1	State of Arkansas	A Bill	
2	93rd General Assembly	A Dili	CENTATE DILL (25
3	Regular Session, 2021		SENATE BILL 635
4	Dry Compton Hoston		
5	By: Senator Hester		
6 7	By: Representative Ray		
8		For An Act To Be Entitled	
9	AN ACT TO	AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DATES FOR	R
10		ECIAL ELECTIONS; TO PROMOTE VOTER TUR	
11		HER PURPOSES.	,
12			
13			
14		Subtitle	
15	TO AM	MEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DATES FOR	
16	CERTA	AIN SPECIAL ELECTIONS; AND TO PROMOTE	
17	VOTER	R TURNOUT.	
18			
19			
20	BE IT ENACTED BY THE G	ENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKAN	SAS:
21			
22	SECTION 1. Arka	nsas Code § 2-16-504(b)(1), concerning	g elections to
23	establish Johnson gras	s control and eradication districts,	is amended to read
24	as follows:		
25	(b)(1) <del>Immediat</del>	ely upon the submission of <u>If</u> the pet	ition <del>to the</del>
26	county court or courts	is submitted under subdivision (a)(1	) of this section,
27		all issue a proclamation calling the	
28		$\S$ 7-11-201 et seq. and notify the coun	•
29		missioners in writing. The election s	
30		h § 7-11-201 et seq. but in no event	•
31	(90) days following pu	blication of the proclamation under §	7-11-304.
32	GROWION O. A.1	0.1.0.6.1/.100/1	1 1 .11
33 24		nsas Code § 6-14-102(b), concerning s	cnool millage
34 35	elections, is amended  (b) The board of		all have the
35 36		f directors of any school district sha a school election concerning the tax:	
<i>-</i> 0	additionary to may note	a sensor erection concerning the tax	LUCC OF GCDC

2	<u>if</u> :
3	(1) All constitutional and statutory requirements for the annual
4	school election are met, notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section; $\underline{\text{and}}$
5	(2) The election is held before the date of the annual school
6	election; and
7	(3) The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
8	approves the date of the election.
9	
10	SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-14-122(b), concerning dates for elections
11	regarding the consolidation, annexation, or merger of school districts, is
12	amended to read as follows:
13	(b) The boards of directors of the school districts may, by resolution
14	duly adopted and with the approval of the Commissioner of Elementary and
15	Secondary Education, set a date for the annual school election in that year
16	for the school districts involved on a date other than the date set in § 6-
17	14-102 for all school districts under § 7-11-304, provided only one (1)
18	annual school election may be held in any school district in $\frac{1}{2}$
19	calendar year.
20	
21	SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-53-602(b)(2), concerning publication of a
22	proclamation by a community college, is amended to read as follows:
23	(2)(A) The local board or acting local board shall issue a
24	proclamation and set a date for the election under § 7-11-201 et seq., but
25	the date set for the election shall not be later than
26	(B) The local board or acting local board shall publish
27	the proclamation at least ninety (90) days after the publication of the
28	proclamation before the election date.
29	
30	SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-53-603(a)(2), concerning the date of
31	election for a tax levy called, is amended to read as follows:
32	(2) It The tax may be reduced or repealed, with the exception of the
33	amount of tax required to service $\frac{\partial u}{\partial x}$ outstanding $\frac{\partial u}{\partial y}$ or the tax
34	may be increased upon approval thereof by a majority of the qualified
35	electors of the district voting on the issue at <del>an</del> the next election called
36	by the local board or acting local board to be held at least thirty (30)

