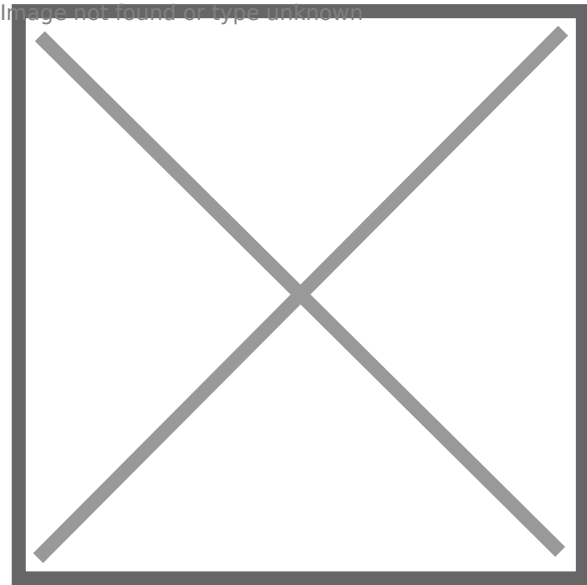




Arkansas House Newsletter

June 15, 2018

A Special Message from Speaker Jeremy Gillam



If there is one thing I've learned in the last 7 and a half years, it is that civility is about much more than just being nice. It is not about staying silent on the things that matter or ending sentences with sir and ma'am.

It's about really listening. It's about thinking of another's perspective without judgment. Civility is a choice.

So when someone asked me recently what I'm most proud of in my years of service, I didn't have to think twice. I'm most proud that this body, for all its differences, showed the world what public service can look like.

Arkansas was ranked number one last year by the National Conference of State Legislatures as the state with the least legislative polarization. I am not surprised.

We weren't graded on our ability to smile and say thank you, we were graded on our ability to see the big picture, communicate, and work together effectively.

As many of you may have read by now, I'm leaving the House for an opportunity to help advance higher education at the University of Central Arkansas. It's an exciting adventure that will also lend itself to spending more time with my family. If you are parent, you know time is something you can't get back. So while I'm saddened to leave this place of dear friends, I have no doubt I've made the right decision.

When I was sworn into office for the first time I was one of 45 Republicans. So I've had the unique experience of being part of a minority and part of a super majority. And each year, the House continued to pass legislation that made life better for all of us.

I was proud to carry the Middle Class Tax Cut that saved the average family \$300 dollars a year. During my second term, I introduced legislation aimed at preventing fetal alcohol syndrome by requiring signs to be posted in bars and restaurants that serve liquor.

I also leave proud to be a part of an effort to make substantial changes to occupational licensing. After submitting an application earlier this year, Arkansas was accepted to participate in a national consortium of 11 states examining the issue.

The 99 other members who serve in the Chamber are not just my colleagues. They are the people who bought my kids gifts, who grabbed a hamburger with me between committee meetings, and the ones who lifted me up in prayer when my father passed unexpectedly this year. They are the kind of friends who bring out the best in us.

And I leave here knowing they will continue to bring out the best in Arkansas.

I want to thank them for allowing me to serve as the Speaker. I also want to thank the people of District 45 who elected me to represent our district. It has been an honor.