



**ADH 2011 LEGISLATIVE SUCCESSES
IMPACTING ARKANSAS
MINORITY GROUPS**

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



VISION:

Optimal health for all Arkansans to achieve maximum personal, economic and social impact.

MISSION:

To protect and improve the health and well-being of all Arkansans.

Dr. Paul Halverson, DrPH, FACHE
Director and State Health Officer

OFFICE OF MINORITY HEALTH & HEALTH DISPARITIES

VISION:

The Arkansas Department of Health and Office of Minority Health & Health Disparities envisions a state in which health disparities are eliminated, thereby better ensuring optimal health for all Arkansans.

MISSION:

To provide leadership in improving health outcomes by advocating for health equity for at-risk populations as defined by age, race or ethnicity, education, disability, gender, geographical location, income, and sexual orientation.

The image shows the Michigan State Capitol building, a large neoclassical structure with a prominent white dome topped with a golden finial. The building features a portico with columns and a wide set of steps leading to the entrance. In the foreground, there is a green lawn, a metal railing, and a concrete wall. A large blue banner with white text is superimposed over the middle of the image. The sky is bright blue with some light clouds.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Bill is presented and debated in
committee



Bill is voted on by the chamber

SENATE



House of
Representatives



Passed bill is sent to other chamber



Bill is signed by the Governor
and becomes an Act



Legislative Successes

Act 89 – Oral Health	*S-10
Act 90 – Oral Health	S-11
Act 189 – Immunizations	S-12
Act 197 – Fluoridation	S-13
Act 269 – Health Insurance	S-19
Act 771 – Health Insurance	S-20
Act 790 – Health Equity	S-22
Act 798 – Health Equity	S-23
Act 830 – Prostate Cancer Awareness	S-24
Act 855 – Obesity	S-26
Act 868 – Tobacco	S-27
Act 889 – Alzheimer’s Council	S-28
Act 909 – Sickle Cell	S-29
Act 1176 – Women’s Health	S-31

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Act 89: Oral Health

Allows qualified hygienists to perform procedures for patients without dentists supervision under collaborative care agreement

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: In 2010, more than 60% of 3rd graders experienced tooth decay & almost 25% over age 65 had lost all of their permanent teeth.

- African Americans & Hispanics are more likely to have untreated tooth decay
- African Americans are disproportionately affected by oral cancer.
- People in rural areas are less likely to receive regular dental care and more likely to lose all their teeth.

Act will require new rules by the AR State Board of Dental Examiners. When permits are issued, the Office of Oral Health will endeavor to have those hygienists provide services in underserved areas.

Act 90: Oral Health

Allows physicians and nurses, after approved training, to apply fluoride varnish to children's teeth.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: In 2010, more than 60% of 3rd graders experienced tooth decay & almost 25% over age 65 had lost all of their permanent teeth.

- Rural residents are less likely to have dental insurance or visited a dentist during the previous 12 months.
- Most low-income children do not receive basic dental care.
- Children aged 2-11 whose families live below the federal poverty level are twice as likely to have untreated decay.

Act will increase the number of health care providers who can provide fluoride varnish for very young children, even before children typically see a dentist.

Act 147: Immunizations

Allows pharmacists to administer flu vaccines to children.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Elderly, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: Older Hispanic and African-American adults are less likely to be vaccinated against influenza than their white counterparts. Additionally, children living below the poverty level have lower immunization coverage rates.

- Disparities in overall immunization coverage rates among racial and ethnic groups exist in large urban areas with underserved populations.

Act will greatly increase access to flu vaccines for people age 7 and older. In addition, increased availability of medications will enhance public health & disease management.

Act 197: Fluoridation

Mandated fluoridation of water systems serving 5,000 people or more.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: Only 65% of population on public water systems receive fluoridated water.

- Tooth decay remains the most common chronic disease of childhood
- People with fluoridated water have 15% to 40% fewer cavities.
- Fluoridation benefits all without regard to age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, access to dental care or geography.
- Research has linked gum disease to heart disease, diabetes & stroke.

