



2015 Legislative Overview:

Legislation Relating to or Affecting Autism

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DIRECTLY AFFECTING LEGISLATION



Act 574 – Autism Awareness License Plates

- Creates the Autism Awareness motor vehicle license plate
- Shall be designed by the Department of Finance and Administration in consultation with the Arkansas Autism Resource Outreach Center
- Fee of \$25.00 to cover the design-use contribution (to be remitted on a monthly basis to the Arkansas Autism Resource Outreach Center)
- Fee of \$10.00 for handling and administrative costs
- Repeals the Prostate Cancer Awareness motor vehicle license plate

Act 919 – Amend Law Concerning 911 Systems

- Training for dispatchers and supervisors of a public safety agency, answering point, dispatch center, or a 911 public safety communications center may include autism training



Act 1008 – To Require DHS to Expand Capacity of the Arkansas Autism Partnership


- Amends the statute that established the Medicaid Waiver for Autism
- Repeals the previous definitions and adds new definitions (autism spectrum disorder, evidence-based strategies, and intensive early intervention treatment)
- Changes the ages of children in the waiver program
- Requires DHS to apply to add an additional 50 eligibility slots to the Medicaid Waiver no later than January 1, 2016 if funds are available



DIRECTLY AFFECTING APPROPRIATION LEGISLATION

Act 237 – Appropriation for University of Arkansas Fayetteville

- Section 11 - Appropriated to the University of Arkansas to be payable from the University of Arkansas Fund for the 2015-2016 fiscal year - **\$250,000** for Partners for Inclusive Communities – Personal Services, Maintenance and Operating Expenses, Matching, and Grants
- Section 12 – Appropriated to the University of Arkansas to be payable from the University of Arkansas Fund for the 2015-2016 fiscal year - **\$2,500,000** for operating expenses of the University of Arkansas Fayetteville – Arkansas Centers for Rural Education in Autism and Related Disabilities



Act 656 – U of A Fayetteville Partners for Inclusive Communities Autism Awareness Supporting Grant

- Authorizes **\$250,000** from the General Improvement Fund or its successor fund or fund accounts for the U of A Fayetteville Partners for Inclusive Communities Autism Awareness Supporting Grants
- Act 1146 and Act 1147 (identical GIF bills) funded (see page 22 of each)

Act 679 – DDS – Arkansas Autism Waiver Program

- Authorizes **\$3,000,000** from the General Improvement Fund or its successor fund or fund accounts for the Department of Human Services – Division of Developmental Disabilities Services for the Arkansas Autism Waiver Program
- Act 1146 and Act 1147 (identical GIF bills) did **NOT** funded

Act 979 – Appropriation for DDS

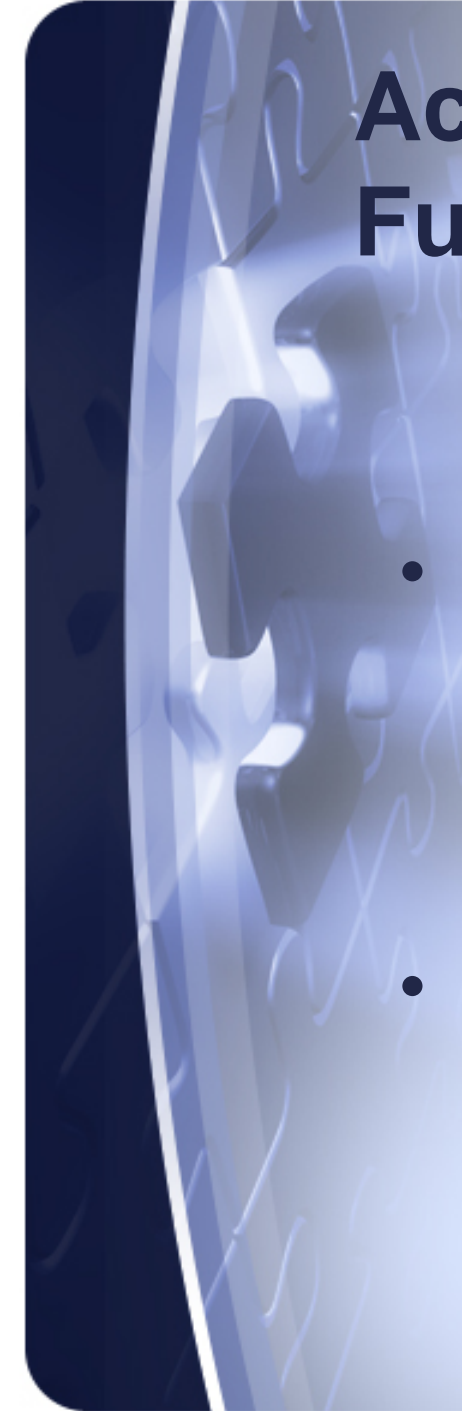
- Section 10 – Appropriated to DDS to be payable from the Developmental Disabilities Services Fund Account for the 2015-2016 fiscal year - **\$273,974** for Autism Treatment and Coordination Grants & Aid & Autism Waiver Services
- Section 16 – Special Language regarding the promulgation of rules and regulations regarding the licensure and oversight of Applied Behavior Analysts



