



## 93rd General Assembly Fiscal Session | Day 23 March 8, 2022

### FISCAL SESSION ADJOURNS

The House and Senate adjourned the 2022 Fiscal Session this morning. Sine Die adjournment will occur March 15 by proclamation of the House Speaker and Senate President Pro Tempore if no issues with bills are found that need attention or any vetoes occur that need to be considered.

### SUMMARY OF THE FISCAL SESSION

#### REVENUE STABILIZATION ACT

The Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA) was placed on legislators' desks for review on Thursday, March 3, and adopted this morning. The RSA, which must be passed by the General Assembly every year, outlines funding priorities for the state's budget in the next fiscal year and prevents the state from deficit spending. The proposal would increase the state's general revenue budget by \$175.1 million, to \$6.02 billion. It represents a 2.9% increase over last year's budget – lower than the 3.3% increase initially proposed by Governor Hutchinson. The legislation largely tracks the governor's proposed budget. However, legislative leaders said they felt it was important to keep the increase below 3%.

The governor told media that although a smaller funding increase was adopted than he proposed, the RSA is sufficient to serve all of those on the state's disability services waiting list by 2025, which he has said is a top priority. The budget provides \$37.6 million to help alleviate the waiting list for services for Arkansans with developmental disabilities. A majority of the increase will go toward education and Department of Human Services (DHS) programs that include a \$70 million increase for elementary and secondary education and county jail reimbursement increase of \$6.4 million.

#### PRISON EXPANSION

The General Assembly approved a measure to amend the Department of Corrections budget to allow spending of up to \$75 million for construction of a 498-bed expansion at the North Central Unit at Calico Rock. The governor and legislative supporters have said the expansion is needed to provide relief to county jails who accommodate overflow.

#### OFFICER PAY

A measure was adopted that calls for a \$7.4 million increase in salaries for Arkansas State Police officers if it is determined general revenue funds are available. Other certified law enforcement would be eligible for salary increases, as well.

#### MEDICAID

The General Assembly approved the Department of Human Services Division of Medical Services budget, which includes Medicaid programs. (In the past, lawmakers have taken multiple attempts to reach the required  $\frac{3}{4}$  threshold for passage, amid debate about the state's Medicaid waivers/expansion.)

#### UKRAINE

Both the House and Senate passed resolutions last week expressing the state's support

of the People of Ukraine and condemning the Russian invasion of the country. After the initial filing of competing resolutions in the Senate, lawmakers rallied behind an agreed-upon bi-partisan version.

## LEADERSHIP

Following the Senate Republican Caucus' election of Sen. Bart Hester to serve as Senate President Pro Tempore designee for the 94<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the full Senate unanimously approved Sen. Hester as the pro tem designee this morning. Sen. Blake Johnson was chosen earlier as majority leader and Sen. Ricky Hill was chosen as majority whip. The Senate also said farewell to eight senators who will not be returning in the next session due to term limits, personal choice or choosing to run for another office, two of which had served 20 years in the General Assembly.

The House will elect its Speaker of the House designee on Tuesday, March 15.

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## LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION

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

### Legislative Message Center

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

### Live Streaming from the Capitol

The House and Senate have links to live streaming of their committee meetings and floor session online.

- House: <https://www.arkansashouse.org/>
- Senate: <http://www.arkansas.gov/senate/>

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