

1 State of Arkansas  
2 89th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2013  
4

*As Engrossed: S3/21/13*  
**A Bill**

SENATE BILL 929

5 By: Senator Teague  
6 By: Representative Mayberry  
7

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

9 AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXPAND  
10 OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE HIGH-TECHNOLOGY, KNOWLEDGE-  
11 BASED JOBS; TO RESTRUCTURE CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND  
12 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS TO FOSTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;  
13 TO EXPAND THE DUTIES OF THE ARKANSAS RESEARCH  
14 *ALLIANCE; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER*  
15 *PURPOSES.*  
16  
17

**Subtitle**

19 *TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE HIGH-*  
20 *TECHNOLOGY, KNOWLEDGE-BASED JOBS; TO*  
21 *RESTRUCTURE CERTAIN PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM*  
22 *REQUIREMENTS TO FOSTER ECONOMIC*  
23 *DEVELOPMENT; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.*  
24  
25

26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
27

28 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 15-3-503 is amended to read as follows:

29 15-3-503. ~~Arkansas Acceleration Fund Committee~~ Advisory capacity of  
30 Arkansas Research Alliance.

31 (a) The Arkansas ~~Science and Technology Authority~~ Research Alliance  
32 shall ~~create the Arkansas Acceleration Fund Committee,~~ serve in an advisory  
33 capacity to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Arkansas Science and  
34 Technology Authority, and other agencies responsible for programs enumerated  
35 in subsection (b) of this section.

36 (b)(1) The ~~committee~~ Arkansas Research Alliance shall make



1 recommendations regarding support and assistance for the accelerated growth  
2 of knowledge-based and high-technology jobs in the State of Arkansas through  
3 focused funding of the state's initiatives and programs.

4 (2) For funds in the Arkansas Acceleration Fund, § 19-5-1243,  
5 the ~~committee~~ Arkansas Research Alliance shall make recommendations to the  
6 authority regarding the allocation or reallocation of funds and moneys for  
7 programs and initiatives authorized by the:

8 (A) Arkansas Research Alliance Act, § 15-3-301 et seq.;

9 (B) Innovate Arkansas Fund, § 19-5-1237;

10 (C) Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund Act of 2007, § 15-  
11 5-1601 et seq.;

12 (D) Supplemental science, technology, engineering, and  
13 math fund grants under § 6-17-2701 et seq.;

14 (E) Existing programs of the authority authorized under §  
15 15-3-101 et seq., § 15-3-201 et seq., § 15-3-301 et seq., and § 15-3-401 et  
16 seq.; ~~and~~

17 (F) Arkansas Technical Careers Student Loan Forgiveness  
18 Program, § 6-50-201; ~~and~~

19 (G) Any other programs or activities aimed at the creation  
20 of knowledge-based and high-technology jobs.

21 (3) In consultation with members of the Arkansas Research  
22 Alliance, the Executive Director may solicit input, advice, or counsel from  
23 any group or individual concerning a policy or funding decision of the  
24 Arkansas Research Alliance, including without limitation Accelerate Arkansas,  
25 Innovate Arkansas, and Connect Arkansas.

26  
27 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 15-3-504 is repealed.

28 ~~15-3-504. Members of the committee.~~

29 ~~(a) The Arkansas Acceleration Fund Committee is composed of the~~  
30 ~~following members:~~

31 ~~(1) Seven (7) of the members shall be individuals from the~~  
32 ~~private sector;~~

33 ~~(2) One (1) member is to be the President of the Arkansas~~  
34 ~~Science and Technology Authority or the president's designee;~~

35 ~~(3) One (1) member is to be the Director of the Arkansas~~  
36 ~~Economic Development Commission or the director's designee; and~~

1           ~~(4) One (1) member to be the President of the Arkansas~~  
2 ~~Development Finance Authority or the president's designee.~~

3           ~~(b) Each private sector member of the committee shall:~~

4           ~~(1) Be knowledgeable through personal experience or training of~~  
5 ~~the process of growth and development of knowledge-based or technology-based~~  
6 ~~jobs;~~

7           ~~(2) Have obtained at least an undergraduate degree from a four-~~  
8 ~~year institution of higher learning; and~~

9           ~~(3) Have:~~

10           ~~(A) A science or engineering degree from a four-year~~  
11 ~~institution of higher learning;~~

12           ~~(B) Experience managing a private sector knowledge-based~~  
13 ~~or high technology company; or~~

14           ~~(C) Experience working in areas related to development of~~  
15 ~~private sector knowledge-based or high technology jobs.~~