INDIRECTLY RELATED LEGISLATION

Act 161– Repeals the Youth Outcome Questionnaire (YOQs)

- Repeals the former outcome based data system used by the Division of Behavioral Health Services of DHS
- Requires a new outcomes measurement tool be selected no later than September 30, 2015 to replace the former outcome based data system



Act 410– Building Better Futures Program

- Allow students with intellectual disabilities to broaden their career opportunities through education and job training in an inclusive and age-appropriate environment
- Emergency Clause – Effective March 16, 2015

Act 839– Legislative Task Force on the Best Practices for Special Education

- Establishes the Legislative Task Force to:
 - Study and research ways to improve special education and how special education can positively impact student education and achievement outcomes
- Consider the separate strengths and challenges for children who are developmentally delayed; have severe behavioral challenges; or have severe physical disabilities




Act 895– Criminal Justice Reform Act of 2015

- Section 6 – Establishes the Behavioral Health Treatment Access Legislative Task Force to ensure that persons in the criminal justice system who have a demonstrated need for behavioral health treatment have access to the treatment
- Several sections refer to Medicaid eligibility and application, substance abuse, and mental health for inmates, parolees, and probationers



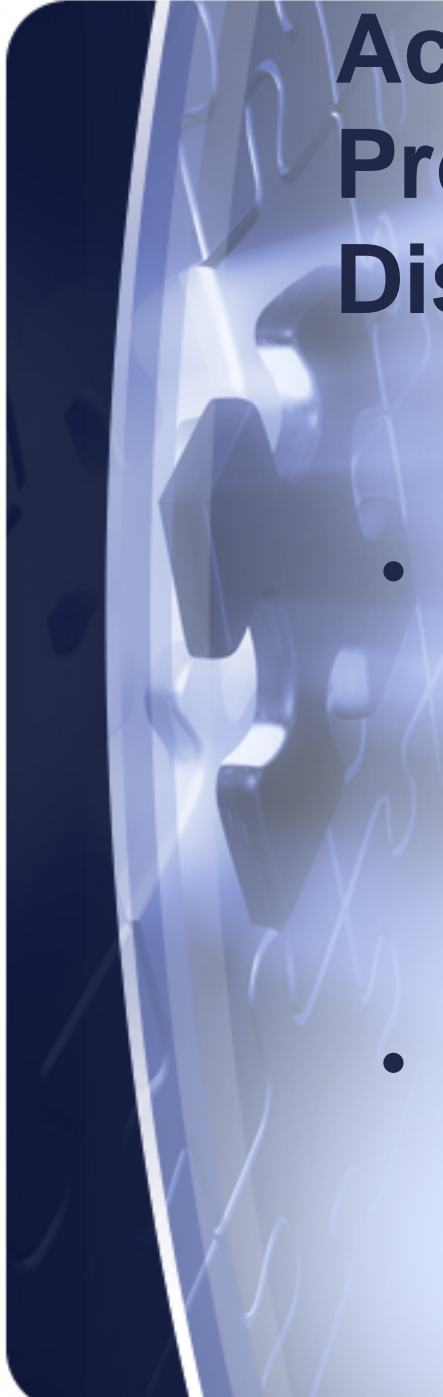
Act 931– Building Better Futures High School Program

- Allow students with intellectual disabilities to broaden their career opportunities through education and job training in an inclusive and age-appropriate environment while completing the additional years of high school
- Emergency Clause – Effective April 2, 2015



Act 1010 – Improve Effectiveness of Juvenile Justice System

- Establishes a “mandate for the provision of services to reduce youth incarceration” including family or individual therapy, day treatment services, residential or outpatient mental health counseling, sex offender counseling, or substance abuse counseling
- The Division of Youth Services of DHS shall create the Youth Justice Reform Board to assist in determining savings from reduced state commitments



Act 1178– Succeed Scholarship Program For Students with Disabilities

- Intended to provide a scholarship to a private school of choice for students with disabilities that have an individualized education program in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.
- Awarding in the 2016-2017 school year

Act 1200– Adult Education Charter Schools

- Establishes adult education charter schools (i.e. a charter school for individuals at least nineteen (19) years of age that offers a high school diploma program and an industry certification program simultaneously to students
- Focuses on adults whose educational and training opportunities have been limited by educational disadvantages, disabilities, homelessness, criminal history, or similar circumstances

Act 1238– Achieving a Better Life Experience Program

- Establishes the ABLE Program as provided under the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-295
- Becomes effective when the Treasurer of the State determines that federal regulations have been finalized and provide the guidance necessary to implement the ABLE Program