Act will guarantee access to fluoridation for persons on the 32 non-fluoridating communities currently serving 5,000 or more customers and will affect approximately 640,000 more Arkansans and bring the fluoridation rate to 87%.

Water Fluoridation



- **Some fluoride is present in ALL drinking water systems in the world.**
- **Fluoridation is the upward adjustment of fluoride in drinking water to a level proven to prevent tooth decay.**
- **Fluoride counteracts tooth decay and strengthens teeth.**
- **Identified as 1 of the 10 most important public health measures of the 20th century.**

- **Community water fluoridation is safe, effective and economical.**
- **Major contributor to decline in tooth decay over last 6 decades.**
- **Fluoridation adds no taste, color or smell to the water.**
- **Fluoridation has been proven effective in more than 65 years of research and practical application in the U.S.**

Communities Benefiting by Act 197

Alma Waterworks (Crawford)

Booneville Waterworks (Logan)

Carroll-Boone Water District (Carroll & Boone)

Cherokee Village Water Assoc. (Sharp)

Clay Co. Reg Water District (Clay)

Community Water System (Van Buren, Cleburne, Faulkner & Stone)

Cross County Rural Water System (Cross)

Danville Waterworks (Yell)

DeQueen Waterworks (Sevier)

Dumas Waterworks (Desha)

El Dorado Waterworks (Union)

Those in red denote counties of high health disparities.

Communities Benefiting by Act 197

Fort Smith Water Utilities (Sebastian)

Grand Prairie Bay Two (Arkansas, Lonoke, Monroe & Prairie)

Greenwood Waterworks (Sebastian)

Hot Springs Village Waterworks (Garland)

Hot Springs Waterworks (Garland)

Hwy 63 (Lawrence)

Lawrence Co. Reg. Water Dist. (Lawrence)

Little River Co. RDA (Little River)

Madison Co. Regional Water (Madison)

Magnolia Waterworks (Columbia)

Marion Co. Reg Water Dist. (Marion)

McGhee Waterworks (Desha)

Mena Water Dept. (Polk)

Communities Benefiting by Act 197

Mountain View Waterworks (Stone)
N Garland Co Reg Water Dist (Garland)
Ozark Waterworks (Franklin)
Sardis Water Association(Pulaski)
Southside (Independence)
Hwy 63 (Lawrence)
Ward Waterworks (Lonoke)
Warren (Bradley)
McGhee Waterworks (Desha)
Watson Chapel Water Assoc. (Jefferson)
Western Green County RWD (Green)
Yorktown Water Assoc (Lincoln)

Act 197 Champion: Dr. Lynn Mouden



- Director of ADH Office of Oral Health since 1999.
- Leading force behind passage of 3 bills:
 - ❖ Guaranteeing access to fluoridated water,
 - ❖ Creating collaborative practice category for dental hygienists.
 - ❖ Allowing physicians & nurses to apply fluoride varnish.
- Received Chief Dental Officer's Exemplary Service Award in recognition of efforts to lead policy changes.



Gov. Mike Beebe signing Act 197



Act 269: Health Insurance

Requires individual health insurance policies to children under 19.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities

PROBLEM: With the departure of Mercy Health Plans, the only insurance plan in Arkansas selling child-only plans, 400 children in Arkansas would be without health insurance.

- As of 2006, 46% of Arkansas children ages 18 and under received employer-based health insurance coverage.

This Act aims to require all health insurance agencies to immediately begin offering coverage to children under 19 regardless of pre-existing conditions. This is consistent with provisions of the Federal Affordable Care Act.

Act 771: Health Insurance

DHS to increase enrollment & retention in ARKids among eligible uninsured children under 19 by minimizing administrative barriers.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities

PROBLEM: 20,000 children were dropped from ARKids A or B because of procedural requirements.

- Almost two-thirds of the state's uninsured children are eligible for ARKids, but many are not enrolled or do not remain enrolled.
- 19% of Hispanic children (age 17 and younger) lack health insurance and 77% live below the poverty level.
- 20% of African American children (age 17 and younger) lack health insurance and 76% live below the poverty level.

