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B.1

February 12, 2018

Senator Larry Teague, Co-Chair
Representative Lane Jean, Co-Chair
Joint Budget Committee
Arkansas General Assembly
State Capitol Building
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Co-Chairs:

I respectfully request the following amendments to SB12, the 2018-2019 Operations Appropriation Bill for The Arkansas State Game and Fish Commission, as follows:

Please amend SECTION 1. REGULAR SALARIES.

Item No.	Class Code	Title	Maximum No. of Employees	Maximum Annual Salary Rate Fiscal Year 2018-2019
(1)	Q249U	AGFC DIRECTOR	1	\$132,729 <u>\$152,638</u>

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission adopted a pay plan separate from the Uniform Classification and Compensation Act. At that time the Commission had not provided for a change in compensation for their Director. This amendment will increase the line item maximum salary rate for the Director.

Please amend SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION - OPERATIONS.

ITEM NO.		FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019
(06)	(A) Operating Expenses	36,131,187 <u>34,760,018</u>
(07)	GAME AND FISH GRANTS	5,628,831 <u>7,000,000</u>

Previously, some grant expenditures were made from the Agency's Operations Line Item, but these items would be more appropriately expensed from the Game and Fish Grants line item. This increase will provide for sufficient appropriation in the Grants line to accommodate this change.

Please add the follow two (2) new Sections and renumber accordingly.

SECTION 14. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE OR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL, AND TEMPORARY LAW. COMPENSATION DIFFERENTIALS. To address specific employee compensation needs, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (the Commission) is authorized to pay compensation differentials to employees occupying regularly appropriated positions. All compensation differentials must be reviewed by the Arkansas Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee. The Commission must demonstrate the need for a compensation differential and submit a plan to the Arkansas Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee identifying the classifications or positions eligible for such differentials. Compensation differentials that may be authorized under this section are shift differentials, hazardous duty, certification, and second language in an amount not exceed twelve percent (12%) of an employee's base salary. The cumulative total of any compensation differentials paid to an employee under this section shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the employee's base salary. An employee who receives additional compensation under this section who moves into a position that is not authorized to receive the compensation differential shall have the compensation differential removed. If granting additional compensation would have the effect of exceeding the line item maximum assigned to the employee's classification, the additional compensation shall not be construed as exceeding the line item maximum for that classification.

The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

SECTION 15. SPECIAL LANGUAGE. NOT TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE ARKANSAS CODE OR PUBLISHED SEPARATELY AS SPECIAL, LOCAL, AND TEMPORARY LAW. COST OF LIVING INCREASES AND MERIT PAY. Employees of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission shall be eligible for cost-of-living and merit pay adjustments at the discretion of the Commission. In addition, the Commission is authorized to develop and establish a merit pay system. The merit system developed by the Commission must be reviewed by the Arkansas Legislative Council, or if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee. The Commission may establish merit payments as either an increase to an employee's base salary or as a lump sum payment, based on sufficiency of funding. Commission employees shall be evaluated using an instrument developed by the Commission that incorporates performance evaluation standards. Employees reaching the maximum rate of pay for their respective classifications may receive merit pay or cost of living adjustments in a lump sum payment, provided adjustments are awarded; the additional compensation shall not be construed as exceeding the line item maximum for that classification.

The provisions of this section shall be in effect only from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

This language allows the Commission the ability to pay above line item max for compensation differentials and merit increases. Since the Commission is currently outside of the Uniform Classification and Compensation Law without this special language earnings would not be able to exceed the line item maximum.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Pat Fitts
Director