STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Glenn Barnes

District 65

February 7, 2025

Week 4 of the 2025 Regular Session

As the Arkansas House of Representatives enters the 5th week of the 2025 Regular Session, several key pieces of legislation have moved forward, addressing issues ranging from food freedom to healthcare access and election policy.

One measure that received House approval, HB1149, ensures that counties and municipalities cannot impose regulations on vegetable gardens located on residential properties. This bill upholds the right of homeowners to cultivate their own produce without restrictions. Similarly, the House passed HB1048, which expands opportunities for small farmers by allowing the sale of unpasteurized milk at farmers' markets or through direct delivery from the farm where it is produced.

Healthcare policy also saw legislative action this week. HB1181 allows certified nurse midwives to admit and discharge patients from licensed hospitals if granted privileges, improving maternal healthcare access. Additionally, HB1309 clarifies cost-sharing requirements for breast cancer examinations.

The House also passed HB1221 this week, which limits the validity of ballot initiative titles and petition signatures to the election cycle in which they are approved and collected.

In addition, the House also passed SB3, a bill that seeks to eliminate affirmative action programs in state government. The proposed legislation states that the state shall not discriminate against or grant preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in matters related to state employment, public education, or state procurement.

The House also took up legislation impacting seasonal commerce, approving HB1324 to adjust the permissible sales period for fireworks. This bill moves the start date for summer fireworks sales from June 20 to June 13 while keeping the existing winter sales period unchanged.

In the week ahead, the House expects to address cell phone restrictions in schools and free breakfast for students. You can watch all House committee meetings and House floor proceedings at arkansashouse.org.