



Arkansas House Newsletter

February 9, 2015

First Month of Regular Session 2015

On February 6, Governor Hutchinson signed a bill to lower income tax in our state by 1%. This will amount to a savings of around \$300 a year for a family making \$50,000. It directly affects 600,000 taxpayers making between \$21,000 and \$75,000 a year.

The other big development last week came when the House passed a bill that is aimed at reforming health care in Arkansas.

Senate Bill 96 creates a task force which will study and present findings for health care reform by the end of this year. Supporters of the bill called it a compromise for those on either side of the debate of the Private Option.

The House also passed the appropriation bill which will continue to fund the Private Option and medical services provided by the Department of Human Services through the next Fiscal Year.

In a unanimous vote on the House floor, we moved forward with a plan to offer a computer science course in every public high school in the state. This will be of no cost to the school districts as they can use a program called Virtual Arkansas. The course will teach coding, programming, web design and robotics. In recent years we've seen a decline in college graduates with degrees in computer science. Currently, only 2 percent of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) graduates have computer science degrees, but 60% of STEM jobs are in that field.