



Arkansas House Newsletter

August 18, 2023

National Senior Citizens Day



The latest census figures show 17.8% of our state's population is over the age of 65. Nationwide, the population aged 65 and over grew nearly five times faster than the total population over the 100 years from 1920 to 2020.

[August 21 is National Senior Citizens Day.](#) It's an opportunity to show our appreciation for their dedication, accomplishments, and services they give throughout their lives.

The Arkansas General Assembly has worked to pass legislation to empower people to choose how they live as they age.

This year, we passed laws to lower taxes, strengthen our rural hospitals, and increase awareness and services available to those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

In the 2023 Regular Session, we also worked to eliminate the red tape for seniors still in the workforce. [Act 73](#) creates a lifetime certificate of license for contractors who have reached the age of 65 and have been

licensed as a contractor for at least 12 years.

Protecting our seniors involves safeguarding them from abuse and exploitation. We did that with [Act 783](#). This created the Vulnerable Person Protection Act. It defines a vulnerable person as anyone over the age of 69 or an individual who is in an inpatient facility. It makes the abuse of a vulnerable person a Class B felony if it causes serious injury or death and a Class D felony for non-serious injuries.

In addition, we passed [Act 70](#), [Act 335](#), and [Act 682](#). [Act 70](#) requires home caregivers to have a specific number of hours in dementia training. [Act 335](#) sets minimum training requirements for staff members who are employed by an assisted living facility that includes persons with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias.

[Act 682](#) creates the position of dementia services coordinator with the Department of Human Services.

[National Senior Citizens Day](#) serves as a call to action to ensure our seniors are treated with the respect and care they deserve. As we continue to find ways to improve their lives in the state, let us all take the time this week to increase our interaction with our elders. Their stories can inspire and their guidance can lead to a more thoughtful and compassionate society.