This Act will allow for more eligible children to enroll and stay enrolled, while state government becomes more efficient through better use of technology and paperless options.

Red Counties in Arkansas

Counties where the life expectancy is 6-10 years less than the county with the highest life expectancy (Benton).

Arkansas

Chicot

Crittenden

Cross

Dallas

Desha

Fulton

Jackson

Jefferson

Mississippi

Monroe

Ouachita

Perry

Phillips

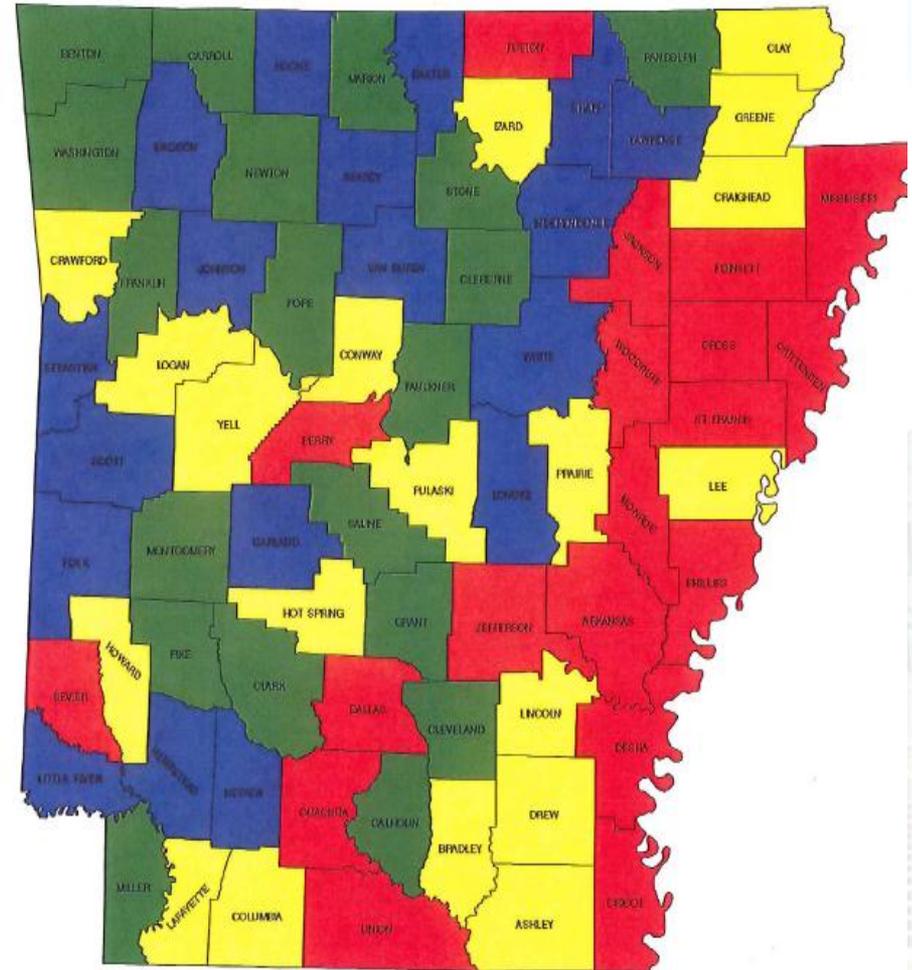
Poinsett

St. Francis

Sevier

Union

Woodruff



Act 790: Health Equity

Requires state agencies to maintain programs & services to address and/or correct the disparity in mortality rates among areas of the state.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: Arkansas is ranked 48th in overall health.

- Phillips Co. has the highest rate of unwed births in the state (74%).
- Lee Co. has the highest poverty rate in the state (39%).
- Crittenton Co. has the highest infant mortality rate in the state
- St Francis Co. has the highest juvenile arrest rate in the state.
- Mississippi Co. has the second highest jobless rate in the state.

Act will focus state agency attention on red counties and encourage state agencies to create and maintain programs and services aimed at reducing the disparities in these counties.

