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**93rd General Assembly
Friday, April 2, 2021 – Session Day 82**

TODAY AT THE CAPITOL

The House and Senate are in recess until Monday, April 5.

*** * * CALL TO ACTION – YOUR CONTACTS ARE
IMPORTANT * * ***

PLEASE ASK YOUR LEGISLATOR TO VOTE YES ON SB622!

CLASS PROTECTION BILL – State Chamber/AIA Priority Agenda Bill

Leadership in the Arkansas House and Senate filed **SB622**, a “Class Protection Bill” to send the message that crimes targeting individuals simply because of who they are will **NOT** be tolerated in our state. As you know, we are one of only three states in the country without a law on the books to ensure justice for crime victims who are targeted because they belong to a certain group or class of individuals. We could easily find ourselves the **ONLY** state in the nation without a similar law on the books. **We CANNOT let that happen.**

Please reach out to your legislator, as well as members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, letting them know SB622 is critically important – not just for creating jobs, but retaining the ones we have. Please let them know this measure is important to you and your community. Our employees deserve to know their state values equity and inclusion, and that diverse groups throughout Arkansas are both valued and protected under the law.

Ask your Senator to Vote Yes on SB 622 - It's important to business and our state.

PLEASE ASK YOUR SENATOR TO VOTE YES ON SB 530

WORKERS' COMPENSATION – State Chamber Priority Agenda Bill

SB 530 by Sen. Dave Wallace and Rep. Jack Ladyman addresses the issue of subrogation in workers' compensation cases. The purpose of this bill is to reduce employers' workers comp costs by allowing a recovery of payments made to an employee who was injured while on the job and the injury is caused by someone else.

Workers' comp is obligated to pay its benefits regardless of the employee's ability to seek recovery of those benefits and more from the person that caused the injury. Workers' comp must pay all of the injured workers' medical bills and temporary total disability to cover a portion of the employee's lost wages and then the injured employee can make a claim against the person who caused the injury. That claim includes the medical bills already paid by workers' comp and all of the lost wages, which approximately two-thirds was paid by workers' comp.

Ask your Senator to Vote Yes on SB 530 - It's important to business.

YESTERDAY'S BILLS

INDEPENDENT TAX APPEALS COMMISSION-State Chamber/AIA Priority Agenda bill

HB 1468 by Rep. Joe Jett and Sen. Jonathan Dismang is our bill that seeks to create an Independent Tax Appeals Commission and a technical companion bill, **HB 1705**.

HB 1468 passed in the Senate yesterday 34-0. HB 1705 also passed 34-0.

The State Chamber/AIA supports **HB 1468 & HB 1705**.

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTION PROTECTION – State Chamber/AIA Priority Agenda Bill

HB 1321 by Rep. Jimmy Gazaway and Sen. Alan Clark will define critical infrastructure, add critical infrastructure to the existing criminal code, and set associated criminal mischief penalties.

This bill passed yesterday in the Senate 34-0 and has been sent back to the House Judiciary Committee for concurrence in an amendment that corrected some paragraph numbers.

The State Chamber/AIA supports this bill.

EXTENDED TAX RETURN DEADLINE – State Chamber/AIA Priority Agenda Bill

SB 420 by Sen. Jonathan Dismang and Rep. Joe Jett would set the deadline for state income tax returns following application for a federal extension to one month after the federal deadline for tax returns that have been granted a federal extension.

The Senate passed this bill 34-0 yesterday and it has been assigned to the House Revenue and Taxation Committee.

The State Chamber/AIA supports this bill.

PUBLIC ROADS IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT– State Chamber/AIA Priority Agenda Bill

SB 481 by Sen. Jonathan Dismang allows 100 percent of the public roads improvements tax credit to be taken in a single year, instead of limiting it to 50 percent. It also extends the carry-forward period for the credit from three to ten years.

