Culp, Rep. Doug Gutwein, Brian Pilotte, Barry Wesner, Robert Dolick, Marla Storm, Scott Nagel.

(Photo by: Darin Griesey)