Act 798: Health Equity

Requires comprehensive cross-sector collaborative initiatives to address & correct the disparity in health & mortality rates in certain counties by state agencies/entities.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Rural Communities

PROBLEM: There are 19 red counties where life expectancy at birth is 6-10 years less than life expectancy in Benton county.

- Arkansas has some of the worst health rankings in the country, as measured by any of a number of different statistics.

Act will define “red counties” and encourage state agency collaboration to provide an annual report detailing services (health screenings, preventive health services, health outreach programs, health awareness programs, and public outreach/education) in these counties designed to reduce disparities.

Act 830: Prostate Cancer Awareness

Creates a prostate cancer awareness special license plate.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities

PROBLEM: Arkansas has significantly higher prostate cancer incidence rates and mortality rates than the national average.

- The prostate cancer incidence rate for African American men is 55% higher than for white men.
- African American men die from prostate cancer at a rate that is 176% higher than for white men.

Revenue generated from this Act will support the efforts of the Arkansas Prostate Cancer Foundation.

Act 830 Champion: Rep. Fred Allen



- Diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2007.
- Screened at church health fair.
- Received treatment at Henry Ford and CARTI Clinic (Central AR Radiation Treatment Institute) at UAMS.
- Passed ACT 75 in 2009
 - ❖ Requires insurance companies to cover yearly screenings for men age 40 and over.

Act 855: Obesity

Requires state/public school employee health benefit plans to cover treatment for morbid obesity.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities

PROBLEM: Arkansas ranks 10th in the nation in prevalence of adults who are obese.

- Morbid obesity causes many medical problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease & stroke.
- In 2008, 38% of African Americans were obese in comparison to 29% of Whites.

Act proposes to implement a pilot program for state & public school employees health benefit plans to offer coverage for morbid obesity & treatment including: bariatric surgery, gastric bypass surgery, adjustable gastric banding surgery, sleeve gastrectomy surgery, and duodenal switch biliopancreatic diversion.

Act 868: Tobacco

Community service & tobacco education program for any minor found in possession of tobacco when found in violation of any other statute.

IMPACT: Racial/Ethnic Minorities

PROBLEM: Tobacco use in Arkansas is responsible for more deaths than the other top 5 causes of death combined. Roughly 5,200 people die annually from tobacco-related diseases.

- African American smokers consume 35% fewer cigarettes/day than white smokers, yet have a higher rate of developing smoking related illnesses.
- For African Americans, tobacco-related cancers account for 45% of all cancers in men and 25% in women.
- The incidence of oral cavity & throat cancer in African American men exceeds white men by 49%. Lung and bronchus cancer in African American men exceeds white men by 41%.
- African Americans have higher lung cancer rates for any level of smoking.

Act will strengthen regulation of tobacco sales to minors, decrease the onset of smoking and subsequent addiction to tobacco products by minors.

Act 889: Alzheimer's Council

Creates the Alzheimer's Advisory Council.

IMPACT: Elderly

PROBLEM: Alzheimer's disease is a progressive & fatal brain disease and is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.

- Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia
- There are an estimated 76,496 Arkansans living with Alzheimer's or other related dementias.
- There is some increase among older AA's & Hispanics, possibly due to higher rates of high blood pressure & diabetes as well as lower education levels and other socio-economic characteristics.

Act will create a permanent council to assess the current and future impact of Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia & will examine existing services and resources addressing the needs of persons living with Alzheimer's disease, their families and caregivers.

Act 990: Sickle Cell

Creates Adult Sickle Cell Clinic at UAMS.

IMPACT: African Americans

PROBLEM: More than 98% of sickle cell patients in Arkansas are African American. Because disease is most prevalent in minority populations, the treatment, which is non-curative, highlights the racial and ethnic health disparities that exist across the country.

- 1 in 12 African Americans have sickle cell trait, but very few in Arkansas are aware of their trait status.
- Estimated that 1,000-1,250 people living with sickle cell disease in the state, mostly in the southern, eastern and central counties.

Act ensures clinic's physicians and nurses are trained in treating sickle cell and patients will be tracked to make sure the treatment is effective.

