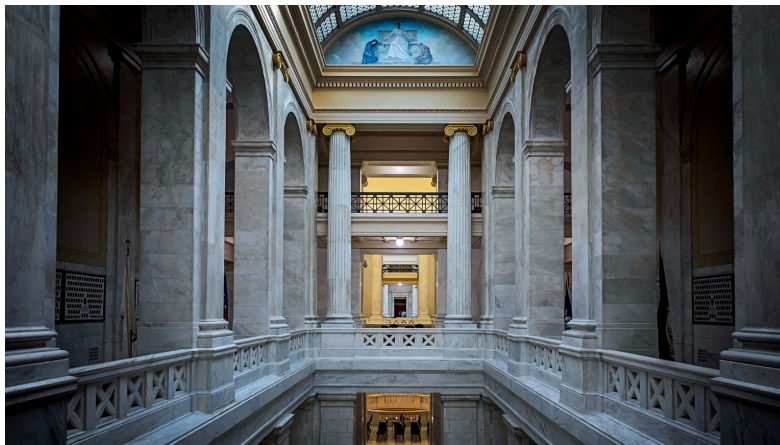




Arkansas House Newsletter

March 31, 2023

Week 12 of the 2023 Regular Session



When the House reconvenes on Monday, members will likely be entering the last week of the 2023 Regular Session. Currently, the General Assembly is expected to adjourn on April 7.

Before members adjourn, they will be addressing education funding, tax cuts, and amending the Revenue Stabilization Act which prioritizes spending for the next fiscal year.

On Thursday, the House Education Committee advanced [HB1688](#). This bill amends public school funding. It increases per-pupil funding from the current amount of \$7,413 to \$7,618 for the 2023-2024 school year. The bill would increase the amount to \$7,771 for the 2024-2025 school year. This bill will now go to the full House for a vote.

Also on Thursday, several legislators and the Governor announced the introduction of a proposed tax cut.

[SB549](#) would reduce the state's top income tax rate from 4.9% to 4.7%. It would also reduce the corporate income tax rate from 5.3% to 5.1%. The reductions would be retroactive to January 1, 2023.

[SB549](#) will be before the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee on Monday.

One of the last items of legislation before House members every session is the Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA). The RSA outlines general revenue spending. Once a proposal for the budget is released, it will be posted at arkansashouse.org.

Meanwhile, the House passed a number of bills during the 12th week of the session including the following:

[SB248](#)-This bill creates the Arkansas Challenge Plus Scholarship Program. The bill states that a student is eligible to receive an Arkansas Challenge Plus Scholarship if the student receives the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship and demonstrates financial need as determined by FASFA. The Plus Scholarship would be awarded in \$1,000 increments per student per academic year.

[HB1503](#)-This bill creates the offense of operating a chop shop and makes the offense a Class C felony.

[HB1468](#)-This bill prohibits requiring employees of public schools and state-supported institutions of higher education to use a person's preferred pronoun, name, or title without parental consent.

[HB1610](#)-This bill amends the law relating to public meetings under the Freedom of Information Act. It defines a public meeting as one-third or more of the members of a governing body of all municipalities, counties, townships, school districts, boards, bureaus, or commissions of the State of Arkansas.

[SB377](#)-This bill creates a misdemeanor offense concerning initiative petitions if a person knowingly changes a signature on a petition, erases or destroys a signature, pays a person in exchange for not signing a petition, or misrepresents the purpose and effect of the petition.

[HB1617](#)-This bill would require an autopsy in the case of a suspected drug overdose.

[HB1502](#)-This bill creates the offense of sexual solicitation of a minor and classifies the offense as a Class B felony.

The House will convene on Monday, April 3, at 1:30 p.m. You can watch all committee meetings and House floor proceedings at arkansashouse.org.