This bill passed 35 to 0 in the Senate yesterday and has been assigned to the House Revenue and Taxation Committee

The State Chamber/AIA supports this bill.

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING

HB 1667 by Rep. Tony Furman would require all occupational licensing entities to recognize licenses from other states. The bill defines “applicant” as an individual seeking an occupational or professional license.

A Do Pass motion failed yesterday in the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

The State Chamber/AIA opposes this very broad bill.

PHARMACY BENEFITS MANAGEMENT

HB 1804 by Rep. Brian Evans and Sen. Ron Caldwell seeks to make changes to the Arkansas Pharmacy Benefits Manager Licensure Act.

This bill passed 90-0 in the House yesterday and has been assigned to the Senate Insurance and Commerce Committee.

We oppose this bill.

INDEXING WEEKS OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

HB1676 by Rep. Austin McCollum seeks to scale back the duration of unemployment compensation benefits in increments as indexed to the current unemployment rate.

This bill was defeated in the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee Tuesday but was on yesterday’s committee agenda. It was not considered.

We support a study of this concept and to allow time for DWS to put in place a modern computer system, which could take years.

PROHIBIT MANDATORY COVID IMMUNIZATIONS OR VACCINES

HB 1547 by Rep. Robin Lundstrum and Sen. Breanne Davis proposes an Act to Prohibit Mandatory 2019 (Covid-19) Immunizations or Vaccines for students and employees.

This bill awaits consideration in the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

We oppose this bill.

NEW BILL WE OPPOSE

COVID PASSPORT

SB 615 by Sen. Trent Garner and Rep. Justin Gonzales would prohibit state and local authorities from using a vaccine passport (meaning documentation that an individual has been vaccinated against COVID-19 or has tested negative for or recovered from the virus) as a condition of entry, travel, employment, etc.

This bill has been assigned to the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee. We oppose this bill.

BILLS WE SUPPORT

FUNDING FOR ARHOME

SB 55 by the Joint Budget Committee is the appropriation for the state Division of Medical Services. This appropriation includes funding for ARHOME, **SB 410**, which is the replacement for Arkansas Works. The ARHOME bill, **SB 410**, has been sent to the Governor. **SB 55** requires a seventy-five percent majority to pass.

This bill passed the Senate 28 to 5 on March 29 and awaits consideration on the House floor.

The State Chamber/AIA supports **SB 55**.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE SYSTEM UPDATE

HB 1765 by Rep. Robin Lundstrum would allow a portion of the existing Stabilization Tax revenue to be used to finance a much needed modernization of the unemployment insurance system. These funds could be used from April 1, 2021 through December 31, 2023 but cannot exceed \$35 million.

This bill awaits consideration in the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee. We support updating the DWS UI system and this bill.

STATE CHAMBER/AIA BILL TRACKING

Total Bills Filed: 1492 | New Bills Filed: Senate 7 | House 11

Bills and resolutions added to State Chamber/AIA Tracking: 4 | Total Tracked: 555

To see a list of the new bills added to our tracking, click [here](#).

To see all tracked bills saved by category, click [here](#).

LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION

To view schedules, calendars, bill information and legislator information, click [here](#).

To view the statement regarding Capitol access and committee attendance, click [here](#).

Legislative Session Message Center

House of Representatives: 501-682-6211

Senate: 501-682-2902

STATE CHAMBER/AIA INFORMATION

2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

To view the State Chamber/AIA's legislative agenda, click [here](#).

BILL SCORING

Floor votes on bills that address issues in our Legislative Agenda and/or are discussed in a Daily Legislative Update are subject to being scored.

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
- Toni Lindsey, Director of Governmental Affairs
tlindsey@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, reviewed by Randy Zook, then 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

STAY CONNECTED



Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/Associated Industries of Arkansas
1200 W. Capitol Ave., Little Rock, AR 72201
P.O. Box 3645, Little Rock, AR 72203
501-372-2222 | arkansasstatechamber.com