

## Woody Burton

### Indiana House District 58



#### Summary

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##### Legislative Biography

State Representative Woody Burton has been a key player in promoting positive change for Indiana since joining the state legislature in 1988.

One of Burton's legislative priorities has been to permanently repeal property taxes in Indiana. During the 2007 session, he was instrumental in passing legislation that capped property taxes. In 2010, he supported legislation to allow a constitutional amendment to permanently cap property taxes on the November 2010 ballot.

In addition to property tax relief, Burton has been diligent in working to improve the mortgage industry through improving foreclosure prevention programs, increasing land bank opportunities and instituting tax incentives for businesses to renovate empty buildings.

Burton was also the driving force behind the “In God We Trust” state license plate and is proud that Hoosiers have the option to acquire this plate at no extra charge. More than two million Hoosiers have already purchased this plate.

Burton also co-authored legislation that focused on bullying in schools. After hearing numerous cases of students taking their own lives as a result of bullying, Burton felt compelled to act. This law required the Indiana Department of Education to develop guidelines to assist school corporations in establishing bullying prevention programs, reporting procedures and disciplinary rules.

In 2015, Burton authored legislation that required teachers-in-training to be instructed on how to recognize dyslexia in students at earlier ages. Dyslexia is a reading disorder that affects how students see words. Students with dyslexia have the same potential as any other student; they just learn differently. House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1108 was a necessary step to ensure Hoosier students receive a quality education.

With legislation in 2015, Burton cleared up confusion, established procedures and created guidelines for Homeowner Associations and their members. HEA 1286 required sellers of property that is subject to a Homeowner Association to disclose certain information to the purchaser. In 2016, he authored a bill that built upon previous legislation to empower Homeowner Associations to better serve their members by eliminating unnecessary red tape.

Burton authored legislation in 2016 which prohibited the tax or collection of PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) fees from churches and church schools.

[Legislative Biography, [3/12/2018](#)]

### **ALEC membership/ties**

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- Commerce, Insurance and Economic Development Task Force Member, 2011
- Attended ALEC's 45th annual conference in New Orleans, 2018
- Signed Confirm Judge Brett Kavanaugh ALEC Letter 2018
- Signed ALEC letter in September 2014 to Google about CEO Eric Schmidt's comments about ALEC's position on climate change
- Signed on to ALEC SALT Letter to Congress in October 2016
- ALEC Legislator of the Week 3/12/2018
- [Signed on to 2013 ALEC Durbin Response Letter](#)

### **Legislator of the Week**

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ALEC and FreedomWorks introduce the Legislator of the Week: Indiana State Representative Woody Burton. Representative Burton has been a key player in promoting positive change for Indiana since joining the General Assembly in 1988. He is the current Chair of the Commerce, Insurance, and

Economic Development Taskforce at ALEC. One of Rep. Burton's legislative priorities has been to permanently repeal property taxes in Indiana. During the 2007 session, he was instrumental in passing legislation that capped property taxes. Representative Burton has also been diligent in working to improve the mortgage industry through improving foreclosure prevention programs, increasing land bank opportunities, and instituting tax incentives for businesses to renovate empty buildings. He and his wife, Volly, have been married for 33 years and are active members of Franklin Memorial Christian Church. They also work together in the real estate brokerage business. The couple has three children and six grandchildren.

**Why did you run for office?**

I ran for office back in 1988 because I saw people in a constant struggle with the government. I wanted to do right for the people of Greenwood and Whiteland, and help break the constant struggle they were stuck in.

**In your view, what is the biggest issue facing your state?**

I believe the biggest issue facing the state of Indiana today is our desperate need to fix the Department of Child Services. We have over 24,000 children in our DCS system in Indiana and our state has a total population of 6.6 million people. When you look at our neighbors Ohio and Illinois, they have around 12 million in total population and have 10,000 less kids in their DCS system. There is a clear problem with that, and I want to work towards fixing it.

**If you could "wave your magic wand," what would you like to see immediately implemented in your state?**

If I had one wish for our state, it would be that the Department of Child Services would be completely revamped, so that all Hoosier kids can come home to a safe and loving environment.

**What project or law are you most proud of?**

There are two specific laws that I am very proud to say I was a part of. First, back in 2006, I authored a bill making an "In God We Trust" license plate. This license plate has been one of the most popular ones in Indiana since coming out more than a decade ago, and gives Hoosiers the opportunity to express their faith with our nation's motto. The other piece of legislation I am most proud of is a bill I authored in 2015 defining dyslexia, which requires educators to take a training program that teaches them the characteristics of dyslexia and how to best help those children. I am dyslexic, and I know the lifetime struggle dyslexia can bring to someone. I wanted to help children with the disability to have a more fair fight than I had.

**How has ALEC helped you as a legislator?**

ALEC has helped me expand my knowledge of other state's laws, and has therefore helped me become more informed when similar bills come before us on the House floor in Indiana.

**Can you share a fun fact about yourself that's not in your official bio?**

I am a huge car buff! I have a 1938 Ford Firetruck that is often used in parades in my district. I also have a 1998 Chevy Corvette convertible and a 2016 Chevy Camaro convertible. I just recently sold my father's 1953 Chevy Corvette to a museum (attached). I also was lucky enough to get the chance to drive a race car around the track at Indiana Motor Speedway for my 70th birthday.

[Legislator of the Week, [3/12/2018](#)]

## Other Hits

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**Representative Woody Burton, in discussing anti-discrimination legislation, compared homosexuality to a pathology shared with “molesters and killers.”** During a town hall meeting in his hometown of Whiteland, in central Indiana, Republican Rep. Woody Burton made these analogies in an effort to describe his belief that being gay is a behavior. “You can’t control it sometimes. I understand that,” he said. “If someone’s a psychopathic killer, it’s a behavior thing. They can’t help it. OK? Somebody’s a homosexual, maybe it’s a genetic thing. Maybe it’s not. They can’t help it. But it’s still a behavioral thing.” He then brought up former Subway spokesman Jared Fogle, who was sentenced to prison last year after pleading guilty to possessing child pornography and crossing state lines to have sex with a minor. “This thing with Subway and Jared is a classic example of what’s the next step,” Burton said [The Advocate, [1/27/2017](#)].

**Representative Woody Burton dismissed a constituent’s concerns during a discussion over discriminatory bathroom bills.** In response to a request to increase funding for schools and publicly accessible bathrooms, Burton responded, “I get it! You are a Bernie supporter!” As the conversation ended, Burton turned back to his constituent only to exclaim, “say hi to Bernie for me!” [Nuvo, [5/31/2016](#)]

**Representative Woody Burton voted for a bill that would require schools to distribute permission slips for parents to sign before giving instruction on human sexuality, including topics like gender identity** [Trib Star, [2/20/2018](#); SB 65 [Third reading: passed, 1/30/2018](#)]