Act 990 Champion: Germaine Johnson



- Diagnosed with sickle cell as an infant.
- 38 years old.
- Founder and CEO of Sickle Cell Support Services.
 - ❖ Sicklecellsupportservices.org
- Hosts annual 5 day summer camp for 30 kids with sickle cell.
- Leading advocate for Act 990.



Act 1176: Women's Health

Requires all facilities that perform 10 or more abortions each month to be licensed by ADH.

IMPACT: Women

- AR law required the ADH to conduct periodic inspections of surgical abortion clinics, but only where abortion was the primary function.
- AR law did not require clinics that performed clinical abortions (pill-RU 486) abortions to be licensed.

Act will bring current abortion inspection laws more up-to-date and require clinics that perform at least 10 abortions each month to be licensed by the ADH.

Interim Studies



REP. FRED ALLEN (D-District 33)

- Little Rock
- Budget; Chair-Insurance & Commerce; Public Health, Welfare & Labor; Public Retirement & Social Security Programs
- ❖ Act 100 (Routine HIV Testing)

PROBLEM: African Americans compose 13% of the state's population, yet compose 43% of HIV cases and 50% of AIDS cases. Evidence shows that providers often do not test for HIV, even in the presence of symptoms.

Creation of interim committee will study:

- How provider and patient related factors may prevent HIV testing.
- Why patients may not want routine HIV testing.
- How state law may be clarified regarding informed consent for adolescents seeking HIV testing and pretesting & post-testing requirements.
- How health care settings can effectively implement routine HIV testing.
- What billing-related obstacles that may prevent routine testing.

Interim Studies



SEN. JOYCE ELLIOTT (D-District 33)

- Little Rock
- Budget; Education; Insurance & Commerce; Legislative Council; Vice-Chair-Retirement & Social Security; Rules, Resolutions & Memorials
- ❖ Act 1162 (Cultural Competency)

Interim study on cultural competence will:

- Study the increasing diversity of our state.
- Identify best approaches to prepare state employees to interact most effectively with people of different cultures and ethnicities.
- Develop trainings to be offered electronically to reduce expenses.
- Make recommendations to public health professionals on the National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services and encourage their use.

Legislative Champions

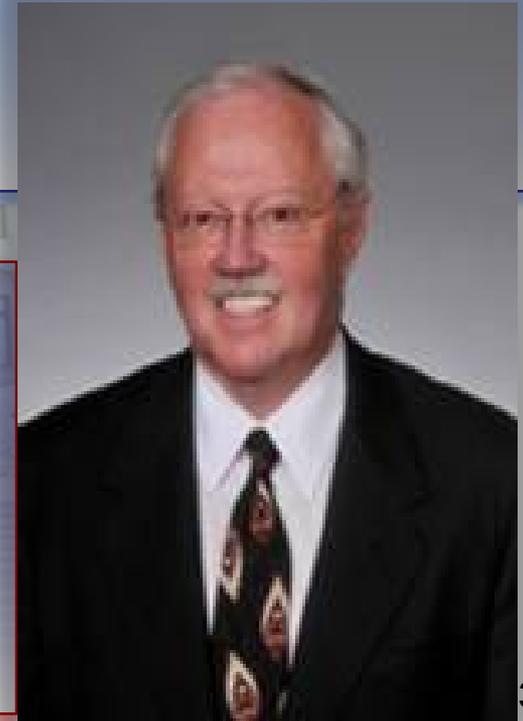


SEN. DAVID JOHNSON (D-District 32)

- Little Rock
- Budget; Judiciary; Legislative Council; Rules, Resolutions & Memorials; State Agencies & Governmental Affairs
 - ❖ Act 89 (Oral Health)
 - ❖ Act 90 (Oral Health)
 - ❖ Act 197 (Fluoridation)

SEN. PERCY MALONE (D-District 26)

- Arkadelphia
- Vice Chair-Budget; Children & Youth; Vice Chair - Efficiency; Energy; Legislative Council; Insurance & Commerce; Chair-Public Health, Welfare & Labor
 - ❖ Act 147 (Immunization)



Legislative Champions (cont.)