Act 1260 – Statewide Reengagement Program

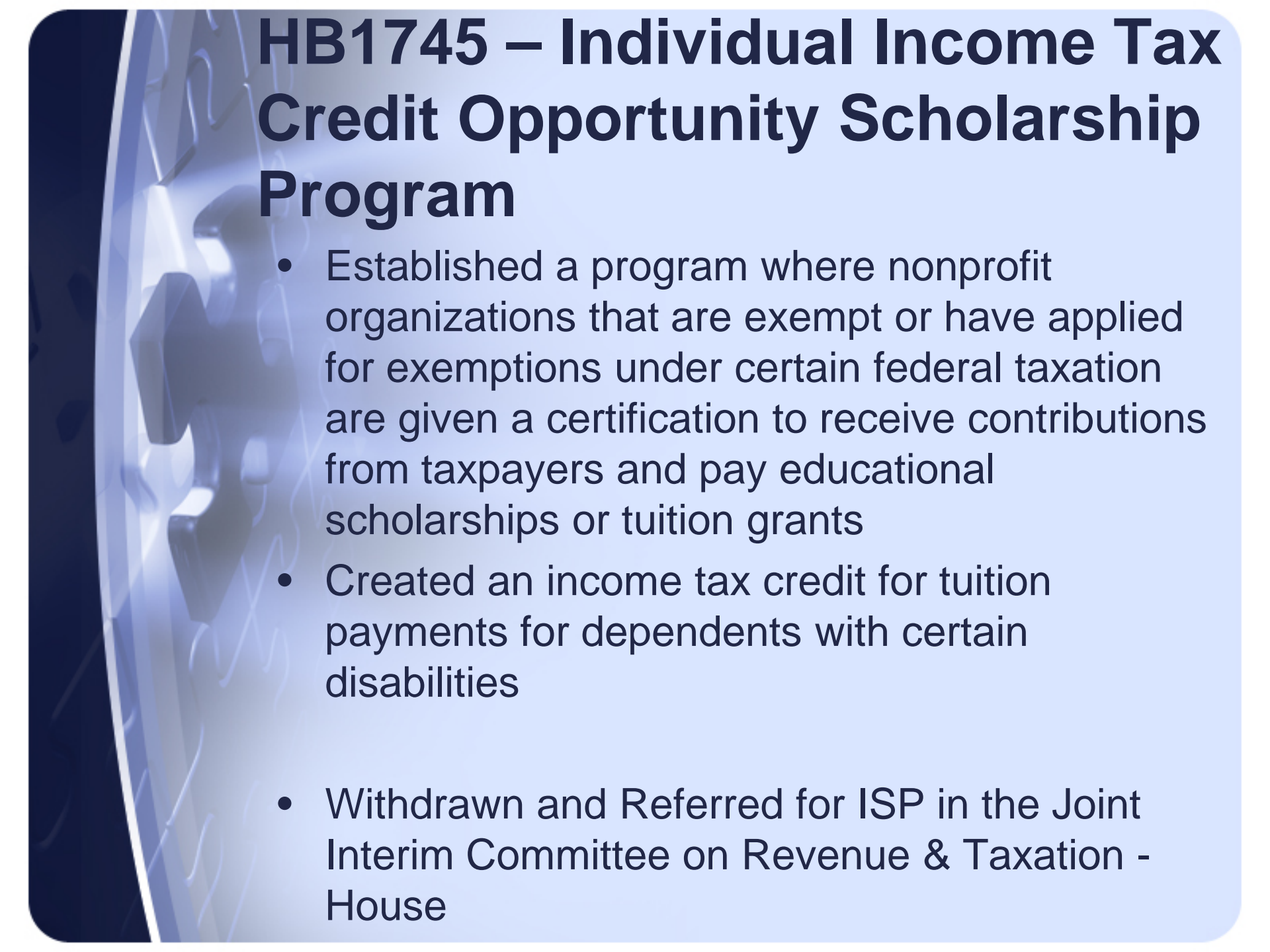
- Establishes a Reengagement System and Differentiated Pathway to a High School Diploma Program
- To provide appropriate educational opportunities and access to services for students 16 to 21 years of age who are disengaged from the traditional high school setting and who are in danger of dropping out of high school



FAILED LEGISLATION

HB1192– To Amend The Right to be Accompanied by a Service Animal

- Additional sections to mirror the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and federal regulations
- Broaden the right to accompanied by a service animal
 - The types of disabilities that qualified a person
 - The specified specific types of service animal including a sensory service dog trained to assist an individual with autism



HB1745 – Individual Income Tax Credit Opportunity Scholarship Program

- Established a program where nonprofit organizations that are exempt or have applied for exemptions under certain federal taxation are given a certification to receive contributions from taxpayers and pay educational scholarships or tuition grants
- Created an income tax credit for tuition payments for dependents with certain disabilities
- Withdrawn and Referred for ISP in the Joint Interim Committee on Revenue & Taxation - House



HB1749– To Eliminate the Waiting Lists for ACS Waiver/DDS Waiver

- Require the Department of Human Services to explore and investigate all waiver programs to develop a feasible plan to eliminate the waiting lists by September 1, 2016

Family in Need of Services Case & Adjudication of Juvenile

- Senator S. Flowers
 - SB486 – Amend the law concerning an adjudication hearing of a juvenile
 - SB484 – Amend the law concerning the disposition of a FINS Case and the contents of a FINS Petition
 - SB485 – Amend the law concerning the disposition of juvenile delinquent petition and the contents of a juvenile delinquent petition



Questions?

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