

## Indiana Pawnbrokers Association History

The Indiana Pawnbrokers Association was unofficially formed in Houston Texas. While attending the NPA Convention & Exposition, on May 6, 1991, the delegates attending from Indiana met in the hotel room of Steve Krupnik and discussed the need to organize and make some changes in the industry in Indiana. At that time there were 28 licensed pawnbrokers operating in the state under regulations that had seen but a handful of small changes in 56 years. With the help of Indiana Department of Financial Institutions Director Charles Phillips, Deputy Director Robert Haler, and former State Regulator and now association Executive Director Ron Stempkowski, the Indiana Pawnbrokers Association was officially organized in Indianapolis on June 26, 1991. At that first “official” meeting twenty-four pawnbrokers joined the association, or a whopping 85 % of the pawnbrokers operating in the state (makes you wonder what the other four were thinking). Over the past eleven years the number of licensed pawnbrokers in the state has grown to 135 thanks to major legislative changes in 1992 and 2001. Unlike other newly formed state associations, the Indiana Pawnbrokers Association was able to update their antiquated 1935 pawnbroking law without the assistance of any public companies, but was appreciative for the assistance of Louise Seawright, National Pawnbrokers Association President at that time. There are many cities in Indiana that now have licensed and regulated pawnbrokers for the first time in their history. This has been a big help in dispelling a lot of the old myths about the pawnbroking industry in the state. Of course, the Indiana Pawnbrokers Association has had to grow along with the industry and has adapted its policies, its Board of Directors, and its member services over the years.

Through hard work, communication, and some dogged persistence, the association has managed to retain approximately 50 % membership of all of the licensees in the state. And, thanks to the success of a variety of projects taken on by the Indiana group, such as hosting the annual *Midwest Pawnbrokers Conference & Convention* and publishing the quarterly trade publication *The Midwest Pawnbroker*, the future of the Indiana Pawnbrokers Association and the industry in the Hoosier State looks positive.