

1 **State of Arkansas**

2 **80th General Assembly**

3 **Regular Session, 1995**

A Bill

ACT 1203 OF 1995

HOUSE BILL 1765

4 **By: Representatives J. Smith, Flanagan, Cunningham, Pollan, M. Wilson, Brown, Northcutt,**
5 **Beatty, Booker, Schexnayder, von Gremp, Hogue, Wilkins, Ferrell, J. Wilson, M. Jones,**
6 **Goodwin, Choate, Owens, Argue, Madison, Bennett, Lynn, Sheppard, Townsend, Dawson,**
7 **Roberts, Angel, Harris, Willems, Wallis, McGee, Ferguson, T. Smith, Wagner, Simmons,**
8 **Wren, Stalnaker, Mitchell, Lancaster and Critcher**

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For An Act To Be Entitled

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"AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE COMMON GROUND PROGRAM FOR

13

ARKANSAS COMMUNITIES IN COORDINATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS

14

OF HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND EDUCATION; AND FOR OTHER

15

PURPOSES."

16

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Subtitle

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"TO ESTABLISH THE COMMON GROUND PROGRAM

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FOR ARKANSAS COMMUNITIES IN COORDINATION

20

WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF HEALTH, HUMAN

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SERVICES AND EDUCATION."

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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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25 SECTION 1. The General Assembly, in response to the recommendations

26 from the Governor's Summit on Youth Violence Prevention, finds that:

27 (1) For too many Arkansas children, the environment in which they live

28 prevents their healthy development, resulting in school failure, substance

29 abuse, teen pregnancy, violence and other destructive behaviors;

30 (2) Intervention or treatment programs and punishment or incarceration

31 are far more costly than working to prevent destructive behaviors from

32 occurring;

33 (3) An environment where youth can grow up healthy, safe, succeeding in

34 school, participating in community life and ready to enter productive

35 adulthood is inseparable from the well-being of families and the safety,

36 stability and economic viability of the neighborhoods and communities where

1 they live;

2 (4) New relationships are needed between state government, local
3 communities, public and private service agencies and the families and young
4 people who need services, so that help will be more accessible, easier to use
5 and more effective;

6 (5) Better evaluation tools are needed to identify youth crime
7 prevention programs that are working and those that are not, so that scarce
8 resources can be more effectively utilized;

9 (6) A better communication system is needed to connect and streamline
10 the array of services, coalitions and committees already under way, to track
11 programs and publicize successful models; and

12 (7) Solving the current problems of youth cannot be accomplished in a
13 short-term program but will take a long-term commitment on the part of state
14 and local government and all those who touch the lives of our youth.

15 Therefore, there is established the Common Ground Program, as a bridge
16 connecting and assisting government, communities and citizens to build a more
17 responsive human educational and economic system where children and families
18 can thrive.

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20 *SECTION 2. (a) The Common Ground Program shall function under the*
21 *auspices of the Governor's Partnership Council for Children and Families. The*
22 *Common Ground Program Committee shall be comprised of twenty-one (21) members*
23 *to serve at the pleasure of the Governor with eighteen (18) appointed by the*
24 *Governor as follows:*

25 (1) One (1) member shall be a state Senator;

26 (2) One (1) member shall be a state Representative;

27 (3) Two (2) members shall be representatives of the Youth
28 Commission to be selected from a list of three (3) names per position
29 submitted by the Youth Commission; and

30 (4) Fourteen (14) members shall be culturally diverse
31 representatives of the statewide community at-large, and may include parents,
32 educators, representatives of religious organizations, health care
33 professionals, youth service providers, law enforcement officers,
34 representatives of private business and those working in the juvenile justice
35 system;

1 (5) The three (3) directors of the Departments of Health, Human
2 Services and Education, or their respective designees, shall be members of the
3 Committee.

4 (b) Members of the council shall serve without compensation, but may,
5 to the extent monies are appropriated therefor and subject to reasonable
6 limitations established by the Department of Finance and Administration, be
7 reimbursed for actual reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their
8 official duties in accordance with rates and standards for reimbursement of
9 state employees.

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11 SECTION 3. (a) The Common Ground Program Committee shall select a
12 chairperson.

13 (b) The Committee shall hold its initial meeting not later than
14 September, 1995, and shall continue to hold meetings, as needed to complete
15 its work, until March 1, 1997, at which time it shall dissolve unless extended
16 by the General Assembly.

