

LWVIN's three environmental priorities in this session of the Indiana General Assembly are addressed by these bills. Even if unsuccessful in this short session, we should thank these legislators for proposing them and we should bring up these important issues with all of our legislators to help the chances for success next year.

1. Wetlands

SB 246 "Assessment of wetlands classified as wildlands"

- authored by Senator Susan Glick (R)
- revises the definition of wetland categories and provides property tax incentives for wetland preservation

Note: The bill has been assigned to Senator Glick's Senate Natural Resources Committee

2. Water Policy

SB 249 and HR 1305 "Major ground water withdrawal facilities"

- authored by Representative Sharon Negele (R) and Senator Spencer Deery (R)
- requires that transfers of water by pipeline more than 20 miles, if the quantity is over 10,000,000 gallons a day and used for industrial and commercial purposes, be subject to permitting and public notification requirements

Note: These identical bills were prompted by the proposal to transfer large quantities of water from Tippecanoe County to the Lebanon LEAP district, which has grown into concern about the lack of overall statewide water policies, and was recently covered in a NY Times article and on National Public Radio.

3. Community Solar

HB 1193 "Community Solar Facilities"

- authored by Representative Carey Hamilton (D)
- makes independent third-party community solar development legal in Indiana

Note:

- *Community solar refers to a large local solar facility done by a third-party community solar developer, which can be a utility, but often is not. Multiple customers (e.g. households, small businesses, churches, schools, local governments), that are unable to place solar systems on their own property, can subscribe to receive a credit on their utility bill for a share of the power produced by that solar facility.*
- *As of 2020, about a third of states have passed legislation creating a third-party market for community solar, which requires project developers and utilities to follow certain regulations in order to enroll customers and build community solar installations. Utilities can do community solar projects in Indiana; but it's illegal for independent third-party developers, which are predominant in successful states.*
- *The LWVIN board recently voted to become a member of Hoosiers for Community Solar created last April by 14 diverse organizations.*

LWVIN Natural Resources Co-Chairs,
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