

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR
Meeting Jointly
Thursday, February 29, 2024
10:00 AM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Missy Irvin, Chair; Bryan King, and Fredrick J. Love; Representatives Lee Johnson, Chair; Josh Miller, Vice-Chair; Mary Bentley, Jon S. Eubanks, Deborah Ferguson, Kenneth B. Ferguson, Justin Gonzales, Stephen Magie, Mark Perry, Aaron Pilkington, Bart Schulz, Jeff Wardlaw, and Jeremy Woolridge

Other members present: Senators Alan Clark, Jonathan Dismang, Kim Hammer, and Bart Hester; Representatives Rick Beck, Stan Berry, Keith Brooks, Denise Ennett, Jack Fortner, Mike Holcomb, David Ray, Jamie Scott, Steven Walker, and Carlton Wing

Senator Irvin called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve the February 8, 2024, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Without objection, the minutes were approved.

Discussion of Division of Environmental Quality Request to Review New Business Plans of Four New Used Tire Programs, Submitted Pursuant to Act 713 of 2023 and A.C.A. § 8-9-408(f) [Exhibit C]

Lauren Ballard, Chief of Staff, Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (E&E) and Caleb Osborne, Director, Division of Environmental Quality, E&E, presented four business plans and reimbursement rates for new used tire programs.

Jimmy Hart, Chairman, United Tire Board Program-1 and Justin Sparrow, Executive Director, West River Valley Solid Waste Management District, discussed the differences between public and private tire programs.

Discussion of Interim Study Proposal 2023-097 by Senator Missy Irvin – To Study the Public Health and Environmental Impacts of Pollution and Depletion of Natural Resources Resulting From the Presence of Digital Asset Mining Facilities, Also Known as “Crypto Mining Facilities” [Exhibit D]

Allen Dodson, Faulkner County Judge; Phillip Murphy, Faulkner County Attorney; and Randy Higgins, Faulkner County Administrator; presented issues related to noise pollution from a crypto-mining facility in Faulkner County and how it may affect those in the surrounding area.

Review of Arkansas Tobacco Settlement Commission (ATSC) Quarterly Report for April-June 2023 [Exhibit E] [Handout E]

Matt Gilmore, Public Health Programs Policy/Boards and Commission Coordinator, Arkansas Department of Health (ADH); Emily Lane, Project Director for ATSC Evaluations, Adjunct Instructor, Department of Health Sciences, University of Central Arkansas; and Liz Gates, JD, MPH, Assistant Dean, Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health, UAMS; discussed the success of prevention programs implemented by ATSC.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Medical Services, Rules Pertaining to Provider Refunds and Primary Care Provider Qualification Updates [Exhibit F]

Elizabeth Pitman, Director, Division of Medical Services, DHS and Mitch Rouse, Chief of Staff, DHS, presented the rules pertaining to provider refunds and primary care provider qualifications.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

DHS, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Rules Pertaining to Community and Employment Supports (CES) Agency Provider Standards & REPEALS: Arkansas Refugee Resettlement Program State Plan; DHS Policy 3007 – Options Counseling [Exhibit G]

Melissa Weatherton, Director, Medicaid Specialty Populations, DHS and Mitch Rouse, Chief of Staff, DHS, presented the rules pertaining to DHS Policy 3007.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

DHS, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, Rules Pertaining to Developmental Screen for Children (48 to 60 mos.) [Exhibit H]

Melissa Weatherton, Director, Medicaid Specialty Populations, DHS and Mitch Rouse, Chief of Staff, DHS, presented the rules pertaining to developmental screens for children.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

ADH, Center for Health Protection, Pharmacy Services Section, Rules Pertaining to Controlled Substances List [Exhibit I]

Laura Shue, Chief General Counsel, ADH and Shane David, Branch Chief, Health Systems Licensing, ADH, presented the rules pertaining to the controlled substances list.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

ADH, Center for Local Public Health, Environmental Health Branch, Rules Pertaining to the State Board of Sanitarians [Exhibit J]

Laura Shue, Chief General Counsel, ADH and Shane David, Branch Chief, Health Systems Licensing, ADH, presented the rules pertaining to the state board of sanitarians.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

ADH, Center for Local Public Health, Environmental Branch, Rules Pertaining to Water Operator Licensing [Exhibit K]

Laura Shue, Chief General Counsel, ADH and Shane David, Branch Chief, Health Systems Licensing, ADH, presented the rules pertaining to water operator licensing.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

ADH, Center for Local Public Health, Environmental Health Branch, Rules Pertaining to Septic Tank Cleaners [Exhibit L]

Laura Shue, Chief General Counsel, ADH and Shane David, Branch Chief, Health Systems Licensing, ADH, presented the rules pertaining to septic tank cleaners.

Senator Irvin stated that, without objection, this rule stands reviewed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.