

Friday, November 13, 2020



New session, new faces, same demographics

When lawmakers return to the Statehouse on Tuesday, nearly 20 fresh faces will be among the crowd.

Nineteen legislators will be entering their first legislative session—four new members in the Indiana Senate and 15 new members in the Indiana House.

One of the new members is still unknown—Republicans in Senate District 31 will caucus on Sunday to vote on who will replace retiring state Sen. **Jim Merritt** (more on that later).

But here's who we know will be new:

House Republicans

- Michelle Davis, Greenwood
- John Jacob, Indianapolis
- Chris Jeter, Fishers (already in office, but this will be his first session)
- Cindy Ledbetter, Newburgh
- Julie Olthoff, Crown Point
- Zach Payne, Charlestown
- Elizabeth Rowray, Yorktown
- Hal Slager, Schererville
- Craig Snow, Warsaw
- Jake Teshka, South Bend

House Democrats

- Mike Andrade, Munster
- Maureen Bauer, South Bend
- Mitch Gore, Indianapolis
- Blake Johnson, Indianapolis (already in office, but this will be his first session)
- Renee Pack, Indianapolis

Senate Republicans

• Scott Baldwin, Noblesville

Senate Democrats

- Fady Qaddoura, Indianapolis
- Shelli Yoder, Bloomington

What do these changes mean for the diversity breakdown in the Indiana General Assembly? Not much, actually.

The Legislature will still be overwhelmingly male and white.

The Senate will have (at least) 39 men and 10 women. Several men and women are seeking to replace Merritt, so we could end up with a 40-10 split, which is what it was before the 2020 election, or we could see a 39-11 split, giving women one additional seat than what they had before.

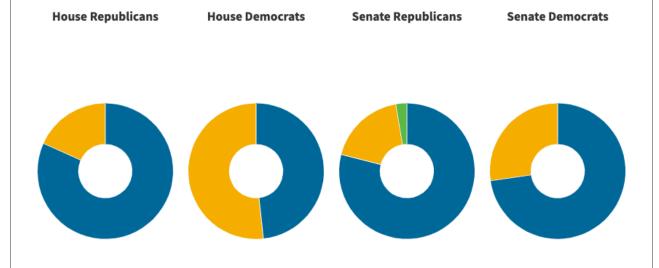
The House will have the exact same gender divide with 72 men and 28 women. House Republicans gained two male and two female representatives, and House Democrats lost two male and two female representatives. Women will still have a slight majority in the Democratic caucus, with 15 women and 14 men.

Females will continue to be far outnumbered by men in the House Republican caucus though, with only 13 women compared to 58 men.

Male majority

📕 Male 🦰 Female 📗 To be determined*

Men continue to outnumber women in the Indiana General Assembly



As for racial diversity, the Indiana Senate will have at least 44 white members. Again, whoever wins Merritt's seats could tip this to 45. Last session, the Senate had 46 white members.

Four Black senators and the state's first Muslim senator (**Fady Qaddoura**) are all Democrats.

^{*}Republicans will elect someone to replace Sen. Jim Merritt on Sunday

In the House, 88 of the 100 members are white. That's the same number of white representatives in office last year. The chamber gained an additional Black lawmaker (Democrat Renee Pack), but it lost an Asian member, with Democrat Chris Chyung losing his reelection bid. (A common misconception is that Chyung was the only Asian member, but that is not true—state Rep. Peggy Mayfield, who won her reelection, is also Asian.)

Overall, this makes the 150-member General Assembly 74% male and 26% female. And 88% white and 9.3% Black.

How does that compare to the state's demographics? It's pretty far off the mark when it comes to gender, but not too far off the racial makeup of the state. The state population is 49% male and 51% female, and 78% white and 9% Black.

Bonus: Lawmakers sometimes have their own rules. During Org Day, and possibly for the session, they will not be required to wear masks. It will be <u>strongly</u> encouraged, but not mandated.

Five Republicans trying to replace Merritt

Indianapolis-area Republicans will gather on Sunday evening to vote on who should replace longtime state Sen. **Jim Merritt**, who retired from the Senate District 31 seat earlier this month.

