

# The Chamber Scene

HUNTINGTON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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## Income tax revenue replacement being discussed

BY ZAC JACKSON

Indiana State Budget Director

As Republican leaders in the Indiana General Assembly look to reduce and possibly eliminate the state's individual income tax, one of the state's top fiscal analysts says there is no clear replacement for a revenue stream that brings in about \$8 billion a year and makes up about a third of the state's overall tax revenue.

The comments from Indiana State Budget Director Zac Jackson came during a virtual panel discussion Thursday, September 21 on how an economic recession would affect state and local governments. The event was organized by the Volcker Alliance, a New York City-based not-for-profit founded by former Federal Reserve Board Chairman Paul Volcker, and the Penn Institute for Urban Research at the University of Pennsylvania.

In the most recent legislative session, lawmakers created a task force to review, among other topics, the individual income tax, including methods to reduce or eliminate the individual income tax.

"Although reducing the individual income tax is a goal of this committee, it remains to be seen how the state would deal with that \$8 billion loss in revenues," Jackson said. "Does that mean we will cut spending by a third out of our general fund, or does that mean that we will make it up in other tax types?"

Another complicating factor, he said, is that Indiana also allows municipalities to collect local income taxes, which brings in between \$3 and \$4 billion a year.

In the committee's first meeting last month, lawmakers and budget analysts heard testimony from Americans for Prosperity, a conservative political advocacy group, and former Republican state Sen. Brandt Hershman, who advocated for repealing the corporate income tax.

The task force is scheduled to meet again in September and October before releasing its recommendations by November 1.

Senate Tax & Fiscal Policy Committee



Chair Travis Holdman, R-Markle, has argued that repealing the income tax by 2030 would help Indiana compete with states like Florida, Tennessee and Texas that don't have a state income tax and have seen economic and population growth in recent years.

In 2022, lawmakers passed a tax-cut package that gradually reduced the income tax rate over the next seven years, from 3.23% to 2.9%, with the stipulation that state tax revenue must have grown at least 2% in the previous budget year. It was the state's first income tax cut since 2013, and it was Holdman who added language to the bill to tie any income tax decrease to overall revenue growth.

In the budget bill passed in April, lawmakers further accelerated those cuts to occur by 2027 and removed the 2% trigger requirement. Indiana's current income tax rate sits at 3.15%.

Indiana finished the 2023 fiscal year on June 30 with \$2.9 billion in reserves.

Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, who is running for governor, has been a vocal supporter of eliminating the personal income tax, which she said would help Hoosier families and small businesses while helping to attract companies to move or expand here.

Crouch said the loss of income taxes could be absorbed by instituting a number of measures, including by returning budget and reserve fund surpluses to taxpayers that are "beyond necessary levels;" modernizing the state's tax code; limiting the growth and cost of Indiana government to necessary levels; and limiting expenditures to a 2% inflation adjusted growth rate.

The four other leading candidates for the GOP nomination have expressed tepid support for the idea, though some question how Crouch would replace the lost revenue stream.

Other states that have eliminated their income tax have had to offset the losses by raising property taxes, increasing sales tax rates or taxing services, or creating a new tax altogether.

In Alaska, a state that repealed its income tax in 1980, a severance tax on the oil and natural gas industry keeps the government solvent, while Texas has higher-than-average property tax rates, and Florida brings in billions of dollars a year in tourism development taxes. Tennessee has the same state sales tax rate as Indiana at 7%, but local jurisdictions can enact their own sales tax, making the rate as high as 10% in some places.

# Entrepreneurial 'Meet & Greet' held on August 30

The Clubhouse, the picturesque setting of the former historical Lafontaine Golf Club, was the location of the Huntington County Chamber of Commerce's first entrepreneurial gathering 'Meet & Greet.' The event was held August 30 with over 40 entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs attending.

Steve Kimmel, executive director of the Chamber, began the evening by explaining the newly formed Entrepreneurial Leadership Council under the direction of the Chamber.

Kimmel said "The goal of the Council is to grow entrepreneurial wealth, and encourage more entrepreneurs to open businesses or to attract more businesses to open in our county. It is also a way for entrepreneurs to get to know other like-minded individuals and together encourage and support each other."

Kimmel then introduced John Niederman of the Fortitude Fund. The Council was formed from a conversation between Kimmel and Niederman. "After three meetings with the entire entrepreneurial group, we felt it was time to form a sub-committee and begin focusing on the entrepreneurs themselves. This is how the first 'Meet & Greet' began. We plan to hold four gatherings throughout the year with other meetings to be held in Roanoke, Warren and Markle," said Kimmel.