issues on a date other than that fixed by law provided that under § 7-11-304

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1	calendar days after the local board or acting local board notifies the county
2	boards of election commissioners under § 7-11-304.
3	
4	SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-53-604(b), concerning dissolution of a
5	technical college district, is amended to read as follows:
6	(b)(1) The petitions A petition shall be filed with the Secretary of
7	State <del>, who, within</del> .
8	(2) The Secretary of State, within ten (10) days of the receipt
9	and verification by the Secretary of State of the sufficiency of the
10	petitions the petition, shall notify the county boards board of election
11	commissioners in each county in the district that an election shall is to be
12	held at a time not less than thirty (30) days nor more than one hundred
13	eighty (180) days from the date of notification under § 7-11-304.
14	
15	SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 7-1-101(16), concerning the definition of
16	"general or special election", is amended to read as follows:
17	(16) "General or special election" means the regular biennial or
18	annual election for election of United States, state, district, county,
19	township, and municipal officials and the special elections to fill
20	vacancies therein and special elections to approve any measure. The term as
21	used in this act shall not apply to school elections for officials of school
22	districts;
23	
24	SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 7-11-205 is amended to read as follows:
25	7-11-205. Dates of special elections on measures and questions $-$
26	Exceptions - Separate ballots.
27	(a) $(1)(A)$ Except as provided in subdivision (a) $(1)(B)$ of this section,
28	all special elections on measures or questions $\underline{A}$ special election on $\underline{a}$
29	measure or a question shall be held on the second Tuesday of any month,
30	except special elections held under this section in a month in which a
31	preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election
32	is scheduled to occur, which shall be held on the date of the preferential
33	primary election, general primary election, or general election under § 7-11-
34	<u>304</u> .
35	(B) Special elections scheduled to occur in a month in

which the second Tuesday is a legal holiday shall be held on the third

1	Tuesday of the month.
2	$\frac{(2)(A)}{(b)(1)}$ If a special election is held on the date of the
3	preferential primary election, the issue or issues to be voted upon at the
4	special election shall be included on the ballot of each political party.
5	$\frac{(B)}{(2)}$ The portion of the ballot containing the special
6	election shall be labeled with a heading stating "SPECIAL ELECTION ON
7	with a brief description of the measure or question to be
8	decided in the election.
9	(3)(c) Separate ballots containing the issue or issues to be
10	voted on at the special election and candidates for nonpartisan judicial
11	office shall be prepared and made available to voters requesting a separate
12	ballot.
13	(4)(d) A voter shall not be required to vote in a political
14	party's preferential primary in order to be able to vote in the special
15	election.
16	(b)(1) A special election shall be held not less than seventy (70)
17	days following the date that the proclamation, ordinance, resolution, order,
18	or other authorized document is filed with the county clerk when the special
19	election is to be held on the date of the preferential primary election or
20	general election.
21	(2) If the special election is not held at the same time as a
22	preferential primary election or general election, the special election shall
23	be held not less than sixty (60) days following the date that the
24	proclamation, ordinance, resolution, order, or other authorized document is
25	filed with the county clerk.
26	
27	SECTION 9. Arkansas Code Title 7, Chapter 11, Subchapter 3, is amended
28	to add an additional section to read as follows:
29	7-11-304. Dates of special elections.
30	(a) The proclamation, ordinance, resolution, order, or other
31	authorized document calling for a special election shall:
32	(1) Set the date of the special election; and
33	(2) Be filed at least seventy-five (75) days before the date the
34	special election is to be held.
35	(b) If a special election is called in a year in which a preferential
36	nrimary election or general election is held the special election shall be

1	nerd with the preferencial primary election of general election.
2	(c) If a special election is called in a year in which a preferential
3	primary election or general election is not held, the special election shall
4	be held on the third Tuesday in May or the Tuesday next after the first
5	Monday in November.
6	(d) This section does not apply to special elections to fill vacancies
7	in office, special runoff elections, local option elections, or special
8	elections otherwise provided for by the Arkansas Constitution.
9	(e)(1) An emergency special election may be held on a date other than
10	the dates specified under subsections (b) and (c) of this section.
11	(2) As used in this section, "emergency" means:
12	(A) Either a substantial change in:
13	(i) The interpretation of the law by the federal or
14	state courts that, if not addressed by an election, will render the governing
15	entity incapable of performing its lawful duties and obligations;
16	(ii) Circumstances due to a fire, flood, tornado, or
17	other natural disaster that, if not addressed by an election, will render the
18	governing entity financially incapable of performing its lawful duties and
19	obligations; or
20	(iii) Circumstances determined by the governing body
21	of the entity requesting the election to be an imminent danger to public
22	health and safety; and
23	(B) A delay of the special election that, until the next
24	date under subsections (b) and (c) of this section, would cause a substantial
25	and undue hardship to the governing entity.
26	
27	SECTION 10. Arkansas Code § 11-10-1006(a)(2), concerning elections on
28	the issuance of Arkansas Unemployment Trust Fund Bonds, is amended to read as
29	follows:
30	(2)(A) An election under this section may be $\frac{1}{1}$ conjunction with
31	a general election, or it may be a special election.
32	(B) A special election held under this section shall occur
33	on the second Tuesday of any month, except as otherwise provided for in this
34	subsection.
35	(C) A special election that is held in months in which a
36	precidential preferential primary election, preferential primary election