Five Republicans have filed to run in the caucus—former Marion County GOP Chairman **Kyle Walker**, Fishers City Council President **Cecilia Coble**, Tendercare Home Health Services, Inc. co-owner and Financial Business Manager **Eric Deitchman**, F.C. Tucker realtor **Tiffanie Ditlevson**, and RE/MAX Ability Plus Vice President of Sales **Jim Morgan**.

Former Indianapolis City County Councilor **Mike McQuillen** did not file to run after initially expressing interest in the seat.

Walker has picked up some notable endorsements from Lawrence Mayor **Steve Collier** and former Indianapolis Mayor **Greg Ballard**.

Most of the candidates participated in a forum earlier this week to share their views.



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Candidates who want to replace Indiana State Senator Jim Merritt got together last night to make their case. indypolitics.org/the-race-to-re...



6:31 AM · Nov 11, 2020 · TweetDeck

The district includes parts of northeast Marion County and southern Hamilton County.

Changes at the Indiana Democratic Party

The Indiana Democratic Party will have a new leader in the spring.

Chairman **John Zody** told reporters last week that he <u>will not seek another term</u> when his term is up in March.

Naturally, that sets off speculation over who will run for chair. Former state Rep. **Karlee Macer,** D-Indianapolis, is one name that's already being talked about.

She told IBJ on Friday morning that she is "certainly investigating the idea."

"There is so much work that needs to be done," Macer said. "It seems insurmountable but it isn't."

Macer said she's not blaming anyone in particular for the state of the party today—Indiana Democrats do not hold any statewide elected offices and lost seats in the Indiana House this year, allowing Republicans to strengthen their supermajority in that chamber.

"I believe we are all responsible for where we are today," Macer said.



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Replying to @KarleeMacer

We're not here to point fingers or assign blame, but the fact of the matter is we need to take responsibility for where we are & how we got here. Pretending the status quo is ok doesn't yield different results. Now more than ever we need to keep working.

11:06 PM · Nov 3, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

If she does run for party chair—and it certainly sounds like she's leaning that way—watch for her to make a bold goal: take back control of the Legislature by 2030.

She said she will announce her decision "probably sooner rather than later."

Bonus: Indiana Democratic Party spokesman **Phil Johnson**'s last day with the party is today. He's moving on to do public relations for an education technology company. His departure was planned prior to Election Day.

Hoosiers in D.C.

When **Mike Pence** went to Washington, D.C. to become vice president, a lot of other Hoosiers followed and were part of the Trump administration.

But don't think the White House will be Hoosier-less in a Joe Biden administration.

Biden's team <u>announced this week</u> that Indianapolis-native **Ron Klain** will <u>serve as his chief of staff.</u>



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@RonaldKlain the President elect has made an outstanding choice. @NCHS_IN grad. and to quote fellow hoosier Kurt Vonnegut "I don't know what it is about Hoosiers. But where ever you go there is always a Hoosier doing something very important there."

7:53 PM · Nov 11, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Klain is a longtime advisor to Biden. He served as chief of staff for Biden during **Barack Obama**'s first term, was chief of staff to Vice President **Al Gore** in the mid-1990s and was a key adviser on the Biden campaign, guiding Biden's debate preparations and coronavirus response. He's known and worked with Biden since the Democrat's 1987 presidential campaign.



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I love getting a LinkedIn alert this morning telling me "Congratulate Ron Klain on starting a new position..." like he just got promoted to assistant manager of the night shift. @RonaldKlain — congratulations! Indianapolis is proud!

7:15 AM · Nov 12, 2020 from Florida, USA · Twitter for iPhone



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I've seen so many kind wishes tonight on this website. Thank you - and I'm sorry I can't reply to each of you.

I'm honored by the President-elect's confidence and will give my all to lead a talented and diverse team in a Biden-Harris WH.

8:13 PM · Nov 11, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

A couple of Hoosiers are also on Biden's transition team, including Indiana University Maurer School of Law professor **Dawn Johnsen** and **Jonathan Swain**, who served as former first lady **Judy O'Bannon**'s chief of staff before going to Angie's List.

<u>Johnsen served in</u> the Department of Justice in the Administration of President **Bill Clinton** and on the transition teams for Clinton and Obama. <u>Swain served as the chief of staff</u> at the agency during the Obama administration.

