

1 State of Arkansas  
2 84th General Assembly  
3 Second Extraordinary Session, 2003  
4

Call Item 4

# A Bill

SENATE BILL 50

5 By: Senator Wilkins  
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## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS  
10 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE STATE BOARD OF  
11 EDUCATION, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
12

### Subtitle

14 AN ACT TO CREATE THE COMMISSION ON CIVIL  
15 RIGHTS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE STATE  
16 BOARD OF EDUCATION.  
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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21 SECTION 1. Creation of the Commission on Civil Rights.

22 (a)(1) To enhance the ability of the State Board of Education to serve  
23 the needs of schools, students, parents, and communities with respect to  
24 minorities, the General Assembly finds that a Commission on Civil Rights  
25 shall be established under the direct operational control of the state board.

26 (2) The foremost obligation of the commission shall be to serve  
27 as an independent body with input regarding civil rights issues relating to  
28 decisions made by the state board and the Department of Education.

29 (b) There is created a Commission on Civil Rights, which shall begin  
30 operation within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days following the  
31 effective date of this act.

32 (c) The commission shall be under the supervision of the state board.

33 (d) The Chair of the State Board of Education shall name a three  
34 member Commission on Civil Rights Panel consisting of the following  
35 individuals:

36 (1) Chair of the State Board of Education; and



1           (2) Two (2) members of the state board.

2           (e)(1) The panel shall select an individual to serve as the director  
3 of the Commission on Civil Rights.

4           (2) The director, with guidance and approval from the panel,  
5 shall be responsible for hiring all employees of the commission.

6           (f) The commission shall have the following responsibilities:

7           (1) Ensure that there is a minority perspective advising the  
8 department and the state board on all decisions and serving as an advocate  
9 for schools, students, parents, and communities with respect to issues  
10 affecting minorities;

11           (2) Review grant-making, rule-making, and enforcement actions to  
12 ensure the state board and department decisions are made without bias toward  
13 race, socioeconomic class, gender, geography, or religion; and

14           (3) Serve as a clearinghouse for grievances, conflicts, and  
15 disputes between the department and local school districts in civil rights  
16 issues;

17           (4) Ensure that each public school district has a well  
18 publicized local grievance procedure for civil rights complaints between  
19 parents and students, and the school district or school; and

20           (5) Review and ensure the best faith efforts of schools  
21 statewide to hire teachers from the same demographic groups as their  
22 students.

23           (g)(1) The commission shall provide annual reports of civil rights  
24 issues to the Joint Interim Oversight Committee on Education Reform, the  
25 House Interim Committee on Education, and the Senate Interim Committee on  
26 Education.

27           (2) A preliminary report shall be provided by January 1 each  
28 year and a follow-up report that includes information regarding on-site  
29 visits shall be filed by June 1 each year.

30           (h)(1) There is created the Civil Rights Advisory Council that shall  
31 begin operation within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days following the  
32 effective date of this act. The membership of the council shall include:

33           (A) One (1) member designated as chair, to be selected by  
34 the Governor, who shall be a representative of Arkansas businesses;

35           (B) One (1) member selected by the Governor, who shall be  
36 a representative of an educator's union in the State of Arkansas;

1                   (C) One (1) member selected by the Governor, who shall be  
2 a parent of at least one (1) student currently enrolled in grades  
3 kindergarten through twelve (K-12) in a public school in the State of  
4 Arkansas;

5                   (D) One (1) member selected by the Speaker of the House of  
6 Representatives who shall be a representative of higher education;

7                   (E) One (1) member appointed by the President Pro Tempore  
8 of the Senate who shall be a representative of Arkansas businesses;

9                   (F) One (1) member appointed by the chairperson of the  
10 Senate Committee on Education who is currently employed as a teacher in the  
11 grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) public school system in the State  
12 of Arkansas; and

13                   (G) One (1) member appointed by the chair of the House  
14 Committee on Education who shall be a representative of the administration of  
15 a public school in the State of Arkansas.

16                   (2) The council shall provide advice and consultation services  
17 for the director.

18                   (3) The council may be convened by the chair of the council, by  
19 the chair of the state board, or by the director.

20                   (4) Members shall not receive compensation for service on the  
21 council but may receive expense reimbursement as provided in Arkansas Code §  
22 25-16-902.

23                   (5)(A) Members appointed by Governor should serve an initial  
24 term of four (4) years.

25                   (B) Members appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
26 Representatives, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, shall serve an  
27 initial term of three (3) years.

28                   (C) The members appointed by the chair of the House  
29 Interim Committee on Education and the Chair of the Senate Interim Committee  
30 on Education shall serve and initial term of two (2) years.

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