

Press Release:

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Gov. Holcomb unveils 2020 Next Level Agenda with emphasis on improving Hoosiers' lives

TERRE HAUTE, Ind. – Gov. Eric J. Holcomb today announced his 2020 Next Level Agenda, which focuses on improving the lives of Hoosiers by way of better health, improved career opportunities and quality of place initiatives.

“Because of the hard work of Hoosiers, Indiana has become a destination of certainty and stability, but we can’t stop there,” Gov. Holcomb said. “As I travel the state, I hear people concerned about rising health care costs, the increase in youth vaping, and our education and training systems. My goal is to listen and lead by finding solutions to build a bolder, brighter future.”

The 2020 Next Level Agenda includes five pillars detailing both legislative and administrative priorities for the year ahead.

Cultivate a strong and diverse economy

To continue strengthening our economy, Gov. Holcomb’s 2020 agenda focuses on transforming how we tell Indiana’s story by elevating Indiana’s profile within and outside the state with joint branding and promotion efforts with the private sector and the new Indiana Destination Development Corporation with the goal of attracting more jobs, more talent, and more tourism. The state will also build a 21st century defense innovation ecosystem to triple federal defense investment in Indiana by 2025.

Maintain and build the state’s infrastructure

The 2020 agenda is designed to connect Hoosiers with reliable, safe and swift infrastructure connectivity. To accomplish this goal, Gov. Holcomb’s \$1 billion Next Level Connections program expands broadband service to unserved areas in Indiana, grows the state’s systems of trails and creates more nonstop international flights. The 2020 agenda also focuses on preserving our highways and decreasing distracted driving by enacting a hands-free device driving law.

Develop a 21st century skilled and ready workforce

Gov. Holcomb will continue to make finding long-term sustainable solutions to improve teacher compensation a top priority by supporting the Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission. The 2020 agenda also includes identifying unfunded mandates and unnecessary requirements in K-12 education for elimination in 2021, holding schools harmless for ILEARN scores, changing career-related teacher professional growth points from required to optional, and redesigning our prison education system to better prepare Department of Correction offenders to re-enter society.

Public health and the drug epidemic

Gov. Holcomb is calling for raising the age to purchase tobacco and e-cigarettes from 18 to 21 and enhancing enforcement to prevent underage buyers. The 2020 agenda also includes

providing healthcare price transparency for consumers via an “All-Payer Claims Database,” protecting consumers from surprise medical bills, improving mental health services at schools and hospitals, and incentivizing more community paramedicine programs. In the fight against the drug epidemic, the Governor wants to add more recovery housing for Hoosiers coping with substance use disorder. The state will continue to work toward becoming the best state in the Midwest for infant mortality by 2024 by protecting pregnant workers by providing more workplace accommodations.

Deliver great government service

The 2020 agenda saves Hoosiers more than \$125 million in borrowing costs by using \$300 million in cash now to fund capital projects. Additionally, Gov. Holcomb will simplify how Hoosiers reach out for health and human services assistance by integrating the 2-1-1 helpline into FSSA call centers.

“These aren’t just lofty goals – they are obtainable solutions to improve the lives of Hoosiers around Indiana,” Gov. Holcomb said. “We are on course, full steam ahead, for our state to become the absolute best place in America to grow as an individual, a family, a business and as a community.”

Learn more about Gov. Holcomb’s 2020 Next Level Agenda at <http://www.in.gov/gov>.