

1 State of Arkansas
2 92nd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2019

A Bill

SENATE BILL 7

4
5 By: Senator A. Clark

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO
9 ATTEND HEARINGS HELD UNDER THE ARKANSAS JUVENILE CODE
10 OF 1989; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

14 TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
15 TO ATTEND HEARINGS HELD UNDER THE
16 ARKANSAS JUVENILE CODE OF 1989.

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

21 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative intent.

22 The General Assembly recognizes:

23 (1) That it is the duty of the General Assembly to initiate
24 intelligent legislative reform that benefits the citizens of Arkansas;

25 (2) That many families in Arkansas are involved in child welfare
26 cases with the Department of Human Services;

27 (3) That these families sometimes turn to members of the General
28 Assembly for assistance when their families are negatively affected by
29 certain limitations in the child welfare process;

30 (4) That it is important to preserve a family unit when
31 possible;

32 (5) That the General Assembly's ability to initiate legislative
33 reform with regard to child welfare is impeded by the nontransparent nature
34 of child welfare proceedings, closed juvenile hearings, and other protections
35 that prevent the General Assembly from adequately observing and reviewing the
36 child welfare process; and

1 (6) That in order to intelligently initiate reform, the General
2 Assembly requires an expansion of its ability to observe and review all
3 aspects of the child welfare process.

4
5 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 9, Chapter 27, Subchapter 3, is amended
6 to add an additional section to read as follows:

7 9-27-371. Hearings – Attendance by member of General Assembly.
8 Regardless of any other provision to the contrary under this
9 subchapter, a member of the General Assembly may attend any hearing,
10 including a closed hearing, held under the Arkansas Juvenile Code of 1989, §
11 9-27-301 et seq.