STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. R. Scott Richardson
District 13

January 31, 2025

Week 3 of the 2025 Regular Session

The Arkansas House of Representatives has completed the third week of the 2025 Regular Session, making significant progress on legislation that impacts residents across the state. This week, the House considered and passed several bills addressing a range of issues, from digital identification services to financial planning, tax relief, and public safety.

Among the bills passed was HB1135, which removes the mandatory $10 fee for issuing a digitized driver's license or identification card. The House also approved HB1085, which modifies the Arkansas Brighter Future Fund Plan Act. This legislation allows funds from the state's tax-deferred tuition savings program to be rolled over into a Roth IRA, giving families and students more flexibility in financial planning for education and retirement. Ensuring that property tax relief funds remain protected was the focus of HB1074. Under current law, funds from the Property Tax Relief Trust Fund can be redirected for other purposes with a simple majority vote in both chambers. HB1074 increases this threshold to a three-fourths majority, making it more difficult for these funds to be used for anything other than property tax relief.

Public safety and communication for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) were also addressed with the passage of HB1046. This bill establishes the Blue Envelope Program, which aims to improve interactions between individuals with ASD and law enforcement during traffic stops and other vehicle-related encounters. In the area of legal and healthcare regulations, the House passed HB1204 and HB1214. HB1204 outlines the recovery of damages for past medical expenses incurred by an injured party. It specifies that only costs actually paid by or on behalf of the plaintiff, or those that remain unpaid and for which the plaintiff or a third party is legally responsible, can be included in the recovery. HB1214 amends the definition of a primary instructor within the Long-Term Care Aide Training Act.