Niederman explained that he has been retired from Pathfinder Services for three years and began his connection to the Fortitude Fund one year ago. He further explained that it is an entrepreneurial support agency designed to help entrepreneurs in the beginning and growth phase. We ask "How can we help those who need start up support? \$1,000 grants are issued in the startup phase." He went on to say, "It gets you to know you are recognized as someone in the region who can grow." Learn more and apply at [fortitudefund.com](http://fortitudefund.com).

Troy Johnson, owner of Incipio Devices and The Clubhouse located at 6137 N. Goshen Road, spoke next about his venture rebuilding The Clubhouse. He welcomed those in attendance and



**Troy Johnson**



**The Clubhouse, Huntington**

spoke about his life in Huntington and his career in the medical device industry. When he purchased the former Lafontaine Golf Club it was in complete disrepair. The building was gutted and redesigned with a European flair. The property was also completely transformed from its former golf club days. Johnson said "it was a fun project," and thanked Eric Fawcett of Bippus State Bank for his help in funding the project. He said, "Hopefully the community enjoys and appreciates The Clubhouse which was originally opened in 1929."

The Clubhouse is available for weddings, showers, business events and seats 350+ inside and 500+ outside. For more information visit [clubhousevenue.com](http://clubhousevenue.com).



**Taylor Reeder, Tina & Rod Feller**

Rod & Tina Feller and daughter, Taylor Reeder, owners of Ritzy Dips, presented their business, which began with a five-pound bucket of pigment in the home kitchen. As entrepreneurs in the beauty industry, they began experimenting with acrylic dip powders for use on finger nails. They formulated a whole system to make beautiful nails and began this endeavor during the pandemic on November 21, 2020, when the website was launched. All of their sales take place online since they do not

have a retail store to purchase their products.

They explained that they did all of the research and experimentation themselves, and started with a Christmas collection. They further said the business received 82 orders on the first day and they were instantly debt free. The business moved from the kitchen to a private location at 14 W. Market Street, and their online following has grown to 10,000 Facebook members, 40,000 Instagram followers and they ship to 15 countries. Visit [ritzzydips.com](http://ritzzydips.com).

Brooks Feters

said that he has invested his life in Huntington, and the people here have invested in him. Wife, Barb, and Brooks own two businesses in Huntington, The Huntington Bicycle Shop, and the Purviance House Bed and Breakfast. Brooks explained that The Huntington Bicycle Shop is located in the lower level of the former Nazarene Church building at 45 Etna Avenue, Suite 100, with Whimzy, owned by entrepreneurs Joe and Rachel Zahm, right out his back door. The Bed and Breakfast is right around the corner on South Jefferson Street. Feters explained that the shop has bicycles for everyone and they don't care what your ride. He said, "It is a no shame shop. We'd love for you to buy your bikes from us, but we just want you to have fun riding – we will help you."

The Huntington Bicycle Shop opened in October of 2020, sells bicycles, and is fully staffed with repair people who are professionals at working on new, used and vintage bicycles. Feters also specializes in bicycle restoration. The shop carries Aventon E-bikes, is associated with STS in Rushville, Indiana, which helps you design your own bike and they build it, and has become a dealer of Cannondale bicycles. He also thanks Bippus State Bank. You can reach the bicycle shop by calling (260) 224-0232 or visit their website at [huntingtonbicycleshop.com/](http://huntingtonbicycleshop.com/).

The next Entrepreneurial 'Meet and Greet' is tentatively scheduled at The Saloon in Roanoke in November. Further information will be shared as it is received.



**Brooks Feters**



Shown in the photo above is the A.B.I.G. Day winning team of Wings, Etc. Wings shot a 49 to claim top prize in the golf outing. Second place went to First Federal Savings Bank and third place to Insurance Management Group, both shooting a 52. Pictured above are the members of the Wings Etc. team, from left, Bryan Burcroff, Lee Cutting, Jason Parke, Zach Kindler, Garin Stephan and Darik Sands.

## Chamber names A.B.I.G. Day golf outing winners

The Chamber of Commerce held its A.B.I.G. Day golf outing on Wednesday, September 13 at the Maple Grove Golf Course. The first-place winning team was Wings, Etc. shooting a 49. Second place went to First Federal Savings Bank and third place, Insurance Management Group, both shooting a 52.

Closest to the pin for men was Jamie Squires from Lakeside Chevrolet and for women, Laura Shideler, TCR. Longest putt went to Kyle Felton, Duke Energy, while Zach Kindler, Wings, Etc. won longest drive for men and Laura Shideler, TCR for women. Garin Stephan, Wings, Etc., won the putting green contest. The skins game was shared between Wings, Etc. and Complete Drywall & Texture, Inc.

Back by popular demand, the Chamber had a hole allowing golfers to take their turn launching their drive using an AR-15 rifle. The gun owner/instructor was Scott Howell, Burke's Sewer Service, shown in the photo. Pictured shooting the rifle is Michelle Bunker of the Insurance Management Group team.