1 general primary election, or general election is scheduled to occur shall be 2 held on the date of the presidential preferential primary election, 3 preferential primary election, general primary election, or general election. 4 held on a date under § 7-11-304. 5 (D)(i)(B)(i) If a special election is held on the date of 6 the presidential preferential primary election, preferential primary 7 election, or general primary election, the issue or issues to be voted upon 8 at the special election shall be included on the ballot of each political 9 party. 10 (ii) However, separate ballots containing only the 11 issue or issues to be voted upon at the special election shall be prepared 12 and made available to voters requesting a separate ballot. 13 (iii) A voter shall not be required to vote in a 14 political party's presidential preferential primary election, preferential 15 primary election, or general primary election in order to be able to vote in 16 the special election. 17 (E) Special elections scheduled to occur in a month in 18 which the second Tuesday is a legal holiday shall be held on the third 19 Tuesday of the month. 20 21 SECTION 11. Arkansas Code § 14-14-917(a)(2), concerning special 22 elections for referendum petition measures, is amended to read as follows: 23 (2) Referendum. Referendum petition measures may be submitted 24 to the electors during a regular general election and shall be submitted if 25 the adequacy of the petition is determined within the time limitation 26 prescribed in this section. A referendum measure may also be referred to the 27 electors at a special election called for the expressed purpose proposed by 28 petition. However, no referendum petition certified within the time 29 limitations established for initiative measures shall be referred to a special election, but shall be voted upon at the next regular election. No  $\underline{A}$ 30 31 referendum election shall be held less than sixty (60) days after the 32 certification of adequacy of the petition by the county clerk on a date under 33 § 7-11-304.

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SECTION 12. Arkansas Code § 14-20-108(a)(1)(B)(i)(b), concerning special elections on the issue of the levy of volunteer fire department dues

I	on residences, is amended to read as follows:
2	(b) $(1)$ The issue may be placed on the ballot at a
3	special election by order of the quorum court in accordance with § 7-11-201
4	et seq.
5	(2) The special election shall be held by
6	August 1.
7	
8	SECTION 13. Arkansas Code § 14-40-303(a)(3), concerning ordinances
9	calling annexation elections, is amended to read as follows:
10	(3) Fix the date for the annexation election under this section
11	at the next special election date under § 7-11-304 after the ordinance is
12	<pre>filed; and</pre>
13	
14	SECTION 14. Arkansas Code § 14-47-140(d), concerning special elections
15	for mayor, is amended to read as follows:
16	(d) The special election shall be held <del>not less than thirty (30) days</del>
17	nor more than one hundred twenty (120) days after the proclamation on the
18	next special election date under § 7-11-304.
19	
20	SECTION 15. Arkansas Code § 14-48-104(b), concerning special elections
21	after submission of a governmental form question to electors, is amended to
22	read as follows:
23	(b) If the number of signatures certified by the clerk is equal to or
24	greater than fifteen percent (15%) of the aggregate number of votes cast, as
25	prescribed, the Secretary of State shall call <u>the election</u> by proclamation $\frac{in}{in}$
26	accordance with, and an election shall be held under § 7-11-201 et seq. a
27	special election to be held not more than ninety (90) days from the date of
28	the clerk's certification.
29	
30	SECTION 16. Arkansas Code § 14-48-114(b)(3), concerning removal of
31	mayors or directors in city administrator cities, is amended to read as
32	follows:
33	(3) The county board of election commissioners shall issue a
34	proclamation in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq., calling a special
35	election on the question and shall fix a date for holding it <del>not more than</del>
36	ninety (90) days from on the next special election date under § 7-11-304

