

INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2015-114

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NINETIETH ARKANSAS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO REFER TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
FORESTRY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT A STUDY OF THE ARKANSAS NATIVE
WINES INCENTIVE GRANTS PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, Arkansas is the oldest and largest grape juice and wine-
producing state in the southern United States; and

WHEREAS, grapes were first grown commercially in Arkansas by a colony
of German-Swiss immigrants who settled at Altus, Franklin County, in the
1870s; and

WHEREAS, there are now wineries in Arkansas with a storage capacity
exceeding one million two hundred thousand gallons (1,200,000 gal.); and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas native wines incentive grants program was
enacted by Act 681 of 1985; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of the incentive grant program include:

- (1) Reducing unemployment and providing new job opportunities;
- (2) Providing expanded markets for grapes, fruits, berries, or
vegetables produced in Arkansas;
- (3) Attracting other industries to this state;
- (4) Providing stability to the marketing of grapes used in the
wine industries of this state;
- (5) Providing relief to Arkansas wineries which must compete
with products imported from foreign countries whose producers are receiving
direct government subsidies; and
- (6) Providing relief to the financial community of this state
which made investments and loans supporting the growers of grapes, fruits,
berries, and vegetables used in the wine industry; and

1 WHEREAS, developing economic, social, and agricultural conditions over
2 the past thirty (30) years are reshaping the wine industries of this state;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, a comprehensive review of the incentive grant program would
6 benefit the wine industries of this state and the state's agricultural
7 economy generally,
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9 NOW THEREFORE,

10 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL
11 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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13 THAT the Legislative Council of the Ninetieth General Assembly of the
14 State of Arkansas refer to the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and
15 Economic Development a study of the Arkansas Native Wines Incentive Grants
16 Program.
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18 Respectfully submitted,
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22 Representative Charlene Fite
23 District 80
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26 By: MGF/LNS
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