

1 State of Arkansas  
2 93rd General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2021  
4

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1779

5 By: Representatives Wooten, K. Ferguson  
6 By: Senator K. Hammer  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT CONCERNING THE IDENTIFICATION AND ELIMINATION  
10 OF UNUSED AND UNNECESSARY POSITIONS FROM THE BUDGETS  
11 OF STATE AGENCIES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR  
12 OTHER PURPOSES.  
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## Subtitle

15 CONCERNING THE IDENTIFICATION AND  
16 ELIMINATION OF UNUSED AND UNNECESSARY  
17 POSITIONS FROM THE BUDGETS OF STATE  
18 AGENCIES; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.  
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 21, Chapter 5, Subchapter 2, is amended  
25 to add an additional section to read as follows:

26 21-5-226. Vacant positions – Legislative findings – Reporting  
27 requirements.

28 (a)(1) The General Assembly finds that determining the maximum amount  
29 of an appropriation, the purpose for the expenditure of appropriations, and  
30 funding and personnel for a state agency, state department, or state  
31 institution each fiscal year is the prerogative of the General Assembly.

32 (2) Determinations under subdivision (a)(1) of this section are  
33 typically accomplished by delineating the maximums and purposes in the  
34 appropriation act for a state agency, including without limitation  
35 authorizing appropriations for each fund and fund account.

36 (3) It is both necessary and appropriate that the General



1 Assembly maintain oversight by requiring approval of the Legislative Council,  
2 or the Joint Budget Committee if the General Assembly is in regular, fiscal,  
3 or extraordinary session, as provided by this section.

4 (4)(A) The requirement of approval by the Legislative Council or  
5 the Joint Budget Committee under this section is not a severable part of this  
6 section.

7 (B) If the requirement of approval under this section is  
8 found unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, the entire  
9 section is void.

10 (b)(1) On or before June 15 of each calendar year, the Office of  
11 Personnel Management shall identify each position authorized for the use of a  
12 state agency that has been vacant for two (2) or more years.

13 (2) Positions identified under subdivision (b)(1) of this  
14 section shall be annually reported to the Personnel Subcommittee of the  
15 Legislative Council at its first meeting after June 15.

16 (3) A state agency shall not fill or otherwise utilize a  
17 position identified under subdivision (b)(1) of this section without the  
18 prior approval of the:

19 (A) Legislative Council; or

20 (B) The Joint Budget Committee if the General Assembly is  
21 in regular, fiscal, or extraordinary session.

22 (4)(A) The office shall submit an updated report of the state  
23 agency positions that have been vacant for two (2) years or more to the  
24 Legislative Council and the Joint Budget Committee at least five (5) days  
25 before the beginning of the pre-session budget hearings preceding each regular  
26 session and fiscal session of the General Assembly.

27 (B) The updated report under subdivision (b)(4)(A) of this  
28 section shall:

29 (i) Exclude positions filled or utilized upon the  
30 approval of the Legislative Council or Joint Budget Committee under  
31 subdivision (b)(3) of this section; and

32 (ii) Include any state agency positions vacant for  
33 two (2) years or more that were subsequently identified by the office.

34 (C) A state agency shall not request the further  
35 authorization of a vacant position identified in the report under subdivision  
36 (b)(4)(A) of this section.

1       (c)(1) If a state agency determines that a position authorized for use  
2 by the state agency is no longer required for the necessary and efficient  
3 operation of the state agency, the state agency may submit a request to the  
4 office that the position be:

5               (A) Terminated for the remainder of the fiscal year; and

6               (B) Identified as a position not requested for continued  
7 authorization at the next pre-session budget hearings of the Legislative  
8 Council and Joint Budget Committee preceding each regular session and fiscal  
9 session of the General Assembly.