17 (c) The activities of the Committee shall be governed by the rules
18 established by the Governor's Partnership Council for Children and Families.

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20 SECTION 4. The Common Ground Program Committee shall have
21 responsibility to:

22 (1) Collaborate with the Youth Commission and any other organization or
23 entity that will provide information or support in developing and implementing
24 the Common Ground Program;

25 (2) Periodically review grants and make recommendations as needed to
26 the Governor's Partnership Council for Children and Families regarding the
27 performance of grantees;

28 (3) Develop and recommend to the Governor's Partnership Council for
29 Children and Families criteria and priorities for a grant program to be based
30 on the recommendations from the Governor's Youth Summit on Violence Prevention
31 and, if the Committee is extended beyond March 1, 1997, on regional summits
32 thereafter;

33 (4) Recommend grant recipients to the Governor's Partnership Council
34 for Children and Families using the criteria and priorities established by the
35 Council;

1 (5) Develop information about the program that the Governor's
2 Partnership Council for Children and Families can use to disseminate
3 information to the general public; and

4 (6) Report the results of the program to the Governor's Partnership
5 Council for Children and Families to be included in a report to the Governor
6 and General Assembly.

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8 SECTION 5. (a) The Arkansas Department of Health shall be the agency
9 designated to serve as the administrative and fiscal agent for the Common
10 Ground Program. The department will carry out these responsibilities under
11 the direction of the Governor_s Partnership Council for Children and Families.

12 (b) Funds appropriated for the Common Ground Program may only be used
13 for activities in support of the program which have been approved by the
14 Governor_s Partnership Council for Children and Families. Up to fifteen
15 percent (15%) of the funds can be used for program planning, administration,
16 technical assistance, and evaluation; clearinghouse activities; and Common
17 Ground Committee expenses.

18 (c) The Arkansas Department of Health shall have the following
19 authority as fiscal agent for the Common Ground Program:

20 (1) To disburse Common Ground Program grant funds to qualifying
21 entities as directed by the Governor_s Partnership Council for Children and
22 Families;

23 (2) To submit applications on behalf of the Governor_s
24 Partnership Council for Children and Families for funds which may become
25 available from public and private sources which would be used to implement the
26 activities of the Common Ground Program; and

27 (3) To contract for fund raising and fiscal investment/management
28 services.

29 (d) The Department of Health shall carry out or contract for the
30 following administrative functions for the Common Ground Program:

31 (1) Establish, in the Offices of Drug Abuse Prevention and
32 Disability Prevention in the Department of Health, a Clearinghouse for Youth
33 Crime Prevention Programs, which shall:

34 (A) Maintain a data base that tracks successful youth crime
35 prevention programs in Arkansas and other states;

1 (B) Develop procedures for the collection of information
2 about youth crime prevention programs in conjunction with the Common Ground
3 Program Committee; and

4 (C) Develop procedures for the dissemination of information
5 about youth crime prevention programs in conjunction with the Common Ground
6 Program Committee.

7 (2) Develop and administer an outreach and grant program
8 component, which shall:

9 (A) Conduct public education activities in regard to the
10 Common Ground Program Committee and programs developed thereunder;

11 (B) Assist groups in developing grant applications and
12 implementing youth crime prevention programs; and

13 (C) Oversee regional summits, which shall be a meeting of
14 representatives of local communities to identify problems relative to youth
15 crime and suggest funding priorities.

16 (3) Develop and administer evaluation, assessment and reporting
17 components, which will evaluate grant recipients and collect other information
18 about youth crime prevention programs to enhance the success of the Common
19 Ground Program.

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21 SECTION 6. Priority for Common Ground Program grants shall be given to
22 applicants that:

23 (1) Provide matching funds for the youth crime prevention program in an
24 amount equal to at least fifty (50%) of the grant award. Matching funds may
25 be in cash or in goods and services; and

26 (2) Demonstrate support for the youth crime prevention program from the
27 local community, including elected officials.

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29 SECTION 7. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature
30 are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code
31 Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

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33 SECTION 8. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to
34 any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect
35 other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without

1 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this
2 act are declared to be severable.

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4 SECTION 9. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this act are
5 hereby repealed.

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/s/Rep. J. Smith, et al

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APPROVED: 4-11-95

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