



# Arkansas House Newsletter

January 28, 2024

## Arkansas Legislative Council Update



The Arkansas Legislative Council (ALC) and the council's subcommittees met this week at the Capitol. These meetings were previously scheduled for the week of January 15 but were postponed due to the winter weather across the state.

ALC members were presented with an update from the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) regarding damage from the winter storms.

ADEM officials said 10 water systems around the state requested assistance from the agency. All but one of those systems is back up and running. As of Friday, the water system in Helena/West Helena was currently not operational. ADEM says the agency has coordinated resources to send pallets of water to the area and is currently working with vendors in hopes of providing mobile shower and laundry units soon.

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) updated members of the Highway Commission Review and Advisory Subcommittee on the road conditions throughout the state. ARDOT reports the agency has been working to repair numerous potholes on highways due to freezing temperatures and subsequent rain.

Arkansans can report potholes directly to the agency by using the iDrive Arkansas app.

In other agenda items before ALC, members approved an emergency rule to allow the implementation of two educational grant programs.

The Literacy Tutoring Grant is designed to help struggling readers in K-3 with personalized tutoring. Families can invoice up to \$500 per school to pay for tutoring services for children reading below grade level. Payments will go directly to providers.

The High Impact Tutoring Grant Program is designed to help school districts with high-impact tutoring during the school day to help struggling students at all grade levels.

The Department of Education will be releasing information soon on how parents and schools can utilize these grants.

The Game and Fish and State Police Subcommittee of ALC continued its study on our state's firearms laws. This week they heard a summary on concealed carry laws. Their next meeting will be February 12 and will focus on hunting laws and Arkansas State Police concealed carry regulations. The public is welcome and there will be time for public comment.

ALC reviewed the most recent General Revenue Report which showed net available general revenue is down 5% from this time last year but 6.7% above forecast. Pre-Fiscal Session Budget Hearings are scheduled to begin March 6.

The Arkansas Legislative Council will meet again on February 16.