10              (2)(A) The office shall submit a report of the state agency  
11 positions identified as a position not requested for continued authorization  
12 under subdivision (c)(1) of this section to the Legislative Council and the  
13 Joint Budget Committee at least five (5) days before the beginning of the  
14 pre-session budget hearings preceding each regular session and fiscal session  
15 of the General Assembly.

16              (B) A state agency shall not request the further  
17 authorization of a position identified in the report under subdivision  
18 (c)(2)(A) of this section.

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20              SECTION 2. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE. DO NOT CODIFY. State Employee  
21 Position Management, Control, and Efficiency Task Force – Creation –  
22 Membership – Duties.

23              (a) There is created the State Employee Position Management, Control,  
24 and Efficiency Task Force.

25              (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

26              (1) Two (2) members appointed by the co-chairs of the Legislative  
27 Council from the membership of the Legislative Council, who shall serve as  
28 co-chairs of the task force;

29              (2) Three (3) members of the House of Representatives appointed  
30 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

31              (3) Three (3) members of the Senate appointed by the President  
32 Pro Tempore of the Senate;

33              (4) The Secretary of the Department of Education or his or her  
34 designee;

35              (5) The Secretary of the Department of Transformation and Shared  
36 Services or his or her designee;

1           (6) The Secretary of the Department of Finance and  
2 Administration or his or her designee;

3           (7) The Budget Administrator of the Department of Finance and  
4 Administration;

5           (8) The Director of the Employee Benefits Division; and

6           (9) The State Personnel Administrator.

7           (c) If a vacancy occurs on the task force, the vacancy shall be filled  
8 by the same process as the original appointment.

9           (d) The legislative members of the task force shall be paid per diem  
10 and mileage as authorized by law for attendance at meetings of interim  
11 committees of the General Assembly.

12           (e)(1) The cochaIRS of the task force shall call the first meeting of  
13 the task force within sixty (60) days of the effective date of this act.

14           (2)(A) The task force shall conduct its meetings in Little Rock  
15 at the State Capitol Building.

16           (B) Meetings of the task force shall be held at the call  
17 of the cochaIRS of the task force.

18           (3) The task force shall establish rules and procedures for  
19 conducting the business of the task force.

20           (4)(A) A majority of the members of the task force shall  
21 constitute a quorum for transacting the business of the task force.

22           (B) An affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum present  
23 shall be required for the passage of a motion or other task force action.

24           (5) The Bureau of Legislative Research shall provide staff,  
25 meeting space, and materials for the task force.

26           (f)(1) The purpose of the task force is to identify means by which the  
27 state can increase efficiency and transparency in state budgeting through the  
28 elimination of unnecessary or unused positions at executive branch agencies.

29           (2) To achieve the purpose of the task force, the task force  
30 shall:

31           (A) Study possible plans for increasing efficiency and  
32 transparency in state budgeting by eliminating unnecessary or unused  
33 positions at state agencies within the executive branch; and

34           (B) Develop recommendations for ways in which the state  
35 can increase efficiency and transparency in state budgeting.

36           (g) Beginning three (3) months after the first meeting of the task

1 force and each three (3) months thereafter, the task force shall file with  
 2 the Legislative Council a written report of the task force's activities,  
 3 findings, and recommendations.

4 (h) The task force shall expire on August 1, 2022.

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 6 SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
 7 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the efficient and effective  
 8 use of state funds is critical to the preservation of the public peace,  
 9 health and safety; that this act allows for the identification and  
 10 elimination of unused and unnecessary state agency positions, which enhances  
 11 the efficient and transparent operation of state government and reflects the  
 12 prudent use of state funds; and that this act should become effective at the  
 13 earliest opportunity to preserve the public peace, health, and safety by  
 14 ensuring that state funds are used appropriately and that unnecessary state  
 15 agency positions may be identified and eliminated to promote the efficient  
 16 and transparent operation of state government. Therefore, an emergency is  
 17 declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the  
 18 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective  
 19 on:

20 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

21 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,  
 22 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the  
 23 bill; or

24 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is  
 25 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.