STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Matthew J. Shepherd

District 97

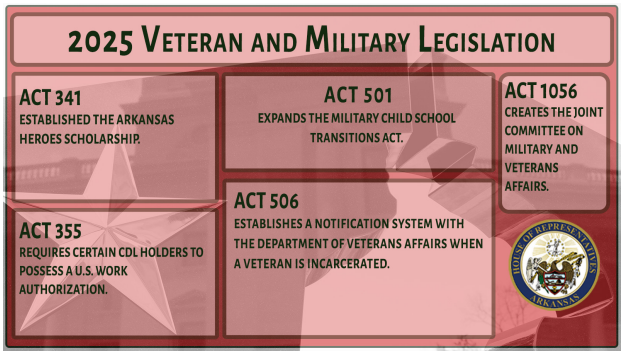
May 23, 2025

Honoring Our Veterans

Each year on Memorial Day, Arkansans come together to honor the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. We remember their courage, their dedication, and the deep debt of gratitude we owe to them and their families.The Arkansas House of Representatives has made supporting veterans, military families, and active-duty service members a top priority. In the 2025 Regular Session, we passed a wide range of legislation aimed at strengthening the support network around our military community.

We created the Joint Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs through Act 1056. This new committee ensures that the unique needs of our military community are addressed consistently and comprehensively.Act 506 sets up a notification system so the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs is alerted when a veteran is incarcerated, ensuring timely outreach and support for veterans during a particularly vulnerable time.

Through Act 341, the Arkansas ACCESS Act, we established the Arkansas Heroes Scholarship for Medal of Honor and Purple Heart recipients. The law also allows colleges and universities that support servicemembers to earn Purple Star Campus designations.

Act 501 significantly improves how Arkansas supports military-connected children. It expands the Military Child School Transitions Act, ensuring smoother transitions for students from Gold Star families and those of medically retired service members.Act 355 ensures that military recruiters are granted access to public high schools and state-supported post-secondary institutions, reinforcing opportunities for students and strengthening our military pipeline.

Sometimes, honoring service means the simple things that matter deeply to those who've worn the uniform. That's why we passed Act 51, authorizing the creation of a special license plate for women veterans.This Memorial Day, we pause to remember those who gave all. And as we do, we recommit ourselves to honoring their memory by taking care of those who served alongside them and came home.