16           ~~(c)(1) The President of the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority~~  
17 ~~shall seek recommendations from the Arkansas Science and Technology~~  
18 ~~Authority's board of directors and the Governor of the State of Arkansas for~~  
19 ~~the initial list of private sector committee members.~~

20           ~~(2) After obtaining the recommendations, the President of the~~  
21 ~~Arkansas Science and Technology Authority shall nominate the initial private~~  
22 ~~sector members of the committee for appointment to the committee by the~~  
23 ~~Arkansas Science and Technology Authority's board of directors.~~

24           ~~(d)(1) Each private sector committee member shall serve a four-year~~  
25 ~~term, with a maximum of two (2) consecutive four-year terms.~~

26           ~~(2) The initial terms of the private sector committee members~~  
27 ~~shall be as follows:~~

28           ~~(A) One (1) member shall serve a one-year term;~~

29           ~~(B) Two (2) members shall serve a two-year term;~~

30           ~~(C) Two (2) members shall serve a three-year term; and~~

31           ~~(D) Two (2) members shall serve a four-year term.~~

32           ~~(3) The President of the Arkansas Science and Technology~~  
33 ~~Authority shall determine the terms of the initial private members of the~~  
34 ~~committee.~~

35           ~~(4) Each member may be reappointed from time to time thereafter~~  
36 ~~to serve not more than a maximum of eight (8) consecutive years, including~~

1 ~~his or her initial term.~~

2 ~~(e) Successors to the initial private sector committee members shall~~  
3 ~~be nominated by the President of the Arkansas Science and Technology~~  
4 ~~Authority upon recommendation by the committee and shall be appointed by the~~  
5 ~~Board of Directors of the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority.~~

6 ~~(f) Members of the committee shall serve without compensation.~~

7

8 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 15-3-505 is amended to read as follows:

9 15-3-505. Recommendations.

10 (a) Upon receiving funding for knowledge-based and high-technology job  
11 advancement, the Arkansas ~~Acceleration Fund Committee~~ Science and Technology  
12 Authority shall insure that the Arkansas Research Alliance meet meets at  
13 least annually to recommend the allocation and priorities of funding, funding  
14 ratios, and the maximum amounts to be made available among the particular  
15 programs to be supported under this chapter and that will accelerate the  
16 development of knowledge-based and high-technology jobs in Arkansas.

17 (b) The ~~committee~~ alliance may base its recommendations for investment  
18 and reinvestment on an analysis of the growth in the state's knowledge-based  
19 and high-technology jobs and associated wages and estimated individual state  
20 income tax revenue.

21 (c) The ~~committee's~~ alliance's recommendations may be used to guide  
22 the preparation of budget requests by the Arkansas Science and Technology  
23 Authority or budget requests by state agencies for the programs stated in §  
24 15-3-503(b).

25 (d)(1) The Board of Directors of the Arkansas Science and Technology  
26 Authority may act on the ~~committee's~~ alliance's recommendations.

27 (2) The governing body of each agency listed under § 15-3-503(b)  
28 may act on the ~~committee's~~ alliance's recommendations for the programs listed  
29 in ~~their areas~~ its area.

30 (3) The board shall report its actions to the Governor by June  
31 30 of each year and shall forward copies of the report to the agencies  
32 included in the report's recommendations.

33

34 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1603 is amended to read as follows:

35 15-5-1603. Definitions.

36 As used in this subchapter:

1           (1) ~~“Angel investor” means a high net worth individual or a network of~~  
2 ~~high net worth individuals who invest in early stage technology based~~  
3 ~~enterprises~~ “Accredited investor” means an accredited investor as defined in  
4 17 C.F.R. § 230.215, as it existed on January 1, 2013;

5           (2) “Enterprise Development Account” means a separate account bearing  
6 that name and to be maintained within the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching  
7 Fund, the moneys in which account shall be used for the purposes and in the  
8 manner prescribed by this subchapter;

9           (3) “Equity capital” means capital invested in common stock or  
10 preferred stock, royalty rights, limited partnership interests, limited  
11 liability company interests, and any other equity, securities, or rights that  
12 evidence ownership or investment in private enterprises;

13           (4) “Near-equity capital” means capital invested in unsecured,  
14 undersecured, subordinated, or convertible loans or debt securities;

15           ~~(5) “Private sector advisory committee” means a committee composed of~~  
16 ~~individual representatives from the private sector in Arkansas, established~~  
17 ~~to offer assistance and advice to the trustees of the fund in:~~

