



Arkansas House Newsletter

April 12, 2019

Final Week of the 2019 Regular Session



More than 900 bills have been signed into law this session. This General Assembly has reduced taxes, addressed infrastructure needs, increased funding to education, and transformed state government. One of the last bills we passed was the amendment to the Revenue Stabilization Act. This outlines the \$5.7 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2020. It includes a 2.2% increase in spending from the current fiscal year. It is the lowest amount of increased spending in Arkansas in the last 10 years. The increases include an additional \$61 million for Medicaid and additional \$31 million for public education. The budget also addresses public safety by increasing funding for state police to hire more troopers and funding for the Department of Community Correction to hire more parole officers. This budget includes increases for UAMS, the Division of Agriculture, and the Department of Correction. Meanwhile, legislation passed this session has reduced income taxes for more than a ½ million families in Arkansas to the tune of \$97 million. We reduced taxes for business and paved a way for tax fairness with online sales tax. In addition, every homeowner in Arkansas will benefit from the \$25 increase in the homestead tax credit.

When it comes to infrastructure, the 92nd General Assembly passed legislation creating \$95 million in additional funding. We have also referred an amendment to voters on the November 2020 ballot to create additional funding for highways.

In addition to the \$31 million increase in education, this General Assembly also increased the minimum starting teacher salary pay by \$4 thousand over the next 4 years.

Just this week, the Governor signed The Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 into law. It authorizes the reduction of the number of cabinet-level agencies from 42 to 15 and accomplishes the largest reorganization of state government in almost 50 years.

We have passed legislation transforming our juvenile justice system. Pilot programs have shown these changes result in a lower prison population and drastically reduce the number of children in foster care.

The 92nd General Assembly cut red tape for small businesses, created and funded the Next Generation 911 system, and laid the groundwork for a state of the art cancer research facility in Arkansas.

The House will convene again on April 24 to address any unfinished business and officially adjourn the 2019 Regular Session. It has been an honor to serve our districts and we look forward to updating you on our work during the interim.