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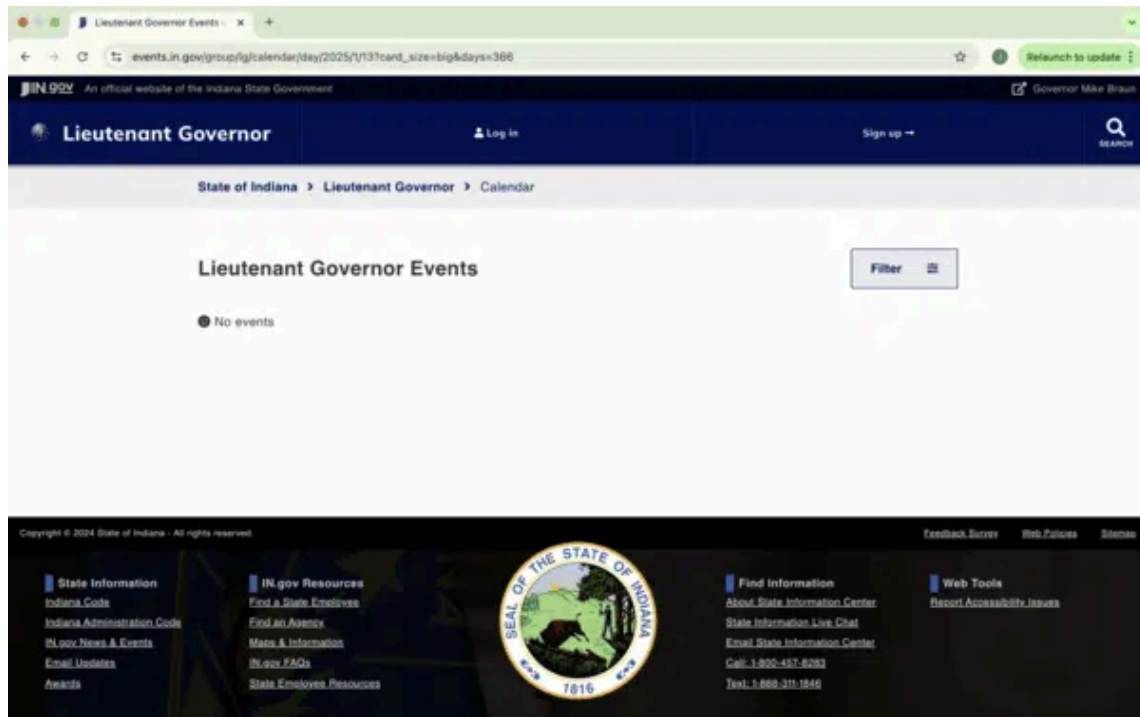


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# 17

March

## SCHEDULING SILENCE: Lt. Gov. Beckwith Not Making Official Calendar Public, His Office Says



Indiana Lt. Gov. Micah Beckwith is not publicizing his public appearances, saying his office did not want to bombard people with tons of information. (Photo/screenshot)

By Juliann Ventura  
The Indiana Citizen  
March 17, 2025

In a move that veers from tradition, Republican Lt. Gov. Micah Beckwith's office is not planning to publicize the new officeholder's official schedule on his state government website page, Beckwith's press chief told The Indiana Citizen last week.

Beckwith Communications Director Jim Kehoe said that the lieutenant governor's office would not be updating the [page](#), even with the events that Beckwith attends in his official capacity.

When asked why his official schedule would not be publicized, Beckwith told The Indiana Citizen that his team strategically posts where he's going to be.

"There are some events that are open to the public, general public, and then there's other events that are somewhat party-related, that are going to be more focused on Republican Party events," he said.

"Not that we don't want to publicize. We just want to do it in a way that makes sense, so we're not bombarding people with tons of information. We want to try to get the information to the targeted groups that we wanted there," Beckwith added.

Republican Gov. Mike Braun's public events are being shared through news releases, his press team said. The governor's public schedule on the [state government website page](#) currently has past press releases, which include advisories, statements and revenue reports. [At least one](#) advisory for an executive order signing was released before the event.

There are no laws requiring state government officials to have public calendars or schedules. Past web pages show Indiana's previous lieutenant governors have traditionally publicized events in advance for at least some of the weeks they were in office and acting in their official capacities.

The previous lieutenant governor, Suzanne Crouch, who served from 2017 to 2025, seemingly publicized at least some parts of her schedule when she was participating in speaking engagements or visiting organizations, [live](#) and [archived](#) web pages show.

When former Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb was the state's lieutenant governor, from March 2016 to January 2017, [archived web pages](#) also show that he publicized at least some of his schedule when he was acting in his governmental role.

Pete Seat, a longtime media professional who was Holcomb's communications director during the Republican's truncated 2016 gubernatorial campaign, outlined both positive and negative reasons for publicizing a government figure's official schedule.