T	<u>after</u> the date of the certification of the petitions by the clerk;
2	
3	SECTION 17. Arkansas Code § 14-57-704(a)(2), concerning special
4	elections for the levy of a vehicle tax, is amended to read as follows:
5	(2) This The election shall be held not more than ninety (90)
6	days from the date of the publication of the proclamation, at which the
7	qualified electors of the city or town shall vote on the question of the levy
8	of the tax on the next special election date under § 7-11-304.
9	
10	SECTION 18. Arkansas Code § 14-61-113(1)(C), concerning special
11	elections called by petition, is amended to read as follows:
12	(C) The special election shall be held <del>not more than sixty</del>
13	(60) days on the next special election date under § 7-11-304 after the
14	proclamation calling the election, provided that if the county board of
15	election commissioners certifies in writing that it cannot prepare the
16	ballots because of other pending elections, then the election can be held not
17	more than ninety (90) days after the proclamation;
18	
19	SECTION 19. Arkansas Code § 14-120-102(a), concerning elections in
20	certain combination levee and drainage districts, is amended to read as
21	follows:
22	(a) $(1)$ There An election shall be held an election annually on the
23	Tuesday next after the first Monday in May in all combination levee and
24	drainage districts where the boundaries of the districts embrace all of the
25	lands within the corporate limits of a city of the first class and no lands
26	situated more than three (3) miles from the corporate limits, for the
27	election of one (1) member of the board of improvement.
28	(2) The judges of the election are to shall be appointed by the
29	county board of election commissioners.
30	
31	SECTION 20. Arkansas Code § 14-122-104 is amended to read as follows:
32	14-122-104. Filing referendum petitions — Special election.
33	If petitions signed by not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the
34	qualified electors voting on the office of mayor in the city at the last
35	preceding general election are filed with the city clerk of the city within
36	forty-five (45) days after the enactment of the ordinance creating the

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1
    municipal drainage improvement district requesting that the ordinance be
 2
    referred to a vote of the qualified electors of the district, the petitions
 3
    shall be referred to the people at a special election to be called by the
 4
    mayor of the municipality in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq. to be held
 5
    not more than ninety (90) days after the proclamation on the next special
6
    election date under § 7-11-304.
 7
8
           SECTION 21. Arkansas Code § 14-125-302(c)(2)(A), concerning election
9
     dates for board of directors of conservation districts, is amended to read as
10
     follows:
11
                       (A) On the first Tuesday in March 2000, and on the first
12
    Tuesday in March every third year thereafter on the date the preferential
13
    primary is held or, if no preferential primary is held, on the Tuesday next
14
    after the first Monday in May, in those districts which that have the
15
    greatest amount of district territory in the following counties:
16
           Boone
                             Little River
17
           Carroll
                             Logan
18
           Clark
                             Lonoke
19
           Clay
                             Poinsett
20
           Cleburne
                             Polk
21
           Cleveland
                             Saline
22
           Columbia
                             Scott
23
           Conway
                             Searcy
           Crawford
24
                             St. Francis
25
           Cross
                             White
26
                             Woodruff
           Fulton
27
           Greene
                             Yell
28
           Jefferson
29
30
           SECTION 22. Arkansas Code § 14-201-316(a), concerning election of
31
    members of the board of public utilities, is amended to read as follows:
32
           (a) In all cities and towns where a board of public utilities shall be
    is created under the provisions of this subchapter, there shall be held, on a
33
    day to be designated by the county board of election commissioners not less
34
    than thirty (30) days nor more than sixty (60) days on the next special
35
36
    election date under § 7-11-304 before the expiration of the term of office of
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any member of the board of public utilities, an election for the purpose of electing a member of the board to succeed the outgoing member.

