STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Arkansas House Newsletter

August 5, 2022

Extraordinary Session

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The Governor is expected to call the General Assembly into an Extraordinary Session next week to address the use of surplus funds to provide tax relief and funding for school safety measures.

The Arkansas School Safety Commission was reinstated in the wake of the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Members of the original commission created in March 2018 submitted 30 recommendations in their original 124-page report. Many of their recommendations were introduced by the legislature and subsequently became law.

In recent weeks, the commission has been identifying new recommendations on best practices regarding school safety that have developed since the commission’s 2018 report. Their interim report was delivered to the Governor this week.

The new recommendations include ensuring that all students have access to mental health services and establishing a behavioral threat assessment team.

Another recommendation states that all schools should ideally have at least one School Resource Officer for each campus and no campus should be without an armed presence at any time.

Since many of these recommendations will require funding, the Governor has stated he will ask the legislature to use $50 million from the state surplus to create a grant program for school districts.

The other item expected on the Governor's call concerns use of surplus funds to provide tax relief. Proposals include accelerating future reductions of income and corporate tax cuts and creating a $150 tax credit for Arkansans making below a designated income threshold.

In an Extraordinary Session (often referred to as a special session), the Governor is required to specify the purpose for convening. No other business can be transacted by the General Assembly until every item on the call has been disposed of.

It requires a 2/3 majority vote in both chambers to remain in session after disposing items on the call. That extension cannot exceed 15 days.

You can review the Governor's call, recently filed legislation and links to live streams of all committee meetings and House floor proceedings at www.arkansashouse.org.