STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

NEWSLETTER FROM REP. Andrew Collins

DISTRICT 73

April 9, 2021

WEEK 13 OF REGULAR SESSION

By the end of the 13th week of the 2021 Regular Session, more than 600 bills were signed into law. This week, the House voted in favor of a bill temporarily changing the deadline for filing and paying state income tax. SB593 extends the deadline this year to May 17, aligning the date with the recent extension issued for filing federal income tax.

The also House voted in favor of the following bills addressing law enforcement, mental health, alcohol sales, and education:

Law Enforcement:

HB1865-This bill requires all law enforcement officers in the state to complete annual training related to a law enforcement officer's duty to intervene if the law enforcement officer observes the use of excessive force by another law enforcement officer.

HB1680-This bill states law enforcement agencies must assist a law enforcement officer involved in a critical incident in obtaining services that may help the officer recover from psychological effects.

Mental Health:

HB1689-This bill will create an Arkansas Legislative Study on Mental and Behavioral Health.

SB27-This bill requires the Arkansas Department of Health to ensure that the Suicide Prevention Hotline employs individuals who have experience working with veterans or are veterans.

Alcohol sales/Service Industry

HB1748-This bill states that a referendum election to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sunday may be called by a city or county if the governing body adopts a resolution by a two-thirds majority vote.

SB479-This bill states that a restaurant with a valid alcoholic beverage permit from the Alcoholic Beverage Control Division (ABC) may expand its outdoor dining availability with approval from the municipality or county's local government zoning authority, which it is located without obtaining prior approval from the ABC. This bill also allows restaurants to remit sales taxes in quarterly payments rather than monthly for the next year.

Education:

SB160-This bill states that in the 2022-2023 school year, Holocaust education shall be taught in all public schools in a manner that generates an understanding of the causes, course, and effects of the Holocaust.

SB524-This bill states that by August 1, 2022, each public school district and open-enrollment public charter school in the state shall prepare a three-year teacher and administrator recruitment and retention plan. The plan should include goals for recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators of minority races and ethnicities who increase diversity among the district staff and, at a minimum, reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the district's students.

SB394-This bill states that a public school district or open-enrollment charter school shall conduct a comprehensive school safety audit every three years to assess the safety, security, accessibility, and emergency preparedness of district buildings and grounds in collaboration with local law enforcement, fire, and emergency management officials.

HB1794-This bill creates the Licensed Practical Nurse Pathway Pilot Program. It states that the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Division of Higher Education, shall establish

and implement a program in which high school students may enroll in undergraduate courses required to obtain a diploma or certificate of completion as a licensed practical nurse by the date on which the public school student graduates or within a reasonable frame of time after the public school student graduates.

The House convenes again on Monday at 1 pm. You can find a complete list of agendas and links to live streams at www.arkansashouse.org.