



HOOSIERS FOR
OPPORTUNITY,
PROSPERITY AND
ENTERPRISE, INC.

Freedom and Opportunity Agenda – Public Safety Plan

Hoosier families and communities deserve to know that their safety and security are the top priority of state government. In today’s interconnected world, national issues like illegal immigration and the flow of illegal drugs like fentanyl and methamphetamine have a real impact on communities across the state and country. Because of the complexity of modern public safety, it is imperative that the State supports our law enforcement officers in the line of duty.

In order to make Indiana a safer, more secure place to live, this plan proposes policies that:

1. Confront the Drug Crisis.
2. Enforce our Laws.
3. Tackle Illegal Immigration.
4. Support our Police.
5. Treat Mental Health with Seriousness.
6. Prioritize School Safety

By enacting the Freedom and Opportunity Agenda – Public Safety Plan, the State of Indiana can strengthen its stance against crime and support its law enforcement agencies.

The Freedom and Opportunity Agenda – Public Safety Plan was originally released in February 2024, and has been updated here to provide additional details.

Confront the Drug Crisis

Hoosier families have been devastated by the flow of illegal drugs like fentanyl and methamphetamine into their communities. In addition to harming our families, drug-related incidents have overrun the State’s public health and safety resources. While the challenge posed by illegal drugs is clear and urgent, the State has not met this challenge to help Hoosiers confront this burgeoning crisis.

Plan of Action

Comprehensive Drug Crisis Strategy: The State should develop a comprehensive strategy to confront the drug crisis, leveraging the entirety of the state’s resources and partnerships with federal and local partners. This strategy should include effective drug prevention, enforcement, and recovery, and should safeguard Hoosiers communities from illegal drugs. The strategy should also include:

- *Stronger Penalties for Distribution:* Strengthen the legal penalties for distributing lethal drugs like fentanyl and methamphetamine, and put the full weight of Indiana’s justice system behind enforcing and prosecuting the law.

- *Crack Down on Drug Trafficking:* Enhance state police interdiction powers by empowering the Indiana State Police to spearhead a comprehensive statewide drug interdiction strategy in close collaboration with local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors.
- *Prevention and Recovery:* Continue to invest in highly effective programs and strategies for drug prevention and recovery, and develop key partnerships to support promising new interventions.

Enforce our Laws

In order to keep Hoosiers safe, our criminal justice system must be fair, effective, and consistent. As it stands, our laws are being undermined by prosecutors who refuse to enforce laws for political reasons, and a bail system that does nothing to ensure that dangerous criminals are detained and kept off the streets. The State should uphold the safety and security of all Hoosiers by empowering the criminal justice system to enforce laws equally and fully.

Plan of Action

Prosecute Violent Criminals: Indiana's law enforcement officers defend Hoosiers from violent criminals daily, but their work is often undermined by selective enforcement and manipulative bail policies. These challenges serve to put violent criminals back on the street and erode public trust in the criminal justice system. To stem the tide of violent crime, the State should strengthen its posture against violent crime and back up its law enforcement officers.

- *Stronger Penalties for Violence:* Strengthen the legal penalties for committing violent crimes and assaulting our law enforcement officers, and put the full weight of Indiana's justice system behind enforcing and prosecuting the law.
- *Non-Discretionary Minimum Bail:* Establish strict, non-discretionary minimum bail requirements for violent crimes and habitual offenders, ensuring that dangerous individuals are detained pre-trial.
- *Consistent State-Funded Prosecutors:* Provide consistent enforcement of the law by equipping prosecutor's offices for success.
 - Increase resources for prosecutors to recruit and retain high-quality deputy prosecutors.
 - Empower the Governor to remove and replace state-funded prosecutors who fail to uphold their duty to the community.

Tackle Illegal Immigration

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, enforcement at the southern border has deteriorated, empowering an overwhelming number of illegal immigrants to cross into the country. In the absence of federal leadership, it is incumbent on state governments to step up with state-based solutions that crack down on illegal immigration. The State should protect Hoosiers by adopting policies that make Indiana unwelcoming to criminals who pass illegally into the country.

Plan of Action

State-Based Solutions: The State should protect Hoosiers by enacting policies that keep its communities safe and secure from the criminal elements tied to illegal immigration.

