STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

NEWSLETTER FROM REP. Keith Brooks
DISTRICT 78

March 5, 2021

WEEK 8 OF THE 2021 REGULAR SESSION

As we wind down the 8th week of the 2021 Regular Session, more than 270 bills have been signed into law.

Next week, the House State Agencies and Governmental Affairs Committee will begin hearing proposals for constitutional amendments. According to Joint Rules, the House and Senate can each recommend one amendment but it must be approved by a simple majority in both chambers. A 2/3 vote is required by both chambers to introduce a third proposed constitutional amendment.

This week, the House passed more than 50 bills including the following:

HB1061-This bill creates the No Patient Left Alone Act. The bill outlines visitation rights for hospital patients including children, patients with disabilities, hospice care, long-term care patients, and members of the clergy.

SB6-This bill would ban abortions except those performed to protect the life and health of the mother.

HB1568-This bill creates a legislative study on the possible use of election technology to increase transparency and security.

SB137-This bill states that a local government shall not adopt any ordinance or policy that would prohibit the right of a customer to purchase, use, connect, or reconnect to a utility service.

HB1437-This bill concerns “Publish for Pay websites” or privately-owned websites that request or require the payment of a fee in order to remove a booking photograph from the website. The bill states the person responsible for removing the booking photograph from the website shall remove the photograph within five business days of receipt of a written request and not require payment of a fee for removing the booking photograph. It also states the website must post contact information.

HB1457-This bill creates “Paisley’s Law”. It allows parents of a stillborn child to claim an income tax credit in the amount of $500.

HB1488-This bill allows employees to file a Workers’ Compensation Claim for COVID-19 if the employee can prove they contracted the virus at their place of employment.

HB1407-This bill modifies the method of calculation of the stabilization tax and caps the tax at .2% for 2022.

HB1409-This bill caps the taxable wage base for employers at $10,000 for 2022.

HB1433-This bill outlines transportation funding for the 2020-2021 school year for districts that need more than the foundation funding provided to all public schools.

HB1464-This bill adds a provision to the Arkansas Code that allows parents to challenge instructional material, events or activities in public schools.

HB1389-This bill creates the Arkansas Foresters for the Future Scholarship Program. This scholarship will be funded by the State Forestry Fund.

SB287-This bill expands eligibility for the Governor’s Scholars Program and the Arkansas High Technology Scholarship Program to migrants from the Compact of Free Association Islands (Marshallese) and to an individual or child of a person who holds a Federal Form I-766 Employment Authorization Document (work permit).

HB1462-This bill allows state-supported two-year and four-year institutions of higher education to designate a staff member as a homeless and foster student liaison.

To accommodate hearing bills and proposed amendments, there will be some changes to committee schedules beginning next week. You can find updated schedules and links to live streams on our website **www.arkansashouse.org**.