18                     ~~(A) Developing rules; and~~

19                     ~~(B) Reviewing:~~

20                             ~~(i) Investments under consideration by the review~~  
21 ~~committee; and~~

22                             ~~(ii) Annual reports from the trustees of the Venture~~  
23 ~~Capital Investment Trust;~~

24           ~~(6)~~ (5) “Review committee” means a committee ~~composed~~ composed of the  
25 President of the Arkansas Development Finance Authority, the President of the  
26 Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, and the Director of the Arkansas  
27 Economic Development Commission;

28           ~~(7)~~ (6) “Technology-based enterprises” means a group of growing  
29 businesses in one (1) or more of the following business sectors:

30                     (A) Advanced materials and manufacturing systems;

31                     (B) Agriculture, food, and environmental sciences;

32                     (C) Biotechnology, bioengineering, medical technology, and life  
33 sciences;

34                     (D) Information technology;

35                     (E) Transportation logistics; and

36                     (F) Biobased products;

1       ~~(8)~~ (7) “Technology Validation Account” means the separate account  
2 bearing that name and to be maintained as a separate account within the  
3 Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund, the moneys in which account shall be  
4 used for the purposes and in the manner prescribed by this subchapter; and

5       ~~(9)~~ (8) “Venture Capital Investment Trust” means the public trust  
6 formed July 21, 2003, under § 28-72-201 et seq., the trustees of which are  
7 the President of the Arkansas Development Finance Authority, the President of  
8 the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, and the Director of the  
9 Department of Finance and Administration, and that has as a principal purpose  
10 increasing the availability of equity capital and near-equity capital for  
11 emerging and expanding enterprises in the State of Arkansas.

12  
13       SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1605(g)(1)(H), concerning the use of  
14 the Technology Validation Account within the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching  
15 Fund, is amended to read as follows:

16               (H) Achieving other similar milestones required for the  
17 advancement of very early stage technology-based enterprises as approved by  
18 the ~~private sector advisory committee and the~~ review committee.

19  
20       SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1605(g)(2), concerning the use of the  
21 Technology Validation Account within the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund,  
22 is amended to read as follows:

23               (2) Financial assistance provided from the Technology Validation  
24 Account may be made in the form of equity capital or near-equity capital, as  
25 ~~recommended by the private sector advisory committee and~~ approved by the  
26 review committee.

27  
28       SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1605(g)(5) and (6), concerning the use  
29 of the Technology Validation Account within the Arkansas Risk Capital  
30 Matching Fund, are amended to read as follows:

31               (5) Any technology-based enterprise receiving financial  
32 assistance to be disbursed from the Technology Validation Account shall have  
33 a business valuation as represented by the technology-based enterprise and  
34 approved by the review committee of not more than two million dollars  
35 (\$2,000,000) determined prior to the making of the investment from the  
36 Technology Validation Account and as the maximum valuation may be adjusted

1 from year to year by the review committee ~~on recommendation of the private~~  
2 ~~sector advisory committee~~ to take into account the effects of inflation.

3 (6) The maximum investment that may be made to any one (1)  
4 technology-based enterprise from the Technology Validation Account shall be  
5 one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), as may be adjusted from year to year  
6 by the review committee ~~on recommendation of the private sector advisory~~  
7 ~~committee~~ to take into account the effects of inflation.

8  
9 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1605(h), concerning the use of the  
10 Enterprise Development Account within the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching  
11 Fund, is amended to read as follows:

12 (h)(1) Moneys and funds within the Enterprise Development Account shall  
13 be used within the parameters expressed in this subsection for the purpose of  
14 assisting early stage technology-based enterprises in augmenting the  
15 investments made or proposed to be made in ~~such~~ early stage technology-based  
16 enterprises from angel accredited investors or owners of the applicant  
17 technology-based enterprise, or both, and other individual or institutional  
18 ~~investors where~~ when established milestones for further development of ~~such~~  
19 early stage technology-based enterprises are set forth in a business plan to  
20 be approved by ~~the fund manager and~~ the review committee.

21 (2) Financial assistance provided from the Enterprise Development  
22 Account may be made in the form of equity capital or near-equity capital, as  
23 ~~recommended by the private sector advisory committee and~~ approved by the  
24 review committee, and shall be on substantially the same terms and conditions  
25 as other investments proposed to be made by ~~angel~~ accredited investors or  
26 ~~other investors~~ owners of the applicant technology-based enterprise, or both.  
27 contemporaneously with the assistance to be provided from the fund.

