



## Daily Legislative Update

91st General Assembly

Wednesday, February 1, 2017 – Day 24

### CAPITOL SCHEDULE

The Senate and House will convene today at 1:30 p.m.

To view schedules for all of today's activities, committee agendas, bills and other information related to the Session, visit [www.arkleg.state.ar.us](http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us).

### RECEPTION FOR CHRIS PALMER – TOMORROW

#### New Workers' Compensation Management Commissioner

The State Chamber/AIA will host a reception from 4:30 pm until 5:30 pm tomorrow to honor new Workers' Compensation Commission Management Commissioner Chris Palmer. The reception will be held in our Bob Lamb Conference Room. Please stop by and say hello to Chris.

### STATE CHAMBER/AIA PRIORITY BILLS – \* PLEASE SUPPORT \*

**HB 1405** by Rep. Robin Lundstrum, R-Springdale, and Sen. Jim Hendren, R-Gravette, was filed yesterday and is one of our priority bills for this session. This bill seeks to lower the unemployment insurance taxes paid by employers by reducing the wage base from \$12,000 to \$10,000. It also makes changes in the weeks of coverage and a base measure in calculating benefits.

### TODAY AT THE CAPITOL

#### LIMITATIONS ON PURCHASES WITH FOOD STAMPS

**HB 1035** by Rep. Mary Bentley, R-Perryville, and Sen. Cecile Bledsoe, R-Rogers, is on this morning's agenda in the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

In many ways, the health of our citizens has an impact on the state's economy. Consequently, it is a laudable goal to seek to improve the health of citizens. Research by one of our member companies indicates that there is very little difference in the items purchased by low and middle income shoppers. So, the level of exercise has a much greater impact on citizens' health than the foods they purchase.

An effort to define "healthy" foods is quite an undertaking. Every product SKU would need to be catalogued in a database for retailers to access 24/7. New product introductions would need to be included in a timely manner. Retailers already have issues with keeping WIC programs current with new product introductions. It can take

food producers as long as two years to have a new product added to the WIC system. Having a federal system and a state system would be very burdensome to retailers, confusing to consumers, and potentially costly to the state.

The governmental decision about which foods are healthy or not healthy is very difficult and would involve more than 300,000 food and beverage products and could inadvertently block the purchase of nutritionally dense foods.

We **oppose this bill** because of the burdens and costs that food retailers and manufacturers would incur to comply with this bill's requirements.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING**

**HB1209** by Rep. Mark Lowery, R-Maumelle, and Sen. Eddie Joe Williams, R-Cabot, would require the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt a productivity-based funding model for institutions of higher education and repeal the funding model currently in place, which is based on student enrollment. It is on today's agenda in the Senate Education Committee. We **support** this bill.

### **BILLS OF INTEREST**

#### **CORPORATE BUSINESS FILINGS**

**HB 1383** by Rep. Dwight Tosh, R-Jonesboro, would require the names listed in the articles of organization for a business to be full legal names. It would also require members who constitute management of a company to be listed along with any managers and would require full legal names of all. We **oppose** this bill.

#### **RETAIL TAX PREPAYMENT**

**HB 1253** by Rep. Jeff Wardlaw, R-Warren, seeks to repeal the requirement that retailers with average net monthly sales of more than \$200,000 prepay a portion of their sales tax twice monthly. This bill was not considered in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee and remains on the committee's agenda. We **support** this bill.

**HB 1388** by Rep. Dan Douglas, R-Bentonville, and Sen. Jake Files, R-Fort Smith, would require a seller that does not have a physical presence in this state and does not collect Arkansas sales or use tax on sales made to Arkansas residents to notify Arkansas purchasers that tax is due on certain purchases made from the seller and that Arkansas requires the purchaser to file a sales or use tax return.

It would also subject any seller who fails to comply with this section to a penalty of \$5 for each failure to provide notice. Sellers that do not have a physical presence in this state and do not collect Arkansas sales or use tax on sales made to Arkansas would be required to file an annual report by March 1 of each year of sales to each purchaser with the Director of the Department of Finance and Administration showing the total amount paid by each Arkansas purchaser to the seller during the preceding calendar year. Those sellers that fail to file an annual report would be subject to a penalty of \$10 for each purchaser that should have been included in the report.

We **support** this bill which will be heard tomorrow in the House Revenue and Taxation Committee.

### **YESTERDAY AT THE CAPITOL**

#### **GOVERNOR'S RETIRED MILITARY TAX REDUCTIONS**

**SB 120** by Sen. Jane English, R-North Little Rock, Rep. Charlene Fite, R-Van Buren, 13 additional Senators and 30 additional House members, passed by a vote of 30- 0 in the Senate yesterday.

**HB1162** by Rep. Charlene Fite, R-Van Buren, Sen. Jane English, R-North Little Rock, 30 additional House members and 13 additional Senators, has been assigned to the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee.

**We support** these bills which will create an income tax exemption for military retirement.

### **EMPLOYER PROTECTIONS**

**HB1126** by Rep. Charlie Collins, R-Fayetteville, was approved by the full House yesterday by a vote of 70 to 17. We **support** this bill which would improve employers' standing in civil suits with employees by exempting civil actions arising from employer-employee relationships from general hate offense provisions and specifying damages that may be awarded from retaliation and interference claims by employees.

This bill addresses issues that we had planned to address in one of our priority bills. It matches Arkansas law with federal law. It has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

### **STATE CHAMBER/AIA BILL TRACKING TRACKED BILLS**

The House has filed 412 bills.

The Senate has filed 264 bills.

We are tracking 169 bills.

To view the list of bills we've added most recently to our tracking, click [here](#).

Our entire list of tracked bills are posted on our website by category, which you can access by clicking [here](#).

### **LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION AND MESSAGE CENTER**

To view schedules, calendars, bill information and legislator information, visit [www.arkleg.state.ar.us](http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us).

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