

DAILY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Business matters.

Daily Legislative Update

94th Arkansas General Assembly
Thursday, March 9, 2023 | Day 60

TODAY'S MEETINGS

9 a.m. Joint Budget Committee

Upon adjournment of Joint Budget Senate Transportation, Technology and Legislative Affairs

9:30 a.m. House Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee

10 a.m. Senate State Agencies & Governmental Affairs, Insurance & Commerce and Agriculture, Forestry & Economic Development committees

10 a.m. House Education, Judiciary and Revenue & Taxation committees

11 a.m. House and Senate convene

NEW TRACKED BILLS

We began tracking [11 additional bills](#) today. In addition to the four bills described immediately below, the seven other new bills address towing and storage, hairstyle protection, vehicle warranties, water transportation taxes, car sharing and school board elections.

Unemployment Insurance - Work Requirements

HB 1575 by Rep. Rebecca Burks and Sen. Clint Penzo

This bill requires the Division of Workforce Services to require at least five work search contacts per business day for a week in which an individual submits a claim for the unemployment benefits in order to receive employment benefits. Also requires the Division of Workforce Services to audit at least 100 of all weekly work search reports for work search verification each week.

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

Construction Contracts - Unenforceable Provisions of Hold Harmless Clauses

HB 1581 by Rep. Les Warren and Sen. Jimmy Hickey

This bill makes changes concerning construction contracts that contain a hold harmless clause. It:

- Seeks to ensure that the standards of care of engineers and architects in those contracts are consistent with general standards and seeks to ensure the ordinary professional skill and care of a competent engineer or architect.
- Voids those contracts in which a party is required to name the other party as an additional insured on the party's professional liability policy or workers' compensation policy.
- Applies to contracts entered on or after September 1, 2023.

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

Construction Contracts – Limits on Job Order Contracting Bid Awards

HB 1582 Rep. Les Warren and Sen. Scott Flippo

This bill amends the limit for job order contracting bid awards for state agencies/institutions of higher learning. 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.

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.

BILLS WE SUPPORT

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 is on today's agenda in the House Education Committee.

Career and Technical Education - Weighted Credit

SB 369 by Sen. Jim Dotson

We support this bill, which 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 today's Senate calendar to adopt an amendment after receiving a Do Pass recommendation yesterday from the Senate Education Committee.

BILLS WE OPPOSE

Special Elections

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 is on today's agenda in the Senate State Agencies Committee.

BILLS OF INTEREST

Net-metering

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

The House Insurance & Commerce committee gave a Do Pass recommendation yesterday to **SB 295**, and it is on this afternoon's House calendar. **HB 1370** was passed over on the House floor yesterday and is not on today's House calendar.

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.

It is on this morning's agenda in the House Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

YESTERDAY'S BILLS

Healthcare - Prior Authorization

HB 1271 by Rep. Lee Johnson and SB 143 Sen. Missy Irvin

This bill seeks to modify medical prior authorization processes for all fully insured individuals and small businesses. A second amendment was added, and the bill was given a Do Pass recommendation yesterday by the House Health, Welfare and Labor Committee.

The bill is on today's House calendar to formally adopt the amendment.

BILL TRACKING

932 Bills Filed | Senate: 7 new – 389 filed | House: 11 new – 584 filed
State Chamber Tracking: 373 - 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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