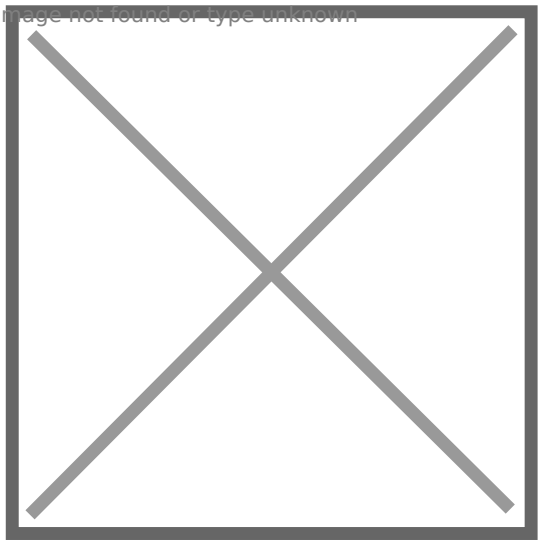
STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Aaron Pilkington
District 45

November 30, 2025

Supporting Small Businesses

As the holiday season approaches, many of us are beginning to think about our shopping lists and where we'll spend our hard-earned money. There's no better time to support the small businesses that help make Arkansas such a vibrant place to live. This year, Arkansas was ranked the **3rd best state in the nation to start a small business**, according to Forbes. That recognition reflects what many of us already know — Arkansas is a place where entrepreneurs can thrive, innovate, and build stronger communities. Small businesses are at the heart of our state's economy. With more than 280,000 small businesses representing 99.3% of all Arkansas businesses, their impact is hard to overstate. Nearly half of the state's workforce — 47.5% — is employed by small businesses. When you choose to shop local, you're not only supporting those owners and employees, you're strengthening the economic health of your own community. Local retailers also bring something special to the holiday season. Many offer products made right here in Arkansas or sourced from independent artisans, giving you the chance to share unique, meaningful gifts with family and friends. Supporting these shops means investing directly in the creativity, craftsmanship, and talent of your neighbors. And the benefits go even further.

Studies show that 68 cents of every dollar spent at a small business stays in the local economy. That reinvestment helps create jobs, support local services, and boost overall economic well-being — a ripple effect that becomes especially important during the holiday season. Small businesses also fuel two-thirds of net new jobs nationwide and drive the kind of innovation and competition that ultimately benefits consumers. The Arkansas General Assembly has taken meaningful steps to support this critical sector. In recent sessions, lawmakers have passed measures to reduce tax burdens on small businesses, streamlined certain licensing and regulatory requirements, expanded grant and loan opportunities for entrepreneurs, and invested in workforce development programs that help businesses hire and retain skilled workers. These efforts are designed to strengthen Arkansas' business climate and ensure that entrepreneurs have the tools they need to succeed. This holiday season, let's celebrate and support the local businesses that give Arkansas its character, its resilience, and its economic strength. By choosing to shop small, you're helping keep our communities strong — not just in December, but all year long.