The Chamber would like to take this time to thank all of our sponsors, volunteers, golfers and Maple Grove Golf Course for making this year's event so successful. We could not do this without all of your support. Thank you!



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## The Bee Hive to hold Bee'zarre on October 21

The Bee Hive will hold their Autumn Bee'zarre on Saturday, October 21. The hours of the event are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Bee Hive is located at 5386 W 200 S.

Local artisan vendors return making this one of the best events for finding that unique gift for a loved one just in time for Christmas even finding something for yourself. All vendors' crafts are hand-made, grown, raised and designed making their items unique.

You must try our amazing Honey Sweet Root Beer Floats! The Bee Hive will have fully stocked shelves with new seasonal scented products and holiday themed products. Stay tuned to see who will be coming and what will be new.

Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend. This is an outdoor Fall day event, so come out rain or shine and support your local artisans?

Enjoy food from JB's Cuisine Machine and hear music from Space Junk as you shop. Follow the event on Facebook.

You can reach The Bee Hive at (260) 468-2657 or by email at indianabeekeeper@gmail.com.



## Purchase tickets for dinner for October 28

Huntington Theatre Guild Act II will be hosting their upcoming murder mystery dinner, "To Wake the Dead" on Saturday, October 28 in Habecker Dining Hall at Huntington University.

Renowned mystery writer Fred Finnegan has died and all his friends have gathered at his wake. His agent, Lenord Elmore, presides over the wake along with Fred's widow Joyce. Also in attendance are all of Fred's old friends: ex-police Chief Wambaugh, Danny Runyon, a reformed "wise guy" and Peaches Marie Crabtree. Agatha Fletcher, a news reporter from the Associated Wire. The 'Fredrick Finnegan Fan Club' is also present.

The wake starts off normally, but the circumstances of Freddie's death keep coming into question. The one guest who would appreciate answers is Fred himself because he is also there - in spirit literally.

Only the nerdy fanboy Clyde Barker has the gift to "hear" dead people. Can Freddie use Clyde to find out what happened? There is a ghost of a chance. Was it someone at the wake? He's dying to find out.

Tickets: Include dinner and admittance to the show. Tickets are available for \$40 online only at the link below. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Purchase tickets <https://www.ticketsignup.io/TicketEvent/ToWaketheDeadDinner>



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Shown in the photo above is Adrian Halverstadt, left, Boys & Girls Club of Huntington County board president, and Mandy Reber, CEO, Huntington County Boys & Girls Club signing the contract with Felderman Design Build.

## Parkview Boys & Girls Club to break ground

The Parkview Boys & Girls Club of Huntington County is excited to announce that an expansion will soon begin for a new Career Prep Center addition to their Parkview facility.

The board of directors has signed a contract with Felderman Design Build, allowing them to begin work this month. They are very excited to have this partnership as they begin this important journey towards a new addition to serve more Tweens (ages 11-12 years-old), and teens of Huntington County.

"The Parkview Boys & Girls Club is thankful to all of our supporters for their belief in our project," said Mandy Reber, CEO. "Our Club has grown tremendously since opening our new facility in 2015, going from serving 170 to over 300 school age students daily. The board and community wants to continue the success of the Club's on-time high school graduation and help with a set plan for their futures. We want to immerse our members in a wide range of real-life learning experiences to give them a solid foundation for life after graduation."

The Parkview Boys & Girls Club has raised 70% towards the \$3.5 million project. Dan Drummond, a supporter of the Club, stated, "It is heartwarming to witness the youth of the Parkview Boys & Girls Club of Huntington County grow into young adults to become our community's next generation of leaders and doers. The leadership of the Parkview Boys & Girls Club of Huntington County has played a critical role in creating the environment for our students to thrive."

Groundbreaking will be held on Thursday, October 5 at 6 p.m. All community members are welcome to join in the celebration.



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## HU celebrating another record enrollment

Huntington University is celebrating another record enrollment for fall 2023. Official numbers mark the highest enrollment in University history with over 1,504 students, up from 1,428 in 2022.

"The fact that more than 1,500 students are participating in our residential, online and graduate programs is a significant milestone for Huntington University," said Dr. Sherilyn Emberton, president. "We are encouraged to see the growth that is happening in historic areas and through some of our most recent initiatives and new programs."

Welcoming 994 undergraduate students on HU's home campus in Huntington, and 242 undergraduate students at the HU Arizona location in Peoria, Arizona, the University continues to be encouraged by the student populations at both locations, the Parkview-Randallia OTD program and in new programs, including two new partnerships: an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) degree program in partnership with Indiana Tech and Parkview Health and an animal health and veterinary nursing dual-degree program in partnership with Purdue University's School of Veterinary Medicine. Other academic majors with a strong or record enrollment include animation, business, film, MBA, nursing, OTA and agriculture programs.