- SECTION 23. Arkansas Code § 14-284-212(g)(2)(B), concerning elections to approve increased assessments in fire protection districts outside of cities and towns, is amended to read as follows:
- (B) The election called by the elected board of commissioners for an increase in the flat fee assessment shall be held within ninety (90) days on the next special election date under § 7-11-304 after the board of commissioners' meeting that approves the assessment increase.

- SECTION 24. Arkansas Code § 14-286-103(a), concerning special elections on the question of the establishment and financing of a red imported fire ant abatement district, is amended to read as follows:
- (a) The special election called by the county court to submit the question of the establishment and financing of a red imported fire ant abatement district to the electors of the proposed district shall be held in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq. no later than ninety (90) days after the proclamation of the election and on the next special election date under § 7-11-304.

- SECTION 25. Arkansas Code § 14-386-403(a), concerning elections on enclosures in fencing districts, is amended to read as follows:
- (a) The county court shall in the same publication prescribed by § 14-386-402 give notice of and cause an election to be held within thirty (30) days of on the next special election date under § 7-11-304 after the date of the filing of the petition, in the townships or parts of townships included in the petition, where the question of the creation of the proposed fencing district shall be submitted to the qualified electors living or owning land in the proposed district.

- 32 SECTION 26. Arkansas Code § 15-43-204(a)(1), concerning local 33 elections to redetermine doe-killing areas, is amended to read as follows:
  - (a)(1) Whenever fifty (50) or more qualified electors residing within an area wholly or partly located within their particular county that has been designated by regulation of the Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission as a

- doe-killing area petition the appropriate county court, praying requesting that an election be held to determine whether or not such an area or portion thereof should remain a doe-killing area, the county court shall order a special election in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq. to be held not more than ninety (90) days after the date of filing of the petition on the next special election date under § 7-11-304. SECTION 27. Arkansas Code § 23-111-306(b)(1), concerning referendum elections on continuing greyhound racing, is amended to read as follows: The date of the special election shall be fixed by the board on
  - (b)(1) The date of the special election shall be fixed by the board of a day not more than ninety (90) days following the date of filing the petitions under § 7-11-304. The deposit of the funds as provided in subsection (a) of this section and the election shall be conducted and shall be subject to contest under the general election laws of this state.

SECTION 28. Arkansas Code § 23-113-201(a)(2)(E), concerning elections to conduct wagering on electronic games of skill, is amended to read as follows:

(E) The election shall be held no earlier than thirty-one (31) calendar days, and no later than one hundred twenty (120) calendar days, after the effective date of the ordinance in which the election is called by the governing body on the next special election date after the ordinance is filed under § 7-11-304.

SECTION 29. Arkansas Code § 26-52-605(b), concerning special elections for equalization of taxes for border cities and towns, is amended to read as follows:

- (b) The special election shall be called not later than one hundred twenty (120) days for the next special election date under § 7-11-304 following the adoption of the ordinance by the governing body of the city or town, or the filing of a petition requesting the special election.
- SECTION 30. Arkansas Code § 26-73-111(c), concerning special local sales and use tax elections, is amended to read as follows:
- 35 (c) The special election shall be called for a date not later than one 36 hundred twenty (120) days from the date of the action of the governing body

1 in establishing the date of the next special election date under § 7-11-304. 2 3 SECTION 31. Arkansas Code § 26-74-207(a)(2), concerning special 4 elections on sales and use tax for capital improvements, is amended to read 5 as follows: 6 (2) The election shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) 7 days of the ordinance calling the election on the next special election date 8 under § 7-11-304. 9 10 SECTION 32. Arkansas Code § 26-74-307(a)(2), concerning special 11 elections on sales tax for capital improvements, is amended to read as 12 follows: 13 (2) The election shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) 14 days of the ordinance calling for the election on the next special election 15 date under § 7-11-304. 16 17 SECTION 33. Arkansas Code § 26-74-402(a), concerning special elections 18 for sales and use tax for counties without an existing tax, is amended to 19 read as follows: 20 (a) The county quorum court of any county not having a countywide one percent (1%) sales and use tax on March 14, 1991, may call an election for 21 22 the levy of a one-half five-tenths percent (0.5%) countywide sales and use 23 tax for any purpose for which the county general fund or county road fund may 24 be used including allocating portions of this tax to the municipalities 25 located therein. The election shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) 26 days of the ordinance calling the election on the next special election date 27 under § 7-11-304. 28 29 SECTION 34. Arkansas Code § 26-74-502(a), concerning special elections 30 for sales and use tax for counties without an existing tax, is amended to 31 read as follows: 32 (a) If petitions are filed requesting an election for an initiated 33 ordinance levying the tax authorized under this subchapter, the quorum court 34 shall submit the question of the levying of the tax to the electors. The