Will Swain also join the administration? Will we see any other Hoosiers head to D.C.? Former South Bend Mayor **Pete Buttigieg**, who was once a presidential candidate and Biden opponent, comes to mind. He became a top surrogate for the Biden campaign in the days leading up to the election. There's also speculation Indianapolis Mayor **Joe Hogsett** could join the administration.

In the meantime, Indiana University Maurer School of Law Professor **Dawn Johnsen** is on Biden's transition team. Johnsen served in the Department of Justice in the Administration of President **Bill Clinton** and on the transition teams for Clinton and Obama.



Rundown Reads

• U.S. Sen. **Mike Braun** was doing some <u>interesting electoral college math</u> this week.

- Vice President Mike Pence is <u>walking a fine line</u> between staying loyal to President **Donald Trump** and preparing for his future.
- State Sen. **Greg Taylor**, D-Indianapolis, has become the first Black legislative caucus leader as he replaces Sen. Tim Lanane as Senate minority leader.
- A former Indiana lieutenant governor <u>has donated \$2 million</u> to Northwestern University's journalism school.

Wait, what month is it?

It kind of feels like March again, right?

It's cold out. Daylight is limited. And new restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19 are being announced by state and local officials.

Gov. **Eric Holcomb** has thrown out the five-stage playbook and is going with <u>a new system that includes requirements</u> and recommendations based on what <u>color level each county is at</u>. Red indicates the highest level of COVID-19 spread, orange is the second highest, yellow is the third highest and blue means the county is doing pretty well.

Nearly every county is in orange right now, nine are in red and only five are in yellow. No county is in blue.

All the details of this new color-coded restriction plan are still unknown though. We are still waiting on the executive order to be published, and that should provide more information.

For some, the announcement from Holcomb was appreciated but seemed to be delayed. Holcomb noted the record-high case numbers and hospitalizations in his comments on Wednesday, but those figures have been at record-highs for weeks.



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Everything @GovHolcomb is doing today he could have done months ago. The data has been clear. I'm glad he is taking action, but it is insanely frustrating that it takes so much pain from Hoosiers to elicit a response worthy of this moment and crisis.

2:47 PM · Nov 11, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

Meanwhile in Indianapolis, Mayor **Joe Hogsett** <u>announced a new set of business</u> <u>and social-gathering restrictions</u> for Marion County on Thursday.

Some highlights: Indoor capacity will be reduced to 25% at bars and entertainment venues, schools must switch to virtual learning by the end of the month and events with more than 50 people will require a safety plan to be approved.

Hogsett also <u>called on Congress</u> to send more aid to cities so more help can be provided to businesses. While the city launched a grant program to assist hospitality businesses, the funding is tapped.

For your calendars

On Monday, we'll hear from the Indiana Chamber Commerce on what its priorities will be for the upcoming session.

One longtime priority that got accomplished last year was raising the tobacco age from 18 to 21. But lawmakers didn't touch the cigarette tax—I'd say it's a safe bet that raising this tax is on the chamber's agenda still. But what else makes the list?

The Indiana State Teachers Association is also releasing its legislative agenda on Monday. The safe bet there? Teacher pay.

Your weekend lineup

On <u>Indiana Week in Review</u>, host **Brandon Smith** will chat with the regular crew: Republican **Mike O'Brien**, Democrat **Ann DeLaney**, TV host **Jon Schwantes** and Statehouse reporter **Niki Kelly**.

On this week's edition of <u>IN Focus</u>, catch interviews with U.S. Sen. **Mike Braun**, U.S. Rep. **Andre Carson**, Indiana House Speaker **Todd Huston**, state Sen. **J.D. Ford and** CBS News correspondent **Ed O'Keefe**. The panel will be **Rima Shahid**, **Robin Winston**, **Tony Samuel** and **Mike Murphy**. You can catch IN Focus at 7:30 a.m. Sunday on CBS4. (*The show won't air on FOX59 this week due to sports programming*).

If you have tips, story ideas or thoughts on this newsletter, drop me a note at lerdody@ibj.com. Thanks for reading.

More headlines

Economist says Indiana might benefit as pandemic pushes people to flee big cities

Online shopping surge could lead to holiday delivery delays

Post-election rancor clouds chances for quick COVID-19 relief bill

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