



More than 200 appropriation bills have now been filed in preparation for the upcoming Fiscal Session.

The General Assembly will convene on February 12 at noon. This will be the 5th Fiscal Session to be held in Arkansas since the passage of Amendment 86.

In November 2008, 69% of Arkansas voters approved legislatively referred Proposed Constitutional Amendment 2, which became Amendment 86 to the Arkansas Constitution. Amendment 86 reduced the period for which appropriation bills are valid from two fiscal years to one, requiring the General Assembly to meet in a fiscal session during even-numbered years.

Each fiscal session begins the second Monday in February of even-numbered years. The fiscal sessions are intended to be brief as it cannot exceed 30 days. It requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of both the House and the Senate in order to extend. An extension can only last an additional 15 days.

In order for non-appropriation legislation to be introduced, a concurrent resolution substantially describing the bill must be approved by a 2/3 vote in both chambers.

Annual sessions for state legislatures are now the norm in the United States with 46 states meeting annually, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

Fiscal sessions have allowed us to make adjustments when the economy has fluctuated. This year, the legislature is being asked to consider increases for higher education, the Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Department of Correction.

The proposal for DHS includes increases for Medicaid and funding for 65 new child welfare case workers.

All appropriation bills require a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority in the both chambers.

The latest revenue report shows year to date revenue is \$121.8 million or 3.9% above levels one year ago.

January net available general revenue was \$47.3% or 8.8% above levels one year ago.

We expect the Governor to address the General Assembly on the opening day of the session. You can watch that address and the House floor sessions through the remainder of the session at www.arkansashouse.org.