petitions must be signed by not less than five hundred (500) electors of the

county. The election shall be held within one hundred twenty (120) days of on

35

1 the next special election date under § 7-11-304 after the filing of the 2 petitions. The tax shall be levied upon approval of a majority of the 3 qualified electors voting on the issue at the election. 4 5 SECTION 35. Arkansas Code § 26-75-208(a)(2), concerning special 6 elections on sales and use taxes, is amended to read as follows: 7 (2) The special election shall be called for a date no later 8 than one hundred twenty (120) days from the date of action of the governing 9 body in establishing the date of the special election for the next special election date under § 7-11-304. 10 11 12 SECTION 36. Arkansas Code § 26-75-213(a)(3)(B), concerning municipal 13 sales and use taxes, is amended to read as follows: 14 (B) If the petition is found to be sufficient, the 15 question shall be submitted to the electors at a special election on a date as may be requested by the petition on the next special election date under § 16 17 7-11-304 after certification of the sufficiency of the petition to the 18 governing body of the city. 19 20 SECTION 37. Arkansas Code § 26-75-213(a)(4), concerning municipal 21 sales and use taxes, is amended to read as follows: 22 (4) The special election shall be called in accordance with § 7-23 11-201 et seq. for a date not more than ninety (90) days from the date on which the city clerk certifies the sufficiency of the petition to the 24 25 governing body of the city. 26 27 SECTION 38. Arkansas Code § 26-75-308(a)(2), concerning municipal 28 sales and use taxes, is amended to read as follows: 29 (2) The special election shall be called for a date no later 30 than one hundred twenty (120) days from the date of action of the governing body in establishing the date of special election the next special election 31 date under § 7-11-304. 32 33 34 SECTION 39. Arkansas Code § 26-75-404(a)(2), concerning the calling of 35 a special election for a temporary tax for acquisition, construction, or 36 improvement of parks, is amended to read as follows:

(2) If the ordinance provides for submitting the question at a special election, the election shall be called in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq. for a date not more than ninety (90) days from the date of the adoption of the ordinance calling the special election the next special election date under § 7-11-304.

SECTION 40. Arkansas Code § 26-75-503(b), concerning special elections on a gross receipts tax, is amended to read as follows:

(b) An election shall be held in the levying city on the question of whether the ordinance shall become effective within sixty (60) days after the receipt of a certified copy of the ordinance on the next special election date under § 7-11-304 and shall be conducted in the manner prescribed by law for holding state, county, or municipal elections, so far as the manner may be applicable.

SECTION 41. Arkansas Code § 26-78-103(b)(1), concerning the county and municipal motor vehicle tax, is amended to read as follows:

(b)(1) Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, before the tax levied by any county quorum court upon owners residing everywhere in the county or only upon owners residing within the county but outside the corporate boundaries of all municipalities in the county may be collected, the county court shall call a special election in accordance with § 7-11-201 et seq. upon the first levy of the tax by the county quorum court, to be held not more than ninety (90) days from the date of the adoption of the levy of the tax by the quorum court on the next special election date under § 7-11-304, at which election the qualified electors of the area to be affected by the tax shall vote on the question of the levy of the tax.

SECTION 42. Arkansas Code § 26-78-111(c), concerning special elections on the county and municipal motor vehicle tax, is amended to read as follows:

(c) The ordinance or order shall specifically state the purpose for which the bonds are to be issued, the total amount of the issue, and the date upon which the election is to be held, which date shall not occur earlier than thirty (30) days after the passage of the ordinance or the entering of the order be the next special election date under § 7-11-304.