

DAILY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Business matters.

Daily Legislative Update

94th Arkansas General Assembly
Friday, March 10, 2023 | Day 61

TODAY'S MEETINGS

The House and Senate are in recess until Monday.

NEW TRACKED BILLS

We began tracking [11 additional bills](#) today. In addition to the two bills described immediately below, the nine other newly tracked bills address motorboat sales taxes, social media access, cosmetology licensing, modifications in the Department of Agriculture, insurance for motor deliveries, home school testing, alcohol wholesaler permits and increasing tax incentives for film projects.

Child Labor Violations - Enhanced Penalties

SB 390 by Sen. Clint Penzo and Rep. Rebecca Burkes

This bill increases fines and the length of time for the assessment of civil penalties related to child labor violations. It provides criminal penalties related to child labor violations for first and subsequent offenses. It also

- Increases the maximum fine for child labor violations from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and extends the time a civil penalty may be assessed for a child labor violation from two years to three years from the date of occurrence.
- Provides criminal penalties for child labor violations. First violation is a Class C misdemeanor; subsequent violations are Class B misdemeanors. If the violation results in injury or death to a child, it is a Class A misdemeanor. Subsequent offenses are Class C felonies.

This bill has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Uniform Commercial Code

HB 1588 by Rep. Stephen Meeks and Sen. Jonathan Dismang

This bill, introduced by the Arkansas Bar Association, makes various changes to the Uniform Commercial Code.

It has been assigned to the House Insurance & Commerce Committee.

BILLS WE SUPPORT

Possessory Liens

HB 1563 by Rep. Brian Evans and Sen. Ricky Hill

We support this bill, which aims to combat some predatory towing practices in Arkansas by creating a cargo exception within towing policy to prevent "hostage cargo." The bill would allow cargo being transported for third parties to no longer be held hostage by tow operators while the truck owner and their insurance provider negotiate and pay for the tow service. Transport companies would be able to transload the cargo to another trailer and make delivery to their customer.

This bill has been assigned to the House Transportation Committee.

Arkansas Adult Diploma Program

HB 1529 by Rep. David Ray and Sen. Breanne Davis

We support this bill, which seeks to establish the Arkansas Adult Diploma Program. It would require the Department of Education to annually issue a request for public, nonprofit, or other entities to apply to become approved program providers in the Arkansas Adult Diploma Program. It also would require the Department of Education to announce the approved program providers no later than October 15 annually. An approved program provider may begin enrolling students starting no later than November 15 of each year.

The bill awaits consideration in the House Education Committee.

Career and Technical Education - Weighted Credit

SB 369 by Sen. Jim Dotson and Rep. Grant Hodges

We support this bill, but it needs an amendment regarding computer science courses. The bill would require the Division of Career and Technical Education to review new and existing career and technical pathways to determine which courses meet criteria for weighted credit and to publish a list of approved pathways annually. It would also allow a career readiness assessment to include the ACT WorkKeys (NCRC). The bill also requires a platinum, gold, silver or bronze credential through the ACT WorkKeys to be equal to participation and completion in an advanced placement course, an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program course, and an honor class, and to be eligible for weighted credit equal to the numeric grade awarded in an advanced placement course, an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program course, and an honors class.

This bill is on Monday's Senate calendar.

Construction Contracts – Limits on Job Order Contracting Bid Awards

HB 1582 Rep. Les Warren and Sen. Scott Flippo

We support this bill, which amends the limit for job order contracting bid awards for state agencies/institutions of higher learning. It provides that bid awards shall not exceed \$1,200,000 per construction job for the first year of the contract for institutions of higher education.

This bill has been assigned to the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

BILLS WE OPPOSE

Freedom of Information Act

SB 382 by Sen. Alan Clark

We oppose this bill, which seeks to amend certain open public meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act. It would prohibit two or more members of a

governing body of a public entity from discussing, deliberating, or deciding public business in circumvention of the Freedom of Information Act during any chance interaction, informal assemblage, or electronic communication.

This bill has been assigned to the Senate State Agencies Committee.

Pharmaceutical Executives – Felony for Drug Misinformation

SB 7 and SB 8 by Sen. Bryan King

We oppose these bills because of the precedent they would set in creating a felony for actions by corporate executives. We also have concerns about the bills' attempt to apply Arkansas criminal law to individuals who are not in Arkansas. **SB 7** applies to prescription drugs, and **SB 8** applies to vaccines.

These bills await consideration in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Special Election Dates

HB 1510 by Rep. David Ray and 42 Representatives and Sen. John Payton

We oppose this bill, which seeks to reduce the allowable dates for special elections on measures or questions referred to the voters by governmental entities. It also amends the conditions under which an emergency special election can be held.

This bill received a Do Pass recommendation yesterday from the Senate State Agencies Committee.

BILLS WITH CONCERNS

Agricultural Land - Prohibition Foreign Ownership

SB 383 by Sen. Blake Johnson and Rep. DeAnn Vaught

This bill prohibits certain foreign parties from acquiring any interest in Arkansas agricultural land. It provides penalties for violations and creates the Office of Agricultural Intelligence within the Department of Agriculture to collect and analyze information concerning the unlawful sale or possession of agricultural land by prohibited foreign parties.

This bill has been assigned to the Senate Agriculture, Forestry & Economic Development Committee.

YESTERDAY'S BILLS

Net-metering

SB 295 by Sen. Jonathan Dismang and HB 1370 by Rep. Lanny Fite

SB 295 passed in the House yesterday 73 to 14 and has been sent to the governor. **HB 1370** was passed over on the House floor yesterday and is not expected to be considered.

Occupational Licensing

SB 90 by Sen. Ricky Hill and Rep. Kendon Underwood

This bill allows recognition of out-of-state occupational license holders when they become residents of Arkansas.

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

BILL TRACKING

997 Bills Filed | Senate: 15 new – 404 filed | House: 9 new – 593 filed

State Chamber Tracking: 385 - 11 added today

To view all tracked bills by category, click [State Chamber AIA Bill Tracking Categories](#)

2023 STATE CHAMBER AIA LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

LEGISLATIVE SESSION INFORMATION

To view schedules, calendars, bill information, and legislator information, click 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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