"The main benefit is accessibility and engagement and the perception that an elected official is in touch and understands what's happening on the ground, especially when you're traveling to communities around the state," Seat, deputy press secretary to then-President George W. Bush, told The Indiana Citizen.

In contrast, he said public figures now have other considerations, such as security or people showing up to create a viral moment for social media, which he suggested could detract from the main purposes of certain events.

"There's a lot more consideration, I think, today in 2025 about broadcasting a public schedule than even 10 years ago, because of how events can be hijacked and derailed from their intended purpose," Seat said.

### **PAC: Entirety Of Calendar May Not Be Kept From Public**

If a resident wants to file a public records request to access a public official's schedule, former Indiana Public Access Counselor Luke Britt suggested the answer isn't straightforward. There are a number of factors – including security concerns and how officials use their calendars – that determine what can be disclosed.

"My former office has historically said that calendars could be considered the functional equivalent of a diary or journal or personal notes, and there is a statute that exempts that from disclosure," said the state's longest-serving public access counselor.

"But everybody uses calendars a little bit differently," he added, citing the way he used his own calendar when he was the state's top public records expert.

"When I was doing my calendar, it kind of had a mix of things that I might put as a placeholder that would have to do with a certain case and I wouldn't necessarily want that public. But then all of my speaking events would be fair game, because that's where I am in my official capacity.

"There are other little notes and stuff that, if someone asked for my calendar, I would probably redact, but that wouldn't make the whole thing non-disclosable," Britt said, later adding, "I would argue that the non-sensitive entries are still disclosed and especially past entries."

Britt, in his role as public access counselor, filed an advisory opinion regarding public access requests of public officials after his office received a [complaint in October 2024](#). The complaint alleged that Indiana University violated the state's Access to Public Records Act after the school denied a request for the university president's public calendar, citing [Indiana Code](#) that states an agency may withhold "diaries, journals, or other personal notes serving as the functional equivalent of a diary or journal."

In his opinion, Britt cited past decisions involving the calendars of the Indiana governor and a local mayor who was running for a major party's presidential nomination. He had written that calendars may include more than just a timeline of dates and appointments, and that "much of this information can also be categorized as deliberative material, some of which may also be withheld."

In this recent opinion, however, Britt added, "I do not believe that the *entirety* of a public employee's calendar would fit squarely within the cited exemption. Certainly the portions of a calendar that serve as the functional equivalent of a diary of journal, personal notes, etc., can be withheld pursuant to the statute."

## **Providing Transparency And Some Accountability**

When it comes to publicizing an official's official calendar, Julia Vaughn, executive director of Common Cause Indiana, a nonpartisan organization dedicated to strengthening American democracy, told The Indiana Citizen, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant."

Vaughn admitted that while certain personal parts of a public figure's calendar can and

Vaughn admitted that while certain, personal parts of a public figure's calendar can and should remain private, the hours spent working in an official capacity should be publicized.

"They're not required to tell us how they spend every hour in the day, but certainly during that time that they spend working for citizens of this state, I do think an official calendar is a good way to provide transparency and some accountability in terms of whose interests they're focused on," Vaughn said.

She added that it's especially important when it comes to campaign finance and asked, "Are they spending a lot of time with a particular campaign contributor at a time when legislation that would impact this interest is pending at the General Assembly?"

At the very least, Vaughn also said that any time a public official isn't fully transparent, "you cause the public to think the worst," adding that an official may not be doing anything nefarious and may have a legitimate reason for wanting to limit access.

Meanwhile, when asked about how he views transparency as it relates to publicizing a public figure's official calendar, Seat said, "It depends on how you define transparency. Is it not transparent to the people at the event who's speaking to them? ...It's not like the elected official's going up there and putting on a mask and pretending to be someone else."

At the very least, however, Vaughn also said that publicizing a figure's official schedule gives the public insight into how elected officials are spending their time and with whom.


"Are they doing it working on behalf of all Hoosiers, or are they spending more time just on certain segments of Indiana special interest or other individuals that don't have the broader interests of the state at heart?"

*Juliann Ventura is a political reporter who grew up in Indianapolis. Prior to joining The Citizen, Juliann reported in Washington, D.C., chasing down federal lawmakers on Capitol Hill, and was most recently on The Hill's breaking news team covering all things politics and policy. She earned her master's in journalism from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and her bachelor's in international studies and criminology from Butler University (Go Dawgs!). Juliann's reporting has been featured in The Washington Post, ProPublica and numerous state and local publications.*

*Judy Wolf, a freelance editor based near Indianapolis, edited this article. She is a former content and copy editor at five daily newspapers, including The Indianapolis Star. She's known to some friends for turning down The New York Times once and The St. Petersburg Times thrice.*

*The Indiana Citizen is a nonpartisan, nonprofit platform dedicated to increasing the number of informed and engaged Hoosier citizens. We are operated by the Indiana Citizen Education Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) public charity. For questions about the story, contact Marilyn Odendahl at [marilyn.odendahl@indianacitizen.org](mailto:marilyn.odendahl@indianacitizen.org).*

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