"Through these strategic partnerships and innovative delivery models, we are offering programs that meet workforce needs," said Emberton. "These majors, in collaboration with our public and private sector partners, provide new opportunities for our students and the communities we serve. We are excited to see the work for Christ that students will accomplish with these opportunities."

Students across the University hail from 65 of the 92 counties in Indiana, 41 states (including Alaska and Hawaii), and 38 countries. They represent all four corners of the United States, from Washington to Florida and California to Maine.

Minority students make up 23% of the 2023-2024 student body, which is an increase for the University. Indiana continues to be the biggest pool for students, with Arizona, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois also being significant contributors to the record growth. With the continued renovation of the University's health and wellness complex and new athletic programming, over 341 student athletes will participate on 18 different NAIA athletic teams.



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## Huntington Bicycle Shop celebrates anniversary with sales, After Hours

The Huntington Bicycle Shop is inviting the public to help celebrate their 3rd anniversary during the month of October. The Huntington Bicycle Shop is proud to carry the following bicycle brands – Cannondale, Aventon (e-bikes), STS Custom, Sun, Pure and Velotric (e-bikes).

The Huntington Bicycle Shop is a full-service bicycle shop (parts, maintenance, repairs and restoration) with an experienced team of seasoned mechanics (Jim Lewis, Nick Hancock and Brooks Fetters), including master mechanic and bike builder Chris Bucher.

Beginning October 1 and running through October 28, the shop is offering 15 to 30% discounts on all in-stock bikes (new and vintage) and e-bikes. Each purchase made between October 1 and October 24 qualifies a purchaser to enter a ticket for a drawing on October 24 for a \$300 Huntington Bicycle Shop gift card.

On October 24 from 4 to 6 p.m. there will be a Chamber After Hours event at the shop, with refreshments, test rides, door prizes and the drawing for the \$300 Huntington Bicycle Shop gift card.

Please check out [huntingtonbicycleshop.com](http://huntingtonbicycleshop.com) for all the services, bicycles and accessories we provide. You can also check out [Aventon.com](http://Aventon.com), [Velotric.com](http://Velotric.com), [Cannondale.com](http://Cannondale.com), [STSBicycles.com](http://STSBicycles.com), [Sun.bike](http://Sun.bike), [Purecycles.com](http://Purecycles.com), and Huntington Bicycle Shop on eBay.

Visit The Huntington Bicycle Shop at 45 Etna Avenue, Suite 100. You can reach them by calling (260) 224-0232.





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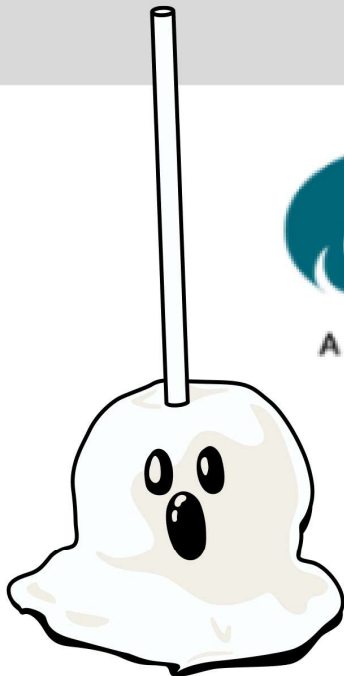
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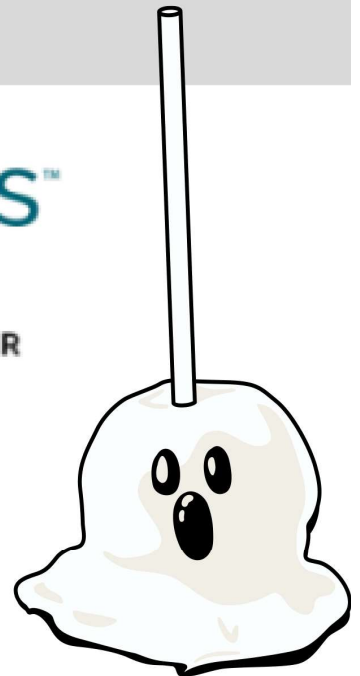


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## Mark Your Calendars

### **Huntington Tails & Trails Festival**

Saturday, October 7, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Evergreen Park, 1370 Evergreen Road

### **Pumpkin Party at the YMCA**

Saturday, October 21, 9:30 a.m. to Noon  
Parkview Huntington Family YMCA, 1160 W 500 N

### **Autumn Bee'Zarre**

Saturday, October 21, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
The Bee Hive, 5386 W 200 S

### **Trunk or Treat**

Friday, October 27, 6 to 8 p.m.  
Huntington County Courthouse

### **Trick or Treat**

Saturday, October 29, 6 to 8 p.m.  
Rodeway Inn, 2820 Hotel Avenue

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