28 (3) Financial assistance made from the Enterprise Development  
29 Account shall be required to be matched by investments from ~~angel~~ accredited  
30 investors, or other investors owners of the applicant technology-based  
31 enterprise, or both accredited investors and owners of the applicant  
32 technology-based enterprise in some the proportion, ~~as~~ determined by the  
33 review committee on a case-by-case basis or as a matter of rule, but on not  
34 less than a four-to-one (4:1) basis with not less than four dollars (\$4.00)  
35 from the applicant technology-based ~~business~~ enterprise for every one dollar  
36 (\$1.00) from the ~~account~~ Enterprise Development Account.

1           (4) Any technology-based enterprise receiving financial  
2 assistance to be disbursed from the Enterprise Development Account shall have  
3 a business valuation as represented by the technology-based enterprise and  
4 approved by the review committee of not more than twenty-five million dollars  
5 (\$25,000,000), determined prior to the making of the investment from the  
6 Enterprise Development Account and as the maximum valuation may be adjusted  
7 from year to year by the review committee ~~on recommendation of the private~~  
8 ~~sector advisory committee~~ to take into account the effects of inflation.

9           (5) The maximum investment that may be made to any one (1)  
10 technology-based enterprise from the Enterprise Development Account fund  
11 shall be seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000), as may be adjusted  
12 from year to year by the review committee ~~on recommendation of the private~~  
13 ~~sector advisory committee~~ to take into account the effects of inflation.

14  
15       SECTION 9. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1606 is repealed.

16       ~~15-5-1606. Private sector advisory committee.~~

17       ~~(a) The trustees of the Venture Capital Investment Trust shall appoint~~  
18 ~~a private sector advisory committee, to consist of not less than five (5) nor~~  
19 ~~more than nine (9) individuals from the private sector in Arkansas who have~~  
20 ~~demonstrated personal or professional experience in assisting one (1) or more~~  
21 ~~of the financing, growth, and development of very early stage and early stage~~  
22 ~~technology-based businesses.~~

23       ~~(b)(1) The private sector advisory committee shall serve for terms as~~  
24 ~~determined by the trustees of the trust.~~

25       ~~(2) Members of the private sector advisory committee may serve~~  
26 ~~successive terms.~~

27       ~~(3) Members of the private sector advisory committee may be~~  
28 ~~reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as~~  
29 ~~determined by the trustees of the trust.~~

30       ~~(c) The trustees of the trust in their discretion shall have the right~~  
31 ~~to remove and replace the members of the private sector advisory committee.~~

32       ~~(d) The trustees of the trust, in consultation with the private sector~~  
33 ~~advisory committee and the review committee, shall develop guidelines for~~  
34 ~~investments of Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund assets in technology-based~~  
35 ~~enterprises consistent with the provisions of this subchapter.~~

36       ~~(e) It shall not be a prohibited conflict of interest for a member of~~

1 ~~the private sector advisory committee to have a direct or indirect pecuniary~~  
2 ~~interest in any technology based enterprise applying for assistance from the~~  
3 ~~Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund so long as the member;~~

4 ~~(1) Makes full disclosure of his or her interest before the~~  
5 ~~consideration of the application by the private sector advisory committee;~~

6 ~~(2) Does not vote on the application; and~~

7 ~~(3) Excuses himself or herself from any deliberations of the~~  
8 ~~private sector advisory committee regarding the application.~~

9  
10 SECTION 10. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1607 is amended to read as follows:  
11 15-5-1607. Review committee.

12 The review committee shall:

13 ~~(1) Recommend~~ recommend to the trustees the payment of fees and  
14 expenses out of the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund for the operation of  
15 the fund; ~~and~~

16 ~~(2) Review and give final approval to the recommendations made by~~  
17 ~~the private sector advisory committee with regard to fund investments.~~

18  
19 SECTION 11. Arkansas Code § 15-5-1608(1), concerning the annual report  
20 of the Venture Capital Investment Trust, is amended to read as follows:

21 (1) Include an annual audit of the Arkansas Risk ~~Capital~~ Capital  
22 Matching Fund's activities conducted by the trustees with the assistance of  
23 ~~the review committee and the private sector advisory committee;~~

24  
25 SECTION 12. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
26 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the continuous operation of  
27 the Arkansas Risk Capital Matching Fund is essential to maintaining the  
28 state's entrepreneurial infrastructure that is available to Arkansas citizens  
29 seeking to create employment opportunities in the state; that this act is  
30 necessary to meet immediate demands for funding under the program; and that  
31 this act is immediately necessary to provide for continuity of services to  
32 Arkansas entrepreneurs and immediate employment opportunities. Therefore, an  
33 emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for  
34 the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become  
35 effective on:

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