REP. DONNA HUTCHINSON (R-District 98)

- Bella Vista
- Budget; Education; State Agencies & Government Affairs; Energy
 - ❖ Act 269 (Health insurance)



REP. CLARK HALL (D-District 13)

- Marvell
- Budget; Performance Review; Government Affairs; Public Health, Welfare & Labor; Chair-State Agencies & Government Affairs
 - ❖ Act 771 (Health Insurance)

Legislative Champions (cont.)

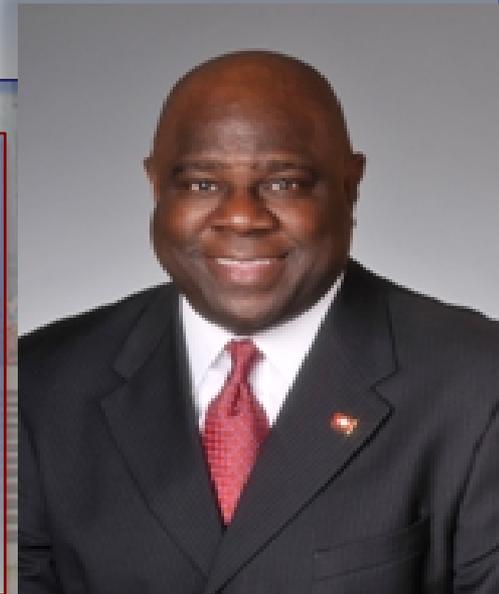


SEN. JACK CRUMBLY (D-District 16)

- Widener
- Audit; Budget; Vice-Chair-Children & Youth; Chair-Insurance & Commerce; Legislative Council; Performance Review; Public Health, Welfare & Labor
 - ❖ Act 790 (Health Equity)
 - ❖ Act 798 (Health Equity)

REP. FRED ALLEN (D-District 33)

- Little Rock
- Budget; Chair-Insurance & Commerce; Public Health, Welfare & Labor; Public Retirement & Social Security Programs
 - ❖ Act 830 (Prostate Cancer Awareness)



Legislative Champions (cont.)



SEN. JIMMY JEFFRESS (D-District 24)

- Crossett
- Chair-Agriculture Forestry & Economic Development; Children & Youth; Budget; Education; Energy; Legislative Council; Retirement & Social Security
 - ❖ Act 855 (Obesity)
 - ❖ Act 771 (Health Insurance)



SEN. EDDIE JOE WILLIAMS (R-District 28)

- Cabot
- Audit; Children & Youth; City, County & Local Affairs; Energy; Revenue & Taxation
 - ❖ Act 868 (Tobacco)

Legislative Champions (cont.)



REP. BUTCH WILKINS (D-District 74)

- Bono
- Legislative Council: Government Affairs; Public Health, Welfare & Labor; Vice-Chair-Retirement & Social Security; State Agencies & Government Affairs
 - ❖ Act 889 (Alzheimer's Council)
 - ❖ Act 1176 (Women's Health)

REP. REGINALD MURDOCK (D-District 52)

- Marianna
- Insurance & Commerce; Performance Review; Public Transportation
 - ❖ Act 909 (Sickle Cell)



Legislative Champions (cont.)



REP. LINDA TYLER (D-District 45)

- Conway
- Legislative Council; Management; Chair-Public Health, Welfare & Labor; State Agencies & Government Affairs



LEGISLATIVE OPPORTUNITY

Clean Indoor Act Exemption Elimination

PROBLEM: Non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25-30% and lung cancer by 20-30%.

- The **Arkansas Clean Indoor Air Act**, enacted July 2006, is designed to protect workers from secondhand smoke in the workplace and to protect citizens from secondhand smoke in public places.
- Smoking is still allowed in businesses not open to the public and have 2 or fewer employees, and in any restaurant or bar that prohibits people under 21 from entering or working at all times.
- Elimination of exemption would close this loop-hole.



**Prepared by the Arkansas Department of Health
Office of Governmental Affairs
Office of Minority Health & Health Disparities**

