STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Les Warren
District 84

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Workforce Development Legislation

Several bills focused on workforce development, economic growth, and improving access to services, have passed in the House in recent weeks. These pieces of legislation reflect a concerted effort to enhance Arkansas' business climate, support workers, and attract talent.

SB50 has already made its way to the Governor's desk and is now Act 145. It mandates a comprehensive study of workforce and social services reform in the state. The goal is to identify gaps and inefficiencies in the current system and to develop strategies for legislative action that will help address these issues.

Acknowledging the need for continued career support beyond college enrollment, Act 354 mandates that state-supported higher education institutions maintain a link on their website for the division's career counseling and career-related resources, take appropriate steps to inform students about their career-related resources, and continue to offer career services for up to six months after a student leaves the institution, regardless of whether they have completed their degree.

HB1582 was also passed in the House this session. This legislation requires individuals seeking benefits through the Division of Workforce Services to take specific actions. Applicants must create an account on the state-maintained job board and provide information about their work experience, credentials, and any relevant job information. Additionally, those seeking benefits must report five work search contacts made during the week.

The House has also passed several pieces of legislation related to compact licensure. This streamlines the process for licensed professionals, making it easier for them to work across state lines and meet the growing demand for skilled workers in Arkansas. This year, compact licensure bills have been passed for a variety of professions, including dietitians, massage therapists, emergency medical services personnel, social workers, physician assistants, and dental assistants.