

RECAPPING THE 2019 ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE SESSION: AN UPDATE ON HEALTH-RELATED LEGISLATION

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OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

MISSION

ACHI's mission is to be a catalyst for improving the health of Arkansans through evidence-based research, public issue advocacy, and collaborative program development.

VISION

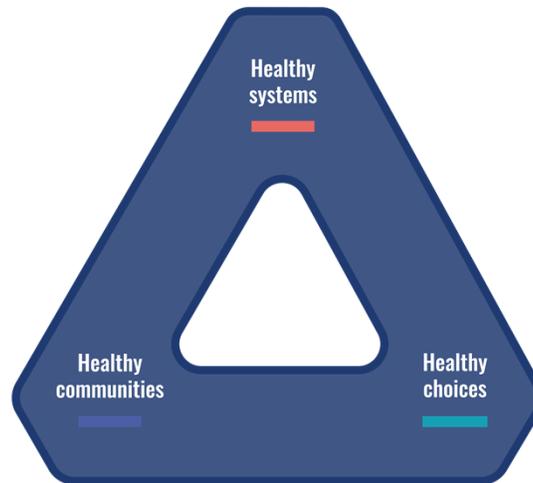
ACHI's vision is to be a trusted health policy leader committed to innovations that improve the health of Arkansans.

VALUES

ACHI's values are trust, innovation, initiative, and commitment.



OUR PRIORITIES



ARKANSAS STATE LEGISLATURE: 92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Regular Session of the 92nd General Assembly convened on Monday, Jan. 14, 2019, and adjourned *sine die* on Wednesday, April 24, 2019.

Major focus areas for this session included: tax reform, the governor's state agency transformation efforts, firearm safety and control, and various issues related to public health and health care.

TOBACCO BILLS: PASSED

Act 580 (HB1565, Davis) increases taxes on cigarette papers and eliminates tobacco tax exemption for border cities to fund efforts to seek National Cancer Institute designation at UAMS, phases-in an increased age limit of 21 for vaping and tobacco product purchase, and preempts local tobacco regulation.

- Governor has committed \$10M in one-time funds from rainy-day fund for UAMS.

Act 947 (SB667, Ingram), exempting casinos from Clean Indoor Air Act.

Act 959 (HB1555, Collins), requiring Medicaid to cover all FDA-approved tobacco cessation medications without prior authorization.

Act 1071 (HB1980, Davis), makes technical changes to permit process and eliminates permissive authority of Tobacco Control Commission to regulate safety and hygiene of the mixing of e-liquids in vaping outlets, including childproof packaging requirements.



TOBACCO BILLS: DID NOT PASS

SB571 (Hendren), which would have taxed vaping products and increased the tax on cigarettes to offset an increased standard income tax deduction and an individual income tax reduction, stalled in the House.

HB1696 (Gonzales), which would have exempted privately-owned businesses from the Clean Indoor Air Act, did not make it out of House Public Health Committee.

SB304 (Bond), which would have established standards for a health curriculum in schools that included education about vaping/tobacco, failed in House Education Committee, primarily due to concerns about sex education component.



INJURY PREVENTION BILLS: PASSED

Act 738 (SB534, B. Johnson), clarifies definitions of texting while driving to comply with federal law and streamlines application of law from previous piecemeal approach.

- Separate bill passed lowers court fees related to texting-while-driving offense.
- Final bill strikes provision removing primary offense for seat belt violation.

Act 1015 (HB1619, Hodges), providing definitions for scooter-share operators and permitting localities with broad authority to regulate operators.

- A previous version of the bill explicitly stated that helmets could not be required and partially exempted local regulation.



INJURY PREVENTION BILLS: DID NOT PASS

Bills regarding the loosening of ATV restrictions did not gain much traction.



SCOPE OF PRACTICE BILLS: PASSED

Act 579 (HB1251, Eubanks) permits optometrists to perform certain surgical and laser procedures.

Act 651 (HB1263, Eaves) authorizes pharmacists to initiate therapy and dispense tobacco cessation products pursuant to a statewide protocol.

Act 637 (HB1269, Magie) permits pharmacists to substitute interchangeable biological products if the substitute results in cost savings for the patient.

Act 652 (HB1278, Gazaway) permits pharmacists to immunize children ages 7-18 under a statewide protocol.

Act 593 (HB1267, Gonzales) permits APRNs to prescribe Schedule II drugs if: 1) for an opioid the prescription is only for a 5-day period or less, and 2) for a stimulant a physician has initiated treatment and has evaluated the patient within 6 months.



SCOPE OF PRACTICE BILLS: DID NOT PASS

Bills stalled that would have eliminated the requirement for supervision of CRNAs and collaborative practice agreements with APRNs or allowed pharmacists to initiate therapy for oral contraception.



MEDICAL MARIJUANA BILLS: PASSED

Act 989 (SB440, Bledsoe), which codifies existing regulations prohibiting manufacture or sale of medical marijuana in non-childproof packaging and in the form of foods or beverages that appeal to minors.

Act 928 (SB441, Bledsoe), which codifies existing regulations prohibiting advertising using certain symbols or in a way that appeals to minors.



MEDICAL MARIJUANA BILLS: DID NOT PASS

A bill that would have added conditions/symptoms for which individuals could qualify for medical marijuana did not pass.



NUTRITION BILLS: PASSED

Act 165 (HB1005, Davis), requires DF&A to provide a list of UPC codes for candy and soft drinks subject to increased taxation rates or provide exemptions to sellers demonstrating good-faith efforts to comply with guidelines.

Act 602 (HB1569, Dotson) permits schools to distribute excess food to students at the end of a school day.

Act 506 (HB1615, Bentley) creates a farm-to-school coordinator position within the Arkansas Department of Agriculture.

- A separate bill provided an appropriation to fund the position.

Act 974 (HB1775, Bentley), which requires adults on SNAP, up to age 60, who do not have dependent children under age 6 to be subject to employment and training requirements to maintain SNAP benefits.

- A separate bill eliminates SNAP benefits for **parents who fail** to cooperate with the Office of Child Support.



NUTRITION BILLS: DID NOT PASS

HB1743 (Bentley), which would have prohibited purchases of candy, soft drinks and energy drinks with SNAP benefits, stalled on the House floor.



IMMUNIZATION BILLS: PASSED

Act 676 (HB1786, Boyd) requires public and private schools to report the number of exemptions from vaccination requirements.



IMMUNIZATION BILLS: DID NOT PASS

HB1823 (Ladyman), which would have required Hepatitis A vaccinations for restaurant workers with some exceptions, failed in the House Public Health Committee.



OTHER HEALTH-RELATED BILLS: PASSED

Act 641 (HB1409, Della Rosa) increases recess time in elementary school for unstructured activity to a minimum of 40 minutes per day.

Act 107 (SB113, Rapert) transfers authority for the Arkansas Health Insurance Marketplace to the Arkansas Insurance Department.

Act 1029 (H1933, Gazaway) requires professional development and school board training on bullying, including cyberbullying.



OTHER HEALTH-RELATED BILLS: DID NOT PASS

HB604 (Ballinger), which would have modified the size of water systems required to comply with fluoridation, failed in the Senate Public Health Committee.

Several bills that would have required more frequent examination of the sufficiency of Medicaid reimbursement rates stalled after the governor issued an executive order requiring Medicaid to review rates by July 2021.





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INSPIRING HEALTHY ACTS

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