STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives

Newsletter From Rep. Ron McNair

District 5

December 12, 2025

Christmas at the Capitol

This week at the State Capitol, members of the Arkansas House of Representatives came together for an annual Christmas tradition that reflects the spirit of service at the heart of public office. During a holiday gathering, House members—joined by state senators and employees from across state government—donated gifts for children in Arkansas's foster care system. The outpouring of support helped ensure that children spending the holidays in care are reminded that their community is thinking of them.

The giving event came during a week when legislators were also focused on the policies and oversight that shape the state's child welfare system. Earlier in the week, the Senate Committee on Children & Youth and the House Committee on Aging, Children & Youth & Legislative Affairs met jointly to review a proposed update to Child Abuse Hotline procedures and to examine performance and oversight reports from the Department of Human Services and the State Police Crimes Against Children Division. These reviews help lawmakers monitor the safety of Arkansas children and ensure state agencies have the tools and accountability needed to respond effectively to abuse and neglect.

The data reported this week show both progress and continued challenges. At the end of State Fiscal Year 2025, Arkansas had 3,390 children in foster care—a five percent decrease from the previous year. More children exited foster care during the year than entered, and 91 percent of those leaving care achieved permanency, either by returning home or by finding stable placement with relatives, adoptive families, or legal guardians.

Reunification remained the most common outcome, with 42 percent of children returning to their own families. Another 24 percent were adopted, while 10 percent each were placed in relative custody and guardianship.

As lawmakers celebrate the season and share generosity with Arkansas's foster children, they remain committed to the work of strengthening the systems that protect them year-round.