STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Matthew J. Shepherd

District 97

August 29, 2025

Labor Day in Arkansas

Each September, our nation pauses to honor the contributions of working men and women. Labor Day is more than just a long weekend or the unofficial end of summer; it is a time to recognize the people who keep our communities strong and our economy moving forward.

In Arkansas, hard work is part of our identity. From the farmers who rise before dawn to provide our food, to the teachers shaping the next generation, to the health care professionals, manufacturers, truck drivers, and countless others, our state thrives because of the dedication of its workforce. Today, more than 1.3 million Arkansans make up the backbone of our economy.

As legislators, we are committed to supporting those workers and helping Arkansans prepare for the jobs of tomorrow. During the 2025 Regular Session, the General Assembly passed several measures aimed at strengthening career opportunities and ensuring that more Arkansans can succeed in the workforce.

Act 354 requires state-supported colleges and universities to extend career counseling and services to students for up to six months after they leave school, regardless of whether they earned a degree.

Act 708 updates the process for receiving benefits through the Division of Workforce Services. Applicants must now create an account on the state's job board, share details about their skills and experience, and report five job search contacts weekly.

The House also passed several compact licensure bills**,** making it easier for licensed professionals—such as dietitians, massage therapists, EMS personnel, social workers, physician assistants, and dental assistants—to work across state lines. This not only helps fill workforce shortages but also ensures Arkansans have better access to skilled professionals.

Labor Day reminds us that behind every policy are real people who put in the hours each day to keep Arkansas moving forward. This holiday, we extend our gratitude to the men and women whose work strengthens our state.