



2021 Legislative Priority

Issue:

Enhance Assessment Uniformity

Background:

Members across the state are experiencing inconsistencies in assessments of similar real property features depending on the county in which they reside. The examples below demonstrate how the assessment manual isn't being applied consistently. It also highlights how the rules currently in place are either not clearly defined or not enforced to the degree that creates uniformity across the state concerning similar types of property.

Evidence of assessing disparity was revealed in a property tax study completed by Policy Analytics LLC.

Examples:

- Classifying the land underneath a livestock barn as commercial and therefore, assessing it as commercial rather than agricultural.
- Applying the “neighborhood factor” to uniform real property items, like grain bins.
- Lacking standard interpretations about farmland assessment influence factors such as tillable, non-tillable, wooded, frequently flooded, etc.

Story Points:

- Tax fairness across all property owners is necessary to foster economic growth.
- Uniformity in property tax assessments based on the assessment manual is essential to creating a fair tax environment for the entire state.
- Property owners will save time and money not needing to appeal subjective assessments.
- Especially considering the result of the appeal is only applied to the individual case.
 - *Use your personal example of an assessment you believe was incorrect*
- Incorrect assessment calculations, like applying neighborhood factors to grain bins, have created situations that have falsely inflated tax bills for farmers based on geographic locations.

Key Message/ Ask:

Indiana Farm Bureau supports the General Assembly passing provisions that bring more uniformity to property tax assessments. This would prevent the piece-meal approach currently in place which leads to inconsistent taxing policies and unpredictable business environments.