



Daily Legislative Update

91st General Assembly Fiscal Session
Thursday, March 1, 2018

AT THE CAPITOL

The House and Senate will convene at 11 a.m. this morning and the Fiscal Session will continue into next week.

LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR 2019

Sen. Jim Hendren, R-Gravette, has been nominated to serve as Senate President Pro Tem for the 2019 Legislative Session. We congratulate Sen. Hendren, who has been the lead sponsor of multiple State Chamber/AIA bills in past Sessions.

Here are excerpts from a story published yesterday by Mike Wickline of the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* about the Legislative Leadership elections:

The Arkansas Senate Republican caucus voted Tuesday to nominate Sen. Jim Hendren of Sulphur Springs over Sen. Jimmy Hickey of Texarkana to be the next president pro tempore, Hendren said Tuesday afternoon. Some senators and Capitol insiders had been privately speculating that there would be a close vote in the 23-member caucus for the upper chamber's next leader. But Hendren said he doesn't know what the vote count was for the post, and the ballots were destroyed. "We don't disclose the vote counts," said Hendren, who now serves as the majority leader.

The Senate will formally choose a president pro tempore-elect on the last day of this year's fiscal session and then vote to confirm him on the first day of the 2019 regular session. Since the Senate now includes 23 Republicans, nine Democrats and three vacant seats, the caucus's decision to nominate Hendren as the Senate's next leader is tantamount to his election for the post.

Hendren, 54, has served in the Senate since 2013 and was in the House of Representatives from 1995-2001. He is owner of Hendren Plastics Inc. and his uncle is Governor Asa Hutchinson.

Senate Democratic leader Keith Ingram of West Memphis said he has the utmost respect for Hendren, who has been involved in every legislative task force meeting during the past several years. Hendren is co-chairman of the Legislature's tax overhaul task force and previously served as a leader for the Legislature's health care task force, and the state and public employee health insurance task force. "Jim is a fine man and will be fair with the minority party,"

Ingram said. During the Senate's brief meeting in advance of the caucus meeting, Ingram told senators that [outgoing two-term Sen. President Pro Tem] Dismang has done "an outstanding job in representing the thoughts and opinions, and hearing the points of view of both parties." The Senate elects the president pro tempore to represent all 35 senators, but for the past several years it has been the Senate Republican Caucus that selected the nominees for the position, he said. "I think that's wrong," he said. "I think that we should all have a say on who our pro tempore is going to be." "I think if we are true to our mission that we try to work across party lines for what is the best for the state of Arkansas, then how can it be possible that one group selects our leader without any input from the other?" Ingram said.

Asked about Ingram's comments, Hendren noted that he served in the House Republican Caucus when Republicans were in the minority in the House, and he understands Ingram's frustration. He said he's sympathetic to Ingram's concerns, but the Senate Republican Caucus has chosen to nominate the Senate president pro tempore for the third consecutive time. In 2013, Republicans gained control of the House and Senate for the first time since Reconstruction. The Democrats previously controlled the chambers.

The [Republican] caucus also elected Sen. Bart Hester of Cave Springs as its leader to succeed Hendren, and Sen. Scott Flippo of Mountain Home as its whip to succeed Hester, Hendren said. Hester vied with Sen. Terry Rice of Waldron for majority leader, while Flippo competed with Sen. Missy Irvin, R-Mountain Home, for whip.

On the other side of the state Capitol, the House will elect its House speaker-elect at the end of this year's fiscal session. Reps. Andy Davis, R-Little Rock, and Matthew Shepherd, R-El Dorado, are hoping to succeed House Speaker Jeremy Gillam, R-Judsonia, who has served as House speaker since January 2015.

CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD CLOSES AT NOON TODAY

The week-long Candidate Filing Period closes at noon today. Here's a link to the Candidate Information section of the Secretary of State's website. You can search by name, office or choose "Sort by Position" and get an entire list of all filings by Position:

https://www.ark.org/arelections/index.php?ac:show:cand_search=1&elecid=374

RED TAPE REDUCTION WORKING GROUP

The State Chamber/AIA hosted an excellent meeting yesterday of its Licensing Group. Co-chairs of the Red Tape Reduction Working Group, Sen. John Cooper, R-Jonesboro, and Rep. Bruce Cozart, R-Hot Springs, spoke to and took questions from our group for about an hour.

A handful of resource websites have been provided to the Red Tape Reduction Working Group members. One of the most interesting is the National Occupational Licensing Database. Here's some information about it and the title is a link to the website:

[National Occupational Licensing Database](#) – *Developed as part of the Occupational Licensing Policy Learning Consortium, the database offers state-by-state comparisons of licensing or certification practices for 34 occupations that 1) are regulated by at least 30 states, 2) have projected job-growth potential, 3) have an entry level of less than a four-year degree, and 4) have a national number of job holders exceeding at least 10,000.*

The 34 occupations discussed in this website are listed below. The Red Tape Group leaders suggested that these occupations would likely become part of their group's review.

Barber	Bus Driver (City/Transit)	Bus Driver, School or Special Client	General Contractor	Home Inspector	Dental Hygienist
Electrician	Emergency Medical Technician & Paramedic	Hairdressers, Hairstylists & Cosmetologists	Heating, AC, & Refrigeration Mechanic	Heavy, Tractor-Trailer Truck Driver	Insurance Sales Agent
Practical & Vocational Nurse	Manicurist & Pedicurist	Massage Therapist	Nursing Assistant	Occupational Therapy Assistant	Pharmacy Technician
Physical Therapy Assistant	Pipefitter & Steamfitter	Plumber	Preschool Teacher*	Private Detective	Radiologic Technologist
Real Estate Appraiser	Real Estate Sales Agent	Respiratory Therapist	Security, Fire Alarm System Installer	Security Guard	Skin Care Specialist
Teacher Assistant*	Veterinary Technician	Vocational Education Teacher*	Water Treatment System Operator		

If you'd like to join our Licensing Group, send a message to Kenny Hall at khall@arkansasstatechamber.com

LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION

During Fiscal Sessions, this update is provided periodically based upon information of interest. To view schedules, calendars, bill information and legislator information, visit: www.arkleg.state.ar.us.

Legislative Message Center

House of Representatives: 501-682-6211
Senate: 501-682-2902

State Chamber/AIA Governmental Affairs Team:

Randy Zook, President/CEO:

rzook@arkansasstatechamber.com

Kenny Hall, Executive Vice President:

khall@arkansasstatechamber.com

Andrew Parker, Director of Governmental Affairs:

aparker@arkansasstatechamber.com

Holly Wilson, Director of Governmental Affairs:

hwilson@arkansasstatechamber.com

Toni Bahn, Director of Governmental Affairs:

tbahn@arkansasstatechamber.com

State Chamber/AIA phone: (501) 372-2222

State Chamber/AIA web site: www.arkansasstatechamber.com

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The Daily Legislative Update is written by Kenny Hall and edited and distributed by Jeff Thatcher.



1200 W. Capitol Ave., P.O. Box 3645
Little Rock, AR 72203-3645

501-372-2222
FAX 372-2722
