



Newsletter From Rep. Jack Fortner District 4

April 5, 2019

Week 12 of 2019 Regular Session



The state budget is guided by the Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA) which is typically one of the last items passed every session.

Members will be reviewing RSA in the Joint Budget Committee Monday morning. We have posted details of the proposed budget on our website. We expect to vote on the budget next week and conclude our business for this session.

This week, the House passed two proposed constitutional amendments for the November 2020 ballot.

SJR15 addresses term limits for legislators. This amendment would limit state legislators elected after January 1, 2021 to 12 years of consecutive service. Those legislators would not be eligible for subsequent service in the General Assembly until four years after the expiration of the last term in office.

Current legislators could serve under the existing term limit of 16 years. Those members would be subject to a 4 year waiting period for before running for a subsequent term in the General Assembly.

The House also passed HJR1008.

If passed by the voters, HJR1008 would increase the vote requirement to a 3/5 majority for the General Assembly to refer future amendments. Currently, it takes a simple majority on the first two amendments and a 2/3 vote to introduce a third a proposal.

This would also require citizen-initiated petitions to be filed by January 15 of the election year. Challenges would have to be filed by April 15. It eliminates the current cure period to collect additional signatures.

It also states that it shall be necessary to file petitions from at least 45 counties bearing the signature of at least ½ of the designated percentage of the electors. Currently, signatures are needed from 15 counties.

Additional legislation passing the House this week includes:

SB576-This bill requires out of state online retailers to collect and remit state sales tax. The bill also phases in a reduction in the top corporate income tax rate from 6.5% to 5.9%.

It extends carry-forward period for net operating losses for businesses from 5 years to 10 years. SB576 changes the apportionment formula for corporations and also makes changes to taxes for carwashes.

HB1933-This bill address bullying in several ways. It requires parents of the victim of bullying be notified as soon as reasonably practicable. It requires schools to investigate and write a report on the complaint within 5 school days. The bill also requires the school notify the parent or legal guardian of the student who is determined to have been the perpetrator of the incident of bullying.

HB1821-This bill requires DHS to implement an increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates for medical providers to address minimum wage increases.

HB1417-This creates the Arkansas Major Historic Rehabilitation Income Tax Credit for projects worth more than \$1.5 million. This bill creates the qualifications for the tax credit but does not provide funding.

HB1837-This bill expands access to association health plans to allow more small businesses to band together to purchase insurance.

HB1733-This bill makes threatening to commit an act of mass violence on school property a Class C felony.

HB1945-This provides needed changes to have the Arkansas Online Insurance Verification System implemented by January 1, 2020. This system gives law enforcement access to real-time information regarding proof of insurance.

SB492-This allows cities in wet counties to pass an ordinance creating a temporary or permanent designated entertainment district.

SB584. This bill requires the Department of Finance and Administration to provide space on income tax forms to designate more than one account for the direct deposit of the taxpayer's refund.

HB1890-This bill would require the Department of Education to establish in standards for accreditation the maximum number of students that a teacher in grades 5-12 is permitted to teach per day.

HB1928-This bill requires an audio recording to be made of all public meetings. Exceptions are made for volunteer fire departments, cities of the second class and incorporated towns.

We will continue to update you through the remainder of the session. You can watch all the House proceedings at www.arkansashouse.org.