- *End Sanctuary Cities:* The rule of law is undermined when states or cities offer safe harbor for crime. So-called sanctuary cities—whether in Indiana or in neighboring states—threaten the safety of Hoosiers. The State should protect the rule of law by taking decisive action to enforce its long-standing ban on sanctuary cities (including, when necessary, through litigation).
 - The State should also work directly with communities that are in close proximity to sanctuary cities in neighboring states to increase enforcement.
- *Present a United Front:* Streamline collaboration between state and local law enforcement, and equip our law enforcement agencies with the necessary technology and tools to effectively combat the criminal elements tied to illegal immigration.

Cooperative Federalism: The State should also be prepared to work hand-in-hand with federal law enforcement officers to address illegal immigration from its root causes.

- *Enforcement Support:* Should the federal government adopt a stronger posture with respect to enforcing illegal immigration, the State should be ready to assist in federal enforcement efforts through data-sharing and other synergies.
- *National Guard Readiness:* Coordinate with border states to determine how the Indiana National Guard may best be prepared to support a coordinated response to the border.

Support our Police

Every day, our law enforcement officers put their lives on the line to protect Hoosiers. In order to enhance officer recruitment and retention, the State should become a national leader in law enforcement support by enhancing salary and benefits, improving law enforcement training and equipment, and supporting officers' mental health and well-being.



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Enhance Salary and Benefits: Law enforcement officers' compensation—including salaries, benefits, and training opportunities—should reflect and respect the daily sacrifice they make. The State should invest in enhanced salary and benefits for state troopers and local law enforcement officers.

- *Comprehensive Pay Reform:* Implement comprehensive reforms to law enforcement officer compensation that align state troopers and local officers with competitive standards, including routine cost of living adjustments, competitive salaries, and comprehensive benefits that support officer well-being.

Elevate Officer Training: Hoosiers know that well-trained law enforcement officers make for safer communities. Today, Indiana's law enforcement officers are trained to handle a variety of challenges, and the State should continue to invest in officer training to further build on officer effectiveness and public trust.

- *State and Local Collaboration:* Increase collaboration between state and local law enforcement at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy to better deliver advanced policing techniques and support cooperation in the field. By enhancing collaboration for officer training, the State can not only reinforce officer preparedness but also ensure that every officer is at the forefront of modern law enforcement practices.

Support Officers in the Line of Duty: In order to best defend Hoosiers, our law enforcement officers need to be able to make split-second decisions in high-stakes situations without fearing unwarranted legal repercussions. The State should defend and protect qualified immunity for its law enforcement officers.

- *Protect Qualified Immunity:* Qualified immunity is a legal doctrine that ensures that law enforcement officers are protected from personal liability while performing their duties. It is critical to ensuring that officers have the necessary protections to act decisively, within the scope of the law, and in protection of Hoosiers.

Treat Mental Health with Seriousness

Across the state, Hoosiers are encountering a mental health crisis that not only impacts their loved ones, but also strains public safety resources that now serve as *de facto* treatment centers for those in need. The State should invest in local mental health treatment facilities that decriminalize mental health, treat it with the seriousness it deserves, and reduces the strain on already-stretched public safety resources.



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Break the Cycle of Incarceration: In the absence of accessible mental health resources, many individuals have found themselves in overcrowded jails and a cycle of incarceration. The State should invest in local mental health facilities and transform its approach to helping those in need.

- *Invest in Local Mental Health:* Significantly invest in local mental health treatment facilities ensuring that individuals with mental health issues receive the care they need within their community and without placing an added burden on the criminal justice system.
- *Hybrid Telemedicine:* In order to expand the reach of mental health specialists and provided tailored care to more Hoosiers, the State should develop a plan to leverage a combination of in-person and telemedicine services for mental health services.

Prioritize School Safety

Currently, Indiana's school safety authorities are fragmented across different agencies. As modern threats continue to grow in complexity, the State must ensure that local communities and schools are supported so that no aspect of school safety falls through the cracks.

Plan of Action

Indiana Office of School Safety: Establish the Indiana Office of School Safety to streamline and enhance existing authorities at the Department of Education, Department of Homeland Security, and Indiana State Police, led by an individual with experience in emergency response and the K-12 environment. In order to achieve the goals of the Office, the State should also:

- *In-School Safety:* Increase the funding available to the Secured School Safety Grant Program, which provides matching grants to help schools employ safety personnel and purchase safety equipment.
- *Online Safety:* Implement age-appropriate cyber safety training for students, including information about online safety, financial scams and phishing attempts, secure passwords, and the responsible use of online platforms (including generative artificial intelligence and social media).